JUNE 18, 2018

TIME

KING ME.

VISIONS OF ABSOLUTE POWER
by MOLLY BALL *and* TESSA BERENSON

TRUMP VS. THE CONSTITUTION
by NEAL KATYAL

WHY MUELLER WON'T INDICT
by JACK GOLDSMITH

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TIME
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The Brief

News from the U.S. and around the world

The View

Ideas, opinion, innovations

Features

Time Off

What to watch, read, see and do

Boys rest after practice on Heimaey—or Home Island (pop. 4,500)—the largest in Iceland's Westman Islands archipelago, on June 1

Photograph by Thomas Prior for TIME

ON THE COVER: *Illustration by Tim O'Brien for TIME*

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WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT ...

THE DRONE AGE The June 11 cover story on the state of drones worldwide resonated with many readers. Rex Hayes of Toms River, N.J., said W.J. Hennigan's feature on military use of drones was "spot on," and B.A. Tilton of Middleton, Mass., wrote that she would use an aerial photo of surfers to explain riptides to her great-grandson. And while Maren Wryn of Salem, Ore., missed TIME's usual red border, she admired the "cutting edge" idea of using drones to create the cover. But Michael Soutter of Boynton Beach, Fla., while moved by Aryn Baker's story on drones delivering medicine in Rwanda, was also reminded that who is using a machine matters as much as what it can do. "Technology," he wrote, "can be used for good or ill."

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

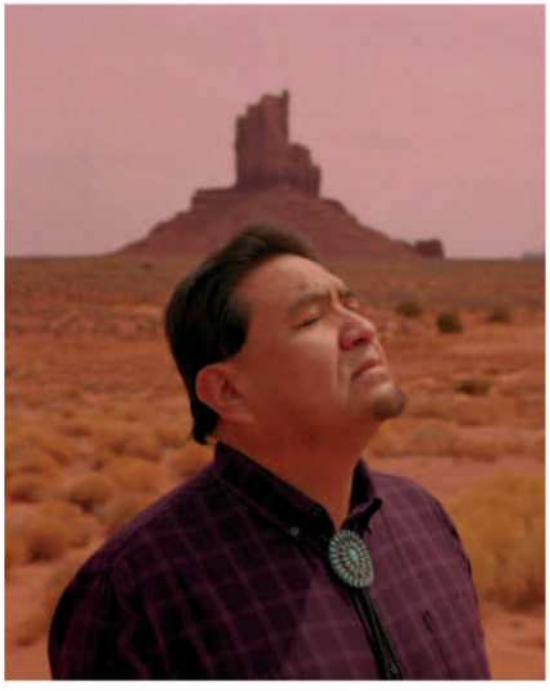
Download the LIFE VR app, click on the Drone AR Experience and scan the June 11 cover to view the Intel Shooting Star™ light show and the Intel Falcon™ 8+.

For more, including behind-the-scenes videos, check out **time.com/drones**

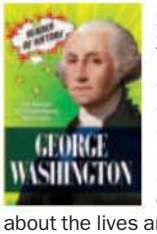
THE ROYAL WEDDING "Thorough and outstanding," Frank Matthews of Atlanta wrote of TIME's June 4 cover on the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. Hyder Ali Pirwany of Okehampton, England, wrote that he felt the monarchy is central to British identity—and that Graham Smith's op-ed on reasons to abolish it represented only a "tiny" slice of opinion. Geoffrey Wexler of Tokyo thought Tina Brown's take on a new Markle biography was too "cruel" to the bride, but George Repa of Salem, Va., objected for a different reason: "Think of how much better the world would be," he wrote, "if such excitement and interest were to be focused on important real events."

'Isn't "Modern Royals" an oxymoron?'

DICK ROCKWELL, Huntington Woods, Mich.



A MONUMENTAL SUIT On TIME.com, take an inside look at the five Native American tribes suing President Trump and his Administration over a recent plan to shrink Bears Ears National Monument in Utah, which they say could threaten key historic sites. Photographed above by Ryan Shorosky for TIME is James Adakai, a Navajo tribal leader and a Bears Ears Coalition commissioner. Read the full piece and see more of Shorosky's photos at **time.com/utah-monument**



SUMMER READING TIME's new *Heroes of History* book series offers middle-school students a chance to learn about the lives and legacies of extraordinary Americans with the help of modern comic book–style illustrations. The series launches with profiles of George Washington and Alexander Hamilton—perfect for keeping material fresh in budding history buffs' heads over the summer. *Available now on Amazon*

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For the Record

koi·no·nia

noun: intimate spiritual communion and participative sharing in a common religious commitment and spiritual community

The word that Karthik Nemmani, 14, of McKinney, Texas, spelled correctly to win the 2018 Scripps National Spelling Bee

$10,000

Amount of money that Vermont will pay people to move there; facing an aging population, the state hopes to attract tech-industry employees who can work remotely

‘Of course it has to be led by a man, because it is a very challenging position.’

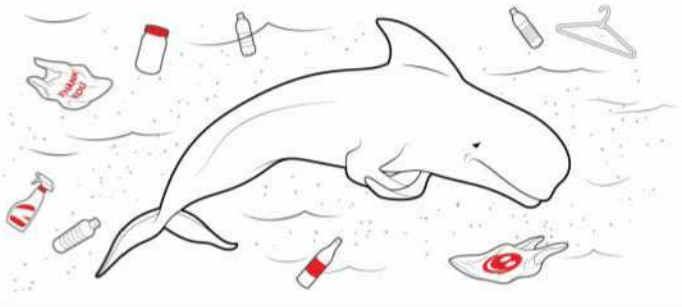
AKBAR AL BAKER,
head of Qatar Airways, asserting at a news conference that a woman could not do his job; after the remark drew immediate backlash, Al Baker said his company “firmly believes in gender equality in the workplace”

‘THIS BAD DREAM WILL NOT COME TRUE.’

AYATULLAH ALI KHAMENEI,
announcing preparations to edge toward uranium enrichment after U.S. withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal

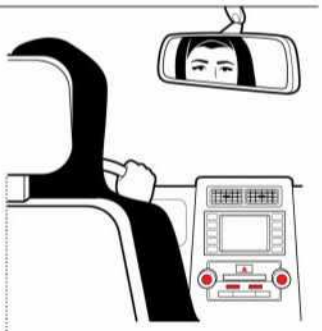
‘Can’t say I have been intimidated by anyone.’

SERENA WILLIAMS,
tennis player, asked to comment on Donald Trump’s once saying that Maria Sharapova’s “supermodel good looks” intimidate her; injury led Williams to withdraw from the French Open before playing Sharapova



17.6 lb.

Weight of the plastic bags and other packaging found in the stomach of a pilot whale after it was declared dead in Southern Thailand on June 1



10

Number of driver’s licenses that Saudi Arabia issued to women on June 4; the nation’s ban on women driving will be lifted on June 24, but some women who were permitted to drive elsewhere have already received their licenses

‘EVERY WEEK I STRIVE TO SHOW THE WORLD AS I SEE IT, UNFILTERED. SOMETIMES I SHOULD PROBABLY HAVE A FILTER.’

SAMANTHA BEE,
host of *Full Frontal*, apologizing for making a profane remark about Ivanka Trump in an on-air segment about immigration policy

Lord & Taylor
Flagship department store in Manhattan to close

Taylor Swift
The singer earned $54 million from just the first six shows of her latest tour

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BROWN BIRD DESIGN FOR TIME

SOURCES: ASSOCIATED PRESS; CNN; NEW YORK TIMES; ROLLING STONE

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The Brief

STYLE ICON Designer Kate Spade in her New York City showroom on Nov. 2, 2000

INSIDE

PUBLIC HEALTH

A disturbing trend on the rise

By Jamie Ducharme

THE APPARENT SUICIDE OF DESIGNER Kate Spade on June 5 did more than shock and sadden her fans across the country. It also reignited a conversation about the many faces—and causes—of suicide.

The circumstances around Spade's death remain unclear, but the tragedy underscores a disturbing reality in the U.S. Suicide is a growing public-health problem that doesn't discriminate on the basis of demographics.

"This is not a condition that is related to success or failure," says Dr. Anne Schuchat, principal deputy director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). "No one is immune."

Federal data shows that suicide rates have increased steadily across nearly every demographic over the past two decades, rising by 28% from 1999 to 2016. Almost 45,000 Americans died by suicide in '16, making it the 10th most common cause of death that year, according to the CDC. Increases have been so drastic that researchers have blamed suicide, along with substance abuse, for recent declines in overall U.S. life expectancy, according to an editorial published in a recent issue of the *BMJ*.

While suicide is most common among middle-aged and older adults, rates are on the rise in many age groups. Almost twice as many children were hospitalized for thinking about or attempting suicide in 2015 as in '08, according to a study published in May in the journal *Pediatrics*.

Young women appear to be disproportionately affected by the overall increase. The suicide rate among girls ages 10 to 19 rose by 70% from 2010 to '16—from 423 deaths to 687—and it hit a 40-year high among female teens in '15, according to CDC data. This increase has been substantial enough to narrow the well-established gender gap between the numbers of boys and girls who die by suicide.

BY THE NUMBERS

28%
Increase in suicide rate from 1999 to 2016

44,965
Number of Americans who died by suicide in 2016

70%
Increase in suicide rate among girls from 2010 to '16

LOOKING BEYOND THE FIGURES, the questions they raise—why is this trend happening, and why now?—are complicated.

Pressing public-health issues, such as the opioid crisis and rising rates of depression, anxiety and loneliness, are likely related to the increase in suicides, Schuchat says. And research suggests that high-profile suicides like Spade's can spur "suicide contagion," a known public-health issue. In the months following actor Robin Williams' highly publicized death by suicide in 2014, there was a 10% spike in suicides nationwide, according to a study published in February in the journal *PLOS One*. Upticks in suicide have also historically coincided with economic turmoil, Schuchat says, so the 2008 financial crisis and its aftermath may have influenced suicides in recent years.

At the individual level, however, there is almost never a single cause of suicide. "Multiple factors are often involved," Schuchat says. Addressing and treating mental-health issues are an important part of suicide prevention, but social connectedness and support from friends, family, communities and institutions may also help people who are struggling for any reason.

"We need to be more connected and there for each other," Schuchat says. "[Suicide is] widespread enough, and so, so difficult for those left behind, that we really want to do all we can."

If you or someone you know may be contemplating suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255

The personal style behind Kate Spade's designs

By Fern Mallis

There was a moment when everyone carried a Kate Spade bag. As a handbag designer starting in the 1990s, she had taken preppy shapes and images and twisted them into a contemporary must-have accessory that influenced a generation of women designers. Her energetic, colorful personality matched that aesthetic. She seemed to be the epitome of happy, carefree and upbeat, especially during the heyday of her career. It feels unbelievable that someone like Kate Spade, who was found dead on June 5 at age 55, would take her own life.

She had not been "out there" so much as of late, but she had started a new collection, called Frances Valentine. She was a creative person, and after she spent about a decade raising her daughter, I'm guessing she felt it was time to be back in the game—the game she invented, with unique products that represented her own very personal style. Still, to many, *Kate Spade* had become a brand's name and stopped being a person's name. When that happens in our industry, I think that is very sad. Kate Spade the person—like the bags, shoes and accessories she designed—deserves a special place in the legacy of fashion.

***Mallis** is a former executive director of the Council of Fashion Designers of America*

PREVIOUS PAGE: THOMAS IANNACCONE—PENSKE MEDIA/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK; THIS PAGE: MARK SAGLIOCCO—GETTY IMAGES

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A mother and her three daughters set out for the first day of the school year in Kabul, on March 24

THE BULLETIN

Millions of Afghan children are not in school, most of them girls

NEARLY HALF OF AFGHANISTAN'S children do not attend school because of war, widespread poverty and cultural factors, according to a new report released June 3 as part of the U.N.'s effort to identify where and how children are kept away from education. This marks the first time that attendance has declined since the situation improved after the 2001 fall of the Taliban, which had prohibited all girls from attending school.

MISSING OUT Starting in 2002, investments in education from '02 led to increases in literacy and school attendance rates. But 3.7 million children—or about 44% of Afghans 7 to 17 years old—are still not going to school, according to the report from the country's Education Ministry and UNICEF. Girls, who make up 60% of children missing school, are far less likely than boys to attend at every age; in the worst-affected provinces, more than 85% of girls are not in school.

MANY BARRIERS While Afghanistan's constitution calls for free school education, the reality looks quite different. Violence regularly disrupts schooling in many parts of the country, a situation that has escalated in recent years as the Taliban has reclaimed control over a number of areas. Afghanistan's financial crisis has also hindered efforts to expand infrastructure and train teachers. And for girls, there can be other obstacles. Child marriage remains the second most reported reason for girls leaving school, and some parents simply keep girls home out of fear or reversion to traditional roles.

WORK TO DO The report recommends specific actions Afghanistan can take (like recruiting more female teachers), but conflict continues, and threats from ISIS and other armed insurgents have closed dozens of schools in recent months. The situation is sure to put to the test the promise made in the report by acting Education Minister Mohammad Ibrahim Shinwari: that, since "education is one of the most powerful and proven vehicles for progress," his country is committed to change. —ABIGAIL ABRAMS

NEWS TICKER

Equal rights for same-sex spouses in E.U.

The European Court of Justice, the European Union's top court, ruled that **member states must recognize the residency rights of all married couples,** regardless of their gender or sexual orientation. The ruling responded to a case brought by a Romanian native after Bucharest barred his American husband from receiving residency.

McConnell shortens August recess

Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell said on June 5 that **Senators will not take their full break in August,** blaming the need to stay in D.C. on "historic obstruction" by Democrats and approaching deadlines for appropriations bills. The move will leave legislators in tight re-election races with less time to campaign.

Scores killed in Tunisia migrant wreck

At least 112 people died after **a boat carrying some 180 migrants sank off the coast of Tunisia** on June 2—one of the highest death tolls in a sea-crossing attempt this year. Sixty-eight people were rescued by the coast guard when the boat capsized near the Kerkennah Islands.

WAKIL KOHSAR—AFP/GETTY IMAGES

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NEWS TICKER

Primary relief for California Democrats

In closely watched primaries on June 5, Democrats **appeared to avoid the feared result of getting shut out of congressional races** in districts they are trying to flip from red to blue. Winners of other races included incumbent Senator Dianne Feinstein, who fended off challenger Kevin de León.

148 civilians rescued from Boko Haram

On June 3, **Nigeria's army rescued 148 civilians—including 58 women and 75 children—who'd been held hostage by Boko Haram militants** in the remote town of Bama, northeastern Nigeria. Officials said the women had been used as sex slaves; two pregnant teenage girls were among those who were rescued.

Parkland students launch summer tour

Survivors of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., said on June 4 they will spend the summer **registering voters across the country and advocating for gun reform.** They will travel in two groups by bus to 20 states and every district of Florida.

POSTCARD

A new train in Phnom Penh shows Cambodia is getting back on track

ROTH PUTHY DOESN'T HAVE A PLANE TICKET or a suitcase, but on a recent Sunday afternoon she boarded the airport shuttle in Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh, anyway—just for fun. "I've never seen anything like it before," says the 20-year-old student. Since opening in April, the train has attracted some unusual patrons. In a city sorely lacking in public space, the single-car air-conditioned train—free until August—offers a rare respite from 90°-plus temperatures.

Its launch, described as a source of "national pride" by the transport minister, also marks a milestone in the country's rapid development. Cambodia's national railway network, built in the 1930s, gradually fell into disuse following the rise of the Khmer Rouge, a genocidal agrarian regime that killed a fifth of Cambodia's population between 1975 and '79. Guerrilla ambushes were a regular menace; service fully stopped in 2002. In the interim decades, the derelict tracks carried only the occasional bamboo cart—an interim fix to help transport locals, goods and U.N. officials between villages.

The trains are running again, after a decade of work and thanks to millions of dollars, much of it courtesy of a grant from the Asian Development Bank and the Australian government. Freight service resumed in 2013 from the capital to the southern port of Sihanoukville; passenger services followed in 2016. A 241-mile line under construction will extend to the border with Thailand and on to Bangkok.

And then there's the airport train. It's intended to relieve the capital's traffic-choked roads and cut an hourlong journey of six miles down to just 15 minutes. It was closer to 45 minutes on a recent trip, as the sole coach stopped for trucks and livestock, rattling loudly through the suburbs—to the displeasure of residents living along the route.

That's not the only reason some Cambodians have worries about the railways' return. A woman was struck and killed by the airport train on May 18, and there's been a dramatic uptick in traffic accidents as drivers contend with the new tracks. Many are unsure how to negotiate the metal rails embedded in the pavement without getting a wheel stuck. "Everyone around here is angry, but there's nothing we can do about it," says Sem Channimol, who runs a roadside pharmacy that has become something of an emergency trauma ward, as victims of motorcycle accidents pile up in her doorway.

Safety will hopefully improve with the arrival of three carriages from Mexico that give drivers a better view of the road. The new carriages will also be equipped with wi-fi, restrooms and televisions—but it's unclear whether the selfie-snapping regulars will stick around after fares are imposed. But, for travelers, convenience makes all the difference. On a trip to pick up his nephew from the airport, Kim Sokun, 38, was racing relatives who opted to take the family car. He beat them comfortably. —ELI MEIXLER/PHNOM PENH

ANIMALS

Lions and tigers and bears, oh my!

Two lions, two tigers, a bear and a jaguar were reported missing from a German zoo on June 1. (They were found.) Here, other times wild animals have run amok. —*Abigail Abrams*

RAGING BULL
When a 550-lb. bull escaped a slaughterhouse in Brooklyn last October, it spent several hours running in a local park before police found it. Authorities sent it to a sanctuary in New Jersey.

FREE SWIM
A Humboldt penguin broke free from a Japanese aquarium in 2012 and spent 82 days frolicking in Tokyo Bay before keepers caught it. Despite officials' fears, the penguin had been eating well on its own.

MONKEY TAKEOVER
In 1935, more than 170 rhesus monkeys got loose from an animal park on Long Island, thanks to a forgetful employee. The monkeys stopped a train, and police had to ask local residents for help catching them.

