

# DEOMI NEWS LINKS, AUGUST 7, 2020

## HIGHLIGHTS

[A new Air Force era begins as “CQ” Brown, the nation’s first Black service chief, assumes command](#) [Stephen Losey, *Air Force Times*, 6 August 2020]

*Gen. Charles “CQ” Brown assumed command of the Air Force as its 22nd chief of staff Thursday in a ceremony at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland. “I’m simply in awe today,” Brown said. “I’m in awe that I’m even standing here as the 22nd Air Force chief of staff, considering I had only planned to stay in the Air Force four years, and I almost quit ROTC after the first semester. Yet here I am, in a position I never thought imaginable.” The ceremony took place in the shadow of a P-51 Mustang, alluding to the historic nature of Brown’s leadership as the U.S. military’s first-ever Black service chief. The famed and skilled Tuskegee Airmen of World War II, who fought against racial discrimination to become the military’s first Black fighter pilots, flew P-51s painted with distinctive red tails.*

[Sorry, boomers: millennials and younger are new U.S. majority](#) [Mike Schneider, *The Associated Press*, 3 August 2020]

*A new analysis by the [Brookings Institution](#) shows that 50.7% of U.S. residents were under age 40, as of July 2019. The Brookings’ analysis of population estimates released this summer by the U.S. