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DAVE VS. BORIS

INSIDE THE MOST IMPORTANT—AND FRAUGHT—
RELATIONSHIP IN BRITISH POLITICS

BY ISABEL OAKESHOTT

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P A G E O N E

CHINA REFUGEES HEALTH LEBANON RUSSIA UGANDA

COLD COMFORT

Despite the dangers of the European winter, refugees are still coming, and many will die

OMID FATEHI KARAJO, his wife, Nadereh, and their 10-year-old daughter, Wanya, have made a bold decision. In a few days, they will pile into an inflatable raft and cast off from the Turkish coast in the hope of landing on one of the Greek islands. Sitting together on a sofa in front of their webcam, the adults don't smile much. Omid is busy explaining his story through a translator, his wife occasionally intervening, while their daughter alternates between sitting on them and sliding in next to them, grinning shyly through her mass of black curls at the webcam. "I am worried [about the journey]," Wanya says. "Especially from Turkey to Greece, because the sea is dangerous." She can swim, but her parents cannot. Omid says he will buy life jackets before his family sets sail.

The Fatehi Karajos used to live in Sanandaj, the capital of Iran's Kurdistan province. More than three years ago, following Omid's arrest and torture for his connections to Kurdish political parties, they fled to Iraqi Kurdistan.

But when threats came from Iranian security forces, the family crossed another border, this time to the Turkish city of Eskisehir, where they have lived for 19 months. Despite the approaching winter and the increasing danger of traveling now, they say they can't stay any longer in Turkey, where, as Kurds, they are often targets of racial abuse. Omid says he was assaulted recently by his neighbor. When he reported it to the police, he was told to leave, that they didn't want Kurds in their country. "The most important thing for us is safety," he says. "We know that there is cold weather [in Europe], but it is better than being threatened here."

Despite the plummeting temperatures, the United Nations refugee agency, UNHCR, has recorded 218,394 refugees crossing the Mediterranean this past October, which is dramatically higher than the total for the same month in 2014, when there were 23,050 arrivals. In previous years, the refugee crisis was affected by the seasons—summer saw high numbers of

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MATEJ POVSE

HUDDLED MASSES:
A Syrian child tries
to stay warm as
he waits near a
registration center
in the town of
Presevo, Serbia, in
September.

NEWSWEEK 12 11/13/2015

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online: extended photo essay **[view]**

Matej Povse won a **LensCulture Exposure Award (2nd Place)**
for this work after it was published in Newsweek.



arrivals, but those dropped off during winter. In 2015, things are different. One reason is the route has changed. Approximately four times as many refugees are setting sail from Turkey to Greece—a trip that can take as little as 25 minutes in a sturdy boat—as those going from North Africa to Italy. Though winter storms over the Aegean bring lashing rain and high waves, making traveling in a smuggler's rubber dinghy a daunting prospect, many refugees believe the short distance makes this a comparatively safe option, even as winter approaches.

This trip, which over 41,000 people made in 2014, has been growing in popularity in 2015. “The route from Turkey to Greece and up through the Balkans is really a 2015 phenomenon,” says Adrian Edwards, a UNHCR spokesman. One of the reasons for this is the worsening of conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan—three countries whose citizens make up 93 percent of the arrivals in Greece. These refugees are geographically closer to Turkey; it makes no sense for them to take the North African route. The number of people fleeing these countries seems likely to continue growing over the winter too. Syria has experienced a surge in fighting, caused in part by Russia beginning airstrikes on September 30, while in Afghanistan the Taliban continue to make gains.

Unlike economic migrants, those escaping war cannot choose when to leave. For refugees in countries like Turkey and Lebanon, where many live in miserable conditions with little money, the success others have had making the journey is encouraging them to follow suit rather than endure yet another cold winter where they are. Others are scared that the European Union might be preparing to shut its borders or make a border arrangement with Turkey. Even though it's cold and dangerous, they'd rather cross now than risk being locked out.

To encourage refugees to make the crossing, many people-smugglers, fearing a drop in business, have slashed their prices. Speaking to *Newsweek* via WhatsApp, a people-smuggler who goes

by the name Fida al-Hamwi says he is offering a special winter rate. A boat trip from Turkey to Greece costs between \$1,500 and \$2,000 in the summer. Now it's between \$1,000 and \$1,500, he says. Al-Hamwi's Facebook page, *Smuggled Into Greece*, shows a photo of a gleaming white yacht, though photos and videos on the page of people who have crossed safely show a black inflatable raft in the background.

The Fatehi Karajos paid \$1,200 each to their smuggler to make the crossing. They scraped together the money from friends and family, while Omid took various construction jobs, earning \$10 a day. Assuming the crossing goes safely, they will find little shelter in Greece. Rights groups, including Amnesty International and Save the Children, have criticized the Greek government for a lack of proper reception centers and shelters. “There is an awareness that they need to winterize the tents,” says Patrick Nicholson, director of communications at the Catholic charity Caritas Internationalis, which is headquartered in Rome. “But it hasn't happened.” On the Greek island of Lesbos, refugees are facing up to 48-hour waits to be processed, sleeping in tents not designed for winter. Others, he says, can be found resting in doorways or

PEOPLE-SMUGGLERS, FEARING A DROP IN BUSINESS, HAVE SLASHED THEIR PRICES.

under trees. In September, when Nicholson was in the Greek village of Idomeni, on the Macedonian border, he saw refugees sleeping on the train tracks.

Lack of shelter is a problem in Europe and along the Balkans route. “Europe as a whole hasn't had mechanisms in place for the mass arrival of refugees,” says the UNHCR's Edwards. “Right now, if you look across Europe the asylum picture is extremely patchy.” Even though sleeping outdoors or in flimsy tents may be feasible in the summer, it cannot continue into winter, which in the Balkans is brutal. Temperatures often drop to well below freezing, while heavy snow can block roads and stall transport. People routinely die of cold; others are stuck in their homes for days. These are the conditions that refugees plan to journey through to Western Europe in a march that many won't survive. “As we head into winter, it is looking extremely



WHO GOES THERE? Hungarian border police shine a flashlight toward a family seeking to enter from Croatia in early October, before Hungary closed its border.

MATEJ POJSE

bleak,” says Edwards. “Robust reception capacities simply aren't in place.... There's a very real risk of deaths, of more people dying.”

At the Opatovac refugee camp in Croatia, close to the border with Serbia, temperatures have already dropped to around 37 degrees Fahrenheit, and it frequently rains. Charlotta Land-Al Hebshi, a child protection adviser for Save the Children who is currently in Croatia, says young children are soaked, freezing and sleeping in the open due to a lack of shelter and basic services. Since Hungary announced the closure of its border with Croatia on October 16, having already shut its border with Serbia, many refugees have had to pass through Slovenia to get to Austria, causing bottlenecks to build up. On October 21, refugees at a camp in Brezice, Slovenia, near the Croatian border, set tents on fire in protest of conditions there. They were tired of the delays, they said, while they lacked food, water and blankets to stave off the cold.

The Fatehi Karajos don't have proper winter clothes, but Omid says they will just follow the other refugees once they get to Greece. When asked where she wants to live, his daughter Wanya beams, turns to the translator and quietly says “Oslo,” where her mother's relatives are. It is painful to imagine this skinny 10-year-old girl journeying all the way through Europe in the rain and biting cold. Though aid agencies are on hand in transit camps to distribute raincoats, dry clothes and blankets, they cannot follow the refugees across countries, ensuring that they stay warm. This is the biggest problem facing governments, agencies and charities. “We do winterization programs for camps, for urban settings,” says Edwards. “But when it comes to winterizing a crowd—that's something for which there is no ready-made solution.”

As they prepare supplies for winter, aid agencies know refugees will die. The grim question for the coming months is only “How many?” ■

PRAYING FOR NO SIGNAL

Science insists that electromagnetic hypersensitivity doesn't exist—cold comfort for those debilitated by its symptoms

NEARLY A YEAR to the day 15-year-old Jenny Fry took her own life, her mother, Debra, brought tulips and a sunflower to lay at her grave.

"In the early days, I came every day," Fry, a dental nurse, says over the phone from her home in Oxfordshire, England, before she left with her husband, Charles, for the cemetery. "Then it went to every other day. Generally, now it's every three days; five days at the most."

She sighs. She sounds drained, unsurprising for a mother still coming to terms with the loss of her middle child. But her exhaustion is not just because of grief. In the year since her family lost their daughter, Fry has devoted her life to battling what she says was the direct cause of Jenny's death: the onward march of technology. In doing so, she's thrust herself into a deeply polarized scientific debate over how best to define an illness on the frontier of science today.

For over two and a half years, Jenny had been feeling ill, complaining of headaches and exhaustion. She couldn't concentrate at school and couldn't sleep at night. Her parents tried a host of solutions to alleviate the problem: They bought a new mattress and thicker curtains to help her sleep; they took her to an orthodontist to see if the headaches were caused by an overbite. "I did all the things you would do in my professional capacity," Debra says, "going through things like a detective to see what caused this or that, and ruling out options."

In May 2015, Jenny came down the stairs pinching her nose. She found her mother and told her that her nose had started bleeding while she was doing her homework. "She said, 'I can't stop it,'" recalls Debra. "I haven't picked my nose; I haven't banged it," she told me. "I haven't had this before, Mum." Debra stanching her daughter's bleeding, then took to Google in search of an answer.

She became convinced Jenny suffered from a little-known and highly disputed medical condition called electromagnetic hypersensitivity (EHS). The disease is purported to be a weakness to the electromagnetic waves produced by Wi-Fi routers and cellphone towers. People who believe this say modern society is bombarding us with damaging waves, causing myriad symptoms, from headaches and nausea to nosebleeds and sleep problems.

Debra tore out the Wi-Fi in her family home, replacing it with wired Ethernet connections, and pleaded with Jenny's school to do the same. But it didn't: The headmaster did his own research and came to a different conclusion, pointing to studies that showed there was no link between Wi-Fi signals and illness. Jenny continued to suffer, returning home from school with splitting headaches that would dissipate at home. On a June day in 2015, she killed herself. At an inquest into her daughter's death, Debra told the coroner, "I believe that Wi-Fi killed my daughter."

For the better part of a decade, two diametri-

cally opposed sides—one that claims there is no scientific link between exposure to Wi-Fi signals and illness and another that says people suffer daily because of it—have battled on websites, in newspapers and in scientific journals. James Rubin of the Institute of Psychiatry at King's College London, doesn't dispute that EHS sufferers are ill. "They have physical symptoms; the quality of life they have can be appalling sometimes; they're in desperate need of help," he says. But his surveys of the science led him to believe exposure to electromagnetic rays is not to blame.

Others, including some professionals, disagree. "Ten years ago, I thought this was hokum," says Dr. David Carpenter, director of the Institute for Health and

the Environment at the University of Albany in New York. "People have symptoms they want to blame on something, so they come to electromagnetic fields as the source." But that changed with the sheer number of people who came calling at his door, claiming their lives had been irreparably changed by electromagnetic fields. He's now switched sides: He has a sympathetic

THE PROVOCATION STUDIES HAVE IN GENERAL NOT BEEN POSITIVE, BUT THOSE STUDIES "ARE DONE IN A HALF-ASSED FASHION."

FEELS REAL: A woman visiting Green Bank, West Virginia, lies down after complaining of the effects of electromagnetic hypersensitivity. Someone in a nearby cabin had set up a wireless router.

JIM MCAULEY



BY
CHRIS
STOKEL-WALKER
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ear and is banging the drum for those affected. EHS is real, Carpenter says, and it's a problem. "The question in my mind is: How does one—in a rigorous scientific fashion—go about getting information that would be convincing to a skeptical scientific community?"

There have been many attempts. A battery of tests, carried out by researchers in fields ranging from psychology to oncology, have been conducted in the past 30 years to prove EHS is caused by direct exposure to electromagnetic radiation. Typically, the tests involve exposing subjects to electromagnetic signals for a short period and measuring their reaction; then doing the same with a placebo. The results are mixed, but mostly the tests find that subjects can't distinguish between real and fake signals.

(Proponents of EHS take issue with these efforts: Carpenter says such studies "are done in half-assed fashion." Testing 15-minute exposures to electromagnetic fields, he argues, is a poor way to disprove what are in his belief the debilitating effects of prolonged daily exposure to Wi-Fi.)

In 2004, Dr. Lena Hillert of the Institute of Environmental Medicine at Karolinska Institutet in Sweden presented a seminal World Health Organization report arguing there was no proof EHS existed in the form its sufferers claim. Twelve years on, she says, there's still no scientific evidence for it. "You can never prove that something does not exist," says Hillert, "but if you fail time after time to prove that something does exist, you do kind of say, 'Enough is enough. If we don't have any new ideas or approaches, we should accept that we can't find support for this hypothesis.'" Hillert says that the best current research supports the hypothesis that EHS is basically due to the "nocebo effect"—where the expectation that something will make you ill becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Most of the scientific community agrees.

That's why there are no good data on how many people could be affected by EHS. Though provocation studies continue, EHS censuses stopped in the mid-2000s, before Wi-Fi became ubiquitous. One estimate presented at a European Economic and Social Committee public hearing in 2014 (not peer-reviewed) suggests

that around 5 percent of all Europeans are susceptible. More rigorous (but significantly older) surveys cite similar figures: 3.2 percent of Californians, 9 percent of Germans and 5 percent of the Swiss population complained of symptoms believed to be caused by EHS.

Those numbers might be why the illness is recognized by government officials in some countries. Last year, a judge in Toulouse, France, awarded a woman a disability grant of about \$900 a month after she claimed she was allergic to Wi-Fi and therefore could not work. In 2013, an Australian scientist won a workers' compensation appeal for EHS. The Swedish government classifies EHS as a functional impairment, granting compensation for its effects while not making any official judgment on the cause of EHS symptoms. In Austria, there are formal guidelines on how to diagnose and treat illnesses caused by electromagnetic sensitivity.

Nevertheless, for those who think controls on Wi-Fi routers are the only answer to the spread of EHS, the web of wireless internet being spun across the globe is worrying. It's impossible to walk through the commercial district of any developed city in the world without your phone pinging up offers to connect to Wi-Fi routers. Wi-Fi is so widespread—it's often free, in stores,

"YOU CAN NEVER PROVE THAT SOMETHING DOES NOT EXIST."

restaurants, bars, buses and cafés—that it has nearly reached the status of a public utility. For most of the world's population, that's a boon: instant connectivity, often free at the point of access, to nearly all of civilization's information (and pornography) on demand.

But people who believe Wi-Fi is a public health threat find this an intolerable, a creeping, permanently present menace. As the result of her tragedy, Debra Fry has made connections with a number of activist groups, including Electrosensitivity U.K., trying to slow the spread of Wi-Fi; some focus specifically on countering the rollout of Wi-Fi in schools. "This could be the biggest mistake we've ever, ever made," she says.

Some of those stricken with EHS end up fleeing modern society. The day before I spoke to Carpenter, he had been visited at his office by an attorney who thought she suffered from a form



OUT OF LEFT FIELD: Green Bank residents watch a little league game within sight of the Robert C. Byrd Green Bank Telescope, the world's largest steerable radio telescope.

of EHS. Dafna Tachover, who runs an advocacy group for those suffering from the aftermath of EHS, used to work and live in New York City but moved to the Catskill Mountains, 150 miles outside the city. It's the only way to escape, she says, having tried different ways to shield herself from the radiation for several years, including sleeping in her car. "I understood if I wanted to get better," she says, "my only strategy was to avoid it."

She's far from alone—as more EHS sufferers decide to leave the Wi-Fi world, communities are cropping up out in the country. There is an independently run "EHS refuge zone" in Drôme, France, nestled deep inside a nature reserve, where electromagnetic radiation emitters are banned, keeping background levels down to 1 or 2 microwatts per square meter. Green Bank, West Virginia, has become an adopted home for some EHS sufferers because of its location in the National Radio Quiet Zone, where all kinds of radio signals are banned to prevent interference with the nearby National Radio Astronomy Observatory. An EHS sufferer in South Africa runs an EHS-friendly farm, with accommodations in the Western Cape. A smattering of similar communities and communes dot the globe.

Carpenter says that EHS today is in the same position as illnesses like chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia and Gulf War sickness were before being accepted by science. "For none of those diseases do you have a blood test that will allow you to diagnose definitively what is wrong. In the meanwhile, the people who have this syndrome are really abused by society," he says. "Are we going to accommodate people that have this rather unusual syndrome, or is it just up to them to find a remote place they can survive without being ill all the time?"

Rubin, who does not think that EHS is real, agrees. "We've spent an awful lot of time and money testing whether electromagnetic fields cause symptoms. And what we haven't done is work out how we can treat these patients," he says.

EHS sufferers often say that if only everyone could see Wi-Fi, pulsing and throbbing across boulevards and down highways, zipping out of storefronts and around corners, they'd understand. Fry carries a meter that measures the strength of such signals. It's a small and inconspicuous, and people often mistake it for a cellphone. "In the average busy McDonald's or Caffè Nero," she says, "if everybody is on their laptops and mobile devices, my meter goes off the scale." ■

UNMAKING A ← MURDERER

AN UNLIKELY
FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN
A TEACHER AND A
TROUBLED YOUNG MAN
MAY HAVE CROSSED
LINES THAT SHOULDN'T
BE CROSSED AND
DESTROYED TWO LIVES.
ONE OF THOSE MEN IS
DEAD, AND THE OTHER
IS BURIED IN PRISON
FOR HIS MURDER,
A HEINOUS CRIME
FOR WHICH HE SAYS
HE'S RESPONSIBLE...
BUT DIDN'T COMMIT

BY
ALEXANDER

NAZARYAN



online: interactive documentary (25min), powered by Verse [\[view\]](#)

FOR SOMEONE SERVING A PRISON SENTENCE FOR MURDER, COREY DEVON ARTHUR IS REMARKABLY POLITE. WHEN HE CALLS, HE ALWAYS ASKS ABOUT MY WIFE, AND HE ALWAYS DOES IT WITH AN UNHURRIED SOLICITUDE THAT MAKES THE QUESTION MORE THAN PERFUNCTORY.

When I visit him at the Green Haven Correctional Facility in Stormville, New York, he strides eagerly toward me as if we were old friends about to share a pitcher of beer and curse the Yankees as they blow a late-inning lead. In conversation, he frequently uses my first name, which has a weirdly endearing, almost paternal effect, though we are nearly the same age.

Arthur looks nothing like the dazed 19-year-old being led out of a Brooklyn precinct house in the spring of 1997, trailed by burly detectives in bad suits, his hands in cuffs, his face fixed in an expression of poignant and pointless defiance. "Gotcha," said the front page of the *New York Post*. In another photograph, he looks like urban terror made flesh.

You know Corey Arthur. When the tabloids talk about thugs, they mean Corey Arthur. When the more serious publications talk about the effects of socioeconomic inequality on young people of color, they also mean Corey Arthur. You fear him, whether you will admit to that fear or not. Corey Arthur is a scary motherfucking guy, OK? Or was.

"The buck stops here," Arthur tells me about culpability for the crime he committed. The governor of

New York wanted the death penalty for Arthur, but that punishment is a rarity in New York unless the victim is a police officer. His victim was only an English teacher, *his* English teacher, so he got 25 years to life. He isn't angry or given to self-pity. Arthur is where he belongs, and he knows that. Whatever wrongs have been done to him are insignificant compared with the wrong he has done, and we both know that.

But there are things I do not know, and those things that draw me to Arthur, compel me to pick up the phone as I change my infant son's diaper or pack my preschooler daughter's lunch. For one, while Arthur says he is responsible for the death of Jonathan M. Levin, he maintains he is not culpable of murder. This may seem like the kind of justification one invents while languishing in prison, but Arthur insists on the fine distinction every time I ask him about what happened in the waning hours of May 30, 1997. Other men, he says, killed Levin. Those other men, whose names he will not tell me, would not have been there unless Arthur had introduced them to his beloved English teacher. But they are the real killers, he claims.

"I had no intentions of robbing this man," Arthur says to me. "I had no intentions of killing this man."

'SLOPPY POLICE WORK'

I HAVE TALKED to at least one other person who was in that third-floor apartment on Columbus Avenue and 69th Street on a spring night nearly 20 years ago: Montoun Hart, who was arrested as Arthur's accomplice in the killing but signed a lengthy confession that implicated Arthur. Hart was subsequently acquitted on all charges and returned to an apparently aimless life. What little of his story Hart deigned to tell me was, frankly, so outlandish that it inadvertently lent credence to Arthur's version of events. Hart may have had nothing to do with Levin's death, but after my

+ **THE \$800 QUESTION:** Levin's murder was tabloid gold, and the local papers speculated about his killers' motives and about aspects of Levin's personal life that may have led to his ugly end.



single encounter with him, I have no doubt that as far as that duo is concerned, the more trustworthy man is languishing in prison.