GETTY IMAGES (3)

RATIFIED
The **Equal Rights Amendment,** by Illinois on May 30. The move puts the ERA one state short of the 38 an amendment requires to be added to the Constitution—but the original deadline passed in 1982.

SWORN IN
Spanish Socialist **Pedro Sánchez** as the country's new Prime Minister on June 2, after leading parliament to oust his predecessor, Mariano Rajoy, over a scandal involving his Popular Party.

CANCELED
The **Philadelphia Eagles' June 5 White House visit,** by President Donald Trump, who has been harshly critical of NFL players' protesting during the national anthem. Most of the team had already said they would boycott the event.

RULED
President Trump must sit for a deposition in a defamation case brought by Summer Zervos, a judge said on June 5. The President's lawyers have appealed.

PUBLISHED
A study finding that **many women with early-stage breast cancer do not need chemotherapy,** and could instead use an estrogen-blocking drug, in the *New England Journal of Medicine* on June 3.

RELEASED
A new batch of **emojis,** with the June 5 launch of Unicode 11.0. The set of 157 images, announced in February, includes bagels, DNA and toilet paper.

Brennan at Commander's Palace—the New Orleans restaurant she and her family took charge of more than 40 years ago—on Dec. 14, 2016

BRENNAN: EDMUND D. FOUNTAIN—THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX; MISS AMERICA: GEORGE ENELL—HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

DIED

Ella Brennan
Commander of the Palace

By Walter Isaacson

IN HER MEMOIR OF THE CULINARY ARTS IN NEW ORLEANS, Ella Brennan proclaimed, "I don't want a restaurant where a jazz band can't come marching through." At Commander's Palace, her vibrant stage for creole cuisine, such bands not only could but did often march through, with Miss Ella second-lining with them.

Dining with her was like watching a choreographer control a stage with glances, hand signals and glares, as she noticed a half-empty water glass four tables away or a pecan-crusted pompano improperly plated. With her passion and compassion, she cared deeply about every detail of her diners' experience, and she was a pioneer among restaurateurs who stressed local ingredients and cuisines. During her 72 years (yes!) in the business, before her death on May 31 at age 92 in her elegant home adjoining her restaurant, she trained many great chefs, including Paul Prudhomme and Emeril Lagasse, but just as important to her were the cadres of waiters and captains she commanded as her front line in turning meals into celebrations.

Isaacson is a professor of history at Tulane University and a former managing editor of TIME

ENDED

The swimsuit round
Contest holdover

By Kira Kazantsev

MISS AMERICA NEEDS GRIT and hustle, but she doesn't need to be able to model a swimsuit on prime-time television. It's not surprising that the organization decided on June 5 to scrap the swimsuit contest. In order for Miss America to stay relevant and to adhere to the cultural revolutions of the #MeToo movement, it does need to make some changes. These changes will be tough—the pageant has been around for almost 100 years and has a deeply ingrained place in people's hearts—but things are moving in the right direction.

Since winning Miss America in 2015, my life has been a whirlwind. I've traveled the world, from Afghanistan to South Korea, visiting children's hospitals and our military. It has been really empowering. To be honest, swimsuit contributed to that. I liked strutting across the stage in that moment—but it had no correlation to the job I went on to do. In fact, it made people not take me seriously. Hopefully they can now take a second look. I'm excited to see what new doors this will open to possible representatives of the image of Miss America.

Kazantsev was Miss America 2015

Miss America Rosemary LaPlanche poses in swimsuit and crown in 1941

WASHINGTON MEMO

Republicans are looking for a new House leader, and the race won't be pretty

By Philip Elliott

TOP REPUBLICANS ON CAPITOL HILL ARE INCREASINGLY skittish that heir apparent Kevin McCarthy lacks the support to succeed House Speaker Paul Ryan, paving the way for an ugly leadership fight.

McCarthy is working behind the scenes to line up backers. But his ascension is unlikely to be smooth, according to interviews with 16 senior Republicans, who believe the divisions in the party may create an opening for a member of the right-wing Freedom Caucus or a compromise candidate such as Representative Kevin Brady of Texas, chairman of the powerful Ways and Means Committee, or Representative Mark Walker of North Carolina.

'There is no Republican Party. There is a Trump party. The Republican Party is kinda taking a nap somewhere.'

JOHN BOEHNER, former House Speaker

Ryan has backed McCarthy, the House majority leader, as his successor. The White House also seems to support him. McCarthy is close to President Trump, whose daughter Ivanka will join the six-term California Congressman at events in the state on June 18. McCarthy is making the rounds to assure deep-pocketed patrons that he has the fundraising ability to bankroll the party machine. He also has plenty of goodwill among rank-and-file Republicans and carefully tends to younger members, helping ensure that every GOP newcomer succeeds in passing a piece of legislation.

YET AS THE RACE TAKES SHAPE, people in McCarthy's corner have nagging doubts about his candidacy. McCarthy has amassed a conservative voting record, but he seldom criticizes Trump, and some Republicans aren't sure that McCarthy is willing to check a President who has trampled traditional GOP values. "There is no Republican Party. There's a Trump party. The Republican Party is kinda taking a nap somewhere," former House Speaker John Boehner said on May 31. A McCarthy speakership, some Republicans fear, could further cement the President's takeover of the GOP.

McCarthy has tried for the job before. In 2015 he made a bid to replace Boehner, but he struggled to persuade enough colleagues to support him and withdrew from the race on the same day as the vote. Speaking of concerns about McCarthy, one top House Republican adviser asks, "What has changed since 2015?"

Just hours before Ryan announced his resignation in April, McCarthy asked for pledges of support from Representative Steve Scalise, the No. 3 Republican in the House, and his deputy, Representative Patrick McHenry. In exchange, the suggestion went, he would help them keep their place in the pecking order. Scalise later endorsed McCarthy, fearing that his silence could fuel drama. But many lawmakers think he could still make a play for the top job.

Scalise, who survived the GOP baseball practice shooting in 2017, is respected in the conference. He has served as the recruitment chief for the GOP's House elections arm and helmed the powerful Republican Study Committee (RSC), winning allies by pushing a conservative policy agenda. But while Scalise has made a tremendous recovery from the shooting, the Speaker's gig requires near constant travel, and some Republicans fear he won't be physically up to it. (Scalise's allies note that he raised a record amount of money in the first three months of 2018 for someone in his position during an election year.)

Another variable in the race is the hard-line Freedom Caucus, a group of 30 to 50 members that has often derailed the party's plans. Representative Mark Meadows of North Carolina, the group's chairman, has crowed that it is impossible to get to 218 votes without his members. Whoever rises to lead the caucus will need Meadows' permission, if not his support, which explains McCarthy's courtship and collaboration. Others on the right, including Fox News host Sean Hannity, have pushed Representative Jim Jordan of Ohio, who says he's open to running.

Meanwhile, Republicans on Capitol Hill are weighing other possibilities. Brady helped guide the GOP's tax cuts into law and has shown a willingness to work across the party caucus. Like his roommate, Scalise, Brady has endorsed McCarthy. As current chair of the RSC, Walker heads a group that counts about two-thirds of the conference as members. If the GOP is looking for a transitional figure, it could land on Representative Rob Bishop, a Utah lawmaker and former NRA lobbyist who says that if he wins in November, it will be his last term.

It will be tough for anyone to round up the votes needed to take over the fractious House. The early tensions in its leadership skirmish speak to just how little unity exists inside the party. ☐

IN THE MIX

Kevin McCarthy
The vulnerable front runner

Steve Scalise
Backed McCarthy but eyeing the gavel

Mark Meadows
Potential kingmaker—or king

Jim Jordan
Backed by Fox News' Sean Hannity

Kevin Brady
Architect of the GOP tax cuts

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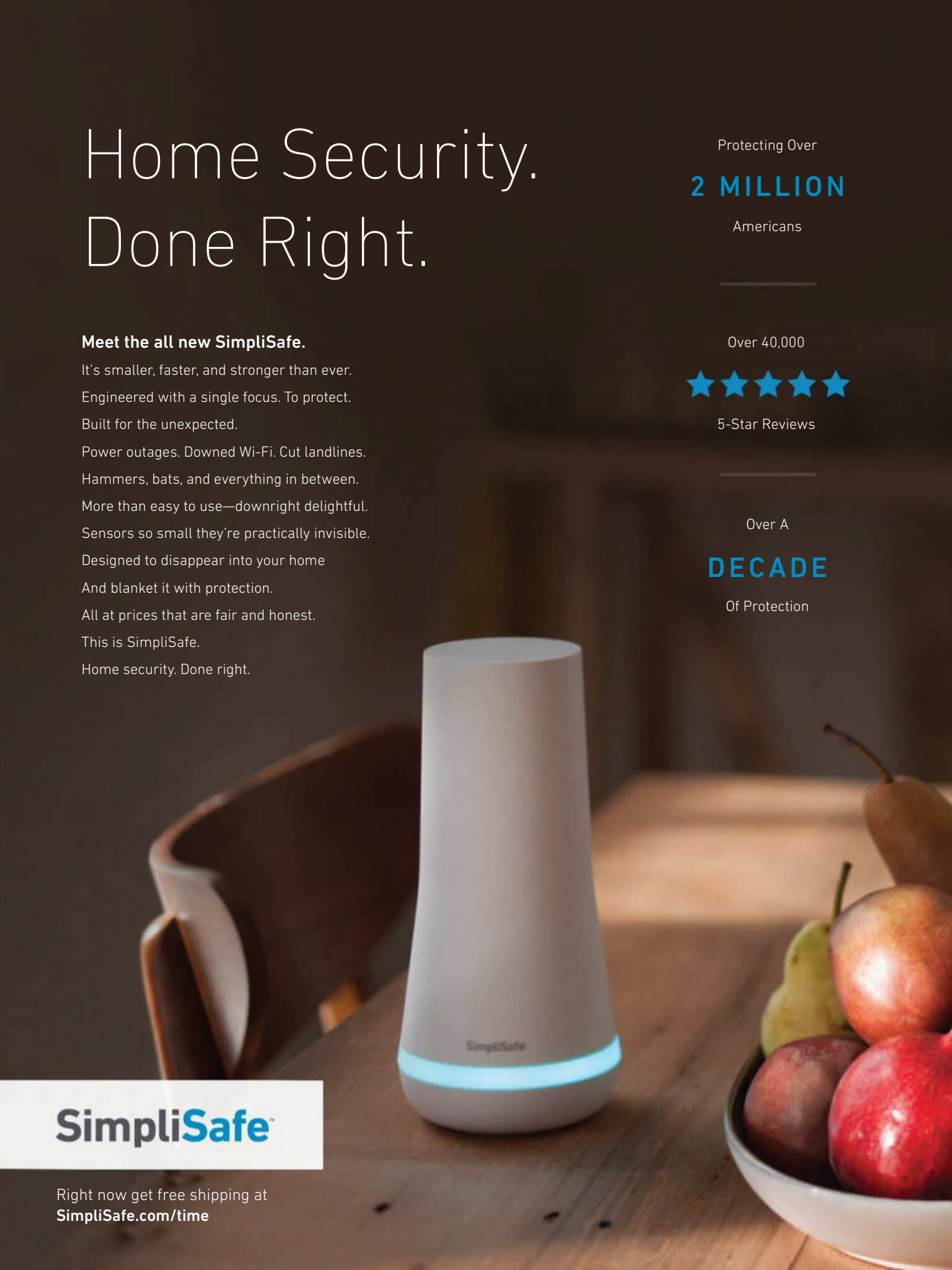

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Actor **Jim Parsons** finds stardom in L.A. and community on Broadway

By Daniel D'Addario

JIM PARSONS CAN'T CATCH A BREAK. HE SPENDS much of the year in Los Angeles, where he will soon start the 12th season of *The Big Bang Theory,* but considers New York City home. Right now he's in Gramercy Park, a small urban oasis near his apartment, and though there's not a cloud in the sky, the relentless buzzing of chain saws and edge mowers in the park is a persistent, nagging distraction. "This is very L.A. right now, the yard work going on," he says. "Irony."

More ironic still is that the project for which Parsons is spending the summer in New York—and the reason he's speaking to me—has been thrown into frantic reorganization. At the curtain call for the Saturday-matinee performance of the newly revived gay classic *The Boys in the Band,* Parsons stumbled and broke his foot; that night's performance was canceled, and on Sunday his understudy stepped in to fill the role. He is scheduled to have an MRI after our meeting on this Monday morning, and plans to re-enter the show on Tuesday night, wearing an orthopedic boot and a Broadway trouper's attitude of confidence. "I'm gonna find my way around this one way or the other," Parsons says. "It's just another interesting hurdle, and hopefully the audience feels this way too—that it's part of the joy of live theater that you can't get anywhere else."

For Parsons, a four-time Emmy winner for *Big Bang* who's also a known quantity on the New York stage, *Boys* represents something more than just a step forward in what has been a stellar career, one that has made him the highest-paid actor on TV and a figure synonymous with lovably askew geekiness. (His *Big Bang* character Sheldon Cooper finally got married in the Season 11 finale, but not before puzzling out some string theory with his beloved.) It's a first. "The camaraderie: I don't just use the word, like, 'We're getting along great,'" he says. "I really do mean there is a uniqueness to nine out gay actors, even in this day and age, all being in one production together, and being the only people in the production."

The Boys in the Band, first produced 50 years ago, in April 1968, has never before been shown on Broadway; Parsons had no real familiarity with it before he was approached by TV megaproducer Ryan Murphy. The cast features, among others, household-name actors like Matt Bomer *(White Collar)*, Andrew Rannells *(Girls)* and Zachary Quinto (the *Star Trek* films), but Parsons plays the lead, never leaving the stage for its 110 minutes—with no intermission. It's an emotionally intense play that sees the men, gathered together to revel privately in the tense historical moment before the 1969 Stonewall riots, begin to tear one another apart through a cruel game that Parsons' character initiates (each man must call a past love, requited or not), fueled by internalized homophobia.

The attitude behind the scenes differs, obviously, from what's portrayed onstage. But the need to gather, Parsons says, is as real for queer people today as it was then. While he says he has never felt that his sexuality was at issue in any workplace, he considers *Boys* to have a uniquely safe environment: "There is a residual something there when you're presented with a situation that's completely gay. Some other little guard gets let down. And the parlance between all of us changes a little bit."

PARSONS CAME OUT publicly in 2012, and married Todd Spiewak, a graphic designer and art director, last year. (When I met Parsons as scheduled outside his apartment building, Spiewak helped him down the steep stairs and ushered him into the park.) "I had an evolution on my feelings on gay marriage," Parsons says, "in that I didn't logically see the importance of it. One of the things that changed my feelings on that was when I thought about, 'Oh my God, part of the reason you feel this way is because it was never a possibility and so you never dreamed about it.'" In getting married as one of the most visible TV stars currently working, Parsons says, "it suddenly felt exciting to be a part of that and helping to change the world in your own personal, heartfelt way just by doing what you want to do."

Listening to a star famous for parsing situations on CBS's physicist-geek sitcom discuss the pure logic of an evolution leading to his own marriage seems natural. But every story needs an origin, and the Sheldon character has a spin-off focusing on his childhood. (Iain Armitage plays the lead on *Young Sheldon,* which is heading into its second season.) For the young Parsons, life was hardly a sitcom: "I found saying 'Hi' very painful," he says of his life as a kindergartner in Texas. "I felt very exposed and scared of getting made fun of for my hello. Maybe nothing specifically triggered that. But that was where I felt it, and I still feel that."

To this day, Parsons is ill-at-ease at industry events. "I tend to only be able to meet people in a way that I feel is a full way just by working with them," he says. "If I'm in a work environment with them, then I don't have to explain my 'worth,' quote unquote." Parsons is approached a great deal—at least one person in the park, as we sit talking, seems

PARSONS QUICK FACTS

Prolific performer
Parsons went to school at the University of Houston, where he appeared in 17 plays over the course of three years.

Money talks
According to *Forbes,* Parsons was the highest-paid actor on TV last year, pulling in a salary of $27.5 million.

Renaissance man
Parsons also stars in this summer's film *A Kid Like Jake,* about parents raising a gender-non-conforming child.

TAYLOR JEWELL—INVISION/AP/SHUTTERSTOCK

to recognize him even under his star shmatte of big sunglasses, black porkpie hat and oversize blue cable-knit sweater. Among those who see him are those who see in Sheldon characteristics akin to the Asperger's community, even as the series has scrupulously avoided giving Sheldon a specific diagnosis. "That has been an absolute constant—what is in my pockets!" Parsons says. (He pulls out a Chapstick, and the key that will get us out of the locked gates of Gramercy Park.) "It shows this character that doesn't always see some of the obvious human signals from other people, it shows him getting along and connecting. It shows him—hell, he just got married!"

Parsons sees a continuity between Sheldon, a character with an ability to make friends and build a life despite looking to any observer like a congenital outsider, and his own life now as an openly gay man: "It goes to the thing about seeing gay people getting married. It creates a fantasy in your head! And once you have that and you have it as a possibility, there's something to aim at." And the show has made it possible for Parsons to pursue his bliss. He didn't have to audition for his Broadway debut, in a 2011 production of seminal gay drama *The Normal Heart*. And he can make real choices about his career: "I'm at a level now where I have the ability to do what I want to," he says.

'I'm at a level now where I have the ability to do what I want to.'

JIM PARSONS, on tackling theater in addition to TV

What Parsons has chosen now is to push off Sheldon for a while with a part driven by self-loathing and confusion that harks back to a painful historical moment that's not as distant as we might like. "History forgotten is history doomed to repeat," Parsons says, citing the prevalent thought, still, that homosexuality is "a sickness that needs to be dealt with." But there's uplift in *The Boys in the Band*—and not merely what will result from an actor's pushing through the pain, delivering to the audience a demonstration of grit under pressure. Parsons quotes the show's director, Joe Mantello, during a rehearsal: "There's nine gay men up here, and they're all so goddamn different!" That one of them can be an out gay star who's as different as he wants to be feels a bit like progress. ◻

LightBox

Under fire

An ash-covered clothesline hangs outside a home in San Miguel Los Lotes, a village southwest of Guatemala City, on June 5, after the eruption of the Volcán de Fuego. The eruption two days earlier has proved far deadlier than the recent volcanic activity in Hawaii: although no deaths have been reported from Kilauea, the Guatemala event has killed at least 75 people and left some 200 others missing. The death toll is expected to climb as search-and-rescue teams comb the area, after a stream of hot ash and mud, known as a pyroclastic flow, buried villages on the flanks of the volcano.

Photograph by Daniele Volpe

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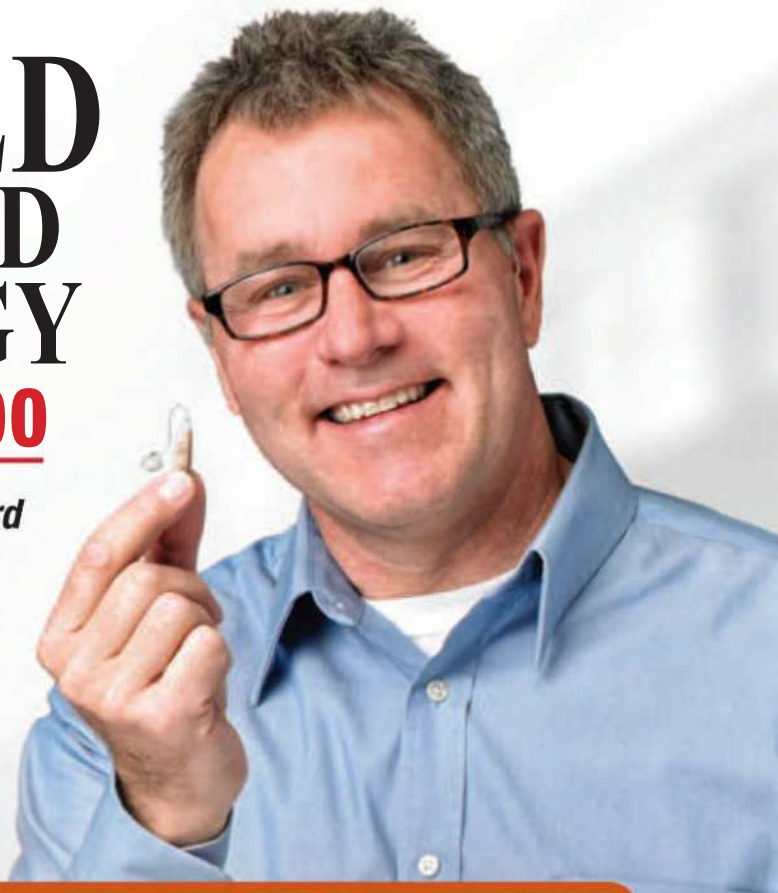

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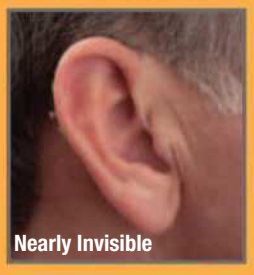

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The View

LAW

THE SUPREME COURT IS NO CAKEWALK

By Katy Steinmetz

Since same-sex marriage became the law of the land, the battle over LGBT rights has shifted from the altar to the cash register. As wedding vendors have turned away same-sex couples for moral reasons, lawsuits have pitted the right to be served against the right to refuse. The much watched case of Colorado baker Jack Phillips

INSIDE

ILLUSTRATION BY JON STICH FOR TIME

presented a chance for the Supreme Court to draw lines in a tangled debate about free speech, religious exercise and equal treatment in the public square. But while the ruling came down on June 4, many potent legal questions remain unresolved.

The narrow decision arrived six years after a clash at Masterpiece Cakeshop in Lakewood, Colo., when Charlie Craig and David Mullins asked Phillips to make them a custom wedding cake and he declined, citing his religious opposition to same-sex marriages. When the couple filed a complaint under a state law that prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation, Colorado agencies ruled in their favor. In a 7-2 decision, the Supreme Court reversed course and sided with the baker—but not because the state agencies necessarily came to the wrong conclusion. The key reason was that officials showed "elements of a clear and impermissible hostility" toward Phillips' religious beliefs while considering the case, Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote in the court's majority opinion. One piece of evidence the Justices pointed to was a commissioner who "disparaged Phillips' faith as despicable."

The legal team representing the couple emphasized that while they may have lost, the other side did not get the broad win some conservatives hoped for: a blanket assurance that religious freedom trumps antidiscrimination measures. On a conference call, American Civil Liberties Union attorney James Esseks highlighted language that acknowledged the civil rights of gay Americans. "Our society has come to the recognition that gay persons and gay couples cannot be treated as social outcasts or as inferior in dignity and worth," Kennedy wrote, adding that business owners cannot be allowed to "in effect" put up signs saying that "no goods or services will be sold if they will be used for gay marriages."

The ruling was still a win for those who believe religious freedom is under attack. Some Christians feel they're unfairly victimized for holding the increasingly unpopular opinion that same-sex marriage is wrong, and the Supreme Court decision is fuel for their fires. "They really quashed the playing of favorites," says Nicolle Martin, Phillips' lead counsel in Colorado. "If somebody has a sincere conviction, you can't dismiss it." The clearest message of the decision may be that government officials had best be careful as they continue to referee these fights.

Phillips, at his bakery, smiling after the decision

AMONG THE QUESTIONS that remain unanswered: Does forcing a baker to make a cake for a same-sex wedding violate the baker's rights to free speech? Is making a cake a form of speech? If another gay couple came into Masterpiece Cakeshop today and asked for a wedding cake, would Phillips be within his rights to refuse them? Experts say it remains unclear. "Whatever the outcome of some future controversy involving facts similar to these," Kennedy wrote, the Colorado ruling must be set aside because it was not the result of "neutral and respectful consideration."

The ruling was still a win for those who believe religious freedom is under attack

There will certainly be future controversy: among the cases the Supreme Court may soon hear is one involving a florist who refused to provide flowers for a same-sex wedding in Washington State. (The state ruled for the couple.) Some LGBT-rights advocates believe that the ruling itself will generate more litigation—that despite the caveats, the fact that the baker won will embolden more religious business owners to turn away LGBT people, who may in turn have cause to sue. "This Supreme Court opinion invites a lot more discrimination to test the contours of these legal principles," says Jennifer Pizer, law and policy director for the LGBT civil rights organization Lambda Legal.

After the ruling, Mullins and Craig vowed that "our fight against discrimination and unfair treatment will continue." As for Phillips, he was back at his shop, serving supportive customers. When asked, Martin said the baker was thrilled about the ruling and "very thankful" to higher powers. ◻

READING LIST

Highlights from stories on **time.com/ideas**

How a role changed an actor's view of his race

Ari'el Stachel, a Tony Award nominee for his role in the musical *The Band's Visit,* recounts how **growing up after 9/11 and as he started his career, he tried to hide his Middle Eastern heritage**—until getting cast changed his thinking.

The NFL gets tackled by Trump

The President uninvited Super Bowl champions the Philadelphia Eagles from the White House, ostensibly over the NFL's national-anthem protests—which the league recently said it will ban. TIME's Sean Gregory writes that **team owners now have a "self-inflicted Trump problem."** By trying to play the President's public relations game, they no longer have the last word on the league's rules.

A different way Cynthia Nixon is catching on

Author of the new book *Sex and the City and Us,* Jennifer Keishin Armstrong discusses **why so many people identify as a "Miranda" now,** even young women—who haven't done so in the past.

QUICK TALK

Korea expert Victor Cha on the big summit

By Joseph Hincks/Seoul

HAD VICTOR CHA BEEN NOMINATED AS U.S. ambassador to South Korea, he might have spent his spring preparing for the summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un scheduled for June 12. But the former Bush Administration official was dropped as a candidate in January after voicing opposition to pre-emptive military action on the regime. He tells TIME about his expectations for the summit.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in credited Trump's "maximum pressure" for bringing Kim to the negotiating table. Do you think this policy of heavy sanctions was a key driver? I do. In 2017 they were able to get more economic pressure on the regime than it's ever felt before. I was always of the view that that policy would work, because North Korea doesn't tend to lash out militarily when they feel economic pressure. They want to come to the negotiating table and see how they can get that pressure taken off.

Is the White House correct to say the Obama Administration's policy of "strategic patience" with North Korea failed? We had a period of eight years where the North Korea missile and nuclear problem got exponentially worse. One could argue that it was the fault of the policy. One could also argue that the North Koreans had a very clear plan and that there was nothing the Obama Administration could have done to take them off that course—I think there's credibility to that second argument. This is just not an issue, historically, to bet on if you are looking for a win.

There's a theory Kim is an enlightened reformer looking for a way to do things differently. Do you buy that? People are entitled to that theory, but there's a very clear, systematic approach he has been taking, which is to go full bore over the past two years on the nuclear-weapons program. Kim declared it complete in December, and they feel like they're now secure with this capability.

You've said before that Kim won't give up his nukes, so what would a win look like for the U.S.? The best outcome would be not just freezing but disabling and dismantling all of their existing programs on a compressed time frame. But what we, as experts, think is best could be very different from what President Trump thinks is best. Trump never has a bad meeting, so I think the atmospherics and the optics will be O.K. But I don't think there is going to be any comprehensive deal.

What would be a win for South Korea and Moon? The South Koreans just don't want to go back to 2017. They don't want to be trapped in a military conflict between the U.S. and North Korea. And I think they deeply value the resumption of bilateral channels of communication that were closed for 10 years under the [previous] conservative government.

What do people in the U.S. consistently misunderstand about diplomacy with North Korea? This is a nuclear security threat to the U.S. that we've had to deal with for 30 years, and one way or another, we're reaching the climax of this issue. It's deadly serious. And while pictures of leaders embracing are great and make people feel good, people have to ask themselves, Are these meetings really making us safer as a country, or are they not? The real question for the President is, Are we going to pretend they got rid of [the nuclear threat], or are we going to make certain that whatever agreement is reached, this will not be a threat to the American people or to U.S. allies? □

PHILLIPS: JOE AMON—THE DENVER POST/GETTY IMAGES; CHA: COURTESY CSIS; SYRIA: MOHAMMED KARKAS—ANADOLU AGENCY/GETTY IMAGES

Hassan Dallal, 9, is treated after a chemical attack

WORLD

The other weapons Trump should discuss with Kim

While North Korea's nuclear program will rightfully dominate the June summit, it is also a rare opportunity for the U.S. to address *all* of North Korea's means of mass destruction—including its longtime pipeline of chemical-weapons expertise, technology and equipment to Syria.

Dictator Bashar Assad has used chemical weapons dozens of times in the Syrian war, in which no horror has been spared. Just two months ago, barrel bombs filled with chlorine gas and a nerve agent, likely sarin, rained down on the Damascus suburb of Douma, killing at least 70 people and sparking the usual outcry before the world moved on.

Now Trump has a chance to put real pressure on Syria, through diplomacy with Pyongyang. It would not be easy; it would not stop the war; it would not hold Assad accountable for his crimes. But it might slow or stop the spread of noxious weapons beyond North Korea's borders. —*Theo Emery, author of* Hellfire Boys

THE RISK REPORT

The limits of being the world's bully

By Ian Bremmer

ON MAY 31, THE SAME DAY THE TRUMP Administration announced steel and aluminum tariffs against the European Union, French President Emmanuel Macron placed a call to President Trump. It didn't go well. Hoping perhaps to draw on goodwill fostered by the congenial time they spent together in Washington in April—just before Trump disappointed Macron by withdrawing the U.S. from the Iran nuclear deal—the French President decided to try some straight talk with Trump on trade. A source explained the outcome to CNN: "Macron thought he would be able to speak his mind, based on the relationship. But Trump can't handle being criticized like that."

That's why the gathering of leaders of the G-7 countries—the U.S., the U.K., France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Canada—in La Malbaie, Quebec, on June 8 and 9 is unusually interesting. The host nation's Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, previewed the G-7 meeting as "extraordinarily valuable, because it's an opportunity for like-minded nations to come together and talk about shared challenges." Like-minded? Shared challenges? Not with a U.S. President who sees allies as constraints and prefers to get things done by twisting arms and making threats.

DONALD TRUMP MADE HIS MARK in the cutthroat world of New York real estate the way a tough-minded poker player bullies those at the table with less money to spend. He played as if he had bottomless pockets. The guy who is not afraid to lose a few hands likes to push the stakes, to go all in and to dare those across the table to accept more risk by staying in the game. With that strategy, he won many hands without always holding the best cards or sitting on a fat wallet.

As President, Trump brought this strategy to the table with South Korea and Brazil. When he made trade threats, the governments of those countries knew they could bring the U.S. before the World Trade Organization and (probably) win. But that would take years, and their economies would suffer much damage in the meantime. Instead, they cut deals. And so they figured: Give the bully some of what he wants and maybe he'll turn his attention toward someone else. (The renegotiation of NAFTA may eventually end in the same fashion.)

But there are limits to this strategy. What happens when someone calls Trump's bluff? If Kim Jong Un steps into the white-hot spotlight that follows Trump and offers him something tomorrow but nothing today, what does Trump do about it? Launch a strike that risks a war? Call him names? Threaten tariffs on China so it puts more pressure on North Korea?

Furthermore, what happens when Trump discovers he doesn't have the big advantage he thinks he has? Trump believes (correctly) that if it comes to a trade war, the U.S. economy can withstand more pain than the Chinese economy. But Chinese President Xi Jinping believes (correctly) that Trump is politically much more vulnerable; Xi doesn't need to win swing states to remain in charge. Sanctions targeted at Trump voters can do more damage more quickly than Trump might expect.

U.S. allies at the 2017 G-7 summit in Sicily; this year's meeting could be more awkward

Finally, when you discover you've picked a tougher fight than you expected, it's best to have friends in the room. Like, say, the G-7 allies. But as those meeting with Trump in Quebec during this summit already know, Trump's "America first" approach is backed by the threat of U.S. power, not the opportunities created by shared values and common interests. Because of this, it's worth noting the meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which will bring Russia, India, Iran and others to China on June 9 and 10. The Europeans, Japanese and Canadians all know that trade with China will be a big part of their future. China may even soon overtake the U.S. as the E.U.'s largest trade partner.

International relations are not a poker game. In a world of "every nation for itself"—a G-zero world—it's harder than ever to accomplish anything ambitious without allies. Trump's indiscriminate use of "I dare you to fight" tactics with friends and foes alike is eroding not only traditional alliances but also the institutions those alliances have sustained over many decades. Over the long term, that's bad for the U.S. and bad for the world. □

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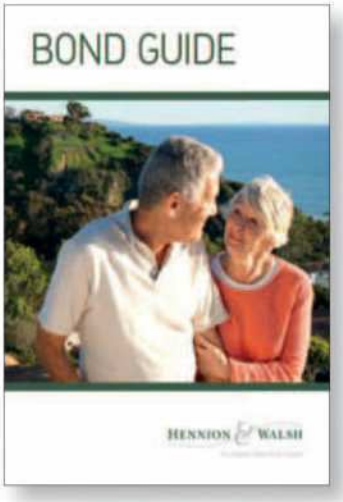

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Donald Trump's campaign to discredit the Russia investigation may be working.

It may also be damaging American democracy.

THE WAR ON MUELLER

By MOLLY BALL and TESSA BERENSON

PHOTOGRAPH BY EVAN VUCCI

Trump, at the White House on June 5, a day after tweeting he has "the absolute right" to pardon himself

IN A WARREN OF LOW-CEILINGED ROOMS ON THE GROUND FLOOR OF THE WEST WING, DOWN THE STAIRS FROM THE OVAL OFFICE AND NEXT TO THE SITUATION ROOM, DONALD TRUMP'S LAWYERS ARE WAGING WAR.

They're locked in battle with Robert Mueller, the special counsel investigating Russia's interference in the 2016 election, who has indicted 19 people over the past 13 months, five of whom have pleaded guilty. Now he is homing in on the investigation's most powerful subject: the President, whom Mueller wants to testify under oath about what he knows.

It's a dangerous moment for Trump. If he agrees to talk, the notoriously undisciplined President risks making a false statement, which could be a crime like the one that led to Bill Clinton's impeachment. But if he refuses, Mueller could issue a subpoena, instigating a long, high-profile court battle over whether Trump could be forced to testify. The two legal teams—Mueller's squad of top prosecutors and Trump's rotating cast of advocates—are haggling over what an interrogation would look like: how long it would be, what topics would be on the table and whether the session would be recorded. Before the President talks to investigators, Trump's team wants to see the authorization letter that established Mueller's authority, according to Trump's lawyer Rudy Giuliani. They are also demanding the special counsel's report to be issued within 60 days of any interview.

As that conflict grinds on largely out of sight, Trump is leading a brazen political campaign to discredit Mueller. In Trump's telling, the special counsel's investigation was illegitimate from the start, the product of partisan bureaucrats hell-bent on nullifying his election and willing to stoop to nefarious tactics to frame the President's team and cover up the crimes of Barack Obama and the Clintons. The President paints the probe as an unconstitutional distraction that has dragged on and turned up nothing, while casting a pall over his achievements.

Trump's allies have taken up his battle cry. Giuliani, Trump's primary legal spokesperson, has declared that a President cannot be indicted and has the power to pardon himself for any crime. Conservative commentators have picked up on that tack, while GOP members of Congress who once hailed Mueller's integrity have seconded the provocations or gone conspicuously silent. The President "is trying to delegitimize the entire prosecution," says Peter Zeidenberg, a former deputy special counsel under George W. Bush.

It seems to be working. In a May CBS News poll, 53% of Americans said they believed Mueller's investigation was politically motivated, up 5 points in five months. An *Economist*/YouGov poll the same month found that 75% of Republicans agreed with Trump's claim that the probe is a "witch hunt" (though only 37% of the overall public agreed). With Trump's 87% support among Republicans, the only President since the 1940s who has been as loved by his own party after 500 days in office is Bush, post-9/11.

This playbook has been run before by Clinton, whose impeachment lawyer, Emmet Flood, recently joined Trump's team. Clinton so succeeded in discrediting the probe run by then–independent counsel Kenneth Starr that his public support actually increased, and he survived impeachment. "This case is not going to be tried before a jury," Giuliani tells TIME. "It's not a criminal case. It's an investigation that's going to result in a report, and the issue will be what happens to that report, and public opinion is going to have a lot to do with that."