Let me be clear: Do I think Arthur was dumb enough to call his favorite teacher, leave a message on his answering machine, then go to his apartment with some hood he barely knows, torture and kill Levin, use Levin's bank card to withdraw \$800 from an ATM on a busy stretch of Columbus Avenue and then simply go to ground in Brooklyn, where he had to know the cops would find him before the weekend was through?

I do not.

At the same time, is it possible that Arthur did, in fact, murder Jonathan Levin?

The evidence suggests that this is not only possible but probable. As far as the state of New York is concerned, Arthur was given just punishment for a crime he was proved beyond a reasonable doubt to have committed. The criminal justice system,

+ **RAP SHEET RAPPER:** Before being collared for the Levin murder, Arthur had been arrested several times on drug charges and had run what he called "an unlicensed pharmaceutical" in Brooklyn.

having done its work, moved on long ago.

I haven't. I have no ties to the people in this case other than a long-standing curiosity about why things turned out the way did. I am not writing as a crusader or an advocate, though a good journalist is often both. Part of my motivation in revisiting this case is the conviction that what remains unknown in it should not remain unknown. Here's just one example: I tried for many months to force the New York Police Department to hand over its file on the Levin murder. I called and wrote letters and had *Newsweek's* lawyer write letters, but got nothing. For a case that had been closed for nearly two decades, such reluctance seemed strange. Or maybe not so strange, since accusations of "sloppy police work" were leveled during Arthur's trial. Is it possible that zealous

"I HAD NO INTENTIONS OF ROBBING THIS MAN. I HAD NO INTENTIONS OF KILLING THIS MAN."

detective work settled on Arthur too quickly, eager to close a case that terrified Manhattan?

Is it possible that a young black man from the depths of Brooklyn was not treated by the criminal justice system with all the solicitude he deserved?

This is also not only possible but probable.

The most important question is whether Arthur should go free. I make no pretenses to impartiality on this point: I have helped him contact appeal lawyers and have suggested steps he should take before his parole hearing. But I also know Levin's parents are both living (both refused to talk to me on the record), and it would surely crush them yet again to have some journalist zonked out on *Serial* and *Making a Murderer* go for glory by trying to free the killer of their son.

Here's the thing, though: Whether by the hand of Arthur or someone else, the only person who gave a shit about Arthur 20 years ago was killed. For this, Arthur deserved the years he has spent behind bars. Nobody disputes that. Yet he is now finally deserving of shit-giving (i.e., empathy). It took him a while to get there, but I believe he is ready to receive compassion without exploiting those who offer it.

For now, Arthur remains something less than a person. He is 98A7146, which is the identification number given to him by the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision. But Arthur is more than 98A7146, more than a murderer, more than the nexus of late 20th-century urban ills. He writes poetry. It isn't very good, but neither is most poetry written by people who aren't in prison. Here is one of his better verses:

*My life is a rose that
forgot to blossom*

He also draws, and his drawings remind me of the great Mexican muralists: sinuous and lush, dreamy but precise. I have been sending him information on how to publish a graphic novel. We both believe his life is rife with material for such an enterprise. He wouldn't even have to make much up: rapping with the Notorious B.I.G. when they were both just hungry scrappers from Brooklyn, getting wailed on by the cops of the famously corrupt 75th Precinct. A graphic memoir, maybe? Those things sell.

Arthur has been in one cell or another since June 7, 1997, when at around 1:30 p.m., members of the New York Police Department descended on him in the Sumner Houses housing development in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn. He was planning to escape to North Carolina. Now he was headed to Rikers Island, then upstate for prison, where he has been ever since. He will turn 39 in December, which means he has spent half his life in prison. The cell is his true natural habitat. He has never even used an iPhone.

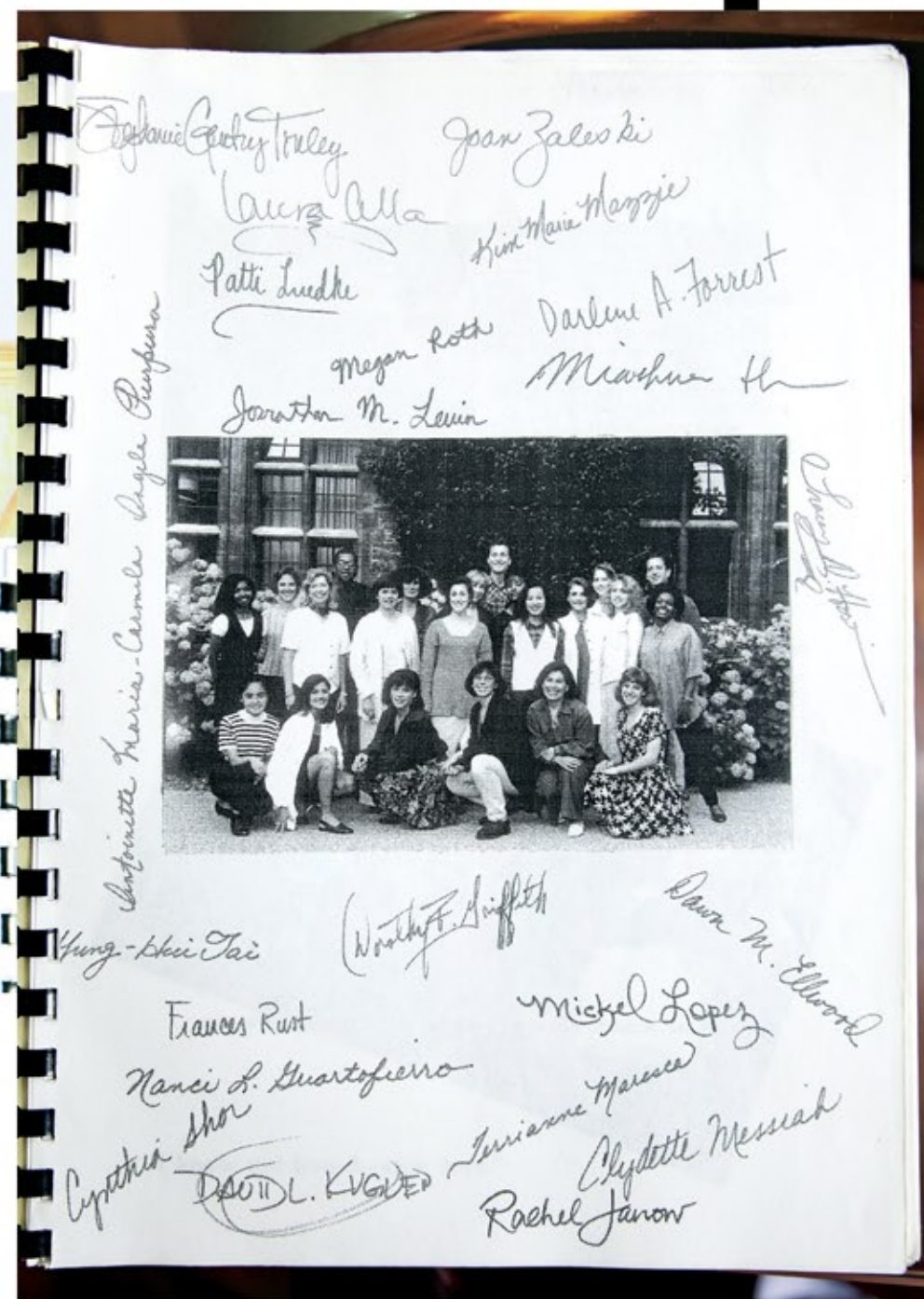
Arthur spent a good deal of his 20s in Attica, the maximum security prison where bank robber Willie Sutton spent 17 years and where John Lennon's killer,



ALL IN: Levin said he could never be a teacher who didn't invest personally in the lives of his students, and he came to the Bronx because he wanted to help kids exactly like Arthur.

Mark David Chapman, spent 31. "I love Attica," he tells me. "I became a man in Attica.... The most basic parts of manhood I learned in Attica." There are very few people who will express fondness for a maximum security prison, but on a deeply uncomfortable level, 98A7146 is an example of the corrections system at its very best, for Corey Arthur has done significantly better when deprived of freedom by the state. He is much more informed, articulate and compassionate than the stoops and street corners of Bed-Stuy would have ever allowed him to be. I don't like having that thought, but few of my liberal verities are confirmed as I sit in the Green Haven visiting room, whose walls are lined with baby play cribs, watching Arthur eat a microwaved pizza slice and tell me how he'd love it if I could send him books about leadership. He likes to read history too.

Arthur knows that he will never escape the events of May 30, 1997. But since the state did not have him executed, he reasons, he has a responsibility to



live, to be better and to maybe even be good. "The story ain't over," he says. "I'm still in the fight." I admire that, even if there is much about Arthur that I do not admire. This is a fight I want to join.

'HE ONLY TALKED ABOUT GETTING MONEY'

IT WAS ONE of those Fridays in late May when every New Yorker yearns to escape from Manhattan to the Jersey Shore, the Hamptons or the country, coolers packed, highways jammed, prayers whispered against the rain. Jonathan Levin, though, wasn't going anywhere. He had just finished another week of teaching

English at William H. Taft High School in the Bronx; the next morning, as his fellow Upper West Siders sleepily slunk out for brunch, he would be back at the school for a meeting of teachers trying to figure out how to deal with students on the brink of dropping out. And so many had already dropped out—the school's graduation rate was only 63 percent.

That night, the New York Yankees were playing the Boston Red Sox. I don't know what social plans he had, but it seems inconceivable that a lifelong Yankees fan such as Levin could have made any arrangements that didn't involve baseball's greatest rivalry. The Red Sox won the game, 10-4. Levin was probably dead well before the seventh-inning stretch.

A little after 5 p.m., there was a message on his answering machine. The caller announced himself as "Corey" while addressing "Mr. Levin." "Pick up if you're there," he said. "It's important."

Corey Arthur had been one of Levin's favorite students at Taft. Not the one with the best grades, not even one who showed up with anything like frequency. Yet there was some ineffable quality that convinced Levin that Arthur could be pulled from the sinkhole that awaited many of his classmates. "So much of what I am and what I want to do in this life, and this profession, revolves around what I've established" with Arthur, he had written in the fall of 1993 in a paper for his graduate program at New York University. In that same essay, he quoted from a thank-you note written by Arthur: "The most important thing you have taught me is how to live.... Wherever I get in life, I owe it to you and for that I am eternally grateful. I am also lucky and most happy to call Jake or Jon Levin my friend."

During the 1993-94 school year, Arthur and Levin had become friends, enamored of each other's respective cultures. Levin loved rap, while Arthur was a real-life rapper. At some point, he started rapping as either "Dee Rock" or "Big C" (Arthur is unclear about the timeline). He was also loosely affiliated with the crew that coalesced around the portly Bed-Stuy rapper named Christopher Wallace, aka the Notorious B.I.G. He says he also met Marion "Suge" Knight, the West Coast producer of rappers like Dr. Dre, though that appears to have come later. In any case, music became the bridge between teacher and student, between white



EARLY EDUCATION: Arthur says his first encounter with police came when he was 12, after he and some friends ditched school. Cops nabbed the truants, took them to a park and "roughed us up."

Manhattan and black Brooklyn.

"That was the closest I've ever been with a white man," Arthur tells me.

In the fall of 1994, after a procession of drug-related arrests, Arthur was sent to a military-style prison on the shore of Lake Erie. He spent about seven months there, then returned to New York City. He got a high school equivalency degree, took some courses at Bronx Community College. The hustle beckoned, though, and soon he was selling crack again. "The only thing he talked about was getting money—any way he could get money," an acquaintance would later tell *The New York Times*.

Still, when Arthur appeared at the door of the third-floor apartment at 205 Columbus Avenue, Levin apparently welcomed him inside.

Levin did not show up for that Saturday meeting at Taft. On Sunday, a fellow teacher left a message: "We're worried about you. Please call and let us know you're all right." There were also messages from another colleague: "Call and say something as soon as you come in the door," she urged. "Call."

After he failed to come to school on Monday, several teachers from Taft showed up that evening at Levin's building. For hours, they pleaded with people on the street to tell them something about their

colleague. Nobody could tell them a thing. Finally, around 11 p.m., one of the teachers called the cops. Two officers showed up and had a neighbor, Richard Veloso, use a spare key to open the apartment.

Veloso went inside the one-bedroom, with the cops behind him. The television was on. It was tuned to NY1, the 24-hour news channel. On the floor between the narrow kitchen and the living area, Veloso saw a body. He thought it was Julius, Levin's 9-month-old German shepherd.

But as Veloso came closer, he saw that the shape on the floor was too big to be a dog.

'AREN'T YOU WORRIED?'

I FIRST LEARNED about Levin a decade ago, when I was on the cusp of becoming a public school teacher. Back then, subway cars were plastered with ads for the New York City Teaching Fellows, a rapid certification program for people who were tired of their office jobs and thought that getting 30 kids to read *The Outsiders* would make life more meaningful. I was accepted into the Teaching Fellows in the summer of 2005; by that fall, I would have my own classroom. So dire were things that putting a 25-year-old barely able to do his own laundry in charge of dozens of children appeared a reasonable means of improving the city's public schools.

"You're going to become a public school teacher?"

I was drinking coffee outside a fashionable bookstore in SoHo with an appropriately fashionable friend who had grown up a few blocks away and now lived in Paris and worked in either law or consulting. He made no effort to disguise his disapproval. To become a teacher was unacceptable and vaguely embarrassing. We had not gone to Dartmouth to baby-sit hopeless cases who wouldn't make it to the 10th grade. Altruism? Yeah, OK, but only as an afterthought.

"Aren't you worried you might end up like that teacher in the Bronx?" this friend asked with casual cruelty. I professed ignorance, which Google cured some hours later when I typed something like "Bronx teacher student killed" into the search box. The headlines that ran down the page captured the tragic essence of his story: "Bronx Teacher, Time Warner Head's Son, Is Slain," "Ex-Student Denies Killing Levin and Tells of Gunmen," "Letter by Defendant Calls Slain Teacher His Friend," "Murder Trial Examines Drug Use by Teacher." There were intimations of an affair with a married woman, as well as questions—many questions—about whether Levin had become too close to one of his students.

One could leave it there, one of those big-city

HE SAID, HE SAID: Arthur insists today that "when I left Jonathan Levin, he was alive" and that the brutal murder was done by "other men," whom he refuses, for whatever reason, to identify.

tragedies that make people thank God for the suburbs. But the story stayed with me, as did the conviction that there was more to Levin than the tale of his demise. What seemed especially admirable to me—as my classmates ascended the ranks of Goldman Sachs, earned their law degrees from Yale, published their first articles in magazines important people were rumored to read—was Levin's renunciation of the solipsism that marks the American coming-of-age experience. He wasn't selfish, bowled over by the complexity of the world, falling back into the prevailing "like, whatever" ethos of Generation X. Nor did he court the convenient outrages of that time, which were most frequently solved with T-shirts or bumper stickers: "Free Mumia," "Save Tibet." There were plenty of outrages waiting for him in the Bronx, right across the Harlem River, unsexy and forgotten.

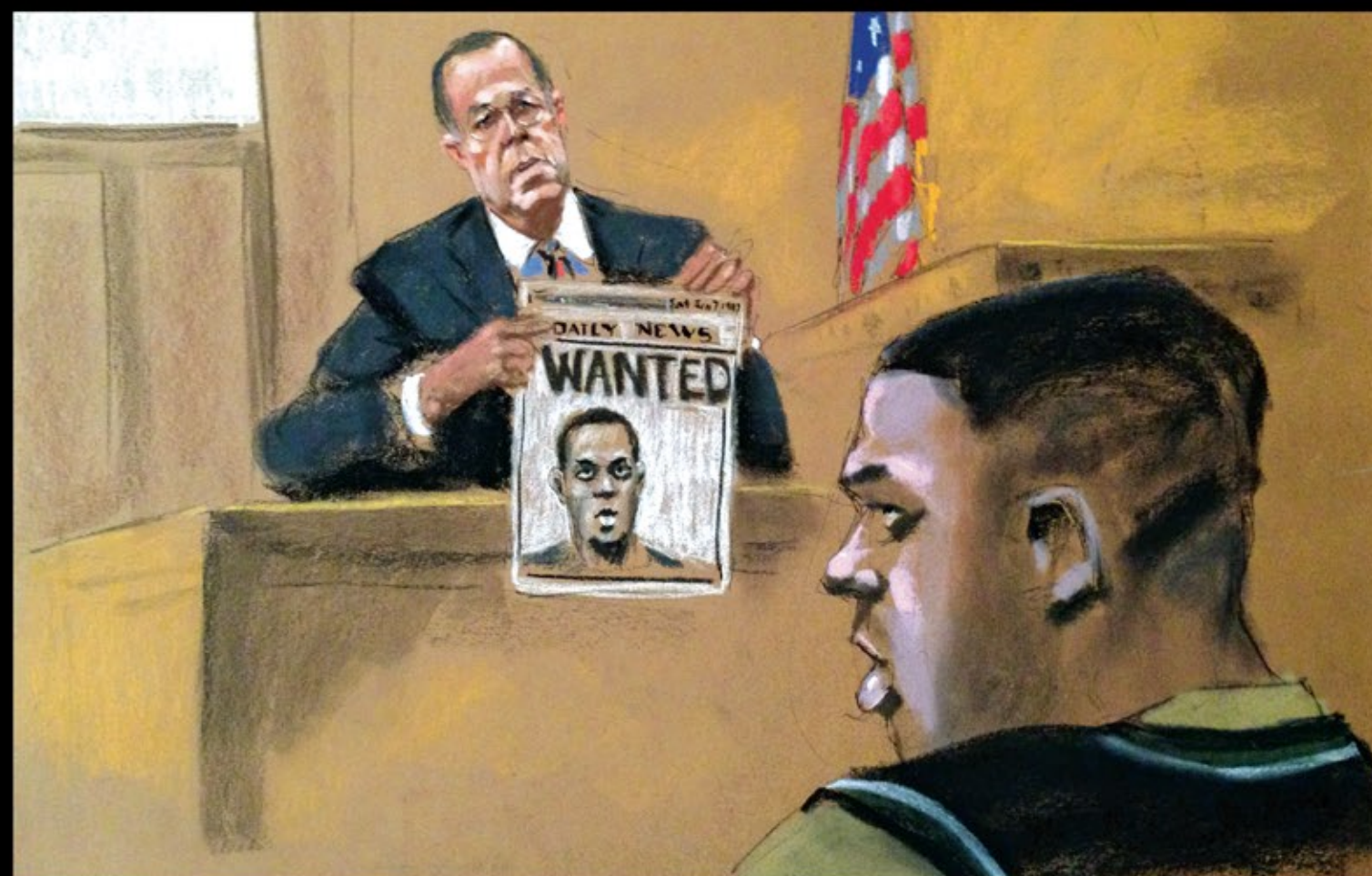
Levin wanted to teach students precisely like Arthur; that his street-wise approach

**ARTHUR WAS
ARRESTED
FOR MENACING
A SUBWAY
CLERK IN
BROOKLYN
BY TRYING
TO SET
HIS BOOTH
ON FIRE.**

appeared to work with Arthur confirmed Levin's hopes for what a good teacher could accomplish in a place like the Bronx. "I can't ever be a teacher who doesn't want to invest personally with my students," Levin wrote in his NYU essay. "If that means giving them some of myself personally...then I have no problem with that."

"I might, actually, be doing something right," Levin said at the end of that essay. In my English class, I could have used this as an example of dramatic irony, or what Aeschylus called "the awful grace of God." *Do you think grace can be awful? If not, why? Did you know Robert F. Kennedy said those words upon learning that Martin Luther King Jr. had been assassinated?*

Do you know what the weirdest thing is about being a teacher? You have no way of knowing whether you are making a difference. You can keep on, as Levin did. Or you can go do something else, as I did.



GOING GOING INTO THE FRAY

IF YOU HAVE ever watched HBO, you have Jonathan Levin's father to thank. The man responsible, however indirectly, for making sure you can enjoy *Game of Thrones* was not groomed from childhood for media moguldom. Gerald Levin descended from Romanian Jews who had come to the United States in 1907 and opened a grocery store in Philadelphia. He went to Haverford College, then the University of Pennsylvania Law School, from which he graduated in 1963. He worked at a white-shoe law firm in New York and, after that proved a bust, on an agrarian project in Iran.

In 1972, Gerald Levin was hired by Time Inc. to work on Home Box Office. Three years later, he figured out that transmitting HBO's signal by satellite, instead of via microwave towers, would give it a reach no other broadcast channel had. He thus became known as Time Inc.'s "resident genius," wrote journalist Nina Munk.

At the time his father reinvented HBO, Levin was 9 years old and living with his mother and two siblings on the north shore of Long Island, in the upper-middle-class town of Manhasset, close to where *The Great Gatsby* takes place. Levin's father had divorced his mother, Carol, in 1970, so Levin grew up in a comfortable but not posh household.

"I will be living in California, working as a wine taster for Ernest and Julio Gallo," Levin predicted in his yearbook as he graduated from Manhasset High School in 1984. He went to Trinity College, majoring in English and psychology. After graduation, he moved to New York City and started working for Access America, a travel insurance company. He did so for the next five years, spending off-hours with high school buddies, enjoying a Manhattan that was still a little wild and must have been an especially welcome playground in the wake of joyless Hartford.

He could have kept doing the young professional thing for years. There is nothing wrong with quietly profitable solidity, but Levin grew restless. "There's gotta be more to this," he would later tell Matthew Dwyer, who also taught at Taft and shared subway rides with Levin from the Upper West Side to the Bronx. And so, in the summer of 1993, he enrolled in a master's program at New York University.

Gordon Pradl, then a professor of education at NYU, remembers Levin bursting into his office, eager to get into the program so that he could start teaching in the fall. "I think that he realized that if he had some of these principles—like helping others—then staying in the business world was not his way of achieving that," Pradl says. "So he had to directly get into the fray. And that's teaching—teaching was actually a logical direction given his talents and also the quickest direction. Because he was in a hurry. He was in a hurry."



'I WAS AN ASSHOLE'

COREY ARTHUR was born in 1977, at the end of a year during which there had been a chaotic black-out in New York City, Son of Sam had gone around killing young women in the outer boroughs, and the whole city seemed to be floating ever further from the American mainland. The Yankees won the World Series, but all else was grim.

Arthur has a good memory, but it stumbles over the details of his life before prison, as if that were an ever-receding dream. He was raised by his mother and great-grandmother. Arthur had a half-brother and half-sister about whom he does not say much, other than that he is proud of them and understands why they don't make much room for him in their lives. "We lived from check to check," he says. "There wasn't no savings."

He remembers some of his teachers: Ms. Cohen,



RICHIE POOR: Many assumed that Jonathan Levin was a rich kid, but he was raised by his mother, who divorced Gerald Levin, center left, years before he became the CEO of Time Warner.

kindergarten, who had a son named Corey and gave him T-shirts bearing that name; Ms. Eisenberg, third grade, in whose class he made butter. "I always liked school," Arthur says. "I never had a problem at school."

Middle school was "when the real problems started." He went to J.H.S. 302, a building on Linwood Street in East New York, Brooklyn, that could easily pass for a medium security prison. It was a bad school then; it was a bad school until the spring of 2015, when it closed, cleaving into several smaller schools. Arthur recounts infractions like fighting and using the girls' bathroom. His first encounter with the police came when he was 12. He and some friends skipped school; Arthur says cops from the 75th Precinct easily pegged them as truants, took them to nearby Highland Park and "roughed us up."

Once he got into real trouble, he kept getting in trouble. "The lines were drawn," Arthur says. In the summer of 1992, he was arrested for menacing a subway clerk in Brooklyn by trying to set his booth on fire. "It's not for me to say, but I would say he's a troubled kid," that clerk later told the *Daily News*.

Arthur's assessment: "I was an asshole."

"THE FIRST THING I DID WAS LOOK AT HIM AND START HAULIN' ASS."

That fall, Arthur moved with his mother and her new husband to an apartment near Yankee Stadium—and even nearer to the Bronx Supreme Court. He had been kicked out of Franklin K. Lane High School in Brooklyn, so now he went to William H. Taft in the Bronx, just a few blocks up the Grand Concourse, with its enormous apartment buildings recalling Moscow or East Berlin.

Arthur had Levin's class at the end of the day, eighth period, not usually a time when he was in school. The two first met outside the classroom. "I was coming out of school a tad bit early," Arthur says, "and I think that he was coming back from a cigarette break. And we just happened to cross paths. And because I was leaving school early, I was scared, and I think he was kind of shocked to be seen smoking a cigarette, because the first thing he did was try and put it out. The first thing I did was look at him and start haulin' ass."

The next day, Arthur showed up in English class. He liked, at once, what he saw. Levin would open every class with a discussion of a quote from a rap song. "He had a thing for, like, conscious rap...rap mostly with a message," Arthur says. He adds that Levin "looked like a dork." This is said not pejoratively but with a kind of wistful affection.

A little later, Arthur saw Levin outside of class again. OK, let's see how cool this dude is, he thought. He took out a cigarette and began smoking it in front of his teacher. Nothing happened. He then tested Levin about his knowledge of Timberland boots. It quickly became clear that Levin knew more about Timbs than he did. He was a white guy down with black culture. Arthur, meanwhile, was a black kid with a curiosity about the white world. "He was like an anomaly to me," Arthur says. "And I was an anomaly to him."

But no amount of De La Soul or KRS-One was going to keep Arthur coming to school. Though nominally living in the Bronx, he was drawn to the streets of his native Brooklyn, where he ran what he calls "an unlicensed pharmaceutical." In the first half of 1994, the cops nabbed him for possession of heroin and selling crack, and that fall he was sent to Lakeview, a special brand of military prison that the National Institute of Justice described as employing "strict, military-style discipline, unquestioning obedience to orders, and highly structured days filled with drill and hard work."

Arthur says he did well during his seven months at Lakeview, but then he was out and back downstate, caught in familiar currents. At some point, he reconnected with Levin, who mentored his former student, though to hear Arthur tell it, they were more like friends. They played pool, drank beers, hit on girls. There was the time they walked from SoHo back up to Levin's apartment, bumming cigarettes along

the way, and the time Arthur cock-blocked Levin with my, Levin's girlfriend. Arthur remembers all this as one might college escapades that involved a friend who couldn't make the 25th reunion.

Dwyer, Levin's colleague, recalls Arthur coming over to his house to watch a ballgame. He says Arthur was quiet and shy, the way kids often are around adults. Then again, Arthur was pretty much an adult himself. By the time he and Levin became friends, Arthur was long done with Taft. Dwyer points this out in defense of his slain colleague, who would later stand accused of getting too close to a student. Still, that won't assuage some who see little difference between student and former student. "It just seems inappropriate in a lot of different levels," education historian Diane Ravitch says of their friendship. "There's some lines you don't cross."

HE GOT WHAT HE DESERVED

ON COULD RAP; and he could write," says Dorothy Striplin, a retired educator who studied at NYU with Levin and got to know him well. "It wasn't like he was a white boy doing rap," by which she means his interest in rap wasn't of the ironic, half-mocking kind. As evidence of Levin's passion for the genre, Striplin showed me a three-page-long rap Levin wrote while at Oxford in the summer of 1994. Calling himself MC Jake (Jake was his nickname), he rapped:

*An MC that can take me ain't been born yet
You see I'll make you laugh and I'll make you smile
Everyone out there wanna get with my style
Now I wanna tell you 'bout the rest of the crew
Recognize what I'm sayin' 'coz I'm a rhyming Jew
Despite many references to hookups attempted
and realized, as well as to the notoriously unpalatable cuisine of dear old England, the rap ends on a sentimental note free of the usual bluster:*

*The group was kind dope 'n' I'm kinda hopin'
That our hearts and our minds will always stay open
Much was made of Levin's affinity for rap after his murder, given that the culture war over gangsta rap was not yet quite over. Some saw in his approach a willingness to engage with the culture of the Bronx, but others saw it as pandering.*

On June 25, 1997, *The Wall Street Journal* published an op-ed by a former teacher named Sylvia Christoff Kurop. It was titled "Killed by Modern Teaching?"

His was the jeans and T-shirt approach to teaching, whereby "The Great Gatsby" was taught with references to rap music at chairs arranged in a circle.

The point of teaching is not to fuse personal relationships, but first and foremost to maintain a professional role. Mr. Levin's brave and open approach to his students certainly made a prominent, positive impact

on his adoring students' lives. Yet in the end it took just one student—only one—to highlight the extreme risks of this teaching style.

She comes close to saying what others doubtlessly thought: He got what he deserved.

Two weeks later, on July 7, the *Journal* published several responses to the Kurop op-ed. One of them was signed by the English department of Taft:

Ms. Kurop is under the false impression that, in an effort to relate to his students, Mr. Levin lowered his classroom standards. This is absolutely untrue. One reason why Mr. Levin was such a successful teacher was that he continually held high expectations of his students and accepted nothing less than their best work. This is why they respected him.

Several other letters pointed out that Kurop taught only briefly, back when Dwight Eisenhower was in the White House. True enough, but she was not the only one to think harshly of Levin. The *Daily News* called him "perhaps too trusting, too tenderhearted," and quoted a student: "People took advantage of him. Some kids would curse at him, but he would just laugh it off. Kids would ask to go to the bathroom and never go back to his class."

It must be said here that every teacher in New York City has had a student ask to go to the bathroom and not return. This is not the failing of a teacher; it is the nature of a teenager.

Dwyer bristles at the suggestion that teachers like Levin were missionaries so zealous in achieving their social goals that they couldn't be bothered with the finer points of classroom practice. "It was a job," he says. "We were professionals, right? We weren't flying in and saving anybody."



KILLED BY MODERN TEACHING? Levin was praised by students and colleagues, but some educators seemed to blame the victim, implying he'd crossed a line with his students that put him in harm's way.



'ELVIS WAS A HERO TO MOST, BUT HE NEVER MEANT SHIT TO ME'

TEACHERS OCCUPY a strange place in American society, revered and reviled. It is a profession whose main benefit is widely believed to be summer vacation. I can report that this is indeed a great perk, though it doesn't quite make up for the many weekends grading five-paragraph essays on the theme of *Antigone*, of late afternoons, long after the final bell, trying to explain to some kid the ancient mysteries of the semicolon.

Once, while we were all sleepily preparing for first period, a kid from Bensonhurst climbed out on the scaffolding and threatened to jump. A teacher of Latin coaxed him down.

Another time, a former colleague called to say a student was killed while walking home from a party in Bed-Stuy. Some jealous punk slashed her in the neck, and she bled out on the street. Her name was Kyanna Thomas. She was a good kid. They were all good kids.

Once, I read my students the great epigrams of the Roman poet Martial. Here is one:

*Your lover and your spouse agree on this:
That baby that you got cannot be his*

Is that any different than having your students parse Public Enemy, as Levin's may have? Is a classroom full of teenagers expending their fullest

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN WELL: Levin and Arthur bonded over rap and Levin's fascination with urban culture. Arthur says his friendship with Levin was the closest he'd ever been to a white man.

intellectual energies on decoding an epigram by Martial in any way different from a classroom full of teenagers expending their fullest intellectual energies on decoding "Fight the Power"?

I am suspicious of anyone who can confidently answer that question.

A BIG RED X OVER THE WHOLE THING

ON THE FIRST floor of what used to be Taft is the Jonathan Levin High School for Media and Communications. The principal, Jacqueline Boswell, never answered my phone calls or emails (she must have sensed I wasn't coming to do a puff piece), so I simply went on my own, slipping past security without any questions at all. It is a despairing fact of life in modern America that being a crisply dressed white male will open almost any door.

Jonathan Levin High has the joyful, claustrophobic chaos of any urban high school. The teachers look harried; the secretaries look bored. Some kid told me he liked my tie, and I had the urge to play the teacher again and ask him why he was tarrying in the hallway.

In a display case near the principal's office, there are several photographs of Levin, with his mother,



MORE THAN STREET-WISE: Arthur, who has spent more than half his life behind bars, says prison made him a much better man than he'd have been growing up on the outside.

his friends, always happy. An explanatory note calls him "Jonathan Levin HS," as if "high school" were a professional appellation like "doctor of philosophy." The poorly written paragraph, which is single-spaced but becomes double-spaced in the final lines, praises his "passionate devotion and professional commitment." It doesn't mention that he was murdered, though that is the sole reason the school bears his name. If I were still an English teacher, I would put a big red X over the whole thing and tell whoever wrote the unfortunate passage that it constituted an atrocity committed upon the English language.

That's how I spoke to my students when I was a teacher. Most of them liked it.

Jonathan Levin High will soon be no more. When the closure was first announced, *The New York Times* reported on what ailed the misbegotten place: "Money for a college scholarship in Mr. Levin's name dried up. A ballfield that a Mets official helped pay for fell into disrepair. Computers sat untouched, applications to the school fell and the graduation rate sank to 31 percent, the fifth-lowest in the city."

One of the people who rallied against the closing was Levin's mother, Carol. She had, in the wake of his death, become a teacher in the Bronx, a parent venturing into the battlefield that claimed her son. "If I didn't try this, I really felt I'd just be taking up space," she told *Good Housekeeping* for a 2000 profile. "Me and my pain, taking up space on this earth." That sounds, to me, like something Aeschylus might have written.

Gerald Levin did not become a teacher, but he did not stay a media mogul either. His company's 2001 merger with AOL is widely regarded as one of the worst decisions in the history of corporate America. In 2002, he met Dr. Laurie Perlman, a psychic who communed with the dead. She told him she spoke with his son. He believed her. He left his second wife and moved to Santa Monica with Perlman, where they opened Moonview Sanctuary, which looks to be one of those places where rich people come to purchase the illusion of serenity.

When there were mass protests over the police killings of black men in Ferguson, Missouri, and New York's Staten Island, the Levins wrote a column for *Deadline Hollywood*. "We are in a never-ending cycle of chaos and death," they said. "Even if

we must scratch and claw ourselves to get into the light, we must begin fully to comprehend the intransigence of old patterns."

This too deserves the big red X.

Jonathan Levin, for his part, would have probably taken his students to Staten Island, to stand at the spot where Eric Garner died and chant, "Black lives matter." And in the classroom, he might have played N.W.A's "Fuck tha Police," and the students would have talked about what that song meant, and about Birmingham, the Watts Riots, Ferguson and what those events said about us and about our country, sometimes glorious but frequently tragic.

'IT'S ALWAYS THE GOOD PEOPLE'

IN ABOUT six years, Arthur will appear before the parole board. He has a decent disciplinary record and has earned certificates in trades like woodworking and metalworking, which could presumably be useful in the real world. He is especially proud of his legal research certificate. He is an AIDS counselor. As a former English teacher, I am happy to certify that his letters, composed with no apparent help, show a good-to-excellent command of grammatical rules.

Arthur has also shown the contrition expected of him by the state. His displays of regret are genuine, though they may also have a practical purpose (i.e., the eventual appearance before the parole board). In 2010, he asked the Manhattan district attorney to allow him to send a letter to Levin's parents. Levin's father accepted the offer; his mother refused it. "Sir, I did you and your family a terrible injustice," the letter says. "Not a day passes that its crushing impact isn't impressed upon me."

But neither in that letter nor in any of our conversations does Arthur say the thing I am confident he will have to say if he wants to leave prison: *I killed Jonathan Levin*. Arthur does not want to talk to me about what happened on May 30, 1997, except to say this: "When I left Jonathan Levin, he was alive." Despite his circumspection, Arthur does have a narrative that challenges the one offered up by prosecutors. "[Levin] did something he shouldn't have done with someone he shouldn't have done it with," he says. During his trial, Arthur's lawyers argued that Arthur and Levin were smoking crack when assailants entered the apartment and ordered Arthur to bind him. Arthur now says he never smoked crack, neither that evening nor on any other occasion; the notion of Levin smoking crack is equally ludicrous to him today. As far as I understand it, Arthur maintains that other men murdered Levin, with him acting only as an accomplice. But no such assailants were ever identified, while forensic evidence

(blood on Arthur's clothes, fingerprints at the crime scene) proved convincing enough for the jury. The .22-caliber gun Arthur supposedly used was never found, but this turned out to be a surprisingly irrelevant detail.

I ask him to tell me about the real killers, but he refuses, citing the safety of his family and the code of the streets. "This is not my story alone to tell," he tells me in one letter. "I have every intention of giving full disclosure to the parole board when I appear before them. But other than that, my hands are tied."

When Arthur entered Levin's apartment that evening, with him was Montoun Hart, the small-time criminal from Brooklyn who says he came along without quite knowing what he was getting into. Later, Hart would sign his 11-page confession that portrayed him as an unwitting accomplice in the murder, which he'd had no idea Arthur planned to commit. He was acquitted of all charges partly because he claimed to be high and drunk when signing that confession. If that's the case, then can anything about his description of that night be believed?

Another question for which I don't have an answer. "It's always the good people," Hart says of Levin, talking with me over the phone for the first time after I have told him of my interest in the case. This sounds disingenuous, like some lugubrious thing he has heard in a movie and saved for moments just like this.

Hart still lives in Brooklyn; his Facebook page is rife with allusions to the Crips, though for Hart the C's are more a club for middle-aged dudes than an active criminal gang. Hart disavowed all responsibility for what happened on May 30, 1997, spun a wild and increasingly unbelievable story of his life, then asked for money for an on-the-record interview. I paid for the drinks and never talked to him again.

Arthur and I speak by phone about once a week. He calls me when I am on a jog. He calls as I am plodding through *The Cat in the Hat* for the sixth time. He calls when I am in the hospital with my wife, who has just given birth to our second child. "Corey," I mouth to her. She understands: They don't let you play phone tag from a maximum security prison. We both know I am going to keep talking to Arthur, because it would be cruel to take the story but leave the man, like a teacher walking out in the middle of a class.

I also know it would have been so much easier for Jonathan Levin if he had just stayed in Manhattan, selling insurance. Such a life could be a good one, but it was not the life he sought to live. The Bronx beckoned, a battlefield where glories are rare and muted, defeats frequent and resounding. Nothing would be easy in the Bronx, but Jonathan Levin had tired of easy things. So when the Bronx called, he went. ■

**"IT WAS
A JOB. WE
WERE PROFESSIONALS....
WE WEREN'T
FLYING IN
AND SAVING
ANYBODY."**

JARED T. MILLER

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SEXUAL ASSAULT CRISIS

ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT ON CAMPUS ARE AT RECORD LEVELS, AS ARE LAWSUITS FROM THE ACCUSED CLAIMING SCHOOLS ARE OVERZEALOUS AND DISCRIMINATE AGAINST THEM BASED ON GENDER

BY MAX KUTNER

NEWSWEEK 26 12/18/2015



LAST ACT: Sulkowicz defied a school ban on "large objects" to haul her mattress to the podium when she claimed her diploma in May. Nungesser and his parents were at that ceremony.



WHEN YOU ARE THE MOST NOTORIOUS ALLEGED COLLEGE RAPIST IN THE COUNTRY, IT TAKES A LOT OF GUTS TO ATTEND YOUR GRADUATION CEREMONY.

FOR MOST OF Columbia University's Class of 2015, graduation day was an exuberant celebration of four years of hard work at one of the country's most prestigious schools. For Paul Nungesser, it was yet another reminder of how alone he was on that storied campus, and how hated he was. He and his parents had agonized over whether to attend the ceremony because his classmate Emma Sulkowicz had accused him of raping her, and for more than eight months she had carried an extra-long twin-size mattress around campus, vowing to do so until he was expelled, or fled. Despite this very public shaming, Nungesser had stayed in school and earned his degree. But now he worried that people would boo him as he crossed the stage to claim his diploma, that reporters would hound him, that the image of him in his cap and gown would spread across the Internet. He also feared that Sulkowicz would lug that mattress onstage, even though Columbia had warned the seniors not to bring "large objects which could interfere with the proceedings or create discomfort to others."

At the last minute, the family decided to attend. His parents flew in from Berlin, where they live and where Nungesser is from. His mother, Karin, recalls that on graduation day it was pouring rain "like it's perhaps the last day of New York." Despite the apocalyptic weather, a thousand students lined up in their blue caps and gowns, eager to take their prize. Nungesser wore a blue bow tie and khaki pants, while some of his classmates stuck red tape to their caps, part of a campus anti-sexual-violence organization called No Red Tape, co-founded by Sulkowicz.

As "Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1" played over the loudspeakers, the soon-to-be graduates filed from the student center to the campus green and took their seats on white folding chairs under giant tents. On the way in, Nungesser spotted Sulkowicz, carrying the mattress. He texted his parents about it but knew there was nothing they could do. So he sat nervously, awaiting his turn to cross the stage. At one point, the keynote speaker, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, said, "You took risks. You've held contrary opinions, held die-ins and sit-ins and carried mattresses.... Never stop being activists."