But Trump's strategy goes even further than Clinton dared: it involves asserting increasingly broad claims of presidential impunity. In a 20-page memo sent to Mueller in January and published on June 2 by the New York *Times,* Trump's lawyers articulated an almost boundless view of Executive authority, arguing

HOW TRUMP HAS ATTACKED MUELLER

Appointed by Trump's Deputy Attorney General to investigate Russian meddling in the 2016 election, former FBI chief Robert Mueller is a lifelong Republican who has been lauded by both parties for his career of public service. Mueller has indicted 19 people, including five guilty pleas, and three companies, with a trial slated in July for former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort. In response, the President has leveled a series of attacks on the special counsel, not all of which are accurate.

MAY 8, 2017

'The Russia-Trump collusion story is a total hoax, when will this taxpayer funded charade end?'

JUNE 15, 2017

'They made up a phony collusion with the Russians story, found zero proof, so now they go for obstruction of justice on the phony story.'

JUNE 18, 2017

'The MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN agenda is doing very well despite the distraction of the Witch Hunt.'

that he cannot be compelled to testify and cannot have obstructed justice because he has control over all federal investigations. Trump himself claimed in a June 4 tweet he had an "absolute right" to pardon himself, an idea in conflict with the centuries-old principle of British and American law that no one can be a judge in his own case.

Trump's critics hear in these ever-expanding claims of presidential authority not just an echo of Richard Nixon, but the kind of unchecked power Americans have bridled against from the moment they broke with the British monarchy in the 18th century. Spurred by his desire to discredit the Mueller investigation, Trump is putting America's founding principles on trial, from its independent justice system to the separation of powers to the rule of law. It's too early to say how the war on Mueller will end. But just as the post-Watergate period redefined presidential power in America, Trump's vision of the office may well determine the contours of the American government he leaves behind.

WHEN MUELLER was appointed special counsel in May 2017 by Trump's handpicked Deputy Attorney General, Republicans couldn't stop praising him. Speaker of the House Paul Ryan said Mueller would help "ensure thorough and independent investigations are allowed to follow the facts wherever they may lead." Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich called the former FBI director a "superb choice" and tweeted that "his reputation is impeccable for honesty and integrity." Even Trump, though furious behind the scenes, issued a measured statement; a month later he called Mueller "an honorable man."

Trump now accuses the straitlaced former Marine of political bias and corruption, blasting the investigation as "an attack on our country." Gingrich calls Mueller an agent of the "deep state," his investigation an "open-ended hunt for guilt." Kevin McCarthy, Ryan's most likely successor, says "it's time to wind this down." Republican chairman of the House Judiciary Committee Bob Goodlatte decried "the magnitude of this insider bias on Mr. Mueller's team."

Democrats believe this barrage is a coordinated smear campaign run out of the White House. Representative Adam Schiff, the top Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, tells TIME the committee's Republicans have engaged in "clear and exposed coordination" with the White House "to undermine the investigation." Trump's lawyer Jay Sekulow admits there is method to the madness. "We're fully cognizant of the fact that this inquiry has a public component to it," he tells TIME.

But Trump's allies say the war against Mueller is more improvised than planned. The President launches his assault on the investigation via impulse and instinct, his Twitter blasts inspired and magnified by a feedback loop that injects fringe theories and unfounded suspicions into the mainstream debate about the probe.

It begins, according to those who see it in action, with the President scrolling through right-wing Twitter and picking up on phrases and ideas he likes. "He sees the ones that are the most popular and getting the most [of the] zeitgeist, most attention on social media, and he repeats it," Eric Bolling, a former Fox News anchor who regularly speaks to the President, tells TIME.

Often, Trump latches onto conspiracy theories or lines of attack that he's seen on Fox News or been fed in late-night conversation with his friends, including Fox News host Sean Hannity. Trump's tweets cite Fox News shows and commentators by name. Sometimes the feedback loop goes the other way around, with Trump generating a suspicion and the right-wing media bolstering and amplifying it. "It's almost like he uses *Fox & Friends* to vet which [topics] are good enough or are legit, and he will go ahead and attack those and light those up," says a friend of Trump's who is familiar with his social-media use.

A typical White House uses a structured process to disseminate messages, with talking points and conference calls to ensure its allies are speaking from the same script. When it comes to Mueller, however, multiple sources in and around the White House insist there's no such discipline. "This is not a coordinated caliphate," a Republican Congressman tells TIME. "This is al-Qaeda, where everyone is their own cell, lobbing Molotov cocktails, firing at will." One lobbyist close to the White House says he takes messaging cues from Twitter.

Even as they deny orchestrating the anti-Mueller campaign, Trump supporters are happy to tout its results. "They're

PREVIOUS PAGES: AP/SHUTTERSTOCK

JUNE 23, 2017

'WELL, HE IS VERY, VERY GOOD FRIENDS WITH COMEY, WHICH IS VERY BOTHERSOME.'

APRIL 9, 2018

'They found no collusion whatsoever with Russia.'

MARCH 17, 2018

'The Mueller probe should never have been started in that there was no collusion and there was no crime.'

MARCH 18, 2018

'Why does the Mueller team have 13 hardened Democrats, some big Crooked Hillary supporters, and Zero Republicans?'

APRIL 9, 2018

'This is the most biased group of people. These people have the biggest conflicts of interest I've ever seen.'

MAY 4, 2018

'In all fairness, Bob Mueller worked for Obama for eight years.'

talking to the American people, who have a right to know," Joseph diGenova, a lawyer who considered joining Trump's legal team, says of Trump's tweets and Giuliani's media appearances. DiGenova says Trump has been "restrained" in his commentary on the case considering the extent of his victimization by "the FBI, the Department of Justice and the CIA."

Until March, Trump still had yet to use Mueller's name on Twitter. But subsequent months have seen a rapid escalation of the PR war against the special counsel. Nowhere was the technique more evident than in the recent controversy that the President dubbed "#spygate." After it was revealed that the FBI used an informant to approach members of Trump's campaign, the *National Review* asserted that this amounted to the Obama Administration implanting a "spy" in the rival party's election operation. Trump leaped at the idea. "SPYGATE could be one of the biggest political scandals in history!" he tweeted on May 23. A thousand cable chyrons were born; on Fox News, commentator Andrew Napolitano lamented, "It's clear that they had eyes and ears all over the Trump campaign." Trump expounded on the idea. "I hope it's not true," he told reporters, "but it looks like it is."

Trump didn't cite any evidence for the claim, but his allies in Congress rushed to bolster it. House Intelligence Committee chairman Devin Nunes demanded that the department brief a Republicans-only group of lawmakers on the FBI's confidential source. Critics said it would represent an alarming erosion of the separation of powers if a political party were permitted to meddle on behalf of the President. On May 24, classified briefings were held, with Democrats allowed to attend. But the appearance of White House interference intensified when Flood and White House chief of staff John Kelly also showed up.

The FBI's actual goal, according to members of both parties who have seen the intelligence, was to determine what the Russians were up to, not to surveil the Trump campaign. A Republican Congressman who attended, Trey Gowdy of South Carolina, told Fox News that "the FBI did exactly what my fellow citizens would want them to do when they got the information they got, and … it has nothing to do with Donald Trump." Gowdy, long a favorite in conservative circles, was savaged in right-wing media for his perceived disloyalty. Despite three weeks of widespread debunking, Trump was still stoking his phantom controversy. "SPYGATE at the highest level," Trump tweeted June 5. "This makes the Nixon Watergate burglary look like keystone cop stuff." Another seed of doubt had been planted in the minds of Trump's followers about the integrity of federal investigators.

When Trump tweeted on June 4 that he has the "absolute right" to pardon himself, some Republicans expressed shock. The President has broad pardon power in the Constitution, but the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel determined in 1974 that a self-pardon would run afoul of bedrock legal principle. Senator Susan Collins called such discussion a "tremendous abuse of his authority." Senator Lindsey Graham, a sometime Trump ally, dryly noted that the threat of dirty pardons featured in Nixon's impeachment proceedings.

But there were limits. At the Capitol, reporters crowded around Senator Ted Cruz, a Harvard Law–educated former state solicitor general, to ask if the President indeed has the power to self-pardon. The typically loquacious Cruz went silent for a remarkable 18 seconds. Finally, he muttered, "That is not a constitutional issue I've studied, so I will withhold judgment at this point."

AT THE SPECIAL COUNSEL'S nondescript offices in southwest Washington, Mueller's team continues undeterred, running a tight ship that doesn't appear to leak or engage with the press. Mueller speaks not with statements but with legal actions. He has brought charges against a tightening circle of Trump's orbit, including former campaign chairman Paul Manafort, former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn and former foreign policy aide George Papadopoulos. Mueller has also indicted 13 Russian nationals and three Russian companies on conspiracy charges related to the propaganda effort in the 2016 election. Trump's defenders note that none of the crimes alleged so far implicate Trump or show explicit collusion with Russian agents. They also bemoan the investigation's price tag: nearly $17 million so far, according to spending reports filed by the Justice Department. (The investigation of Clinton spent

Mueller leaves the Capitol after briefing Senators in June 2017

J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE—AP/SHUTTERSTOCK

$52 million over nearly five years.)

Whether or not Trump is interviewed is critically important. Without that question settled, the President cannot rest easy, and Mueller cannot wrap up his inquiry. In April, the New York *Times* obtained a list of almost 50 questions Mueller's team had floated to Trump's lawyers. The potential queries focused on Trump's firing of former FBI director James Comey and Flynn; his relationship with Attorney General Jeff Sessions; and a summer 2016 meeting at Trump Tower among campaign officials, Donald Trump Jr. and Russians peddling information on Hillary Clinton. There were also questions related to Trump's business and family. Trump's lawyers hope to limit the scope of the questions. "

As negotiations over an interview continue, the posture taken by Trump's lawyers has changed. For months, his attorneys pledged full cooperation with Mueller; according to the January memo, the team has turned over tens of thousands of documents related to the case. But while, according to Sekulow, "there continues to be a professional dialogue between our team and the office of the special counsel," the President's lawyers have become more combative. Giuliani claimed on June 6 that the special counsel's office is "trying very, very hard to frame" the President.

ONCE MUELLER CONCLUDES his work, the two battles in this war, legal and political, will converge into one theater. And that is when the wisdom and costs of Trump's public strategy will become clear. Perhaps the investigation won't turn up anything that implicates Trump in wrongdoing. Nothing to that effect has been formally alleged. But Trump is preparing for the possibility that Mueller will make serious charges. That's when the groundwork Trump's laying now could pay off.

Even if Mueller finds that Trump has committed crimes, Trump's team contends a sitting President cannot be indicted. Legal scholars differ on this point, but Giuliani claims Mueller has informed the White House he would not try to do so. (Mueller's spokesperson, Peter Carr, declined to comment.) Mueller is required to file a report on his findings to Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, according to the special-counsel regulations. Rosenstein, in turn, would face pressure to send the report to Congress.

Then it would be up to Congress to decide what to do—and that's when the outcome of the legal inquiry would be determined in the hyperpartisan political arena. "The Congress is going to be driven to a large extent by public opinion," Giuliani says. Under the Constitution, impeachment proceedings are initiated by the House, which can pass an article of impeachment with a simple majority. If Mueller issues his findings after this November's midterm elections, the House may well be controlled by Democrats. If they impeach the President, it would be up to the Senate to hold a trial, presided over by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. It would require a 67-vote supermajority to convict Trump and remove him from office.

All this will be familiar to anyone who lived through the Clinton saga. Clinton was impeached by the Republican House, and the Democratic Senate declined to convict him. It's highly unlikely that Democrats, who currently hold 49 seats in the Senate, will control more than 67 seats next year. Which means Trump's removal would require the support of Republican Senators whose own base opposes it. Nixon's approval rating with Republicans was about 50% when he resigned in 1974. Clinton maintained a 90% approval rating among Democrats through the end of his impeachment saga in 1999.

While Trump cannot control the outcome of Mueller's probe, his broadsides shape public perception of it, and thus tip the political scales. "What's been disappointing is how few people have stood up and said, 'Mr. President, what you're saying is inappropriate," says Republican Senator Jeff Flake of Arizona, a critic of the President. "More Republicans need to say that."

A key question is whether Trump's quest for self-preservation at all costs is putting the rule of law at risk. Trump "disparage[s] the investigation, but also the individuals who are conducting it, and even more insidiously, the institutions of our government, which are pillars of the protection of our individual rights and security," says Richard Ben-Veniste, a lead prosecutor during the Watergate scandal. Trump has advanced a vision of American democracy that paints the President as all-powerful, the Attorney General and the Congress as his handmaidens, the top law enforcement and intelligence agencies as corrupt bureaucrats. If Trump's team takes Mueller to court over a subpoena, the judiciary, too, could find itself riven by politics. Sessions has endured the President's public floggings for months. Rosenstein, says diGenova, is "lucky he's going to come out alive."

Trump's strategy may in the end prove ironic. His claims of unchecked power could end up leaving behind a damaged Executive office and a weakened federal government. But for Trump and his team, all that matters is the president's survival. Giuliani insists that Trump has done nothing wrong and will be vindicated in the end. As for whether the war on Mueller is working, the President's lawyer says: "You know when you find out? When it's over." —*With reporting by* RYAN TEAGUE BECKWITH, BRIAN BENNETT, PHILIP ELLIOTT *and* NASH JENKINS/WASHINGTON

TRUMP IS WRONG: THE MUELLER PROBE IS CONSTITUTIONAL

BY NEAL KATYAL

PRESIDENT TRUMP DECLARED ON JUNE 4 THAT the "appointment of the Special Counsel is totally UNCONSTITUTIONAL!" Like many of Trump's utterances, it was made with all the deliberation of a tweet. But unlike some of his targets, which are susceptible to a dashed-off gurgitation, this is an intricate constitutional issue worthy of sober reflection. Happily, there is a clear answer: virtually no one believes the appointment of the special counsel is unconstitutional, and there has been a long-standing bipartisan consensus to the contrary.

A little background: After Watergate, Congress passed the Independent Counsel Act, which created a supercharged independent prosecutor who acted in many ways outside of the Justice Department and with little oversight. That act empowered Lawrence Walsh to investigate Iran-*contra* and Kenneth Starr to investigate Whitewater and Monica Lewinsky. Notably, a near unanimous Supreme Court upheld the legality of such a prosecutor in 1988 in *Morrison v. Olson*. Only Justice Antonin Scalia dissented.

I joined the Justice Department in 1998, at the very start of the Lewinsky investigation, and the department knew the Independent Counsel Act was due to sunset on June 30, 1999. Attorney General Janet Reno and Eric Holder asked me to convene a working group to think about the act and whether it should lapse, and if so, what should replace it.

After extensive consultations within the Justice Department and, on a bipartisan basis, with Congress, we wrote the special counsel regulations. Robert Mueller was appointed under those regulations. They weaken the powers of the special counsel in several respects. They require, for example, the special counsel to work under the Attorney General (or if, as here, that person is recused, the Deputy Attorney General). They give the special counsel "day-to-day independence" but say that substantial investigative steps have to be approved by the Attorney General. And they say that if the Attorney General overrules the special counsel, a report must be given to Congress—to both the majority and minority parties. These regulations were supported by almost everyone at the Justice Department and in Congress.

It is against this backdrop that Trump's claims must be assessed. The Supreme Court already upheld a supercharged independent counsel in the *Morrison* case. And while many, such as myself, think the court may have gone too far in *Morrison,* it is the law of the land. Of course, the Supreme Court is free to overrule an earlier decision, but the problem for Trump is that even overruling *Morrison* would not make the special counsel probe unconstitutional, because the regulations take into account the weightiest constitutional objections to the Independent Counsel Act.

The idea that the special counsel is a runaway agent biased against Trump is a feverish dream concocted by those who are afraid of where the investigation is leading

THE BEST ARGUMENT for why the Independent Counsel Act was unconstitutional was that the prosecutor was a "Principal Officer" under our Constitution—someone with Cabinet-level powers—but who had not been nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate for such a task. Virtually no one thinks Mueller is like an independent counsel in that respect. He is working under the authority of Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein. He cannot take steps without the approval of that Senate-confirmed, presidentially appointed official. Far from being a "Principal Officer," Mueller is a true subordinate—incapable of doing anything that his boss, Rosenstein, rejects.

And who is Rosenstein's boss? None other than Trump. No fact better puts the constitutionality of the special counsel in perspective. If you or I get indicted, we don't have the luxury of picking our prosecutor. But for Trump, his prosecutor is his own guy, Rosenstein. The idea that the special counsel is a runaway agent biased against Trump is thus a feverish dream concocted by those who are afraid of where the investigation is leading. And if there is any doubt about that, Rosenstein himself has dispelled it. He has testified to Congress that Mueller has come back to him and asked for additional authority whenever he has sought to expand his investigation. That is why a federal judge in Washington, D.C., already rejected all of this "unconstitutional" nonsense in the Paul Manafort case.

As with Manafort, Trump's claim about the special counsel did not arise out of thin air. He's not a law professor trying to gain tenure by writing a provocative article. He's a subject of a federal investigation by the special counsel, and every week makes the investigation look even more important. Trump is acting like he is fighting for his life, and grasping onto slender constitutional reeds to keep from drowning. But none of that makes the special counsel probe "unconstitutional." And if Mueller ever did overstep his authority, Rosenstein of course could discipline or fire him. For all of these reasons, Trump's claim is, legally speaking, very weak.

Katyal is the Paul and Patricia Saunders Professor of National Security Law at Georgetown University Law Center and a partner at Hogan Lovells. He previously served as Acting Solicitor General of the United States.

YET MUELLER WON'T INDICT A SITTING PRESIDENT

BY JACK GOLDSMITH

"THE PRESIDENT IS TO HAVE THE LAWS executed," wrote the Chief Executive. "He may order an offence then to be prosecuted," but if he "sees a prosecution put into a train which is not lawful, he may order it to be discontinued."

That's not a tweet from Donald Trump. It's a letter from Thomas Jefferson, in 1801, explaining the President's broad authority to supervise and control federal criminal prosecutions.