"It was like a slap in the face," says Andreas Probosch, Nungesser's father. (Karin Nungesser and Andreas have been together 25 years but are not married.)

After the speakers had all passed along their platitudes and homilies, administrators began calling students to the stage. Fortunately for Nungesser, when the announcer read his name, no one booed or protested. But eight minutes later, it was Sulkowicz's turn. The announcer stumbled over her name, perhaps distracted by the giant mattress wrapped in a waterproof cover being lugged to the dais by Sulkowicz and four friends. A loud burst of applause drowned out the names of the next few classmates called after her.

Sitting among all the rain-soaked parents, Probosch remembers feeling relieved that nobody knew who he was. "I wondered...What would they do if they knew we were the parents of the guy Emma accused? What would they do? Would they spit in front of us?"

Karin, however, felt defiant. "I would have liked to go to every single parent in that audience and say, 'I am the mother of Paul, and I am very proud of my son, and I hope you discuss with your sons and daughters what they did to him.'"

Sulkowicz's final act of rebellion that day—and the fact that Columbia did not stop it—is now part of a lawsuit Nungesser has filed against his alma mater. Even though Columbia found him not responsible for what Sulkowicz alleged, his suit claims the school was complicit in her long-running effort to destroy his reputation and declined to intervene because he is male. Some people believe the claim is absurd. Others say it's the wake-up call higher education needs to start protecting all students.

"I HOPE YOU DISCUSS WITH YOUR CHILDREN WHAT THEY DID TO HIM."

CU IN COURT: Nungesser's suit doesn't name his accuser; instead, it goes after Columbia University for allegedly condoning and facilitating her long campaign against him.



MUSTAFAH ABDULAZIZ FOR NEWSWEEK. PREVIOUS SPREAD: KIERA WOOD/COLUMBIA DAILY SPECTATOR

assigned **Mustafah Abdulaziz** to photograph Paul Nungesser



'STARTING TO SNOWBALL'

COLLEGES HAVE recently ramped up their investigation of sexual assault accusations because a 19-page letter told them to do so. In 2011, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights issued a "Dear Colleague" letter. It clarified that sexual violence is a subset of sexual harassment, which in an education setting falls under Title IX of the Education Amendments. The OCR threatened to investigate schools thought to be insufficiently zealous with sexual assault cases, and if it found a school had violated Title IX, the OCR might rescind federal funding.

"We were seeing quite a bit of noncompliance and quite a bit of concern around the country," says Catherine Lhamon, assistant secretary for civil rights at the Department of Education, who believes the "Dear Colleague" letter did its job. "I think we've seen just a cataclysmic change around the country in terms of attention to the issue, responsiveness to it, and training, preparation for our students so that we can see safer campuses," she says. The OCR is investigating 152 colleges for their handling of sexual violence claims, and, she adds, complaints about sexual violence at colleges have increased more than 400 percent.

Victims' advocates say the OCR letter helped destigmatize sexual assault and encourages survivors to report. But a less-told

GETTING UGLY: Sulkowicz's campaign was embraced by many of her fellow students at Columbia and other schools, but it also led to some backlash against her, right.

consequence is the tendency by schools to trample due process rights for the accused, according to some higher education and legal experts. "There was for a long time a perception that colleges were not responsive at all to claims of sexual misconduct," says Samantha Harris, director of policy research at the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education. These days, however, "a growing number of people are starting to be concerned that the pendulum has swung too far in the other direction."

"I think probably a lot of colleges translated the 'Dear Colleague' letter as 'favor the victim,'" says Brett Sokolow, executive director of the Association of Title IX Administrators and president of the National Center for Higher Education Risk Management, which consults with schools. "We very quietly started to say to our clients.... Don't overcorrect on this because it will touch off

"THERE'S KIND OF A GATHERING STORM OF RESISTANCE."

a spate of litigation by accused individuals."

The message, he adds, was "You went too far. Swing the pendulum back." Sokolow says schools didn't heed the warning and resented the suggestion. "[We] really took it on the chin. I mean, this was such an unpopular thing for us to say. And it does not feel good in any way, shape or form to have been absolutely right."

Nungesser leads the swelling ranks of male students suing colleges, seeking damages and asking judges to force schools to clear their records. A database on the website of advocacy organization Boys and Men in Education says at least 90 men have filed such lawsuits in the past few years, and some lawyers say the total number is even higher. Until recently, the lawsuits focused on claims such as breach of contract and lack of due process. But increasingly, lawyers are throwing gender discrimination into the mix. Accused men are now echoing the complaints of their (most often) female accusers: that schools are violating Title IX, the federal law that prohibits sex-based discrimination in federally funded education programs.

At a time when a movement is finally growing to prevent campus sexual assault and support the survivors, the claim that schools are anti-male can sound as absurd as white people suing for racial discrimination. After all, new findings reaffirm the statistic that 1 in 4 or 5 college women is a victim of a sexual assault, and research published in the journal *Violence Against Women* says that only 2 to 10 percent of campus sexual assault accusations are false. But at least 14 so-called reverse Title IX cases are moving through the courts, and new ones are being filed every few weeks. All it takes is one victory in court to set a legal precedent and end what some higher education experts say is an overcorrection on sexual assault.

"Things are starting to snowball. There's kind of a gathering storm of resistance," says Jonathan Taylor, founder of Boys and Men in Education. Since 2011, accused students have sued too many schools to list.

At Vassar College, the daughter of a professor had sex with her teammate on the rowing team. She later told him on Facebook that she had "had a wonderful time," court documents say. A year

later, though, she reported that she had not consented and that she had tried to resist and felt trapped. After an investigation and hearing, the school expelled him. He sued, but a judge dismissed the case.

At Brandeis University, a male student accused his ex-boyfriend of "numerous inappropriate, non-consensual sexual interactions" during their two-year relationship, according to the federal complaint. Those apparently included waking the accuser with a kiss in the morning (because the accuser was half-asleep, the school investigator said he was incapacitated) and seeing his then-boyfriend naked in the dorm shower. The accused was found responsible for sexual misconduct, and he's suing.



A case against Washington and Lee University recently survived a motion to dismiss. According to the complaint, a female student started kissing a male student, led him to his bed and removed his clothes. They apparently performed oral sex on each other and then had intercourse. She spent the night, and in the morning they exchanged phone numbers, the complaint says, and a month later, they had sex again.

The next semester, the female student attended a presentation

on sexual assault, during which the school's Title IX coordinator allegedly spoke about how "regret equals rape." (The school has denied this.) Soon after, the female student filed a complaint, and the coordinator from the presentation opened an investigation. That person allegedly omitted important details from the report, such as quoting the girl as saying, "I usually don't have sex with someone I meet on the first night" and leaving out her caveat: "But you are a really interesting guy." The school expelled him. He sued, and a jury trial is scheduled for April.

Lawsuit after lawsuit paints a picture of some accused college rapists that's far different from the stereotype of the roofie-dropping frat boy or violent jock. "I'm not representing students who are being accused of violent gang rapes," says Kimberly Lau, a lawyer who represented the accused Vassar student. "I'm

FREIGHTED: Unhappy with the results of Columbia's investigation of her rape charge, Sulkowicz hauled a mattress around campus for the school year to protest in a thesis project she called *Carry That Weight*.

talking about the gray area, the he-said, she-said, two people in a room, two people drinking...and coming away the next day with different narratives of what occurred."

Nungesser's case was a he-said, she-said, and its details are well-known by now. He and Sulkowicz were friends who had had sex on two occasions before they hooked up again in August 2012, on the first day of their sophomore year. They seemed to remain friendly afterward, but several months later, Sulkowicz filed a report with Columbia, claiming Nungesser had anally raped her that night in August during what had started as consensual sex. She also said he had slapped her, choked her and pinned her down and wouldn't stop despite her screaming. "He could have strangled me to death," she told *The New York Times*.

"That was obviously a huge shock, and a whole world for me broke apart," Nungesser says of the accusation. He told the school the sex had been consensual. In November 2013, Columbia found that Nungesser was not responsible and denied Sulkowicz's appeal.

Shortly after Sulkowicz filed her report, two more women came forward with accusations against Nungesser. One said he had groped her and tried to kiss her a year earlier; another said that when she dated Nungesser, she had felt pressured to have sex with him. Nungesser's accusers have said they each decided to speak up when they learned of the others' cases. Columbia found Nungesser not responsible in all cases. (In one, the school initially found him responsible; after an appeal, a second hearing

cleared him. A fourth accuser, a male student, later said Nungesser had sexually assaulted him; again, the school found him not responsible.) "This is the point where all of us say, Well, this is finished, OK," says Karin, his mother. "Now everything can cool down."

Or heat up. In December 2013, the *New York Post* ran a story about the first three claims, referring anonymously to a "jock 'rapist'... still walking around like a big man on campus because the school dropped the ball." In January 2014, a student publication detailed the claims against him, with pseudonyms for all involved. Then, in April 2014, Sulkowicz spoke at a press conference with New York Senator Kirsten Gillibrand. A press release quoted Sulkowicz as saying, "My rapist—a serial rapist—still remains on campus, even though three of the women he assaulted reported him.... Every day I live in fear of seeing him."

A month later, Sulkowicz appeared on the front page of *The New York Times* and penned an article for *Time* about the alleged rape. Nungesser's name soon appeared on fliers and graffiti around campus, along with the words "serial rapist." Days later, Sulkowicz filed a police report. The district attorney decided not to bring charges, which, Nungesser's lawyer at the time says, was because the office felt it could not prove the case beyond a reasonable doubt.

Sulkowicz has said it was because she declined to participate in the DA's investigation. (The DA declined to comment to *Newsweek*.) But the report was enough for the *Columbia Daily Spectator* to publish Nungesser's name, confirming the identity of Sulkowicz's long-alleged rapist. "I knew that was the point of no return," Nungesser says. "I knew life was never going to be the same again."

Nungesser's parents regularly emailed school administrators, including President Lee Bollinger. Every email expressed a new concern:

We have just learned that our son was ambushed outside his residence by two reporters.... Do we have to wait until Paul is beaten up, severely wounded or even killed?... We just talked to Paul on the phone and found him devastated, depressed and without any support.... We feel that his well-being is seriously in danger.... You are again massively worsening our son's situation.... Shame on you, Mr. President!

Columbia's responses, which the parents provided to *Newsweek*, were usually boilerplate, stating that the school "takes these matters extremely seriously." "Everytime we said, 'Please, Columbia, do something,'" Karin says. "And they didn't."

Then came the art project for which Nungesser's accuser would gain international fame—and credit for her school the-

TWO INCAPACITATED STUDENTS HAVING SEX "ARE FRANKLY RAPING EACH OTHER."

sis. She titled it *Mattress Performance (Carry That Weight)*. In a September 2014 video, she declared she would carry a mattress around campus "for as long as I attend the same school as my rapist." That video now has more than 2.2 million views.

Nungesser was appalled and scared. "Immediately, when I found out about the project, I reached out to Columbia. I said, 'There is someone apparently doing a school-sponsored project about getting me either bullied or expelled. This can't be going on. You should be doing something about it I'm not feeling safe. This is against school regulation.' And I was just completely—yeah, ignored is not even strong enough" for how little they seemed to care.

The image of Sulkowicz struggling under the weight of her mattress became a national symbol, her "Carry That Weight" slogan a rallying cry. She appeared on the covers of *New York* magazine and *The New York Times* Arts section. *New York* magazine art critic Jerry Saltz named her project the best "art show" of 2014. She attended President Barack Obama's State of the Union address as Gillibrand's guest, and women's groups showered her with awards. Students at more than 150 schools participated in "Carry That Weight" days of action, hauling mattresses across campuses.

"I would hear people talking about it who didn't even know me or didn't recognize me. I would hear people discussing it on the subway...non-Columbia people," Nungesser says. "I kept



telling myself, 'I'm not that person.'"

He considered leaving school but knew people would take that as an admission of guilt. So he and his parents stopped emailing Columbia, pleading for help, and lawyered up.

'DARK DAYS AHEAD'

FOUR THOUSAND miles away from the ivy-covered residence halls, neoclassical libraries and *Alma Mater* sculpture that watches over the Columbia campus, Nungesser, who turns 24 this month, sips espresso macchiato in a dimly lit café in the trendy Prenzlauer Berg section of Berlin. He grew up around the corner and later moved away, long before it was trendy. It took months of negotiating to arrange this meeting; he's wary of reporters and hadn't spoken with one at length since before graduation.

Nungesser has been depicted as a privileged Ivy Leaguer from Europe, but he attended Columbia on a need-based scholarship, and his family had to borrow to pay his legal fees. These days, he lives with his parents and freelances as a cinematographer. He plans to apply to film school, but he feels that he's lost all of his New York connections and that he can't return to

"DO WE HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL PAUL IS BEATEN UP, SEVERELY WOUNDED OR EVEN KILLED?"

the U.S. He says prospective employers Google his name and question him about what happened at Columbia. "It's something that I have to explain in detail every single time, which is very painful to do, and ultimately it's also been leading up to me missing out on several jobs," he says.

If the "mattress protest" turned Sulkowicz into the poster girl for campus sexual assault survivors, it made Nungesser the poster boy for alleged campus rapists. "The question was always, What can we do to clear Paul's name?" Karin says. As the "mattress protest" went viral, and Columbia was doing nothing to stop it, Nungesser's father flew to New York City to hire an attorney. He happened to visit just as Sulkowicz's *New York* cover hit newsstands, and he saw it everywhere. He met with Andrew Miltenberg, a lawyer who had gained media attention for representing 75 to 100 accused students (by his count) and who had previously sued Columbia.

On April 23, 2015, Nungesser filed a federal lawsuit against Columbia, its trustees and president, and Jon Kessler, an art professor. (Kessler declined *Newsweek's* interview request. Lawyers for Columbia and Kessler did not respond to *Newsweek's* requests for comment, but in court filings they deny responsibility for Sulkowicz's conduct.)

The complaint details the many ways Columbia allegedly allowed Sulkowicz to commit gender-based harassment: Kessler helped Sulkowicz develop the "mattress" idea; Columbia let her carry the mattress in school buildings and on school-provided transportation; Bollinger supported Sulkowicz in the

press; the school promoted her project on its website and paid part of the cleanup fee for a "Carry That Weight" rally. The suit claims those actions "significantly damaged, if not effectively destroyed Paul Nungesser's college experience, his reputation, his emotional well-being and his future career prospects" and "deprived him of equal access to educational benefits and opportunities at Columbia on the basis of his gender."

One name that doesn't appear on the list of defendants is Sulkowicz's. "Ms. Sulkowicz believes what she believes, and she's created this story for herself," Miltenberg says. "The greater distress is at Columbia for allowing her to have on-campus rallies, allowing her to base her thesis

MUSTAFAH ABDULAZIZ FOR NEWSWEEK

LONG-DISTANCE CALL: After graduation, Nungesser moved back to Berlin, but says the notoriety of the Columbia case followed him to Europe, and makes it hard for him to find work.

on this, allowing her to essentially legitimize her story.... At this point, she's sort of a footnote."

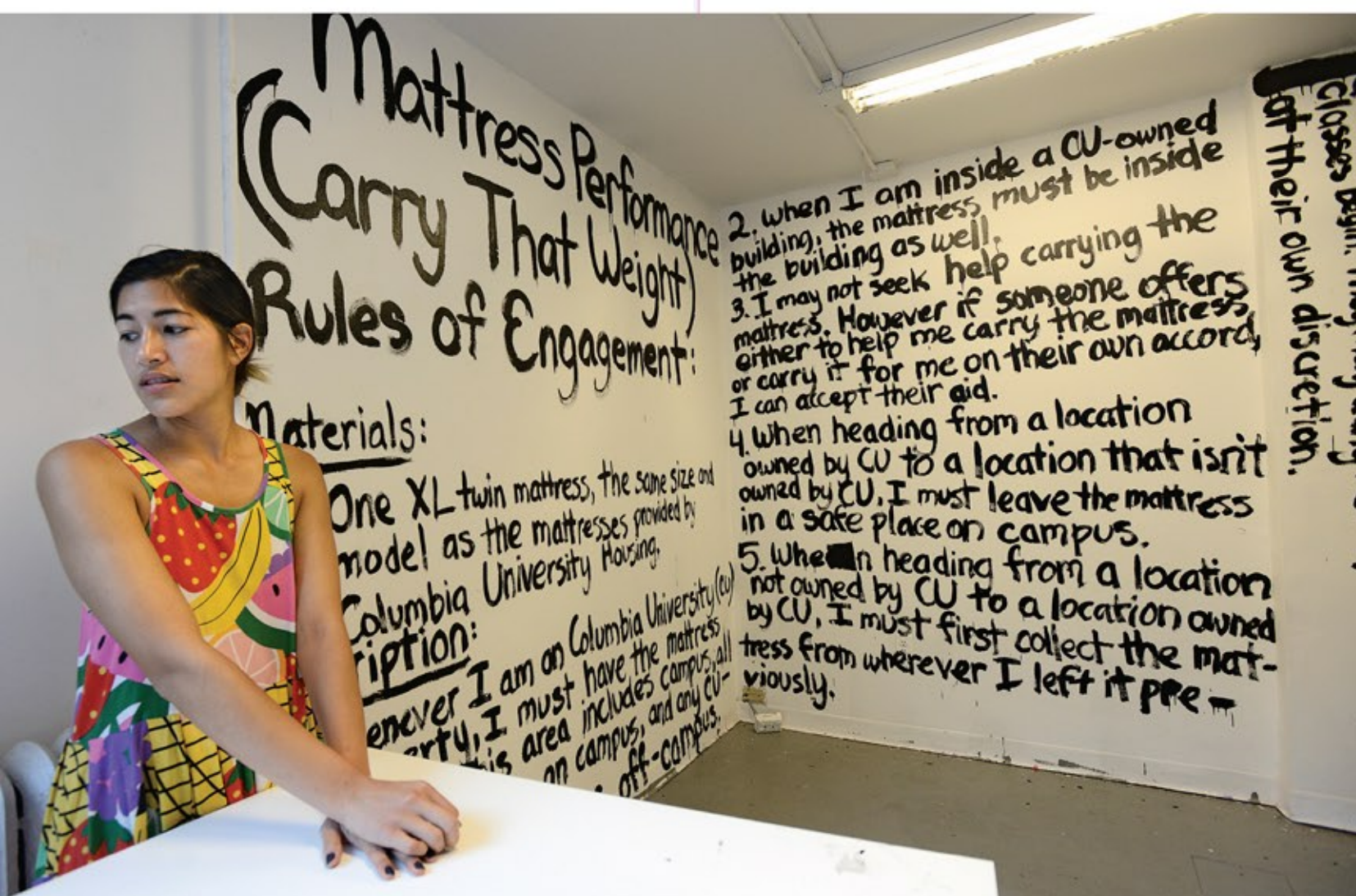
Sulkowicz declined to speak with *Newsweek* but said by email, "Paul Nungesser's complaint is filled with lies.... I want to warn you to be conscientious about what you publish as 'fact' for I may work with a lawyer to rectify any inaccuracies and misrepresentations." Two days after Nungesser filed, Kessler posted a link on Facebook to an article about the lawsuit. He tagged Sulkowicz and wrote, "Dark days ahead..."

'SEX IS CONFUSING'

TWENTY YEARS before Sulkowicz carried that weight, a woman at Vassar, once all-female, accused S. Tim Yusuf of sexual harassment. At the time, schools were just starting to grapple with "date rape," which *Ms.* magazine had called a campus epidemic. Court documents are now sealed, but Yusuf recalls that his accuser claimed he had tried to pull the towel off her as she came out of the shower. "It was terrifying, that's really the only way to put it," he says. "At the time, you don't really understand everything that's going on. You're too emotionally involved to really question what's being said to you."

Yusuf maintained his innocence and had records proving he was elsewhere at the time of the alleged incident, but he says the disciplinary panel refused to consider them. The school suspended him for a semester.





WALL-TO-WALL COVERAGE: Above, Sulkowicz posted "Rules of Engagement" for her "mattress performance" on the wall of her studio and made several pieces of art that combined drawings with coverage of the case, opposite.

Soon after, in 1992, Yusuf sued Vassar for discrimination based on gender and race. (He is South Asian-American.) A judge dismissed the case, but Yusuf appealed, and another judge reinstated the gender claim and issued an opinion. It was likely the first time a court had supported a claim of erroneous outcome from a discriminatory school disciplinary hearing. Yusuf and Vassar eventually settled before trial, but the precedent was set.