As special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation heats up, Jefferson is a better guide to presidential prerogatives than the Trump critics who decry his Executive power claims as reminiscent of King George. For better and worse, the Constitution gives the President extraordinarily broad authority over investigations, pardons and firings.

The President's pardon power is practically absolute for federal offenses. It "cannot be modified, abridged, or diminished by the Congress," the Supreme Court has ruled. The President can issue a pardon before prosecution, and to a broad class of people. It's unclear whether Trump can pardon himself. But he could, if he wanted, pardon everyone else Mueller is investigating, just as George H.W. Bush in 1992 pardoned six people under investigation by an independent counsel.

Trump could also order Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, Mueller's supervisor, to dismiss Mueller or limit his investigation. If Rosenstein refuses, as he certainly would, Trump could fire him and keep firing his successors until he found someone who would carry out his will.

The Justice Department has twice determined—during the Nixon and Clinton Administrations—that a President cannot be indicted or prosecuted while in office. It reached this conclusion based on the Constitution's impeachment remedy and the special demands on the presidency. Mueller is bound by this and cannot indict Trump.

In the wrong hands, the prodigious powers of the presidency become worrisome. "[I]n every political institution, a power to advance the public happiness involves a discretion which may be misapplied and abused," said James Madison. Trump has been threatening misapplication and abuse.

But another important constitutional principle is that hard presidential power doesn't necessarily translate into effective presidential power. Trump should have learned this lesson when he fired former FBI director Jim Comey last year. The dismissal sparked a political firestorm and led Trump's own nominee, Rosenstein, to appoint Mueller, who ramped up the investigation.

This political dynamic is the ultimate check on the presidency. It is why Trump—who has rained down ferocious tweet-threats toward the Justice Department—has not yet wielded his pardon pen or fired anyone else related to the Russia matter.

Trump's threats without follow-through are a sign of presidential weakness. In the face of his howling disapproval, Mueller has been quietly building a comprehensive picture of any relationship among Trump, his associates and Russia during the 2016 election as well as any evidence of other crimes, including obstruction of justice.

Any damning information Mueller has amassed is sure to come out—in a report, or by leaks or congressional subpoena

NOW THAT MUELLER has had a year to gather this information, it is practically impossible for Trump to kill the investigation. In light of Mueller indicting 19 people and the many suggestive leaks, which are likely the tip of the iceberg, the political costs of firings or pardons are greater than ever.

Trump may nonetheless try to burn down the Justice Department. But even if he pardons everyone or finds someone willing to fire Mueller, which I doubt he can, the investigation will not end.

Mueller's probe began as and at bottom remains a counterintelligence investigation designed to learn about and thwart Russian interference in U.S. elections. That task would continue even if there were no defendants to prosecute. Trump would be especially hard-pressed to shut it down, since so many people in his Administration have acknowledged the reality of the Russia threat.

More significant, any damning information Mueller has amassed is sure to come out—in a report, or by leaks or congressional subpoena.

This is the vital consideration. Mueller was never going to indict Trump. He is not allowed to, and if he tried, he would face a steep and lengthy uphill battle in court. His main goal was always to find out what happened and disclose it publicly so that Congress, by follow-up investigation and possibly impeachment, and the American people, through pressure on Congress and elections, can, if the evidence warrants, decide Trump's fate.

This might seem like a weak and uncertain reed on which to ensure presidential accountability. But at the end of the day, it is the foundation of all constitutional constraints on the presidency.

Goldsmith is a professor of law at Harvard University and a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution. He previously served as Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legal Counsel, in the George W. Bush Administration

THIS MAN WANTS TO BE ON BIRTH CONTROL

Inside the race to develop a better male contraceptive

By Alexandra Sifferlin

PHOTOGRAPH BY ISABELLA CONNELLEY AND BETHAN MOONEY FOR TIME

Kristoffer Thordarson, 22, has participated in early studies of male contraceptive methods at the University of Washington School of Medicine

PHOTOGRAPH BY IAN ALLEN FOR TIME

DANIEL DUDLEY, 28, IS A BUSY MAN. The medical resident at Valley Medical Center in Washington is an active hiker, an amateur chef—he's currently learning how to cook Indian cuisine—and a proud "father" to two dwarf rabbits, whose antics he chronicles under the Instagram handle @bunnyzaddy. He's also at least partly responsible for the creation of a new male contraceptive.

Over the past five years, Dudley has volunteered for three separate clinical trials of three male contraceptive methods. He's taken a daily pill, rubbed a hormonal gel on his chest and received an injection of hormones into his left butt cheek. If all the methods were available today, he says, he would "totally use" the injection for its long-lasting convenience.

Dudley, who is in a long-distance relationship with his partner Adrienne Ton, wants to do his part to increase contraception options for men and take the burden of pregnancy prevention off women, "which is an injustice," he says. "There's been much less money and effort put into safely and effectively lowering men's fertility."

Women today bear the greatest responsibility for preventing pregnancy, with nearly a dozen options for birth control, including longer-term solutions like the IUD implant and short-term strategies like the diaphragm and vaginal ring. For a century, men have had only two: the condom (with a failure rate of close to 20%) and the vasectomy, which is considered largely irreversible and involves minor surgery. There has not been a new commercial contraceptive for men in several decades.

That may change, thanks to new clinical trials and shifting perceptions of gender responsibilities, including those in the bedroom. Along with overdue conversations about consent, scientists are hoping that the time is right to change the contraception imbalance and are launching clinical trials this year of different methods including pills and gels with the hope that they will attract drug companies with promising results. Industry analysts believe there's money to be made. If a new male contraceptive method is approved in the next five years, the market is projected to be about $1 billion by 2024 and could grow at a rate of 6% over the next 10 years, according to Global Market Insights. And there's a pressing need: in the U.S. alone, 45% of pregnancies are unplanned, and yet the public-health strategy to prevent them largely ignores 50% of the population.

THE ARRIVAL OF the birth control pill in 1960 started a sexual revolution, helping women level the playing field. Its debut in the U.S. market changed society in unanticipated ways too. College enrollment among American women who could access the Pill legally by age 18 in 1970 was 20% higher than among women who could not. One-third of the wage gains women have made since the 1960s are considered to be a result of oral contraceptives access, according to a Planned Parenthood report.

But female birth control methods have not solved the world's unplanned-pregnancy problem. Studies suggest that it's common in the U.S. for women to cycle through multiple types of birth control, often because of side effects. Yet the burden of pregnancy prevention almost always falls on them, with 62% of all women of reproductive age currently using a contraceptive method. Even when it comes to permanent measures, female sterilization remains a much more common procedure than vasectomy in the U.S.

Women not only endure all the physical risks when a birth control method fails but also assume the social ones: a 2018 Denmark study found that a woman's income sharply declines after she has her first child—a drop not experienced by men—which ultimately causes women to earn 20% less than men throughout the rest of their career.

Ton, 26, who is studying to become a family nurse practitioner at Columbia University, says women may initially find it difficult to relinquish some control over pregnancy prevention, but that doing so can create more balance in a relationship. "Women are so used to carrying that burden and are socialized to think it's our responsibility," she says. "But I think women would be willing to have more protection." Ton says she was initially nervous about Dudley's trials but thinks it's "amazing" that he's willing to volunteer.

Past surveys suggest that at least 50% of men would use a new male contraceptive, with men in stable relationships being the most open to taking a daily pill. While some scientists are exploring hormonal options for men that suppress testosterone and sperm production, other researchers are exploring nonhormonal options.

Recently, the pill method that Dudley tested showed promise. Researchers gave Dudley and 82 other men a drug called dimethandrolone undecanoate, or DMAU, which lowers certain hormones like testosterone that are required for sperm production. The small study found that the once-daily pill appeared safe, and among the men who took the highest dose, it was able to suppress the hormones needed for sperm development to extremely low levels that classified their bodies as medically castrated. The men didn't experience serious side effects, however, because DMAU also mimics testosterone throughout the body.

The scientists behind the DMAU pill trial—from the University of

'THERE'S BEEN MUCH LESS MONEY AND EFFORT PUT INTO SAFELY AND EFFECTIVELY LOWERING MEN'S FERTILITY.'

—Daniel Dudley, 28, Seattle

IAN ALLEN FOR TIME

Dr. Stephanie Page of the University of Washington School of Medicine is co-leading clinical trials of male contraceptive options, including a pill and a gel method

Washington School of Medicine (UW Medicine), Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute and elsewhere—have worked in the field for years and say there's welcome and unprecedented energy around their research today. "We have a lot of positive momentum right now," says study author Dr. Stephanie Page, the division head for metabolism and endocrinology at UW Medicine. "I think the field may be in a different place because the public is expressing quite a bit of interest. There are changes happening socially. It seems different from 15 years ago."

Like Dudley, Kristoffer Thordarson—a California native and self-described "beach bum" who attends UW Medicine, where he is studying microbiology—has volunteered in multiple clinical trials for male birth control methods. In January, Thordarson, 22, got an injection containing either DMAU or a placebo into his right abdomen to lower his sperm count to nearly negligible. He was told not to use the method as contraception just in case. "It felt like I was being stung by a bee," he says.

Thordarson and Dudley say the pain from the needle is a worthy burden to bear if it means they're doing their part to advance the science behind male contraceptives and, in their opinion, right a wrong. "I think having both men and women be responsible for preventing unwanted pregnancies will alleviate a lot of the misogyny and crap that women face," says Thordarson.

IN THE PILL STUDY that Dudley participated in, the side effects were minor: eight of the 60 men taking the drug reported decreased libido, and five men taking the drug reported acne. Dudley says he didn't feel any different taking the pill. The researchers are now testing the effects of the pill on an additional 100 men before moving on to a longer trial with couples in a few years.

In the meantime, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Population Council, with the help of several universities around the world, are planning to kick off one of the largest male contraceptive trials to date in July for a gel contraceptive. Research behind the gel method is further along than the pill, largely because when taken orally, lab-made testosterone, which is used in male contraceptives, clears the body quickly, and researchers say gels get absorbed into the skin and stay in the bloodstream longer than pill versions so far.

Recruitment is under way for the gel trial, which will enroll over 400 couples in six countries and require men to rub the gel onto their upper arms and shoulders once a day. The gel contains a synthetic progestin called Nestorone—which blocks the testes from making enough testosterone to produce sperm—and a synthetic testosterone, which will counteract subsequent hormonal imbalances. Once the men's sperm count has reached a low enough level, the men and women will agree to rely solely on the gel as their birth control.

Historically, men had one of the first contraceptive options. The much maligned condom has been around in some form since imperial Rome, though the first recorded descriptions appeared in the 16th century. It evolved from animal intestine to latex and gained mass appeal during times of war. The German military began supplying condoms during World War I to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, and by 1918 condoms were legalized in the U.S. for disease prevention.

Men's other birth control option, the

vasectomy, was first described in the 19th century as a procedure for dogs, before becoming a method to treat enlarged prostates or as an alternative to castration. During the first half of the 20th century, vasectomies were used as part of state-backed eugenics programs that forced the procedures on prisoners. By the second half of the century, men started to get the procedure electively, and today it is estimated that 175,000 to 550,000 vasectomies are performed every year in the U.S.

Clinical trials in the modern search for a third male contraceptive kicked off in the early 1970s, when both the U.S. and Chinese governments launched studies on potential sperm-suppressing compounds that could be taken by pill. Chinese researchers ran trials of gossypol, a chemical that's derived from seeds of cotton plants, in over 8,000 men. Daily gossypol pills lowered men's sperm count, but some of the men did not return to their usual fertility levels after ending the pills, and several experienced severe drops in their potassium. Ultimately, the work was discontinued over concerns about the side effects.

Also in the early 1970s, researchers backed by the NIH started experimenting with injectable male hormonal birth control options. Early studies showed that with the right combination of testosterone and the synthetic hormone progestin, a man's sperm count could be substantially lowered.

Pharmaceutical companies Organon and Schering teamed up on a clinical trial in the early 2000s, for which about 300 men were given progestogen implants and injections of testosterone. Although the men experienced side effects like acne, weight gain and mood issues, they also experienced dramatic drops in sperm counts. But after the pharmaceutical giant Bayer bought Schering in 2006 (Bayer is one of the top sellers of female birth control, with brands like Mirena and Yaz), both companies closed their research programs. "Ultimately, the decision was made to halt male contraceptive research, and we currently do not have plans to pursue [it] in the future," a Bayer spokesperson told TIME.

Another former company called Sterling Drug tested a fertility-suppressing compound called WIN 18,446. But when an inmate at Oregon State Penitentiary who was taking part in the trial drank contraband scotch and became "violently ill," *Bloomberg Businessweek* reported, it became clear the method didn't mix well with alcohol. A few scientists are keeping that research going on a small scale, but they lack funding from pharmaceutical companies or government grants.

FOR REGULATORS, the future of male contraceptives may come down to one question: How much physical risk should a man carry? Scientists say it's harder to justify—even if it's a harsh or dated view—having a healthy person take a medication, and deal with its side effects, to prevent an outcome from happening to someone else.

The results from a trial published in 2016 in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism* illustrate the problem. The study, which began 10 years ago, was one of the largest male contraceptive trials and launched in 10 study sites around the globe with support from groups like the World Health Organization (WHO) and U.N. Development Programme. On paper, the trial results showed that the contraceptive—which used a combination of a long-acting testosterone and a derivative of the female hormonal progesterone—was an early success. Three hundred twenty men, with the consent of their female partners, agreed to undergo injections every two months of the hormones, which were designed to substantially lower their sperm count, and then use that method as their primary form of birth control. The findings were stunning: hormonal injections given to the men were 96% effective at suppressing their sperm and preventing pregnancy, and the vast majority of men said they would use it if it came to market (likely in pill form).

And yet despite the method's popularity and how well it worked, an independent panel appointed by the WHO argued that the side effects experienced by some of the men—including mood swings and depression—were unsafe. "I did not agree," says study co-author

MILESTONES IN MALE CONTRACEPTIVE RESEARCH

HORMONAL GEL
Researchers plan to launch the largest trial of a male contraceptive yet, for a hormonal gel that reduces sperm count, in July. Four hundred men will rub it on their shoulders daily.

MALE PILL
A recent study of 83 men showed that a pill successfully suppressed the hormones needed to produce sperm with no serious side effects.

NONHORMONAL METHOD
In India, a polymer gel method called RISUG blocks sperm when injected into the vas deferens. It was 98% effective in trials and is awaiting government approval.

ISABELLA CONNELLEY AND BETHAN MOONEY FOR TIME (3)

Gabriela Noé, a researcher on male contraception at the Instituto Chileno de Medicina Reproductiva in Santiago, Chile. "It's true there were side effects, but they were mild and well tolerated."

Researchers say the closure of the study may say less about men's willingness to put up with the same side effects women do and more about whether regulators think they should. In fact, over 80% of the men in the shuttered trial said they would use the method if it were available.

The decision to end the trial sparked criticism in the reproductive health community, with some arguing that women regularly deal with significant side effects from their hormonal birth control, including mood swings, depression, acne, strokes, low libido, blood clots and more.

"The side effects were no different from female hormonal contraception," says study co-author David J. Handelsman, a professor of reproductive endocrinology and andrology at the University of Sydney, adding that he was "definitely not" in agreement that the trial should end. Interviews with nine of the report's authors revealed that many of them did not agree with the panel's decision or were disappointed by it.

There are other reasons pharmaceutical companies have not been quick to invest in bringing male contraceptives to market. Creating a male method is an onerous process. Female birth control works largely by preventing the ovulation of one egg, once a month. But men produce millions of sperm every day, and bringing that number down to zero involves careful experimentation with various hormones, dosing and intervals, and it takes a while to get it right.

"Hopefully, we will have results that are exciting and effective enough that a company will come and partner," says Diana Blithe, chief of the Contraceptive Development Program at the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, who is supporting the upcoming gel trial.

Plenty of men are excited by the prospects. Devin Patterson, 33, a data architect in Grand Rapids, Mich., describes himself as "someone with a strong leaning toward the child-free lifestyle" and says he would consider using a male contraceptive beyond condoms—hormonal or nonhormonal—if it were available, side effects included. "It comes down to choice," he says. "I'd like to have a choice, and options. I don't know why it has to be [women's] problem, and I would like control of my own destiny."

RESEARCHERS AND INVESTORS are betting on the popularity of nonhormonal contraceptives that would allow men to go a decade between procedures. In India, researchers have tested a sperm-blocking product called RISUG (reversible inhibition of sperm under guidance) in human clinical trials with success. The procedure involves injecting a polymer gel into the vas deferens—the tube sperm swim through—neutralizing the sperm. It's estimated to be at least 98% effective and has been tested so far in about 500 men, preventing pregnancies in their partners for up to 10 years.

It has inspired similar versions in the U.S. The nonprofit Parsemus Foundation acquired the rights to produce RISUG in 2010 and has since created Vasalgel, which may begin a clinical trial in humans in 2019. Vasalgel is also a polymer gel injected into the vas deferens, and the group expects it to be long-acting but reversible and safe to use for several years. In a study published in February 2017, researchers tested Vasalgel in 16 adult male monkeys and found that it was effective at preventing pregnancy during the monkeys' mating seasons.

"I care about my wife, and if we were on birth control, that's the method we would choose," says Kaplan Akincilar, 37, an audio and video engineer in New York and a father of one child, who has been following Vasalgel research. "I can't believe it's taken this long for an alternative to condoms to even be an option."

Contraline, a startup in Charlottesville, Va., is developing a method that's somewhat similar to RISUG and Vasalgel. The company uses a solution that is injected into the vas deferens and hardens into a hydrogel in seconds, blocking sperm. The company has yet to launch human clinical trials but has been popular among investors, raising $2.25 million in a funding round led by Peter Thiel's Founders Fund in 2017.

Although Contraline CEO Kevin Eisenfrats would not release the number of men who have contacted the company, he says over 70% of people who have reached out have expressed interest in participating in future clinical trials. "We thought it would be women signing their boyfriends or husbands up, but it's been primarily men signing themselves up," says Eisenfrats, adding that the company hears largely from men in their 20s and 30s. "I think there's a huge interest from millennials."

For men like Akincilar, a nonhormonal option that's reversible is appealing, though he says he's unsure whether other men would be on board. "I've asked people I work with if they would do it, and they're like, 'Absolutely not. I would not take a shot to the balls,'" he says.

Researchers remain optimistic that the field will bring a male birth control method to market within 10 years but argue that they need more support to make it a reality, ideally from pharmaceutical companies. Large, costly studies involving thousands of couples are likely needed. And if a male pill makes it to federal consideration, will regulators agree that the payoff—even if there are side effects—is worth it?

Dudley, the Washington medical resident, remains confident that the market is there. "I think as research continues, more men will be open to it—particularly men broadly interested in social justice," he says. "Our society is moving toward more gender equality in many areas. This is an obvious next step." □

'I'D LIKE TO HAVE A CHOICE, AND OPTIONS ... AND I WOULD LIKE CONTROL OF MY OWN DESTINY.'

—Devin Patterson, 33, Grand Rapids, Mich.


LADAN

THE DARK NORSE

How Iceland grew into a soccer force

By Sean Gregory/ Reykjavík

THE HOPES OF AN ENTIRE SOCCER-MAD nation will soon be riding on the hands of Hannes Thór Halldórsson. But on this chilly morning in late May, Iceland's goalkeeper uses his powerful mitts not to stop a blast from Lionel Messi but to gently tap the tiny shoulder of a Reykjavík kindergartner. Halldórsson asks the boy, who's wearing a blue Iceland soccer jersey and has his country's flag painted on both of his cheeks, to move a little to his right. Halldórsson then glides back across the floor—shoes off in the classroom, even for national team stars—and peeks at the video camera. Now the shot looks better.

He would know. Until about four years ago, when he finally received a professional soccer contract to play in Norway, Halldórsson, 34, was a full-time filmmaker. So when Coca-Cola sought a director for its World Cup commercial in Iceland, the smallest country ever to qualify for the World Cup—its population, about 350,000, is barely bigger than that of Corpus Christi, Texas—the team's goalie got the nod.

"Typical Iceland," says Halldórsson. Indeed. While some other players in the 32-nation World Cup field may hold side

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THOMAS PRIOR FOR TIME

Members of Tólfan, the Iceland team's fan club, march to the national stadium in Reykjavík before a World Cup tune-up vs. Norway on June 2

jobs, no top-flight team looks quite like this one. Iceland's coach doubles as a dentist. One of the defenders delivers salt. The team's nickname is *Strákarnir Okkar,* which translates to "Our Boys." In a country this small, everyone has a stake.

That's why just three weeks before the start of the world's most prestigious tournament, Halldórsson is imploring a bunch of 6-year-olds to do the "Viking clap," a mesmerizing chant involving two drumbeats, a moment of silence, and then a resounding *woo* as fans pound their hands together over their heads. "Who can yell the loudest?" Halldórsson shouts to the giggling, out-of-breath kids in Icelandic. "Who can clap the loudest?"

The chant was made famous at the 2016 European Championships, when Iceland made an improbable run to the quarterfinals in its first-ever major international tournament in men's soccer. That stunning showing—which included a draw with Portugal and an upset of mighty England—was the culmination of a 20-year investment in soccer, including building new, accessible and affordable facilities across the country and educating hundreds of youth coaches on the proper way to teach the game. The current members of the national team benefited from that commitment, and it shows on the pitch. While Iceland has relatively few players in the world's top professional leagues, the squad displays a patient, selfless style that has foiled higher-ranked teams.

The combination of Iceland's national investment in soccer and its appeal as the ultimate underdog has sent expectations soaring ahead of its first World Cup match, in Moscow on June 16 against Argentina. The Argentine soccer legend Diego Maradona said recently that Iceland has a shot at beating the two-time World Cup champs. "Wow," Halldórsson says, reading the quote on his phone. "Maradona is thinking about Iceland."

Among the rabid fans in Reykjavík, the World Cup offers an opportunity to show that Iceland stands for more than Instagram-ready glaciers and volcanoes, and a banking collapse that nearly crushed the country during the 2008 financial crisis. Adding to the pressure on the team is that virtually the entire nation will be watching: during the European Championships two summers ago,

Players from Iceland, the smallest country to qualify for a World Cup, warm up before a June 2 match against Norway

99.8% of Icelanders who were watching television at the time of the England upset were tuned in to the game.

"You have to be careful to judge the quality of a society by sporting success," Iceland President Gudni Jóhannesson tells TIME during an interview from Bessastadir, his windswept official residence. "Having said that, for a small nation like Iceland in a globalized world, it's so important to tell us, and the outside world, that we can punch above our weight."

HOW DID ICELAND, which a decade ago was losing games to microstates like the Faroe Islands (pop. 49,000) and Liechtenstein (pop. 38,000), arrive on the doorstep of the World Cup? Take a ride to Breidablik, a sports club in a suburb of Reykjavík, for clues. There, on a soaked spring day, about 100 boys and girls are practicing in one of Iceland's vast indoor soccer halls under the supervision of professionally licensed coaches. Towns across the country started building such facilities around the turn of the century so that kids could play unbothered by Iceland's unforgiving weather.

One group of 8-year-old boys dribble around cones; a coach works with about a dozen others on lateral quickness. Another group plays a game while a coach stands to the side, saying nothing; just letting kids play is a deliberate training tactic. "You need to give them space to express themselves," says Hákon Sverrisson, head of youth soccer at Breidablik and a former math teacher.

Four members of Iceland's World Cup team played on Breidablik's indoor pitch, which opened in 2002. Overall, 13 purpose-built indoor facilities have popped up across the country in the past two decades. Turning soccer into a year-round sport has improved Iceland's raw talent.

What's more, Iceland spent the riches generated by soccer's global popularity to expand access to the game, rather than on perks for the country's sports brass. TV-rights money helped finance the construction of some 150 smaller artificial pitches, many with a heating system that can melt snow, near schools. These fields give kids ample opportunity to kick the ball around whenever the mood strikes. "I often think that the reason I made it this far was just playing by myself, really," says Iceland forward Jón Dadi Bödvarsson,

who grew up in Selfoss, a town of about 7,000 people some 45 minutes southeast of the capital. "That's one of the best trainings as a kid, when you're having fun with your mates."

A culture that mixes free play with coaching expertise can produce startling results. Fifteen years ago, no Icelandic coaches held the "A" or "B" license awarded to the most qualified instructors by the Union of European Football Associations. Now Iceland has 716 such coaches, up 87% over 10 years and 27% over five years. Moreover, this top-notch instruction is widely available, and not just offered to those with the most talent or deepest pockets.

In Iceland, anyone can join a local sports club that employs elite coaches, for an average of $600 a year. The local government subsidizes the fees, covering anywhere from a third to half of the cost. Since the towns finance the facilities, the club dues pay the coaches; some are full-time employees of the club, while others hold day jobs (among them: teachers, computer scientists, janitors and a purchasing manager at the local car dealership). This system phases out volunteer parents, who often lack both coaching qualifications and a comfortable perspective on the abilities of their own children. There is surely a lesson there for the U.S., which relies on a pay-to-play youth soccer model and more than its share of screaming parents serving as coaches, and failed to qualify for the World Cup for the first time in 32 years.

Iceland's sports-for-all philosophy has paid off beyond its run to the World Cup. Research has shown that organized-sports participation, which has doubled among adolescents in Iceland since the early 1990s, is linked to improved academic performance and self-esteem, and reductions in childhood smoking and alcohol abuse. "If you keep kids active in organized sports, you'll have better health outcomes for them," says Kári Jónsson, head of sports and recreation for the town of Gardabaer, where construction on a new $40 million indoor soccer hall is set to begin in September. "Not just physical health, but mental and social too. That's why everything pays back into the community."

Meanwhile, Iceland's elite players develop their talents at a steady, arguably

GETTY IMAGES (3)

WORLD CUP CHEAT SHEET

This is likely soccer superstar **Cristiano Ronaldo's last shot at winning a World Cup.**

The 33-year-old Portuguese captain has won the European Champions League five times with two teams, yet the World Cup trophy remains elusive. Leading fourth-ranked Portugal to victory would cement his place as one of the game's greatest players of all time.

The only South American team to win a World Cup on European soil was Brazil in 1958. This year, there are five teams from South America in contention. Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina and Colombia all look likely to make it out of their groups, with Peru the underdog. If the Brazilians live up to their tag as tournament favorites, few would bet against them in Russia.

France and Germany are also considered front runners. But with Germany's surprise decision to leave star winger Leroy Sane at home, **France could have the edge.** A young squad bursting with raw talent, like forward Nabil Fekir, has the best chance in years of bringing Les Bleus their second ever World Cup.

Off the pitch, soccer officials are hoping the host nation can avoid a **resurgence of soccer hooliganism.** At the European Championships in 2016, Russia's fans violently clashed with British fans in the city of Marseilles. Russia says it has created a blacklist of "known troublemakers," reportedly of almost 2,000 people and plans to deploy hundreds of police on the streets to dispel violence. Still, fans are bracing for trouble. The British Foreign Office has warned citizens traveling to Russia to watch out for "anti-British sentiment or harassment."

Egypt wasn't considered to be a team to watch even when it last played in a World Cup, 28 years ago, but since Liverpool's Mohamed Salah powered his way to become one of the top three goal scorers in Europe, it is attracting fresh attention. The team is already set to break one tournament record: **fielding the oldest player ever to play in a World Cup.**

Egypt's Mohamed Salah

Nigeria's jersey

Goalkeeper Essam el-Hadary, 45, is set to captain his side. He told ESPN the milestone meant little, since "age is just a number."

Although Iceland has pride of place as tournament underdogs, **Nigeria is emerging as another popular choice.** According to the Nigeria Football Federation, the Super Eagles' distinctive white, green and black patterned jersey had 3 million preorders, and London's Nike store sold out after fans had lined up for hours. The team is hoping for a best-ever performance after finishing ninth in 1994.

If you only pay attention to soccer every four years, you might be wondering who the U.S. is playing. Alas, **Team USA failed to qualify for the 2018 World Cup,** prompting much soul-searching and anger at the controversial goal that let Panama proceed instead. There's a silver lining in the form of a squad of rising stars like Christian Pulisic and John Brooks, who are young enough to be dreaming of a resurgence in 2022. And the Americans are at least in good company: four-time winners Italy also failed to qualify.

—*Siobhan Morrin*

Iceland players huddle during a training session at Laugardalsvöllur, the national stadium; a superfan applies makeup before a match

saner pace. Iceland doesn't have a full-fledged professional league, so young stars don't decamp to specialized academies at a young age and burn out. Since the local clubs offer a variety of sports, most kids try a few out—basketball and handball are also popular—before focusing on one around age 14 or 15. Playing multiple sports rounds out an athlete's motor skills and can help kids thrive in soccer in the long term.

Still, Iceland's sporting culture is not completely egalitarian. The top players do eventually break away from their local towns, and the best of them sign contracts with overseas professional teams and hone their skills abroad. (Top leagues in Denmark, Norway and Sweden are popular stops.) "We've become more professional," says University of Iceland sociologist Vidar Halldórsson, who wrote the 2017 book *Sport in Iceland: How Small Nations Achieve International Success*. "But not too professional."

While Iceland refined its grassroots soccer system, the football federation in 2011 hired Lars Lagerbäck—who guided Sweden to two World Cups and Nigeria to one—as the national team coach. Lagerbäck commanded immediate respect and molded the country's emerging talent; two years later, Iceland fell one playoff victory short of making the 2014 World Cup. In the group stage of the 2016 European Championships, Iceland forced a draw with eventual champ Portugal, which features superstar Cristiano Ronaldo, and shocked England in the knockout round to advance to the quarterfinals. "That was one of the biggest surprises in the history of the European Championships," says former FIFA World Player of the Year Lothar Matthäus, a World Cup commentator for Fox Sports.

After the Euros, Lagerbäck, who said he was satisfied with the team's unprecedented success, handed the reins to former assistant Heimir Hallgrímsson. A dentist who has coached men's, women's and youth teams at his local club in Vestmannaeyjar, an archipelago off Iceland's southern coast, Hallgrímsson is surely the only international soccer coach to be featured on the Colgate toothpaste blog. His everyman status has endeared the coach to his countrymen. "You know the world of football coaches, where you wake up tomorrow and don't have a job?" says Hallgrímsson. "Don't apply to me."

Hallgrímsson has guided Iceland through World Cup qualification and rising expectations. But the homespun trappings remain. At an early-May press conference naming the 23-man roster for Russia, the first question came from a man who wondered why a certain goalkeeper didn't make it. Turns out this inquisitor wasn't a member of the media. Rather, he was the keeper's father-in-law.

IN AN ATTEMPT to drum up public support after he joined Iceland's staff in 2011, Hallgrímsson pledged to meet with representatives from Tólfan, the national team's fan club, at a pub near the team's stadium before every home game. He offered to preview the starting lineup and share tactical insights with the superfans. Tólfan, which roughly translates to "12th man," was then all but dead. At the first meeting, seven fans showed up.

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Iceland has prioritized youth soccer, as at this club in Selfoss, left; Kristrún Rut Hassing Antonsdóttir plays for the Selfoss women's team

Now, even as the head coach of a World Cup squad, Hallgrímsson has continued the pregame gatherings at the pub. "If you sing, if you wear the national shirt, you deserve a little bit extra from us," he says. Hundreds of fans now pile into the bar to hear Hallgrímsson. Many have been guzzling Viking beer for hours, but they hush as the coach speaks from a stage.

Hallgrímsson's loyalty to Iceland's supporters have helped fans form an especially tight bond with their team. Iceland's supporters bought 27,000 tickets—a number equal to 8% of the country's population—to the 2016 Euros in France. While the longer trip to Russia might shrink the traveling party at the World Cup, Iceland will surely make its presence felt, Viking clap and all. Kristinn Hallur Jónsson, Tólfan's treasurer, assures it. "Ronaldo was a nice appetizer," says Jónsson, slamming his hand against a barroom table as he recalls the draw with Portugal in France. "Messi is going to be a great main course."

That may be more than the Viking talking. Maradona isn't the only veteran soccer hand to call Iceland a dark horse. Matthäus predicts that Iceland will survive group play against Argentina, Nigeria and Croatia and advance to the knockout round. "Iceland can only surprise," he says.

At the Euros, Ronaldo complained about Iceland's deliberate style, calling it a sign of a "small mentality." But the team doesn't have the talent to play a faster possession game and string together pretty passes. "If we were to try to play like Spain," says Hallgrímsson, "we'd be a bad replica of Spain."

So Iceland will stick to its plan, no matter the size of the stage. Counter-attack after an opponent makes a mistake. Capitalize on set pieces such as corner kicks and throw-ins, which are easier to perfect with practice. Bank on technically gifted midfielder Gylfi Sigurdsson, whom Everton of the English Premier League purchased from another club for $58 million last summer, to make an impact. "People call it sh-tty football, boring football," says Iceland defender Ari Freyr Skúlason. "But it works for us."

As long as Iceland keeps knocking off World Cup favorites, its fan base will keep growing. The players are well aware, for example, that more than 300 million Americans don't have a home team in this World Cup. They hope that U.S. fans will adopt Our Boys as their own. "Americans like the underdog," says Iceland defender Birkir Már Saevarsson, who spent part of this season making deliveries for a Reykjavík salt distributor. "It's a big thing in the movies," he says. "*The Mighty Ducks,* for example."

Or Iceland could get a movie of its own. It already has the director. "There are many things to like about our team," says Halldórsson, the filmmaker turned world-class goalie. "We don't have any big stars. We're playing for the love of football, love of country. You can feel the joy we're bringing our supporters. There's purity to it. It's football at its most beautiful."

Halldórsson then puts on his shoes, heads to his car and drives away from the kindergarten classroom. A storybook World Cup awaits. ◻

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Time Off

HAUTE THRILLS Toni Collette stars in the disturbing *Hereditary*, the newest title in the recent art-horror boom

INSIDE

MOVIES

Things that go bump in the night—artfully

By Stephanie Zacharek

Family affair: Collette and her brood tangle with evil forces

PERHAPS EVERY ERA GETS THE HORROR movies it doesn't yet know it deserves, pictures that seep into our souls even before they infiltrate our minds. Ari Aster's debut feature *Hereditary* is a movie for the mood of today, unsettling in its arid, controlled creepiness, but largely distinguished by Toni Collette's intricately layered lead performance, a portrayal of a woman whose love for her family spirals into mad decay. Collette plays Annie Graham, an artist and mom who comes to learn that she's carrying a terrifying multigenerational secret—that she is, in effect, passing along a curse to her children, the very people she has been entrusted to protect. As the movie opens, Annie is mourning the death of her mother Ellen, a remote, secretive woman who didn't exactly foster warm fuzzies when she was alive. There's early evidence that Ellen was involved in some sort of cult: we see Annie fingering a pendant she wears around her neck, a strange swirly symbol that was also of importance to her mother. And as she goes through Ellen's effects, Annie finds a note her mother had written to her years ago: "Our sacrifices will pale next to the rewards. Love, Mommy."

Brrrrr.

Hereditary posits that ghosts live inside all families, whether we welcome them or not. Annie's grief for her mother is on the more conflicted end of the mourning spectrum: "Should I be sadder?" she asks her almost mechanically supportive husband Steve, played by a stalwart Gabriel Byrne. Their daughter Charlie (Milly Shapiro), an odd loner of a child who, from some angles, looks like a very old man from some forbidden fairy-tale wood, takes Ellen's death harder: she and her grandmother were close. When Charlie snips the head off a dead bird with a pair of scissors and tucks the bloody little treasure in her pocket, you get the feeling you know where her weirdo impulses come from.

Meanwhile, teenage son Peter (Alex Wolff) seems like the group's outlier, a kid who's more interested in getting high with his friends than getting tangled in his bummed-out family's problems. But the whatever-it-is that lies in wait for the Grahams will spare no one. In the end the plotlines of *Hereditary* don't totally connect as well as they should. But the movie still succeeds on the strength of its sustained tension. Aster, who also wrote the script, builds a shaky ladder of dread that takes you higher than you'd probably like to go.