The current wave of male-Title IX cases often cite *Yusuf v. Vassar*, but proving that a school not only discriminated against a male student but also did so because the student is male is difficult. "You almost have to show that a woman who was accused in a similar situation would have gotten more favorable treatment somehow, and that's an almost impossible standard," says Patricia Hamill, a lawyer in the Brandeis case. That's because "it's so rare that a woman is accused," she notes.

Few male-Title IX cases since *Yusuf v. Vassar* have been even remotely successful, and those ended in settlements, not full-out wins. "I don't think a Title IX lawsuit against a college or university by anybody is going to go to trial because higher ed won't let it, because the attorneys and the insurance companies will settle these cases to make sure that that precedent is never set," says the Association of Title IX Administrators's

Sokolow. "You're going to have to find a plaintiff, whether they're an accused student or a victim, who refuses a settlement, no matter what it is, and insists on their day in court, which is a very expensive thing to do."

Miltenberg, Nungesser's lawyer, has brought a handful of Title IX claims by accused male students to court but says they're not "getting a tremendous amount of traction." Despite that, he remains optimistic. "The courts are going to have to see enough of these that there is a sense across the country that, Wait, this is coming up too much, there really must be something wrong."

Advocates for sexual assault victims are scornful of these Title IX lawsuits. "I worry that it encourages or it incentivizes universities to evaluate actual allegations of sexual assault and dating violence not based on their merits, and

"HE COULD HAVE STRANGLED ME TO DEATH."

not to investigate the truth of what happened, but simply to evaluate who poses the greater sort of threat of litigation," says Zoe Ridolfi-Starr, a recent Columbia graduate. She helped Sulkowicz carry her mattress at graduation and is now deputy director of Know Your IX, a survivor-run anti-sexual-violence campaign. "The impact on individual survivors can be tremendous," she says, adding that the lawsuits can expose survivors to unwanted publicity and give the impression that the number of false rape accusations is higher than it is.

Perhaps the problem isn't wrongful accusations but the definition of sexual assault. "I don't think anybody knows what it is," Sokolow says. "It's fascinating to watch what these women and men—it's both—want to label as sexually unacceptable behavior. And I wonder if it's generational. I wonder if we're all behind the times, and they're redefining their own sexual mores, and we haven't figured it out yet. Or if they've redefined what's acceptable to them based on hypersensitivity, which their generation is known to possess."

The hypersensitivity debate goes beyond sexual assault; it could apply to everything from "trigger warnings" to "safe spaces" to the recent unrest at Yale University after an administrator defended potentially insensitive Halloween costumes as free speech.

Ridolfi-Starr dismisses the "hypersensitivity" thesis. "Students finally have the confidence and the cultural space and the vocabulary to articulate when certain things are unacceptable.... That's not because we've now become a bunch of delicate flowers," she says. "You would never talk to a war veteran who has PTSD and say, 'Aren't you being a little hypersensitive?'"

School Title IX administrators, who investigate sexual misconduct complaints, aren't receptive to the male-discrimination angle either. During an October seminar for Title IX administrators, Justin Dillon, a lawyer in a firm that settled an accused male-Title IX case against George Washington University, and who has two such cases now pending, cautioned attendees from holding only one student accountable after

two incapacitated students have drunken sex. "They are frankly raping each other," he said. The audience bristled, and the lawyers presenting with him, Hamill (from the Brandeis case) and Susan Kaplan, had to tell attendees to settle down.

Dillon found that reaction "completely unsurprising" and adds that his firm gets one to three calls per week from concerned young men or their families. "Sex is confusing. And sex when you are a college student, often away from home for the first time and trying to figure out who you are in the world, is confusing," he says. "There is no sense at schools anymore that maybe we should just sit down with the complainant and say, 'Wow, it sounds like you really wish you hadn't had sex with him, but did you ever say no? And were you really so drunk that you didn't know what you were doing?'"

The issues lawyers take with school proceedings include the vague notices schools send accused students; the single-investigator model, in which one person is responsible for the entire investigation; the lack of access the accused have to records; and the way some schools bar advocates or attorneys from aiding the accused. Samantha Harris, of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, says, "Even though people seem to understand the importance of due process generally, there seems to be this blind spot with regard to these sexual assault claims."

Hamill has represented about two dozen male respondents in the past few years. She got one of the rare settlements for a male-Title IX case, against Swarthmore in 2014. "These are young people who are navigating relationships. Communication isn't always as clear as everybody might like it to be," she says, speaking generally. "I would hate to be on a college campus today—on either side of this—because of the threat."



'THEY'RE RUINING KIDS' LIVES'

FOR SIX of Luke's eight semesters at Colgate, college was everything he had hoped it would be. He helped lead six student organizations at once, studied abroad in China, had a long-term girlfriend and spent a summer researching climate change with a professor in a Costa Rican rain forest. Once, during a "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes" event to raise awareness about sexual violence, he strapped on red high heels and marched around campus. Another time, he helped a female activist classmate carry her mattress.

In October 2014, coinciding with a "Carry That Weight" day of action, a female student with whom Luke was friendly allegedly helped organize a forum at Colgate on sexual assault. Over the next two days, she and two more women who allegedly attended the forum filed sexual misconduct complaints against him. "I didn't tell anybody at that point because I had no idea what I was up against," says Luke, who asked that *Newsweek* not use his real name because he fears the allegations will destroy his reputation. He didn't even tell his parents. "I had complete faith in the Colgate administrator's system because Colgate had been so good to me and I trusted that they would find the truth and they would find me not guilty."

"He's a college kid. He was 21 years old. He doesn't know that he's just been hit by a truck," says Luke's father.

More than five months passed before the school told Luke the details of the allegations. He says he was allowed to review them only in a file at the associate dean's office, during office hours and with his adviser present. "So while the three complainants had three years to come up with their case and the investigator had five and a half months to come up with her case," Luke says, "I was given less than a week to read through an 85-page file and come up with a defense."

One of the women alleged Luke had "digitally penetrated" her vagina without her consent. Another said he had "touched her buttocks" and breasts without consent and exposed his penis and forced her to touch it. The third claimed he had touched her breasts without consent, "digitally penetrated" her vagina without consent, exposed his penis, forced her to touch it and "pushed" it against her thigh without consent. These incidents had all allegedly happened two and a half to three years before the complainants filed.

"I remembered the encounters I had with these women my freshman year, but I did not see anything wrong," Luke says, "so I was replaying them through my head hundreds, thousands of times. I couldn't sleep." He insists that the first woman allowed him to touch her breasts and that they did nothing else. He says he never went beyond consensual kissing with the second woman, while she was shirtless, and consensual kissing and under-the-shirt touching with the third woman.

A hearing panel—which included the administrator who allegedly spoke at the October sexual assault forum that one of the complainants organized—reviewed all three accusations at once, found him responsible for all and expelled him. It was 39 days before he was set to graduate.

"I didn't know the unfairness," Luke's father says, "[until] I went online and said, Holy cow, this is happening all over America. And he was one of those guys that got hit, that got swept up in

this. These administrators don't have any capability to give a fair process. They're just not qualified, and they're ruining kids' lives."

Luke filed a Title IX lawsuit in August. Colgate has not yet filed a response. A spokeswoman for the school declined to comment on pending litigation, and its lawyers did not respond to *Newsweek's* emails. The names of the accusers are not public, and they are not defendants in the lawsuit.

Perhaps lawsuits such as Luke's and Nungesser's indicate that a fundamental shift is underway in the campus rape debate. "I don't think this is the beginning of the end, but I think it's the end of the beginning," says Miltenberg, who also represents Luke. "Hopefully, people take a closer look at allegations like this. Now, that's not to say that there aren't real sexual assaults and rape. Those are very serious problems. But so is being falsely accused of something."

'HOW WOULD YOU FEEL?'

WEEKS AFTER filing their lawsuit, and days before that tense Columbia graduation, Nungesser's parents visited Dodge Hall, a brick building near the center of the campus. An art exhibition on the third floor featured work by graduating seniors. They expected to find Sulkowicz's mattress there. They knew seeing it would be painful,

DUE PROCESS DUE: Title IX suits like Nungesser's contend that schools are zealous in protecting the accusers, but trample the rights of the accused.



but they wanted to bear witness to what their son had endured. They saw Sulkowicz's large portrait of a man who they instantly thought resembled their son, printed over an issue of *The New York Times* that included a story about him. The figure was grinning and pulling down his underwear, exposing his erect penis.

Another print, over the *Times* article about Nungesser, showed the same man in profile, naked and on a mattress, on top of a woman they thought resembled Sulkowicz. She was naked, pinned down, on her back with her knees by her shoulders. The male figure was penetrating her in the same way Sulkowicz has said Nungesser raped her. A third print showed the female figure covering her eyes, with the words "You can take my story but my body won't be overwritten."

"How would you feel having your face and your genitals drawn over an article with your

"I WOULD HATE TO BE ON A COLLEGE CAMPUS TODAY, ON EITHER SIDE OF THIS."

name, which is then exhibited to the entire school?" Nungesser says. "Columbia is hosting this, is facilitating this.... A Columbia faculty [member] approved those prints, supervised those prints, hung those prints on the wall and then gave a toast to this exhibition."

Nungesser and his parents say they have no interest in settling the lawsuit. "My faith in justice has been so fundamentally shaken," he says, "that I'm hoping by going forth and putting this into a court of law there's going to be someone who says this behavior that occurred here was [an] injustice."

"What happened to me...could happen to any other college male," he adds. "Institutions are capable of intense cruelty without even realizing what they're doing."

FROM LEFT: RAJAH BOSE/THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDOX; MUSTAFAH ABDULAZIZ FOR NEWSWEEK

An aerial photograph of a village nestled in a valley, with a large dam on the Ganges River. The river flows through the center of the image, surrounded by lush green hills and terraced fields. The sky is filled with dramatic, white clouds. The title 'THE RIVER OF DEATH' is overlaid in large white letters with pink horizontal bars. The subtitle 'INDIA'S FUTURE DEPENDS ON REVIVING THE GANGES RIVER' is in yellow text in the top left. The author's name 'BY CAMERON CONAWAY (@CAMERONCONAWAY)' is in the bottom right, accompanied by a yellow 'X' logo. The magazine information 'NEWSWEEK 56 10/02/2015' is in the bottom left.

INDIA'S FUTURE
DEPENDS ON REVIVING
THE GANGES RIVER

THE RIVER OF DEATH

BY CAMERON CONAWAY
(@CAMERONCONAWAY)

NEWSWEEK 56 10/02/2015

ONE DAY IN JANUARY 2015, BLACK CROWS BEGAN TO FILL THE GRAY SKY LIKE WILD BRUSHSTROKES,

so a group of villagers decided to investigate. The birds were circling something, and as the villagers approached they heard the guttural growl of dogs, all teeth and rib cage, scrapping for the last tug of tendon. That's when they found a floating mass grave of more than 100 corpses washed up in a canal that connects to the Ganges River.

The macabre event lent itself well to sensationalization; each headline that came out in the week following ferried me back to June 2013, when Raghvendra "Nandan" Upadhyay, a local journalist and tour guide, greeted me before leading me through his hometown by saying: "Welcome to the city of learning and burning, of light and death. Welcome to Varanasi."

Situated on the west bank of the Ganges River—referred to in Hindi as *Ma Ganga* (Mother Ganga), or simply Ganga—in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, Varanasi is India's oldest city and thought to be one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. Mark Twain, upon visiting in the 1890s, quipped that it's "older than history, older than tradition, older even than legend, and looks twice as old as all of them put together!"

Varanasi is also the religious capital of India and Hinduism. "Millions of Hindus want to die or at least have their ashes spread in the Ganges here," said Nandan. "In doing so, they believe they can break the perpetual cycle of *samsara*, of birth and rebirth, and thus achieve *moksha*, eternal liberation."

That's why dead bodies are burning 24 hours a day there, seven days a week. "This same fire has been going for 3,000 years," said a worker at Manikarnika Ghat, the most famous riverside cremation site in Varanasi. "We average anywhere from 30 to 100 bodies per day. Each takes about three hours." The corpses are covered in ghee (clarified butter), laid atop wooden planks, layered with ornate cloth, briefly dipped in the Ganges and then carried to the open-air pit and lit aflame.

Death is big business here. There are hotels, such as Kashi Labh Mukti Bhavan, that accept only occupants expected to die within 15 days. And according to Uttar Pradesh's official data, tourism is on the rise, with thousands coming every month to watch this theater of death along the



ASH WEDNESDAY... AND THURSDAY... Thousands of bodies like this one are cremated each day, and then the ashes are dumped into the Ganges.

Ganges. And while workers at Manikarnika Ghat will tell you that families can pay "based on means," there is immense pressure to buy the right kind of wood for these cremations (sandalwood, for example, offers a better burn and therefore, it is believed, means a better shot at *moksha*). In the end, a body can cost a family 7,000 Indian rupees (\$109) to burn—over 15 percent of the average Indian's yearly wage.

It's why many families deposit their recently deceased directly into the Ganges or into a channel that will lead to it. Liberating the soul of a loved one is worth running the risk that the body ends up

"WELCOME TO THE CITY OF LEARNING AND BURNING, OF LIGHT AND DEATH."

being picked apart by carrion birds and wild dogs. The problem, really, is when the scavenging animals don't come, and the bodies are left to rot in the river.

POLLUTION TOURISM

"ALL OF THIS," Nandan said as we watched the funeral rituals from our rowboat, "the economics, the ritual,

the history, the bodies burned or simply dumped, the families over there bathing to wash away their sins, all of this is because of my country's deep belief in Ganga. Respect for Ganga is what truly unites India."

The infamously polluted body of water begins in the Himalayan town of Devprayag and winds throughout the country for over 1,500 miles before draining into the Bay of Bengal. The Ganges River basin, according to Colorado State University fluvial geoscientist Ellen Wohl, supports a staggering 10 percent of the world's population. This includes all ways in which the water is used for survival: for growing rice and other crops, bathing, drinking, providing fish and other animals as a food source, and more.

The mythological story of Ganga the self-cleaning river god—she lived



in heaven but chose to live on earth to purify the sins of all those she came in contact with—fuels countless festivals and holidays in India. Tragically, though, it's often respect for Ganga the god that leads to disrespect for Ganges the river.

As I sat in the boat with Nandan that morning, I wasn't struck so much by the burning bodies as by how, in water just a few feet from floating corpses, young boys rinsed their mouths and spat the water high into the air. Yogis and meditators devoted their morning service to worshipping Ganga, but in the afternoon were throwing their candy bar wrappers and plastic bottles into it.

Thousands joined in the Ganga Aarti festival, a spiritual gathering that happens every day at dusk for worshippers to receive Ganga's blessing. And that's when I realized how bad things really were: The celebratory rituals used

to laud the Ganga involve poisoning her.

We were packed in so tight to watch the Ganga Aarti performances that I could see only a few inches of the river in the spaces between the rowboats. This was the space that served as receptacle: I watched as people stuffed these gaps with their cigarettes and cigarette boxes, empty juice containers, receipts—whatever they wanted to get rid of ended up in the Ganges. It was as though we weren't on water but instead on some

FROM LEFT: RAJESH KUMAR SINGH/AP; DANISH SIDDIQUI/REUTERS

LAST STOP: Many Hindus believe that if they have their ashes dumped in the river at Varanasi, they skip a life and death cycle, and earn a shortcut to salvation.

kind of swaying land of trash.

What's flowing beneath the surface is much worse: Millions of gallons of industrial effluents and raw sewage drain into the Ganges each day. The results are devastating. Diarrhea, often caused by exposure to fecal matter, kills 600,000 Indians per year,

and waterborne diseases throughout the Ganges River basin, many a result of the polluted waters, cost families \$4 billion per year. Sanitation and water pollution issues cause 80 percent of the diseases that afflict rural Indians.

The pollution has also slowed down or made stagnant many once free-flowing areas of the Ganges. Stagnation is where the mosquitos thrive, and with mosquitos comes malaria. The deadliest form of malaria, *Plasmodium falciparum*, is on the rise in India, and the worst may be yet to come: Dr. François H. Nosten of the Shoklo Malaria Research Unit in Thailand

THE GANGES RIVER BASIN SUPPORTS A STAGGERING 10 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION.

believes the drug-resistant strain of the disease-causing parasite his team is struggling to combat in Southeast Asia is "bound to spill over into India." This form of malaria is perhaps the world's most pressing global health issue, and if India cannot clean up the Ganges the country could be setting itself up for a catastrophe. And this is to say nothing of dengue, which is endemic all over India, and of chikungunya, a viral disease of which India has had several outbreaks in the past few years.

The pollution has become so grotesque that in May of this year my taxi driver in Delhi went through a list of places I could visit, and after mentioning World Heritage Sites like the Red Fort and Humayun's Tomb, he suggested I go see "Yamuna foam," the toxic foam of chemicals and urine coating large swaths of Delhi's portion of the Yamuna River, the largest tributary of the Ganges. Tourists in India's big cities now flock to see how bad the country's waterways have become, while up and down the river, things are only getting worse.





Kanpur, the silent slaughtering begins. Despite the countrywide respect for cows and the laws in some regions that carry a seven-year prison term for those caught killing them, India is home to an estimated 3,100 illegal slaughterhouses that export cow meat under the guise of buffalo meat to hide the sacrilege. The country is also the world's largest exporter of leather. Kanpur, known as the "Leather City of the World," is at the center of this lucrative industry.

There are 700 tanneries on the banks of the Ganges here, many pumping dangerous levels of sulfuric acid, chromium, arsenic and mercury into the river. According to India's National Green Tribunal, these tanneries are one of the worst sources of pollution to the Ganges; cancer rates are higher in these areas, and it's believed that many children have gone blind as a result of the industry.

PURIFIED: Nearly 10 million Hindus bathe in the river during the annual Kumbh Mela Festival, left, believing that it will cleanse them of their sins.

"PEOPLE WILL STARVE THEMSELVES TO BUY FLOWERS TO OFFER GANGA."

"In Kanpur, the river is effectively dead," says Rakesh Jaiswal, an Ashoka Fellow and environmental activist. "No one ever thought this would happen. This is the water we believe holy, yet we remain silent at its desecration."

TOILETS BEFORE TEMPLES

X

ABOUT 1,100 MILES from Kanpur, in the state of West Bengal, is Sagar Island, where the Ganges drains into the Bay of Bengal. Millions of Hindus make the pilgrimage here at least once in their lifetime to pay respect to Ganga before she makes her way into the ocean. This is especially true during the Gangasagar Mela, an event in mid-January to celebrate Ganga's descent from heaven. It's one of the largest annual gatherings in the world, and well over 500,000 Hindus dip themselves in the water to purify their souls.

It's one of the area's main sources of income. But it's also devastating for the environment. "The load of human waste in Gangasagar Mela is colossal with so many people defecating and bathing within three days on a four-square-kilometer stretch," Tuhin Ghosh, a researcher at the School of Oceanographic Studies at Jadavpur University, told the *Times of India*. "The carrying capacity of Sagar Island is exceeded several thousand times during

TOXIC BENDS

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THERE'S A WIDESPREAD BELIEF that the destitute people living along the river destroy it the most. But Sonali Mittra, of the Delhi-based Observer Research Foundation, a nonprofit think tank involved in regional and transboundary resource management of water, says the data do not bear this out. "The poor or vulnerable river communities are often viewed as the major polluters," she says, "but much research indicates that it is industries and urban centers who are more responsible."

Follow the Ganges along its winding route from the Himalayas to the Bay of Bengal, and you'll encounter a veritable catalog of these pollution types. Haridwar is about 60 miles southwest of Devprayag. It's regarded as one of the seven holy places for Hindus, and it's here where the Ganges enters the plains of Northern India. It's also where, on May 23, 2015, the Radisson Blu hotel had its utilities shut off for about 36 hours by the State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) after it was caught dumping untreated water from its drains into the Ganges.

Many viewed the actions taken against the Radisson as heartening evidence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's passion to clean the Ganges. Maybe, they said, his Cabinet's declaration of 2015-2016 as Jal Kranti Varsh, or Water Revolution Year, was more than just a clever political move. Uma Bharti, Modi's "Ganga rejuvenation minister," has even set a goal that the Ganges will be clean within two years.

SPCB regional officer Ankur Kansal told *The Times of India*, "We have

made it very clear to them that untreated water flowing into the Ganga will not be tolerated." But a hotel manager, who asked to remain anonymous for fear of damaging the Radisson's relationship with government regulators, tells me that after dealing with the SPCB for four years, he is confident that the hotel "will not receive any fine" and "will not receive any sanctions."