Like all genres, horror movies have a way of reflecting the era in which they were made: sci-fi horror films of the 1950s like *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and *Them!* riffed on American anxiety over nuclear experimentation and the threat of communism. The zombie-movie explosion of the 1970s, '80s and beyond was launched by George Romero's 1968 stark, super-low-budget *Night of the Living Dead,* in which the hero (and only decent man) was a black guy—the movie was a blunt expression of the unrest and frustration then clawing away at our not-even-close-to-being-integrated country. Joseph Ruben's *The Stepfather* (1987), about a seemingly normal guy—based on real-life fugitive killer John List—who murders his family because it fails to meet his perfectionist standards, is the quintessential Reagan-era chiller, a parable about the illusory nature of order and prosperity. (The picture was remade, badly, in 2009.) In some ways, *Hereditary* is *The Stepfather*'s spiritual heir: there's nothing overtly political about it, but essayists of the future—and probably even some from next week—are sure to see in it evidence of contemporary

PREVIOUS PAGE, THESE PAGES: A24

American helplessness. It's a movie about feeling small and inconsequential in the larger pattern of danger churning all around us. Those who see it as timely won't be wrong.

***HEREDITARY* IS AMONG** the films forming the swell of a new wave in horror, pictures that are smart, subtle and artfully made. That's not to say cheap, fast, comfortingly predictable horror pictures—like the myriad slasher movies that emerged in the late 1970s and early '80s, in the wake of *Halloween* and *Friday the 13th*—don't have value. Their brash energy counts for a lot, and in horror movies, especially, too much highfalutin artiness can just end up being a chill-killer. But for too long, the horror landscape has been dominated by the grisly sadism of *Saw* (2004) and its numerous sequels and imitators, as well as by the faux-DIY aesthetic of found-footage exercises like *The Blair Witch Project* (1999). The ugly brutality of the former and the winking self-consciousness of the latter have both run their course.

But *Hereditary,* along with other fairly recent movies like Jordan Peele's ambitious *Get Out* and John Krasinski's clever *A Quiet Place*—as well as earlier ones like Jennifer Kent's 2014 mom-gone-mad feature *The Babadook* and Robert Eggers' 2015 homespun goat-worship tableau *The Witch,* suggest we're in the midst of a horror renaissance. Yet to call it that suggests that horror movies are only now worthy of being taken seriously, when that clearly isn't the case. This shift is about something else: I often hear people say, "I can't tolerate horror movies," because they're thinking exclusively of slasher films, or of *Saw* and its ilk. But what about Robert Wise's 1963 Shirley Jackson adaptation *The Haunting,* which terrifies only by whispery suggestion? Or Alejandro Amenábar's bleak, elegant thriller *The Others,* from 2001, featuring Nicole Kidman as a wary matriarch drifting through a haunted house with her two young children? Then there's Dario Argento's outrageously opulent 1977 *Suspiria,* a wiggy marvel for its production design alone. Style is a language, and to turn away from *Suspiria*'s fuchsia-blood-splattered, art nouveau gothic bordello-a-go-go aesthetic is to deprive yourself of one of moviedom's great visual pleasures. (*Call Me by Your Name* director Luca Guadagnino clearly feels that way too; he's making his own version of the film, set to be released later this year.)

Saying "I don't like horror movies" is like saying "I don't like love stories." You just haven't met the right one. Maybe it helps to draw some lines, even if they're wavy, mutable ones, between supernatural horror, psychological horror and pure gore. There are just some experiences you don't want to put yourself through: I've heard enough about Ruggero Deodato's allegedly lurid and bloody 1980 *Cannibal Holocaust* to know that I never want to see it.

Saying 'I don't like horror movies' is like saying 'I don't like love stories.' You just haven't met the right one

Hereditary does have some scenes that could qualify as gory, or maybe just icky. But they're not the movie's chief reason for being. Aster also strives to map the sometimes unnavigable pathways connecting mothers and daughters, mothers and sons, husbands and wives. And like other movies in this new wave of horror, as in many great horror movies before it, *Hereditary* makes room for its actors, and that makes a difference. Wolff, as the zonked-out teenager who later becomes all too plugged in, is one of the movie's stealth weapons: he captures the feeling of wandering through that weird bardo of adolescence, a time when you're going around in a body that allegedly belongs to you yet hardly feels like your own.

But Collette is the soul of *Hereditary.* Even when this movie hits peak dour overdrive, she remains its true north. Her Annie is a respected gallery artist who makes dollhouse-style dioramas depicting the routines of everyday life rendered in miniature. Annie's work becomes even more personal as she reckons with her mother's death—she seems to be trying to burrow into the tiniest corners of complex feelings. But Collette's finest moment—a brief sequence in which you can barely see her face, an instance of a performer channeling pure, electric feeling through her very being—is an expression of grief so distilled and intimate it made me want to look away. The moment is captured in a wide shot, which means that the two figures in it, Annie and Gabriel Byrne's Steve, look smaller than life rather than larger, a bit like the tiny, static humans that people Annie's artwork. Annie's suffering is so intense that she's doubled over; she's keening, though it's the kind of wail where you can't be sure sound is coming out. There's some creepy, spooky stuff in *Hereditary,* images and ideas that just might surface in your nightmares. But the radical, undiluted humanness of Collette's performance is the movie's most haunting effect. There's nothing supernatural about it. Call it the best humans can do without witchcraft. □

QUICK TALK

Toni Collette

In Hereditary, *Collette, 45, plays an artist and mother who becomes unhinged as she uncovers disturbing family secrets after her own mother's death. Her performance has earned raves as the movie finds its place in a new boom of highbrow horror films.*

How did you come to this role? I was not looking to do a film like this. I had specifically said, "I'm sick of heavy—I don't want to cry all the time at work anymore." My agent called and said, "I know what you said, but you need to read this." And he was right. I loved it. I don't know if *love* is the right word—it was more of a knowledge that I had to do it.

Did you see yourself in this character? No! I mean, it's quite extreme. Ultimately, it's about a woman having an awakening after having a distant, destructive, unnurturing relationship with her mother. Often, we associate an awakening with a positive, revelatory gap. In this film, it's the idea of no hope and no escape. That's the scariest thing about it.

"I WAS NOT LOOKING TO DO A FILM LIKE THIS. I HAD SPECIFICALLY SAID, "I'M SICK OF HEAVY."

What was it like filming the more intensely physical scenes? It was more a case of trying to push it away until it was the moment between "action" and "cut"—resisting it and letting it out at the right time. When it becomes ambiguous as to why my character is becoming more and more maniacal, at times it felt a little over the top, because the rest of the story felt completely realistic and natural. But I think that had to happen. The closer she gets to the truth, it's so un-f-cking believable that it is quite realistic to react in that way.

Did it make you think about what you inherited from your parents, or your children from you? I think about that all the time. We're all a combination of nature vs. nurture. In those early years, your mother is a direct reflection of who you are. We certainly bring our own spirit into the world, but they inform who we are so greatly. Some people don't get what they need; others get more than they need. It's totally fascinating.

You've played a lot of mothers. Is there something about maternal roles that you're drawn to? I suppose it would be subconscious, because I don't understand why. But all of those women I played were completely different. I had my first kid when I was 35, and had been playing mothers since I was 24—I turned 25 during the shoot for *The Sixth Sense*. But I always think, Well, I've been on the other end of that relationship. I know my mother pretty well, and maybe it was more a reflection of that knowledge.

What's your relationship with horror as a genre? I don't watch horror films. The only time I watched them was at sleepovers as a teenager. I have such a vivid imagination and I don't need to feed it with that kind of stuff. But something specific to both *The Sixth Sense* and *Hereditary* is that they are not solely horror films. They are beautiful portrayals of something really deep, and it makes them more complex, more interesting—and probably scarier.

Do you feel like after this experience, you want to do something a little lighter? I think I have enough self-awareness to do whatever comes along. I don't feel like it's a balancing act at work. But I don't know. I've never had a plan, and I still don't.

—ELIZA BERMAN

MOVIES

Smooth criminals

By Lucy Feldman

CATE BLANCHETT KICKS off her shoes before she joins Mindy Kaling and Anne Hathaway to lounge on a plush hotel bed in New York City. The actors—three of the eight stars of *Ocean's 8*—have been busy promoting the all-female spin-off of the long-running franchise, out June 8. A rest is warranted.

In the new heist comedy, Sandra Bullock's Debbie Ocean (sister to Danny, played by George Clooney in the early-2000s trilogy) recruits a crew of skilled criminals to steal a priceless necklace off a starlet, played by Hathaway, at the Met Gala. Blanchett plays Lou, Debbie's right-hand woman. Then there's the hacker (Rihanna), the jeweler (Kaling), the designer (Helena Bonham Carter), the fence (Sarah Paulson) and the pickpocket (Awkwafina).

Blanchett, Kaling and Hathaway—eloquent even while reclining—spoke to TIME about on-set antics, the power and pressure of a female ensemble and their ideas for a sequel.

What was your favorite day on set?

Kaling: We were shooting at night in a getaway car, all wearing black, and it was cold out. And we were like, you know what would be great? Cocktails. And Sandy [Bullock] just materialized with some grapefruit juice and tequila.

Blanchett: I was nervous because I'm really not a tequila girl. But it's not bad.

Kaling: You were the getaway driver, weren't you?

COLLETTE: GETTY IMAGES; OCEAN'S 8: WARNER BROS.

The eight indulged in some adult beverages—onscreen and off

Blanchett: Yeah, but the car wasn't actually moving. It was green-screened.
Hathaway: My first day was the day after the election.
Kaling: *[Sarcastically.]* We were all rejoicing. Because our guy won.
Hathaway: We went through makeup, then Hillary [Clinton] gave her speech, and we cried off our makeup—then we had it put back on and worked a 20-hour day.

What discoveries did you make about one another?
Blanchett: I thought, *What if we don't all click?* Part of you does buy that bullsh-t that women are competitive. But that disappeared after 20 seconds in makeup.
Hathaway: The thing I'd never been able to imagine is that people I admire struggle or miss a line or have a day where their kid has the stomach flu. By the end, I felt if I was struggling, I didn't have to hide that.

If filming were to start tomorrow, how would things be different?
Blanchett: So much has changed even since day one of shooting this film. The culture has shifted.
Kaling: We're so lucky we were part of something that was sort of a unicorn when it happened, and now we just happen to be ahead of our time doing a movie with all women. People feel good about going to see it politically, because we're in a charged time—but it's also just a great, funny movie.
Hathaway: I'd like to have a nursery on set.
Kaling: That might be a must.
Hathaway: Not just for the actresses, but for the crew. So people, especially women, don't have to choose between pursuing their careers and [parenting].

'So much has changed even since day one of shooting this film. The culture has shifted.'
Cate Blanchett

Do you feel more pressure these days to speak about your politics?
Blanchett: At Cannes, because I was president of the jury, a lot of questions in the press conference were directed toward me. One journalist said how outspoken I was. I was like, Dude, *you were asking me the f-cking questions.* If a woman has an opinion she's "forthright" or she "doesn't take prisoners."
Kaling: We've always had a responsibility that comes with any kind of platform, and it's bullsh-t to say that you don't accept that. I feel that as a woman, doubly so as a woman of color. I don't love having to talk about my politics whenever I want to promote a movie or show.

If there were a blooper reel, what would be on it?
Kaling: A lot of Paulson.
Hathaway: Us cry-laughing around Sarah Paulson.
Kaling: She's a very uninhibited, open-spirited person, and just so funny.
Hathaway: Also a lot of Helena [Bonham Carter] trying to ground us in the scene we just came from.
Blanchett: For some reason, her character was Irish.
Kaling: It took me a long time to realize that Helena was not Irish.

Any hopes for a sequel?
Hathaway: I want us to go all over Europe. Because the boys got to go to Rome and Lake Como.
Blanchett: I'd like to do Brazil, around Carnival.
Hathaway: O.K., I withdraw my suggestion. A Carnival heist movie? Also Cate suggested that we should have RuPaul in it, and I think that would be great. ◻

POP CHART
***TIME*'S WEEKLY TAKE ON WHAT POPPED IN CULTURE**

Actor Benedict Cumberbatch is being hailed as a hero after he reportedly **jumped out of an Uber ride to come to the aid of a cyclist** who was being mugged by four assailants in London.

Jimmy Fallon delivered a **surprise keynote address at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School's graduation,** in which he thanked the students for their courage and bravery in the wake of the shooting.

LOVE IT
LEAVE IT

Solo: A Star Wars Story **plummeted in its second weekend at the box office,** earning just $29.3 million domestically, which may put it on course to become the first movie in the franchise to lose money.

On Succession, *Brian Cox plays Logan Roy, a mogul searching for an heir*

TELEVISION

A media dynasty gets a savage take

By Judy Berman

A RICH AND POWERFUL ELDERLY patriarch must name an heir to his vast media empire. He has plenty of grownup children to choose from, but none of them seem truly capable of furthering his legacy. In fact, most of his kids are nasty, spoiled nightmares who won't hesitate to kneecap one another as they race to the old man's throne.

It's a tale as old as time—or at least, as old as *King Lear*—and television can't stop retelling it. *Succession,* which premiered on June 3 on HBO, is the latest worthy addition to a niche already occupied by shows including *Empire, Trust* and *Arrested Development.* Despite its hourlong format, this show about the Rupert Murdoch–like octogenarian media mogul Logan Roy (Brian Cox) and his scheming family plays like a dark comedy, with its deadpan tone working harder to underline the absurdity of the Roys' antics than to build real sympathy for its characters.

That choice plays to the strengths of executive producer Adam McKay *(The Big Short),* who directed the series premiere, as well as creator Jesse Armstrong, who honed his ear for creative profanity as a writer for the beloved British comedies *Peep Show* and *The Thick of It.* Like many characters on those shows, the Roys are narcissists, oddballs, control freaks and all-around jerks. Logan's heir apparent, Kendall (Jeremy Strong), is a type-A bro and recovering addict whose favorite word is "Dude." Debauchery, laziness and a superiority complex have kept Kendall's younger brother Roman (a gloriously vicious Kieran Culkin) out of

'We look at Rupert Murdoch and we think we know him, but we forget that he's a human being.'

Brian Cox, to the New York *Times*

STAR WARS: LUCASFILM; SUCCESSION: HBO; FALLON: TAMBOR; HOWARD: SUTHERLAND: GETTY IMAGES

the family business. The baby of the bunch, Siobhan (Sarah Snook), works as a political operative—and it shows in her skills as a sharp manipulator. Just outside the fray are the siblings' space-cadet half brother Connor (Alan Ruck) as well as Logan's nephew Greg Hirsch (Nicholas Braun), an awkward young striver who shows up at the mogul's 80th birthday party to beg for employment.

It's no wonder that Logan, a gruff self-made billionaire who was born in Scotland, has reservations about handing his company to Kendall, whose abrasive personality has already hurt the business. But Logan's claim that he'll keep his post for the next decade is undermined by the reality that he can't even find the bathroom in the middle of the night anymore. And it doesn't help that the only relative he really seems to trust is his current spouse Marcia (Hiam Abbass), a poker-faced sophisticate whose backstory remains murky.

TV's troubled patriarchs

Cox's Logan Roy isn't the only man on the small screen looking for someone to take the helm of his business

GEORGE BLUTH (JEFFREY TAMBOR)
On ***Arrested Development,*** which just returned for a fifth season on Netflix, Tambor plays a corrupt real estate developer.

LUCIOUS LYON (TERRENCE HOWARD)
The founder of a record label, Howard's Lyon on Fox's ***Empire*** is as scheming as his family as he searches for a successor.

J. PAUL GETTY (DONALD SUTHERLAND)
On FX's ***Trust,*** based on the true story of the Getty kidnapping, the veteran actor steps into the role of the oil baron.

We see glimpses of the Roys' personal lives. Most scenes, however, take place in the corridors—and helicopters—of power. Like *Veep* (which shares a creator, Armando Iannucci, with Armstrong's series *The Thick of It*), this is a show about how ridiculous shameless ambition can sound. Operatic insults stand in for fistfights. Breathtaking acts of hubris replace poignant family moments. Armstrong builds suspense around his bleak view of wealth and success by asking how far these characters will go—and how they'll justify that behavior.

Will it ever become tiresome to watch these characters wage war on one another over a corporation that sounds more noxious with each passing episode? Possibly—it's hard to imagine *Succession* squeezing more than a few seasons out of this material. For the time being, though, its expertly calibrated performances and cutting dialogue make it a worthy addition to the *Lear*-lite canon. ◻

REVIEW

Decoding a president's prose

By Tessa Berenson

THE PRESIDENT IS ABOUT TO BE IMPEACHED. A progressive Southerner with a common touch, he's squaring off against a conservative House that is trying to remove him from office. "Savagery in the quest for power is older than the Bible," he gripes, "but some of my opponents really hate my guts."

It's hard to miss the parallels between the fictional President Jonathan Duncan and a certain co-author of *The President Is Missing,* a new thriller out June 4 by James Patterson and former President Bill Clinton. Clinton faced his own impeachment scandal in the 1990s, in the aftermath of his affair with White House intern Monica Lewinsky, and his fumbling responses to recent questions about his behavior have turned the book tour with Patterson into a fresh referendum on his misdeeds.

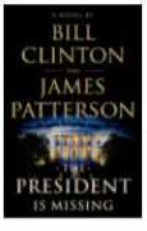
In the fictional tale, Duncan's trouble stems from nobler circumstances, involving a risky foreign policy maneuver meant to stave off an attempted cyberattack on the U.S. Set over five days, the story weaves through clandestine meetings between heads of state, the movements of a classical-music-obsessed assassin and a lot of gunfire as the President goes undercover to save the country.

Patterson—the best-selling author in the world, most famous for his mysteries and thrillers—linked up with Clinton at the suggestion of their mutual agent, according to a spokesperson at Knopf, which is co-publishing the book with Patterson's longtime publisher Little, Brown and Co. The authors, both of whom favor writing in longhand, spent a year passing handwritten drafts back and forth. The publishers have ordered a first print run of 1 million copies—more than double the already considerable amount for a typical Patterson release.

THE PAGES OF *The President Is Missing* are filled with the classic tropes of a big commercial thriller, from ticking countdown clocks and Hollywood-worthy disguises to clipped prose that ratchets up the suspense. But the authors resist pure escapism: this novel is rife with political statements.

Preaching about truth in politics or suggesting basic policy prescriptions for veterans' care, police violence and immigration sometimes make what should be a light summer read feel more like a campaign platform. But the plot is nothing if not timely. Russia gets chastised for election meddling, and Duncan warns of the dangers of "false equivalency" in reporting. "When you find a mountain to expose in one person or party, you have to pick a molehill on the other side and make it into a mountain to avoid being accused of bias," he says. It's a line ripped from the headlines, and one with personal resonance for Clinton: "false equivalency" was a complaint frequently lodged by the left about the media's treatment of Hillary Clinton in her 2016 race against President Donald Trump.

Patterson, left, and Clinton share an agent, who suggested they write together



The co-authors wrote the novel via handwritten drafts mailed back and forth for a year

It's the tantalizing presence of Clinton's pen that drives the most compelling feature of the book: the meta-mystery of which parts he may have written. Duncan curses the impeachment "witch hunt" engineered by the House Speaker. He criticizes how "sensational sells over factual" in news. He bemoans that "there is no trust anymore" amid the bitter partisanship dividing the country. It's tempting to think that this could be the real Clinton venting through the pages of his first novel—or perhaps that a particular former presidential candidate may have peeked over his shoulder as he wrote.

Behind the shield of fiction, what secret truths might Clinton be revealing about the life of a President in crisis? During President Duncan's high-stakes adventure, he encounters his chief of staff's husband after a particularly dangerous scrape. "It sounds like you have quite a story to tell," the man says, noting Duncan's haggard appearance. "But I'll never hear a word of it." The pleasure of this book is in imagining what Clinton might disclose about his own years as President, if only he would. ◻

DAVID BURNETT

FICTION

White-knuckle reads

These three satisfyingly unconventional thrillers are sure to keep readers on the edge of their towels on lazy summer beach days. *—Wilder Davies*

THE WORD IS MURDER
By Anthony Horowitz
The prolific English writer puts a meta-fictional spin on a classic Holmesian mystery by placing himself in the middle of his own story, which follows a brash former detective as he investigates the murder of a London aristocrat. *(June 5)*

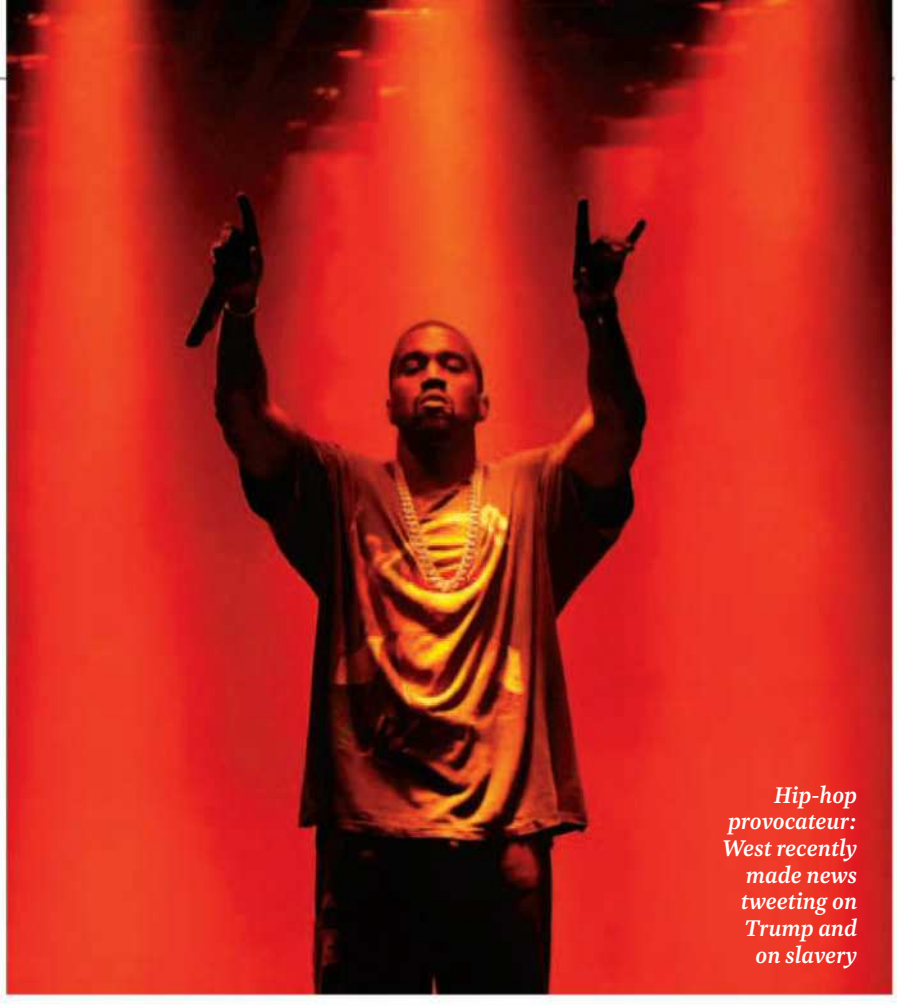
BEARSKIN
By James A. McLaughlin
Seeking solace in his work as a caretaker for an Appalachian nature preserve, an environmentalist escaping a dark past puts his life in jeopardy when he tries to stop an illegal bear-poaching ring in this rustic-noir slow burner. *(June 12)*

SOCIAL CREATURE
By Tara Isabella Burton
Beneath a veneer of glamorous uptown debauchery lurks a sinister reality in Burton's frenetic debut novel, which encircles a twisted friendship between a struggling New York transplant and an eccentric social-media debutante. *(June 5)*

REVIEW

On *Ye*, Kanye West is still a tangle of contradictions

By Maura Johnston



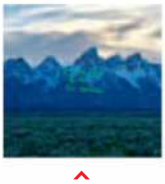
Hip-hop provocateur: West recently made news tweeting on Trump and on slavery

KANYE WEST'S PROJECTS SINCE HE teamed up with his now wife Kim Kardashian West in 2012—including the abrasive *Yeezus,* the sprawling *The Life of Pablo* and the series of personal appearances punctuated by top-of-the-head singles—have had varying stylistic contours. The one thing they've consistently focused on is contrast: light and dark, ugly and beautiful, self-aggrandizing and self-loathing.

West might be uniquely qualified to grapple with this. In the public mind of 2018, he is "Kanye," shorthand for an outspoken black man who says a lot of outré things in a world that still struggles mightily with its racial politics, someone whom Barack Obama has called a "jackass" and who is married to a similarly polarizing figure. He's also Kanye West, a rapper and producer from Chicago who is happy when he's eating ice cream. The back-and-forth between "Kanye" and the public can be excruciating to watch unfold in real time, particularly when it deals with topics like mental illness and opioid addiction, and even more so when it touches especially volatile topics like President Trump. This dynamic is at its most disheartening when it crosses onto platforms that take the wink-and-nod approach to any subject they tackle—your TMZs, your 24-hour news networks, your drive-by tweeters looking for an excuse to blow off steam—and erase the humanity at the star's nucleus.

But West didn't reach his exalted position because he went on a reality show with no interest in making friends. He was an innovative producer who minted hits, both for himself—the Ray Charles callback "Gold Digger," the dreamy "P.Y.T." flip "Good Life"—and for others, like former confidant Jay Z and pop megastars Rihanna and Paul McCartney. This year, in addition to his gossip-blog-poking appearances, he returned to music, on albums for himself as well as other artists in his G.O.O.D. Music stable. He said on Twitter that he was "chopping samples from the sunken place." By this, apparently, he meant Jackson Hole, Wyo.

IT WAS THERE on the night of May 31, with boldface names and influencers gathered around a campfire, that West premiered *Ye,* his eighth solo album. *Ye* opens in the dark; the first track is unnervingly called "I Thought About Killing You," and it begins with West in monologue, his voice stretching and shifting as he talks about murder and suicide over watercolor synths. "I think this is the part where I'm supposed to say something good to compensate it, so it doesn't come off … bad," he says, then chuckles mirthlessly before his voice is pitched even lower, so as to emphasize the "really, really, really bad things" knocking around his brain. (Think *American Psycho,* where the exalted business cards are flaunted on Instagram.) While those impulses recede, they linger over the rest of the record.



"I hate being Bi-Polar its awesome," West writes on the cover artwork for his latest album

Sonically, *Ye* resembles his last album, *The Life of Pablo.* But it is also more stripped down—perhaps appropriately, given its terse title—with the occasional pitch-shifted voice dropped in to add uneasiness. *Ye* doesn't deviate too much from the lyrical concepts of *Pablo;* it blends the trivial and the life-or-death, like on the darkened-club "Yikes," on which he declares his bipolar syndrome (he also refers to it on the scrawled-on-iPhone-pic album art) to be his "superpower" and compares the U.S.-North Korea tensions to his long-simmering beef with Wiz Khalifa. "Wouldn't Leave" is a love song that doubles as an apology to his wife.

Closing track "Violent Crimes," which features a shout-out to and cameo by fellow stratosphere dweller Nicki Minaj, draws from the familiar "I respect women more now that I have daughters" well that's simultaneously frustrating and a relief. But then again, it wouldn't be a Kanye West album without fundamental contradictions to the very end. □

TAYLOR HILL—GETTY IMAGES

Festival hopping is summer's most entertaining vacation

By Raisa Bruner

Over the past decade, music festivals have reached a fever pitch of popularity for artists and attendees alike: they're a cash machine for the industry, a social-media feeding frenzy and the best destination for fans to discover new artists. Plan your summer in the U.S. around these eclectic collections of acts, from stadium headliners to local bands, playing at venues from sea to shining sea.

CATCH 'EM MORE THAN ONCE ▸
Janet Jackson, the Weeknd and the Arctic Monkeys are three of the major artists slated to perform multiple headline sets at festivals this summer.

JUNE

FIREFLY
When: June 14–17
Where: Dover, Del.
Headliners: Arctic Monkeys, Eminem, Kendrick Lamar
Also check out: Vance Joy, SZA, Betty Who, Big Gigantic

ELECTRIC FOREST
When: June 21–July 1
Where: Rothbury, Mich.
Headliners: Bassnectar, the String Cheese Incident, Marshmello
Also check out: Rüfüs du Sol, Zhu, Bonobo, Keys n Krates

SUMMERFEST
When: June 27–July 8
Where: Milwaukee
Headliners: Imagine Dragons, Halsey, Shawn Mendes
Also check out: James Taylor, J. Cole, Kesha, Bishop Briggs

JULY

ESSENCE FESTIVAL
When: July 5–8
Where: New Orleans
Headliners: Erykah Badu, Mary J. Blige, Janet Jackson
Also check out: Snoop Dogg, H.E.R., Daniel Caesar, Ella Mai

FORECASTLE
When: July 13–15
Where: Louisville, Ky.
Headliners: Chris Stapleton, Arcade Fire, Modest Mouse
Also check out: Berhana, Matt Maeson, Morgan Saint

PITCHFORK
When: July 20–22
Where: Chicago
Headliners: Tame Impala, Fleet Foxes, Ms. Lauryn Hill
Also check out: Lucy Dacus, Kelela, Noname, Smino

NEWPORT FOLK FESTIVAL
When: July 27–29
Where: Newport, R.I.
Headliners: Sturgill Simpson, Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real
Also check out: St. Vincent, Courtney Barnett, Khruangbin

MO POP
When: July 28–29
Where: Detroit
Headliners: Bon Iver, The National, Portugal. The Man
Also check out: Dermot Kennedy, Billie Eilish, Brockhampton

AUGUST

LOLLAPALOOZA
When: Aug. 2–5
Where: Chicago
Headliners: Arctic Monkeys, Bruno Mars, the Weeknd
Also check out: Jack White, Dillon Francis, Lykke Li, Khalid, Kali Uchis

OUTSIDE LANDS
When: Aug. 10–12
Where: San Francisco
Headliners: Janet Jackson, the Weeknd, Florence + the Machine
Also check out: Carly Rae Jepsen, Lauv, Perfume Genius, Lizzo

HOT 100 FEST
When: Aug. 18–19
Where: Long Island, N.Y.
Headliners: DJ Snake, Future, Rae Sremmurd
Also check out: Kehlani, Kim Petras, Krewella, Daya

AFROPUNK
When: Aug. 25–26
Where: Brooklyn
Headliners: Janelle Monáe, Miguel, Erykah Badu
Also check out: Jacob Banks, Jaden Smith, Ibeyi

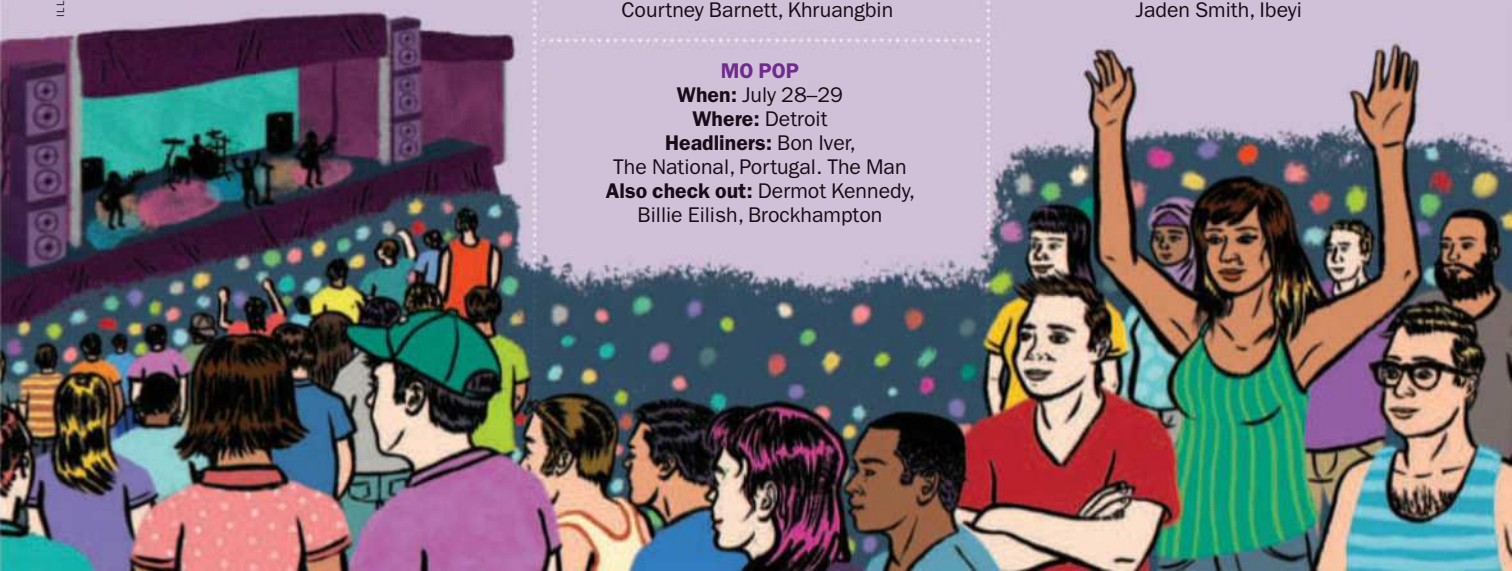


ILLUSTRATION BY DANIEL FISHEL FOR TIME; JACKSON, THE WEEKND: GETTY IMAGES; TURNER: SHUTTERSTOCK

Ben Rhodes The former White House adviser on eight years at President Obama's side, what his old boss bottled up and how Putin and Trump are alike

In your book *The World as It Is: A Memoir of the Obama White House*, you seem to be more than the Deputy National Security Adviser or a speechwriter. What was your relationship with Barack Obama? I think by the end, we'd been through so many things together, all of his foreign travel and all of these intense crises, and you do just develop a shared experience, shared points of reference. I was someone he could talk to about movies, or what did he really think about this foreign leader, or what's annoying him. And there are not many people when you're in the bubble of the presidency who you can be yourself with. I wanted to convey that human side.

After Donald Trump won, Obama mused in the back of a limo, "Were we too soon?" What did you take that to mean? Demographics. He said to us, "This country's going to change. You know, there's gonna be a Latino Barack Obama and an Asian Barack Obama." But the demographic tipping point hasn't happened. He caught lightning in a bottle in 2008 and kind of cut the line. Trump was able to cobble together enough of a backlash constituency rooted in grievance—a largely white coalition—in a way that, frankly, would not be demographically possible 10 or 20 years from now.

Obama's speeches always articulated ideals. Trump's never do. Does that matter? One of the things I was struck by in this job was how much the words of an American President mattered around the world. People could quote the words back to you. Trump's speech at the U.N. sounded like the Chinese or Russian view of the world.

Obama provoked a lot of racist responses. Did his staff urge him to respond? The general sense was he was damned if he did and damned if he didn't. But it would come out in private moments of catharsis. He would be preparing for a press conference, and we'd say, "You may be asked, 'Is some of the opposition you face about race?'" And he'd joke, "Yes. Next question." Or we'd talk about how to discuss the Black Lives Matter movement and the backlash to that, and he'd say, "Well, cops should stop shooting unarmed black kids." And you knew he wasn't going to actually say that. He would kind of come out in this kind of gallows humor, because to him, of course, so much of this antagonism toward him was about race. But I came to see that, as an African American, he had priced that in on the front end of this journey. So he didn't wallow in it.

"TRUMP'S SPEECH AT THE U.N. SOUNDED LIKE THE CHINESE OR RUSSIAN VIEW OF THE WORLD"

Is his discipline made more striking by his successor? He was the most disciplined person I've ever been around.

Is it surprising that someone so charismatic believed in institutions? He is at his core an institutionalist. You make change incrementally. He, unlike any other American President, had in his DNA and family experience an understanding that institutions are the thin veneer between civilization and either anarchy or tyranny.

Is Trump testing that? Trump is testing whether the rules actually matter or they're just ephemeral norms that can be cast aside by a strongman. And we don't know the answer to that, but we're gonna find out in the next year or two.

In the book, Obama says some U.S. voters probably felt they had more in common with Vladimir Putin than with him. Was that prescient? He understood Putinism and that the same forces were in the U.S., that kind of tribal, nostalgic brand of politics that is constantly looking to the past. "Make America great again" is not that different from Putin's nostalgia for the Soviet Union or czarist Russia. —KARL VICK

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