Kanpur is 320 miles southeast of Haridwar. It's a major industrialized city where, according to Murali Prasad Pant at the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur, "Nearly 70 percent of the people who use Ganga's waters will become sickened by waterborne diseases caused by the sewage upstream."

Kanpur's dirty little secret is its underground cow-slaughtering market. Reverence for the cow is found in nearly all of Hinduism's major texts. For the most part, people treat them as pets that provide milk, and generally beef isn't eaten in India. But when the sun sets in



FROM LEFT: KEVIN FRAYER/AP; HENDU SARKAR/LIGHTROCKET/GETTY

this brief period, and the resultant pollution causes environmental degradation. Each Mela pushes environmental parameters closer to the brink."

These problems will only continue to worsen. India's population is growing. With it, water needs are skyrocketing: The International Water Management Institute estimates that water demand in the country will increase 32 percent by 2050. And though India is in the midst of a tech revolution, bolstered by a population set to surpass China by 2028 and developments such as its impressive space program, there has been little investment in technology to save the country's 5,219 miles of water that are, according to environmental journalist Chetan Chauhan of *Hindustan Times*, "not fit to support aquatic life" due to pollution. The water is so bad that the International Union for the Conservation of Nature declared the Ganges-swimming India river dolphin, the country's official national aquatic animal, as functionally extinct in 2007.

WHILE 45 PERCENT OF INDIANS HAVE A CELLPHONE, ONLY 31 PERCENT HAD A TOILET.

There are some signs that things might be improving. There are now some radical cleanup efforts underway using innovative machines such as the floating trash skimmer made by Cleantec Infra. The skimmer moves through the use of two basic paddle wheels, and its two hydraulic gates pull trash onto a conveyor belt. Namami Gange, a government-led water conservation mission, has used the machine during celebratory events involving millions of Indians, and efforts are underway to continue advancing upon this technology.

Professor B.D. Tripathi of Banaras Hindu University pioneered Ganga pollution research initiatives in the early '70s and has been studying the river's decline ever since. So it's reassuring that he is filled with hope. "Modi is the first prime minister of India who has shown his dedication for Mother Ganga and created a separate ministry for its rejuvenation," he says. "I hope he will succeed in his efforts. Over 450 million people rely on the Ganga. Saving the Ganga is the saving of humanity."

When Modi took office in May 2014, he famously thanked two mothers. In Gandhinagar, the capital of the state of Gujarat in Western India, he thanked his mother, Heeraben Modi. After receiving her blessings, he traveled nearly 900 miles east to Varanasi and along the banks where 96 percent consider the water unsafe to drink, he thanked the Ganges for its strength. With that, he claimed he would clean the river by October 2019, the 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's birth.

He's also sticking to the "toilets before temples" mantra that he's repeated on the national stage since his election. There are 600 million people in India who don't use toilets, and much of that human waste ends up in the river; a U.N. report in 2010 revealed that while 45 percent of Indians had a cellphone, only 31 percent had a toilet. But in July of this year, Modi promised there would be toilets in every school throughout India within the next few months.

FAITH HEALING

x

ABOVE ALL ELSE, though, the country needs to come to terms with the fact that, as Mittra puts it, "the mythological idea of the Ganga is indeed more valued than the river itself."



Sadhvi "Sadhviji" Bhagawati Saraswati of the nonprofit Ganga Action Parivar, a nonprofit organization based in Rishikesh, believes that the way to do this is to form "a collaboration that involves the government and scientists, but also faith leaders who have the networks and the capacity to shape perspective through story rather than shaming." Many nongovernmental organizations and others hoping to save the Ganges have ignored the cultural influence of Ganga myths, seeing the pollution as a matter of the people not caring about it. But understanding the impact of religion is key.

"People will starve themselves. They will skip meals to save rupees and use those rupees to buy flowers to offer Ganga," Sadhviji says. "But in offering those flowers, they also offer the plastic bag they're wrapped in." That's why saving the Ganges is not about convincing people to care, it's about convincing them to care differently. "For thousands of years, people have believed Ganga can wash away a lifetime of sins. Why on earth would they suddenly believe their garbage could harm her? Many people actually feel disrespected when such an idea is presented," Sadhviji says. She

says it will take local faith leaders to effectively convince them otherwise.

Ganga Action Parivar tries to wrap informed messages about environmental conservation into religion and its myths. "Hinduism is inextricably linked to caring for animals, plants and the natural world," Sadhviji says. "When the pollution conversation is shaped in this manner, people immediately realize the way their actions go against their deepest values. This is when they change."

In 2015, I visited the city of Rishikesh in the lap of the Himalayas just in time to celebrate the Ganga Dussehra, a countrywide recognition of the exact day Ganga came down from heaven to earth. Rishikesh is known for being "the yoga capital of the world" and for hosting the Beatles in 1968 during their transcendental meditation retreat at the ashram of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. It's also where many Indians told me to visit if I wanted to see Ganga at her finest.

In Rishikesh, the Ganges is shockingly clean; while in water up to my knees, I could still see my feet. Perhaps a better indicator is that I didn't see a single piece of trash during the 30 minutes I spent meditating along the banks. So at 4 in the morning on the following day, with thousands of others, I celebrated Ganga and for the first time plunged my entire body into her waters. ■

Cameron Conaway's reporting on the Ganges River was supported by a grant from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting.



FLOATING CEMETERY: Bodies dumped in the Ganges have to be hauled out downriver, unless they have been picked clean by carrion birds and wild dogs.

FROM LEFT: PRESS TRUST OF INDIA/AP; DANNISH SIDDIQUE/REUTERS



LA
APRÈS
LEUR,
LE
DÉLUGE

BY POLLY MOSENDZ

IN THE WAKE OF HURRICANE KATRINA, OPPORTUNISTIC,
BUREAUCRATIC, RACIST AND POLITICIZED REBUILDING
PLANS KICKED NEW ORLEANS WHEN IT WAS DOWN

THE WORST OF KATRINA WAS AN ACT OF MAN, NOT AN ACT OF GOD.

I HEARD SOMETHING like that from every local I encountered in New Orleans earlier this year. No matter their age, race or religion, the people of this city pretty much agree that referring to Hurricane Katrina as a natural disaster is naive, even ridiculous. They all know it was a three-part storm. First, a Category 3 hurricane, then a massive failure of the levee and then the biggest disaster of all: the government's involvement.

Longtime residents of New Orleans were used to grappling with nature, but man was a harsher beast. Over 1,800 people across five states died as a result of the crisis in 2005, many because they were stuck in their homes. Thousands more suffered for days inside the Superdome before help arrived. The devastation that came after the storm was man-made: a combination of racism, opportunism, corruption and ignorance that has impaired the quality of life in this city for the past 10 years.

In the months following Katrina, New Orleans became a battleground for vested business and political interests fighting for how they wanted the city rebuilt. Some saw a political opportunity, flying in from Baton Rouge and Washington, D.C. Some simply crossed over from the suburbs or nearby campuses to declare their plans for the city to anyone in then-Mayor Ray Nagin's office who would listen.

In the midst of the lobbying, map redrawing and back-door meetings, few people bothered to ask New Orleanians how they would like to see their city rebuilt. It was—though soggy, busted up and run by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)—still their home, after all. It was their interests, their houses, their lives that needed rebuilding. But instead of transparency and aid, they got bureaucracy and ignorance.

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CHARITY VERSUS PROFITS

ON AUGUST 26, 2005, the Friday before Katrina made landfall in Louisiana, three days before the levees broke, Dr. Brobson Lutz, a longtime New Orleans resident, headed down to Galatoire's in the French Quarter for lunch. He decided, based on advice from waiters at the restaurant, that he and his

partner would wait out the storm at their French Quarter home, since the area was on higher ground than much of the city. With the exception of a door flying open, they had no problems, but once the wind stopped, Lutz was suddenly on a 24/7 treadmill, the French Quarter's resident doctor for weeks.

Lutz was uniquely suited to be a Katrina doctor. He'd completed his residency at Charity Hospital in the 1970s, a public hospital known for its trauma unit and willingness to care for New Orleans's large uninsured population. "We treated everything from heart attacks to pneumonia to fainting in church," he recalls.

In those hectic days following the storm, Lutz paired up with an emergency medical team from California. "We treated people in the streets for six or eight weeks," he says. This makeshift clinic was one of many, though Lutz's was among the more accessible in the area: FEMA lodged its clinic "in the bowels of the Omni hotel," a ritzy establishment that required everyone to go through two layers of security.

After Katrina, New Orleans hospitals had to deal with damage and outages, and improvised clinics popped up around town: in trailers, abandoned department stores and, in some cases, large tents. The mentally ill no longer had regular access to psychotropic medicines or even beds. To obtain prescriptions, Lutz and his crew relied on a psychiatry doctoral resident familiar with Charity Hospital and a police officer they called "the pharmacist," because he was adept at commandeering supplies they needed from drugstores.

That resident was the first to give Lutz the disturbing news that Charity would not be reopened. "He had been inside Charity and said it would be ready to go in a week or so. Then it didn't open. And that—that was bad," Lutz says.

Charity Hospital opened in 1736, financed with

WAR OF WORDS: A protest sign held by New Orleans resident Robert Richardson mirrors Representative Barney Frank's observation that New Orleans's government was creating "ethnic cleansing by inaction." He later walked back the remark.



FROM LEFT: PATRICK SEMANSKY/AP; ROBERT F. BUKATY/AP; PREVIOUS SPREAD: TED JACKSON/THE TIMES PICTURE/AG



money left in the will of a French sailor who died in New Orleans and believed there should be a facility to care for the city's indigent. It was rebuilt numerous times before its art deco structure on Tulane Avenue was erected in the 1930s. Almost 75 percent of Charity's patients were black and 85 percent made less than \$20,000 a year, according to *Health Affairs*, a peer-reviewed health policy journal.

Charity had over 2,000 beds and dealt with the outcomes of the city's violent crime every day: overdoses, gunshot wounds, stabbings and treatment for the mentally ill were handled with military precision. Big Charity, as it was often called, also became the primary health care provider for those without insurance: In 2003, 83 percent of its inpatient care and 88 percent of its outpatient care were uncompensated and given to the uninsured.

When the electricity went out during Katrina, Charity's doctors and nurses used handheld breathing apparatuses to keep patients alive. They painted sheets and draped them outside the windows, a reminder to helicopters passing by that they were alive and needed help. "9 West has a big heart,

FAULTY PARTS: Members of the Louisiana Recovery Authority tour New Orleans's Lower 9th Ward in October 2005. The neighborhood became infamous during Katrina coverage for its vivid scenes of destruction and loss.

Katrina can't tear us apart," read one such banner.

But a month after the storm, the building was little more than Katrina's largest tombstone. Though Charity had suffered minimal damage, state officials ordered it closed on September 30, 2005, without even a walkthrough. Nine days earlier, three floors of the hospital had been scrubbed and

FRANK CLAIMED IT WAS A "POLICY [OF] ETHNIC CLEANSING BY INACTION."

declared ready to use by the military. When state Treasurer John Kennedy toured the building, he said he thought the hospital was "just fine"—its biggest issue was flood damage in the basement. "They could have opened it back up. They just needed to turn on the electricity," Kennedy says.

That didn't matter. Charity was on some powerful people's hit lists long before Katrina. In the months

before the hurricane in the summer of 2005, state legislators discussed a plan to knock down Charity and put up a Louisiana State University medical center and a Veteran Affairs hospital. Unlike Charity, the LSU medical center would be privatized.

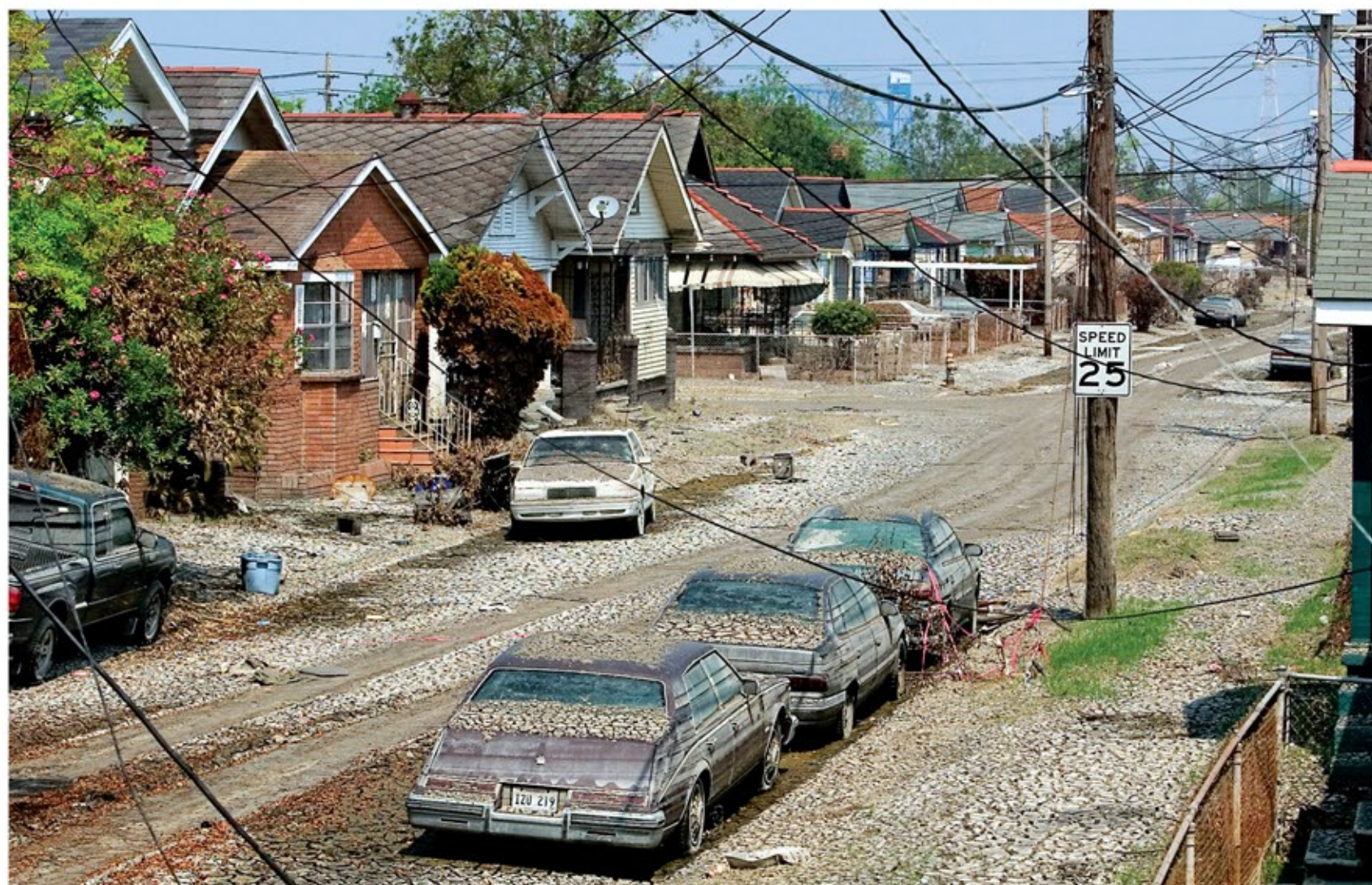
LSU had managed Charity before the storm, but some high-ranking officials didn't love the hospital's altruistic business model. "Some [legislators] charged LSU [favored] its educational missions above providing hospital services to the indigent," said a 2012 University of New Orleans study. LSU wanted its new hospital, and LSU was used to getting what it wanted. "People in New Orleans joke that LSU is the fourth branch of government in Louisiana," Alexander John Glustrom, director of the 2014 documentary *Big Charity: The Death of America's Oldest Hospital*, tells *Newsweek*. "The decision not to reopen Charity went all the way up to Governor Kathleen Blanco, but it wasn't necessarily her who masterminded the plan."

Nor was the decision up to the people of New Orleans: A poll found that 83 percent of locals preferred LSU keep Charity open as a public hospital. Public health care is vital in this town: Before Katrina, 21 percent of Louisiana residents were uninsured—the third-highest rate in the nation. There was also the issue of funding: The hundreds of millions of dollars needed to build the new medical center weren't in the state's budget, and whether legislators and the university liked it or not, Charity was still fully operational. LSU used Katrina as an excuse to skirt both challenges.

A closed-door arbitration panel settled on a FEMA payment of over \$470 million for damage to Charity, but that money would go toward the new medical center. The full cost of the new facility was \$1.1 billion, and the new hospital, University Medical Center New Orleans, didn't open until August of this year. "We could've gone back into Charity and rehabbed every single room there, and got it back going easily for half a billion," Kennedy says. "Probably less."

Some, however, were happy to see the place go. "Charity was the place of first resort and last resort. People that needed preventative care had to sit there for 12 to 13 hours," Mayor Mitch Landrieu says. "It was a question of whether we were going to build the city back like it was or build it back how it should've been done in the first place."

But to Lutz, a New Orleans without Charity isn't New Orleans. "I fell in love not only with the patients but with the long-term employees there.... It was a *real* culture, from the elevator operators to the nurse's aides to the charge nurses and administrators," he says. "The powers that be at LSU didn't care about the emotional side of things. It was just about where they can get the money and whose pocketbook they could suck it out of."



MEAN STREETS: Mayor Nagin's Bring New Orleans Back Commission wanted to take several "abandoned" neighborhoods and turn them into green space—never mind that they were all predominantly black areas that weren't actually abandoned.

A SMALLER, WHITER, RICHER NEW ORLEANS

"IF THE FEDERAL government does nothing, Louisiana will become whiter and richer," then-Representative Barney Frank said of New Orleans's housing situation in January 2007, a year and a half after Katrina. "Because, well, not only black people needed housing assistance, but they were predominantly the ones who needed it. So by simply not doing anything to alleviate this housing crisis that was so greatly exacerbated by Katrina, they achieved—they get a hurricane for the ethnic cleansing. And their hands are clean because all they're doing is not resisting it."

New Orleans officials had first discussed turning the neighborhoods hit hardest by the storm into green space just a few months after Katrina—and insisted it was merely coincidence that most of those communities were black. On December 14, 2005, a headline in *The Times-Picayune* sparked a fierce debate: "Plan Shrinks City Footprint." A group of well-to-do business people, all appointed by Mayor

IT WAS JUST THE BLACKEST, POOREST, MOST CRIME-RIDDLED NEIGHBORHOODS THAT NEW ORLEANS SOUGHT TO DISAPPEAR.

Nagin to the Bring New Orleans Back Commission, had endorsed a plan to turn several "abandoned" neighborhoods—New Orleans East, Gentilly, the Lower 9th Ward, Lakeview, Mid-City and Holygrove—into green space. The commission ignored the fact that many of those neighborhoods were not, in fact, abandoned. Their plan contained a potent mixture of racism and ignorance: It seemed odd to incensed locals that the talk of "reclaiming" neighborhoods didn't reach the affluent Garden District or the tourist-heavy French Quarter. It was just the blackest, poorest, most crime-riddled neighborhoods that New Orleans sought to disappear.

As the mayor, governor, Congress, the president

and Frank debated the housing crisis in New Orleans, residents and volunteers started rebuilding. Eventually, money from Road Home, a government payment system for homeowners devastated by the storm, eked through the pipelines and insurance companies reluctantly settled.

Ten years on, 40 of New Orleans's 72 neighborhoods average a 90 percent population recovery rate. Sixteen of them have more residents than before the storm, and 15 are about the same, since they weren't flooded. Four neighborhoods, however, have less than half of their pre-Katrina occupancy: B.W. Cooper, Florida Development, Iberville and the Lower 9th Ward. Just 36.7 percent of the Lower 9th's population returned.

Rampant fraud and bumbling bureaucracy made moving back into these neighborhoods difficult. Laura Paul, executive director of LowerNine.org, a charity organization focused on rebuilding that neighborhood, estimates 80 percent of the residents she helped fell victim to contractor fraud.

Though the road to recovery is long in these neighborhoods, what Frank referred to as "ethnic cleansing by inaction" has been mostly avoided. A study by the New Orleans Data Center determined that while the African-American population had decreased as of July 2013, so had the white population, while the number of Hispanic residents was on the rise. In 2000, African-Americans made up 66.7 percent of New Orleans. In 2013, that number was 59.1 percent.

Paul hopes to get more help from city officials in the next decade. "At some point, the city needs to step up with significant tax credits here—to get grocery stores, to get businesses, to get the streets fixed," she says. In the meantime, a postcard delivered last Christmas assures her that "the city of New Orleans will soon begin repairing Katrina damaged streets in our neighborhood." She's still waiting.

THE LONGEST ROAD HOME

MIKE COOPER was too exhausted to flee New Orleans when Katrina rolled in, so he went home. He had just worked two shifts on the *Wheel of Fortune* set as a stagehand. (The show had come to town with a custom-made French Quarter set that needed numerous tractor trailers.) Once the crew learned of the severity of the storm, production was shut down, and the show's stars, Pat Sajak and Vanna White, were whisked away. The mayor had ordered an evacuation.

Cooper lives in Lakeview, one of the areas slammed by the storm that was almost turned into green space. His house is eight blocks away from a levee breach and six blocks from Lake Pontchartrain; it filled with 12 feet of water during the storm, and Cooper stayed in his attic to escape drowning. "You're like a rat: You're looking for higher ground,"

he says. "I kicked a hole in my roof as it was getting very hot in the attic. I remember thinking, This is something else I'll have to fix—bitching at myself that I was kicking a hole in my own roof. I got on the roof, looked around and started to realize that hole was the least of my worries."

Several days after the levee broke, Cooper was rescued by two men in a boat. He stayed with friends and relatives in Louisiana and Mississippi for a few weeks before making his way back to New Orleans in late September. He got to work on his house while Washington, D.C., argued with the state legislature in Baton Rouge, which in turn argued with Nagin, who consistently ignored his advisers. "I was the only person I could see [rebuilding]," Cooper says. "Initially, you're just throwing out belongings. Everyone's house looked like a spin cycle. Everything had to go." The Bring New Orleans Back Commission had suggested preventing Cooper and his Lakeview neighbors from rebuilding because of their neighborhood's low elevation. But Cooper was adamant that rebuilding was the only thing that would keep

WRONG TURN: The house of a Lower 9th Ward resident was one of many destroyed by Katrina. This photo from 2006 shows the home unchanged a year later.

him together in an otherwise difficult time.

By February 2006, Cooper had a FEMA trailer to live in. "It was creepy, but it allowed me to work on my house," he says. Cooper gutted his home, and a friend taught him to run wiring and plumbing. Then he taught himself how to lay tile and put up Sheetrock. "I worked on my house seven days a week, eight, 10, 12 hours a day. I had a mission, and I wanted my house back together." By 2007, Cooper was living in his home again. "The godsend to help me finish my home was Road Home money."

Launched in June 2006, Road Home was, in theory, a simple system: The government would pay the difference between a home's pre-storm worth and the insurance payout the homeowner received, up to \$150,000. Cooper was so grateful for his Road Home check that he sent Governor Blanco a thank-you note.

But Road Home was imperfect from conception to payout, and Blanco was widely criticized for its failures. By basing Road Home on the pre-storm worth of the home, lower income neighborhoods received smaller payouts—even if the home damage was the

same. The same areas Frank accused the government of trying to cleanse were, perhaps unsurprisingly, also those least aided by Road Home.

Soon Road Home had a lawsuit on its hands. "African-American homeowners in New Orleans are being unfairly prevented from reclaiming their homes by the discriminatory design and implementation of the Road Home program," John Payton, the president and director-counsel of the Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Center, said in a November 2008 statement when the suit was filed. "African-Americans are facing huge gaps between the amount of their Road Home grant awards versus the cost to rebuild their homes when compared to their white counterparts." The center represented a potential class of over 20,000 homeowners.

The lawsuit was settled three years later. Eligible homeowners received supplemental grants totaling \$473 million, which provided relief to over 13,000 homeowners.

Then there was the incompetence of ICF International. Louisiana paid the Virginia company \$900 million to manage Road Home. According to the book *Katrina After the Flood* by Gary Rivlin, the company was spending millions to fly representatives back and forth. The application had more than 50 steps, though it was cut to a still-unruly 43. At the time, the company had just gone public and was awash in the economic bounty of government funding. By January 15, 2007, Road Home had received almost 99,000 applications. It gave out only 177 payments.

The onerous approval process required a variety of documents flood victims generally didn't have: deeds, purchase paperwork, mortgage statements and the like. Katrina had washed them all away.

John Lopez and his wife, who lived on the lake and lost their home in the storm, submitted their Road

"THE POWERS THAT BE AT LSU DIDN'T CARE ABOUT THE EMOTIONAL SIDE OF THINGS."

Home paperwork numerous times, as did many of their friends. They'd check in once a month: at least a half-dozen check-ins and seemingly endless time on hold. Always, they say, Road Home would demand a document they had already sent.

"I handled the homeowner's insurance, and my wife would handle Road Home," Lopez recalls. "I'd call the company, and my wife would coach me—we would take turns calming the other person down." Their home had been destroyed, and the insurance company offered \$3,800 for it. "It was one of those checks you don't cash—you hang it on a wall," he



TOUR OF HELL: New Orleans resident Beverly Evans views the wreckage in the Lower 9th Ward neighborhood. Residents were bused through their community in October 2005 for the first time since the storm.

says with a bitter smile. Eventually, they received both a proper insurance settlement and Road Home money. Still, they weren't able to go back to their home until 2009. Though Road Home was a bumpy ride, it's the primary reason many New Orleanians were able to return: The program ultimately paid out almost \$9 billion to 130,000 residents.

Lopez and his wife had the patience to outlast Road Home and their insurance companies, but many others did not. They estimate only about 60 percent of their neighbors have returned. Many never came back, overwhelmed by the bureaucracy, the paperwork and the low-balling claims adjusters.

BIG CHARITY

"ONE OF THE blessed things about the event was the people who reached out. Out of a catastrophic event came a beautiful thing," Landrieu says of the charities, donors and faith-based communities who helped rebuild the city. "It was angels among us. People lost the sense of themselves and helped other people."

Some charities—Lower Nine, Make It Right, Habitat for Humanity and many others—were angels. They asked the people of New Orleans what they wanted, and then got to work to help them get it. While government funding came with strings attached, political motivations and a top-down approach, thousands of volunteers focused instead on fixing the city one issue at a time, side by side with the resident they had come to help.

As for Big Charity, it too might still make a contribution to the city it nurtured and healed for decades. One development company has imagined the Charity Hospital building as apartments, retail space and medical offices. Knocking it down would certainly be a waste, as the concrete structure has proved it can withstand the worst nature and man have to offer. "If they do turn it into condos, I'd be interested in buying one," says Lutz. "Especially if it was on Five East, where I learned to be a doctor." ■



personal vision



D

DOWNTIME

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THE GUERNICA OF GAMING

Fallout 4 will be one of the most artistic video games ever. Whether that makes it art is up for debate

GAMING THE ART WORLD: Though some critics discount the artistic merit of video games, a new set of titles may soon earn their place in the museum—just like *Pac-Man* did at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 2013, at left.

JEMAL COUNTESS/GETTY

BY
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THE AIR-RAID SIREN wails. Its shriek drowns out the screams on the street. You clutch your wife's hand and run to the shelter. This is not a drill. Your neighbors panic. The bombs are coming. The door to the shelter won't open. The bombs are coming, but the door won't open. This is not a drill.

A flash, so bright you see the bones of your hand, and a violent, invisible force that throws you to the ground. Darkness. A terrible heat follows. A hatch opens beside you. You fall in. You smell smoke and singed hair. Blind and burning, your last thoughts are of your wife: Did she hold our baby tight? Blackout.

Welcome to *Fallout 4*—one of the most highly anticipated video games of the past decade. This isn't Super Mario saving his princess or a massive *Minecraft* map or a cascading stack of crushable candy. It is a richly layered, deeply constructed open world full of dystopian science fiction. Set in a postapocalyptic wasteland outside Boston, *Fallout 4* takes place 200 years after a nuclear

holocaust. Players assume the role of survivors who return to the surface after getting frozen in a vault. They squint into the sun as the vault door creaks open, tasked to explore this bizarre world that's part *Lost in Space* and part *Mad Max*.

The opening scene described above is just a taste of what *Fallout 4*'s creator, Bethesda Game Studios, has spent seven years designing. *Fallout 4* features 110,000 lines of spoken dialogue (the script of *Apocalypse Now* is about 7,500 lines). It's estimated that players will have 30 square miles to explore, including a faithful layout of what Boston, from Paul Revere Mall to Fenway Park, would look like if it survived a nuclear war. In the time it takes to fully explore *Fallout 4*, players could watch the *Godfather* trilogy straight through 40 times.

Fallout's aesthetic cheekily evokes '50s-era sci-fi and the naïveté of early Cold War-era pop culture. The soundtrack, which will be available on vinyl, runs the gamut from malt shop hits to

DEATH BY A THOUSAND BAILOUTS

The harsh terms imposed on Greece have led many to question the EU's future

"ALL DIPLOMACY is the continuation of war by other means," former Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai once quipped. These days, the same might be said for eurozone summits.

The European Union was founded to ease the continent's toxic wartime legacy, to allow Germany to help lead the continent, not dominate it. But in the aftermath of Greece's most recent bailout this summer, the harsh austerity terms imposed on Greece have created an unprecedented level of animosity between the two countries. Now, as the rancor ripples across borders, many are questioning the EU's political and economic future.

Under the terms of the bailout, Greece receives funding of up to 86 billion euros (\$94 billion). In exchange, the coalition government, led by the left-wing Syriza party, must implement further austerity measures, increase value-added taxes and liberalize the rule-bound Greek economy. Greece must place national assets worth 50 billion euros (\$55.1 billion) into a privatization fund that will be supervised by European institutions.

The Greek parliament approved the deal on July 16, and the backlash was fierce. Zoe Constantopoulou, a Syriza lawmaker, says the bailout terms amounted to "social genocide." Even moderate Greek politicians say the harsh terms of the deal will increase fear, insecurity and resentment in Greece. "There will be very strict

monitoring of how Greece implements the new measures, almost policing the Greek economy," says former Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou. "These have been put in place to create trust for the German taxpayer, but will create more distrust for Greek citizens. Greece's access to markets is now more difficult. Some of the burden should have been taken off."

Meanwhile, the European banks that loaned billions of euros to Greece escaped penalty. "If you are a drug addict, you are to blame for your addiction, but the dealer also bears some responsibility," says Denis MacShane, a former minister for Europe and author of *Brexit: How Britain Will Leave Europe*. "Greece is an easy whipping boy, [but] French, German and Dutch banks lent recklessly."

The result: Postwar Greek-German relations have never been worse, analysts say. The trauma of the bailout is compounded by the enduring trauma of World War II, when Greece suffered one of the harshest Nazi occupations. What has surprised many observers is the ease with which both sides have slid into stereotyping, calling Greece a lazy, feckless nation that can't be trusted, and Germany a Fourth Reich run by Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Greeks who believe the latter point to Walter Funk, the Nazi economics minister and one

BY ADAM LEBOR
@adamlebor



BROKEN: Workers repair the euro sculpture in front of the European Central Bank building in Frankfurt. After Greece's bailout, some analysts say the euro is no longer fixable.

TIM WEGNER/LAIF/REUTERS

of Hitler's most important economic theorists. Funk raised the idea of a German-dominated European monetary union in 1940. He recognized that the union would be complicated, in part because of different countries' standards of living. Yet Funk, like many modern-day European politicians, was an optimist.

As the Greek crisis shows, however, Funk's faith, like that of the euro architects, was wildly misplaced. A currency union of highly disparate states without a shared central budget or fiscal policy was always going to be hobbled. "Greece," says Peter Doyle, a former division chief in

"GREECE IS AN EASY WHIPPING BOY, BUT FRENCH, GERMAN AND DUTCH BANKS LENT RECKLESSLY."

the International Monetary Fund's European department, "is the canary in the coal mine. If the canary dies, it does not tell you that there is something wrong with the canary, but with the mine. Greece is the canary, and the eurozone is the mine."



HEARING **INNOVATION** PRESERVATION GEOGRAPHY SPACE WILDLIFE

GOOD SCIENCE

GOOGLE'S AIR-SNIFFING CARS

A new mapping project will tell you exactly where you can safely breathe

PLOTTING POLLUTION: "If you're a mother of an asthmatic child, you could plan your day using this kind of information," says Karin Tuxen-Bettman, who leads Google Earth's partnership with Aclima.

ALEX MENENDEZ/AP

BY
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LIVING IN a city is like playing air-quality roulette all day long. The air you breathe on your drive to work is different from what you're sucking in while walking to get your midmorning coffee. Air pollution can vary significantly from neighborhood to neighborhood, depending on factors like proximity to parks and trees, topography and clustering of congestion hot spots. Timing also matters: Pollution varies widely throughout the day, according to factors like weather and human activity. Air you breathe in the a.m. may be drastically different from air you breathe at dusk.

But what if you could see a picture of your city's daily air pollution along your route the way you check the weather? Last month, Google announced it was partnering with Aclima, a San Francisco-based company that designs environmental sensor networks, to outfit some Google Street View cars with sensors that track air pollution in real time. The technology can take in data on several pollutants: nitrogen dioxide, nitric oxide, ozone, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, methane, black carbon, particulate matter and

volatile organic compounds. Chronic exposure can cause issues from asthma and cardiovascular disease to low birth weight and cognitive delays.

Last year, a test-spin in Denver was deemed a success: The Environmental Protection Agency provided scientific expertise and corroborating data from its own network of stationary air-quality monitors, confirming that the mobile system worked. Now the air-sniffing cars are coming to the Bay Area in California, and Aclima says it hopes to expand to other cities in the near future.

In cities where pollution is a daily concern, the project could have a significant impact. Take Vernal, for example, a small Utah town plagued by ozone pollution and abnormally high rates of infant death. Some residents suspect that the air pollution is at fault. They cite the area surrounding one intersection in town that sees an exceptionally high degree of truck traffic as being a particular hot spot for risk. The pollution-mapping project could inform speculation with data, warning the public and helping municipal governments effectively address problems. ■



D

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WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT BARBIE

There's more than cybersecurity at risk when a doll records a kid's playtime

SPARKLE AND FADE: A new Barbie toy from Mattel, Hello Barbie, is a kid's best friend—using voice recognition software and a Wi-Fi connection, she can talk, respond and listen. But who else could potentially hear the conversation?

BY
LAUREN WALKER
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IN THE early 1960s, toymaker Mattel dreamed up Chatty Cathy—a pull-string talking doll that dazzled children with a few simple phrases, like “I love you!” and “Let’s play house!” She quickly schmoozed her way onto the holiday gift wish list of a million little girls. In 2015, Mattel is looking to save its struggling, 56-year-old Barbie brand with Chatty Cathy’s even chattier cousin, Hello Barbie. Except this doll doesn’t just talk; she empathizes and listens—and it’s making parents, cybersecurity advocates and child psychiatrists nervous.

It’s hard to tell from looking at her, but the latest Barbie is one of the most technologically advanced toys ever made. Her trendy outfit—a cropped metallic jacket and skinny jeans—conceals her electronic innards from her target 6- to 8-year-old demographic. Barbie’s stylish necklace cloaks both a microphone and a speaker, enabling her to engage in two-way conversations, tell stories, play games and joke around. Her legs are slightly thicker than those of regular Barbies, to hold two rechargeable batteries, while the small of her back hosts a tiny USB port for charging.

To confide in Barbie, all a child must do is press a hold-to-talk button on the doll’s belt buckle.

Before the chatting can begin, parents must download a mobile application and connect Barbie to a wireless network. When a child speaks to the doll, a recording of their conversation is transmitted over the Wi-Fi connection to the servers of ToyTalk, a San Francisco-based startup that Mattel partnered with to bring Barbie to life. Speech recognition software converts the audio into text, and artificial intelligence software extracts keywords from the child’s responses, triggering Barbie to reply with one of the 8,000 lines handcrafted by a team of writers.

What’s more, Barbie remembers every detail, building a cloud database of her owner’s likes and dislikes, which she can incorporate into future conversations. If a child tells Barbie that he or she has two mothers, for example, Barbie is equipped to say later on, “What’s something really special about your moms? What do you like to do together?” Pretty nifty. But buyers be warned: Barbie doesn’t keep secrets.

GALLERY STOCK



A GIRL'S BEST FRIEND: Girls use computers at the Barbie Dreamhouse Experience in Berlin. Some psychologists are concerned about how children interact with new technology and its privacy issues.

Keywords plucked from a child's responses to Barbie are funneled into a "trend bucket," showing Mattel and ToyTalk which topics are most popular with their little customers at any given time. The data provides the creators with ideas for how to improve the product for the spring season, such as which lines they should add to Barbie's response repository. So if the company notices a surge of kids mentioning Taylor Swift, Barbie may have some thoughts on the singer-songwriter a few weeks later.

Asked by *Newsweek* whether the stored material would be used for other purposes, Mattel spokeswoman Michelle Chidoni responds carefully: "We will not use the information to make other product decisions within the Barbie line." That leaves open the possibility of using the data for other toy lines, and, according to ToyTalk's privacy policy, "third-party vendors" can also capitalize on the data for "research and development purposes."

Child privacy advocates don't like what they're hearing. "They really shouldn't call it Hello Barbie; they should call it Surveillance Barbie," Susan Linn, founding director of Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood (CCFC), told *Newsweek* in March. The nonprofit launched a "Hell No Barbie" campaign that month with the hope of shutting down the product. "Kids talking to Hello Barbie aren't just talking to a doll; they're talking to Mattel...a multinational corporation whose only interest in them is financial."

THE HACKERS' DIGITAL HAUL CONTAINED THOUSANDS OF PICTURES OF THE CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS.

Chidoni says critics have it all wrong. "It's not a surveillance device. There's not a camera in the doll," she says. "And the doll isn't always listening to your conversation; she has to be activated." Besides, she adds, "we are putting all of the data into the hands of the parents."

And indeed, parents can log in to their account and deny ToyTalk access to part or all of what their children say. "If there is something your child says that you don't want on our servers, you hit the trash can, and it is gone in seconds... from all servers," ToyTalk CEO and co-founder Oren Jacob says. "Parents can also delete all and turn off [recordings]." But there is an incentive not to: By granting the company permission to hold on to the information, parents can access audio files of their child's conversations with Barbie. The recordings are carved up into strings of couplets—what Barbie says and the child's response. Parents can play, delete or

share the exchange by pushing it to Facebook or Twitter, or by emailing it to Grandma.

While full control may sound like soothing music to parents' ears, it has child psychiatrists worried. "We learn a lot about a child's anger and their family life based on how they play and what is talked about during child's play," says Dr. Judith Fiona Joseph, a child and adolescent psychiatrist with a practice in New York City. "You can learn a lot about what your child observes." Sexual or violent movie scenes, for instance, may make their way into play sessions. "Parents must be very prepared for what they may learn about their children through the recordings," she says.

But the CCFC also fears that hackers—tempted by Barbie's iconic name and massive network—will make some discoveries of their own. Cybercriminals have a fondness for pillaging financial data, but they've also shown they're not averse to stealing what is seemingly less lucrative, like a child's personal information. In late November, hackers ransacked the servers of VTech, a Chinese company that sells a variety of electronic toys, scooping up nearly 5 million parents' names, email addresses, passwords and home addresses, and up to 200,000 kids' first names, genders and birthdays. Worse, the hackers' digital haul contained thousands of pictures of the children and their parents, as well as text and audio chat logs between them.

ToyTalk says it has taken precautions to prevent cyberattacks. It has minimized the collected data to parents' email addresses and a child's chatter, and secured the connections between the doll and servers. The company also ensures that nothing is stored in the doll other than the parents' chosen Wi-Fi networks. "So if a child happens to lose the doll," says ToyTalk's Jacob, "nothing of the child's data is lost at all."

In response to the mounting criticisms, including Barbie's technological vulnerabilities, Chidoni admits that "because she is Barbie, she has a target on her back."

Clearly, Barbie's creators know what they're doing—they've turned their little celebrity into a global toy empire. But that doesn't mean she's immune to controversy. Upon her introduction to the world at the New York Toy Fair in 1959, the unrealistically slim-yet-busty children's toy instantly caught the ire of mothers. "I don't like that influence on my little girl," one mother reportedly said. "It's hard enough to raise a lady these days without undue moral pressures." And as the Barbie brand grew, so did the criticism surrounding it.

In 1992, Mattel gave a voice to an earlier version of Hello Barbie called Teen Talk Barbie,

which spoke whenever someone pushed a button on the back of her neck. Lines like "Will we ever have enough clothes?" and "I love shopping!" irked feminists, but "Math class is tough" enraged the American Association of University Women. "Preteen girls most likely to play with Teen Talk Barbie are at the highest risk for losing confidence in their math ability," then-AAUW President Sharon Schuster announced. The organization demanded that Mattel recall the doll. The company deleted the offensive clips and apologized.

This time, Mattel is confident that Barbie is a positive influence. "The value that Mattel and ToyTalk have put on what comes out of Barbie's mouth is insane," says Chidoni. "It doesn't mean that we aren't going to make a mistake, but it does mean that we are doing everything possible that we can to ensure that...we've thought of every possible angle."

How did Mattel respond to the latest security and well-being concerns? "We didn't change anything," says Chidoni, "because there was nothing that needed to be changed."

Parents who are already in the habit of recording their children doing "the darndest things" and sharing it on social media may agree. To them, Hello Barbie's technology may blend in with the Siris and Cortanas already in their lives. But child psychiatrists *Newsweek* interviewed predict that many parents won't tell their children about the doll's recording capabilities to ensure authentic responses. Parents who do so, the psychiatrists warn, have no idea what they are in for.

Dr. Kevin Kalikow, a child and adolescent psychiatrist in New York City, says that if or when children discover their parents' Barbie betrayal, the results will not be pretty in pink. The immediate effect may be resentment, he says, especially if a secret is made public. There may also be a kind of chilling effect, he says: Children may begin to self-censor, bottling their thoughts as they learn that Mommy or Daddy may share online whatever they tell their doll. If a child learns that everything may inevitably become public, says Kalikow, it may have a "pervasive influence on how the child sees the world."



THE THIN SINS

IT'S NOT
JUST FEMALE
MODELS
WHO ARE
SUBJECTED
TO SEXUAL
EXPLOITATION
AND
PRESSURE
TO LOSE
WEIGHT

BY
EDWARD SIDONS

THE CASTING DIRECTOR, a Dutch man in his 50s with a large paunch, looked at me, his eyes darting around my body. "Take off your top and show me your torso," he said. I was exhausted after 14 hours of castings, and so I did what I was told and removed my undershirt to reveal my rather pallid chest. After a quick glance, the casting director returned to his seat in the adjacent room and muttered to his stylist, "He's beautiful, but he's fat." Sound travels easily in a hard-floored warehouse; I had moved to the changing room, but I heard his words clearly. I felt humiliated.

I had walked the catwalk twice at Paris Fashion Week, worked with a range of talented photographers and stylists, and was part of a world filled with staggeringly beautiful people. But this wasn't the first time I had been called overweight, despite my jutting rib cage and hips. At a fitting for a Japanese menswear show in Paris in the summer of 2014, a group of elderly women from the designer's team gathered behind me to laugh and lightly slap my buttocks as the material stretched to cover my rear. On another shoot, a stylist who had started drinking vodka at 9 a.m. told me I was "handsome" but needed to "stop being lazy and do some fucking crunches." I didn't like any of it—and I certainly didn't like being called "beautiful" but "fat." I decided then, that summer, to quit modeling.

When most people think of exploitation in modeling, they think of young women and girls walking the catwalk with alarmingly protruding hips and angular shoulders, or they remember the lurid tales of celebrity photographers manipulating or coercing young women into sex acts. Muscle-bound male models with perfect cheekbones and fat paychecks? They do not seem like obvious victims. But as I found during my short career as a male model, men and boys are increasingly at risk in the odd, unregulated workplace that is the fashion world. Being a man does not make you safe: Male models are often subject to sexual harassment but rarely report it. And, like their female counterparts, they are

under intense pressure to have just the right kind of body. Recent menswear trends have polarized male catwalk modeling, encouraging either extreme muscularity or waifish androgyny. Want to look like that? It will likely make you sick.

And there's another factor that makes male models more vulnerable today: Emerging East Asian economies have created a demand for designer clothes and consequently for models. Growing numbers of young models, both men and women, are heading to Asia, far from their families and support networks, and working in poorly regulated conditions that leave them at risk of being overworked and underpaid. It turns out that being really, really, really good-looking—as Ben Stiller's male model character Derek Zoolander describes himself—will not guarantee you wealth, health or security.

Sam Thomas, founder of the U.K.-based charity Men Get Eating Disorders Too, is highly critical of recent shifts in the fashion industry. "There has certainly been a trend in which some male models are getting younger and definitely

MALE MODELS ARE OFTEN SUBJECT TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT BUT RARELY REPORT IT.

LIT MAJOR: Siddons was in Paris, in his third year of studies at Oxford, when he was lured into the fashion world.

"HE'S BEAUTIFUL, BUT HE'S FAT."



JONATHAN DANIEL PRYCE: PREVIOUS SPREAD: PAUL MORGU/WIREIMAGE/GETTY

At the age of 20, I fell for that world. It seemed to me like easy money and a shortcut to joining a glamorous elite. But after a year of dabbling in the industry, I realized it was making me miserable. Sure, I had become part of a rarefied world cordoned off from the public—and I'd be lying if I said I hadn't enjoyed that—but to remain part of that elite I was expected to work unpaid to gain a degree of celebrity that never came. I had to cope with relentless pressure to keep my weight down, and my agency bookers expected me to attend castings for up to 17 hours a day in the run-up to fashion week. And there was this: The money turned out to be lousy. While a male model might earn a few thousand dollars for a major show and maybe in the tens of thousands for an international campaign, many magazine shoots are unpaid, and small shows often pay only a few hundred. I felt exploited, as did many of my peers, and yet all of us felt we couldn't speak out because getting a reputation as being "difficult" or "demanding" could kill your fledgling career. So we kept posing and we kept quiet.

BOYS ON FILM

BECAME A MODEL IN

2013, when I was in my third year of studying English and French literature at Oxford University. I had moved to Paris as part of my studies, and my teenage interest in fashion was reborn. I had always been excited by the pace of the industry and found the processes behind designing and creating these garments fascinating. But I had never considered working as a model.

Three days after arriving in Paris in September 2013, I headed out to a gay club, exhausted (from the move) and a little drunk (from the vodka). A guy across the room with stubble and chiseled cheekbones caught my attention; when I ventured out into the street for a cigarette, he followed. He asked for a light and then asked if I was a model. I told him it was a terrible pickup line. He told me he was a casting director and invited me to his studio a few days later, took some photos and added me to his database.

The following weekend, we shot a series of portraits. A few weeks later, he cast me in a music video. And a few months later, he sent me to one of Paris's most prestigious modeling agencies. Its verdict? That I was "unsuitable."

A chance encounter with another casting director in early 2014 led to an invitation to visit a modeling agency. I posed for a few Polaroids,

skinnier," says Thomas. The industry seems "particularly polarized right now," he says, with hypermuscular looks becoming increasingly popular at the same time as demand has surged for waifish male models.

Sara Ziff, founder of the Model Alliance, a New York City nonprofit labor organization advocating for greater protection of models, says male models face a uniquely difficult situation. "I definitely think that men have just as many labor-related concerns as women, if not more," says Ziff, a longtime model. "The industry urgently needs reform. It's an industry that has escaped any real regulation for decades."

The models and insiders I spoke with for this story were often hesitant to talk for fear of reprisals, and many requested anonymity. Their insights reveal an industry struggling to safeguard some of its youngest employees—many of whom have very little employment protection, are ill-informed of their rights and suffer from a culture of silence that protects the abusers within the industry who are considered too powerful to confront.



NAKED AMBITIONS: Many models complain of inappropriate touching and sexual advances by photographers, bookers, editors and designers.

HE ASKED IF I WAS A MODEL. I TOLD HIM IT WAS A TERRIBLE PICKUP LINE.

wrote down my measurements and awaited the decision. The booker—a kind, freckled man in his 30s—looked me up and down as I stood by the window of his fifth-floor studio, whispering to his assistant. “You could do with some exercise,” he said finally, as though I was an out-of-season racehorse, “but we’d love you to come on board.”

In spite of my reservations, I felt a flood of nervous euphoria. I couldn’t help but be seduced by the idea that I would be paid mountains of cash to lounge around and have my face splashed across billboards. And then I began working, and reality hit: To be a model is to accept that you are a product as well as a person. You are also a target for sexual predators.

At first, I was relatively oblivious to the extent of the sexual harassment and abuse in the industry. Serious propositions and sexual advances are often framed as jokes, allowing the powerful figures who make them—photographers, editors and casting directors—to dismiss them as such should they be declined. In September 2013, while I was shooting a music video, a fashion consultant in his 60s spent the day making inappropriate comments and asking if what was “down there” was as “intoxicating” as my “handsome face.” I ignored him and moved away when

he repeatedly brushed against me. As he slid past me, he stroked his hand across my lower back and slapped my backside.

A few weeks later, an editor offered to shoot me for the cover of his magazine, with the caveat that I pose naked and join him for a “romantic” dinner that evening. I said I wasn’t interested, but he messaged me regularly throughout the year. His messages became increasingly graphic, including sending me links to porn videos and images of another model whose career he claimed to have launched. In June 2014, a photographer tried to make me commit to orgies while on a shoot, with the promise of getting me “exposure.” He also convinced me and the other male model I was shooting with to strip down to our underwear in the middle of the Bois de Vincennes, a wooded area southeast of Paris.

At times, these powerful men behave with a remarkable sense of impunity: While I was conducting research for this article, one powerful fashion designer, high on cocaine, repeatedly sent me unsolicited naked videos when I attempted to arrange an interview.

In some ways, I got off lightly. Matthew, a



FOOD SCORN: The male models are routinely told to diet more, work out more, eat less.

British model, signed up with his first agency while he settled into life in Paris (a few months later, he joined Elite, the world’s leading agency). He soon found himself in the studio of a photographer who overstepped the mark.

“It was horrible,” says Matthew, which is his real first name. He has now quit modeling and is a student living in London. “He made me take all my clothes off, including my underwear. His rationale was that he needed to get me over the phase of being awkward and make me more comfortable in my own body.”

Exposing the photographer was impossible, Matthew says. “I couldn’t complain because he was part of my agency.” The man was one of the bookers working at the agency; he freelanced as a photographer on the side.

“In fashion, it is always older people controlling younger,” says René Habermacher, a Swiss-born photographer who works regularly for Japanese *Vogue* and other leading titles. Ziff, of the Model Alliance, says she has heard about countless situations that mirrored Matthew’s story. “I don’t think I’ve ever spoken with a male model about the Model Alliance without them talking about sexual harassment,” she says.

Their age makes many models particularly

vulnerable. “When starting out, models tend to be very young,” says Ziff, whose modeling career started at 14. “Their careers are short-lived and tenuous for the most part. If you know that you have a shelf life of maybe five years, you’re much less likely to stick your neck out or complain, especially since it is so competitive.”

‘UNDERAGE AND UNDERFED’

HAVE FOUND IT HARD

to stick to my decision to quit modeling. I still take jobs now and then. I miss the excitement. Also, as a recent graduate, I could do with the cash. On certain jobs, I have been shocked by how young many of the models are. At my last show, the Andrea Crews collection shown in Paris in January 2016, I shared a cigarette with a boy backstage whose tousled hair, slender body, boyish features and full lips combined to make him look delicate and androgynous. “How old are you?” I asked him. “Fifteen,” he said, looking nervous. “I don’t really know what I’m doing here.”

Critics and commentators have long criticized

FROM LEFT: NICO STIPICANOS/FILMMAGIC/GETTY; ALISON SMITH/GETTY

the use of very young male models in the fashion industry, but the current trend for models with boyish or androgynous looks has intensified that criticism. The androgynous look pushes male models to lose muscle mass and women to lose their natural curves. One model, Jack—that's a pseudonym—says that has increased competition between men and women for the same shows. (At Gucci's menswear show in January 2015, for example, boyish female models walked alongside waifish men.)

In stark contrast to the androgynous male models on the catwalks in Asia are the muscle-bound male models typified by the perfectly sculpted British model David Gandy. But beneath those hypermuscular builds are often serious health problems. "The big, muscular guys are no better off," says a British photographer, whose work is regularly featured in American *Vogue* and *GQ France* and who requested anonymity. "Men who are that big, who go to the gym that often and have 2 percent body fat—they are starving themselves too." Researchers and mental health experts have coined the term *bigorexia* to describe muscle dysmorphia, a distorted perception of the body as too weak and lacking muscle that fuels obsessive workouts even among the most toned men and bodybuilders.

The pressure to lose weight is common among male models. In December 2013, Jack, who had trained as a dancer and had muscular legs, was told by his agents to lose 3 kilograms (about 6.5 pounds) from his legs for a Saint Laurent fitting. "It was a huge pressure." He prioritized reaching his target weight over his health. "It pushed me



SLIDING SCALE: The passion for thin, androgynous male models has led to competition between men and women for the same gigs, and Gucci used women in a recent menswear show.



towards an eating disorder. All the guilt, constantly—it was like pre-bulimia."

Almost every one of the 15 insiders who agreed to speak to *Newsweek* said Saint Laurent's recently departed creative director, Hedi Slimane, spearheaded the rise of the ultra-skinny male model. Karl Lagerfeld, creative director of Chanel and one of fashion's most powerful designers, wrote in *The Telegraph* in 2004 that "Slimane's fashions, modelled by very, very slim boys, required me to lose at least six of my 16 stone."

Slimane defended his preference for super-skinny young men in an interview with Yahoo Style last year, explaining that he was bullied as a teenager for not having a traditionally

FROM LEFT: BEN GABBE/GETTY; ILVA B. SAVENOV/GETTY

DEMAND HAS SURGED FOR WAIFISH MALE MODELS.

masculine build: "I was precisely just like any of these guys I photograph or that walk my shows. Jackets were always a little too big for me. Many in high school, or in my family, were attempting to make me feel I was half a man because I was lean." Slimane says later in the interview that there was a derogatory and homophobic undertone to the idea that skinny was "queer."

For many fashion insiders, the reasons for his casting choices are hardly relevant; what matters is the impact Slimane had on models—and even men outside the fashion world. The British photographer who worked for American *Vogue* is highly critical of the male body type promoted by the designer. "Hedi idolizes emaciated boys," he says. Slimane created an aesthetic that he sums up as "underage and underfed." Saint Laurent

and Slimane declined repeated requests for comment when approached by *Newsweek*.

THIN IN JAPAN

NOWHERE HAS SUPER skinny become more prevalent than in East Asia. Japan has long been a major player in the fashion world, but the rise of China and South Korea has cemented the importance of East Asia. But Asia doesn't just present new opportunities; it also brings new threats. The market is known in the fashion world for its preference for ultra-skinny male models. "In Japan, you have a strong desire for younger, sweet-looking male models, and to the extent that you must represent the market, they're simply smaller sized," says Valerie Steele, an American fashion historian, curator and director of the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City. Combined with culture shock, long work hours and isolation from their families and friends, young male models often enter these new markets unaware of their labor rights and the dangers they might face.

In the summer of 2014, Habermacher joked that I should head to East Asia if I wanted my career to really take off. "They'd love you over there," the photographer told me, "and the pay is crazy: You can make up to 10,000, maybe 20,000, [euros] a month if you're busy, but you can be shooting back-to-back for up to 16 or 18 hours a day." But Habermacher was not actually recommending I make the move because he knew what I would have to do to succeed in Asia. "They like small boys over there, I mean really small," he said. "You'd have to lose about 10 kilos to really make it."

The idea of starting a new, thrilling life in Tokyo, Seoul or Shanghai was tempting. Losing 15 percent of my body weight was not. Shedding 10 kilograms (about 22 pounds) would have sent my body mass index (BMI), a scale using height and weight measurements to judge whether somebody is overweight or underweight, down to 16.9, a level the World Health Organization defines as "severely malnourished."

But I was tempted, in spite of my concerns over my health. Asia offers male models financial opportunities that seem ever scarcer in saturated Western markets and in an industry where men earn far less than their female counterparts. According to a *Forbes* report, from June 2012 to June 2013, the top 10 highest-earning female models made a combined \$83.3 million;

from September 2012 to September 2013, the top 10 men made \$8 million. The best-paid female model, Gisele Bündchen, made \$42 million between June 2012 and June 2013; Sean O'Pry, the highest-earning man, made \$1.5 million in the year ending in September 2013.

There's a gender gap lower down in the market too, with salary data company PayScale reporting that female models can expect an average yearly income of \$41,300, compared with the *Forbes* estimate of male earnings around \$28,000 in recent years, approximately \$2,000 short of the New York living wage as calculated by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

One model from Models 1, Europe's largest agency, took up his booker's offer of a summer in the Far East. He agreed to speak to *Newsweek* on the condition of anonymity. "I came because I wanted to make some money before starting university," says the model, a 19-year-old British student. Yet in retrospect, he says, specifics were missing from his conversation with his booker. "Money was not discussed," he says.

He signed a contract to head to Tokyo in the winter of 2015 with little knowledge of the small print. He felt honored to be offered the opportunity and assumed the terms and conditions would be reasonable and lucrative. But when he showed his mother the contract, she was appalled at the conditions he had agreed to. "She basically said that I'm going to come back with nothing and that, at best, I'll break even."



His travel and accommodations were to be covered by the agency, but under the terms of the contract the money had to be paid back. He would start receiving payment for jobs only after this debt was cleared. Until then, he would have to live on an allowance of about \$87 a week, an amount he could not survive on, so he needed his mother to supplement.

Certain clauses felt particularly exploitative, he says. If he did not book enough jobs, he would have been sent home at his own expense, owing his agency a four-figure sum. If he breached any other terms, including cutting his hair without permission, getting a suntan or putting on any weight, he could have faced the same forfeit.

But the model decided to go regardless, thinking that the experience of living abroad would be worthwhile and that there was always a chance of getting his big break. "I just feel so lucky," he says, talking via FaceTime from his small Tokyo apartment.

TRUST US

FRANCE, SPAIN, ITALY and Israel have all passed legislation within the past decade requiring all models working in those countries to possess a medical certificate that declares them fit to work. The French law stipulates that models' health must be "assessed in particular in terms of body mass index" but with a nod to more holistic methods of assessment, including body shape and well-being. An agency booker who fails to adhere to the law risks a fine of 75,000 euros (about \$83,623) and up to six months in prison. The law also requires agencies to signal when modeling photos have been retouched to alter body shape. Fines of up to 10,000 euros (about \$11,150) and one year in prison can await individuals "provoking people to excessive thinness by encouraging prolonged dietary restrictions that could expose them to a danger of death or directly impair their health."

In the fashion world, these laws have few fans—even among the models. The three male models interviewed for this story all expressed support for the idea of limiting the weight pressures they faced but questioned the accuracy of the BMI scale as a measure. Industry insiders also attacked the inaccuracy of the BMI when applied to those under 25 and the idea that it might penalize models afflicted by eating disorders. And then there's this: The majority of the countries in the world where models work have no legislation protecting these young people.

The fashion industry is so sprawling and decentralized that many industry insiders believe that the only way it can protect its young is if it decides to take on that responsibility itself. Many powerful figures in the industry say they are already acting responsibly. Storm Models, a leading agency, says it abides by minimum BMI rules. "Ultimately,



FAT CHANCE: France now requires models to have a health certificate that includes a BMI measurement, but many in the industry say that's a faulty metric.

FROM LEFT: ALI SMITH/GETTY, RICHARD BORD/GETTY

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we're just a supply chain," says Cat Trathen, head of the men's division at Storm. "We only provide what our clients are asking for." She says that any potential problems lie with the editors and brands booking the models she represents. And she was adamant that she and her team already do their utmost to safeguard the models signed to their agency: "We do not have and we have never had one model—male or female—on this board who is underweight." Trathen says it's not in the economic interests of an agency to promote models who are too thin: "A model who's underweight is going to be ill. Ultimately, they're a commodity, and you have to look after them. If someone is ill or too thin, they're not going to work because they're not going to look their best or have the energy to model."

One prominent casting director, Noah Shelley of AM Casting, says he bears some responsibility for the pressure to be skinny. "If we were to sit down and round table and say there's

blame to be had, then I would definitely deserve some," says Shelley. "Nonetheless, I don't feel on a daily basis that I'm responsible for unhealthy body ideals, but I'm not naïve enough to suggest that couldn't be happening without my intention, and I have to take responsibility for that."

Yet Sebastien Meunier, creative director of the Paris-based cult fashion house Ann Demeulemeester, denies that designers are doing anything wrong. "We are not doing anything shocking: We're making clothes that are perfectly decent and acceptable," he tells *Newsweek*. "At the end of the day, [models] are adults. There's no problem here."

Steele, of the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York, believes the industry is unlikely to self-regulate in a meaningful way. "Everyone says they're not the ones at fault, that they're just following orders," she says. "I suspect there's a lot of blame to be shared. The casting directors and designers and members of the audience want to see thin, white, young models. They're all at fault." ■

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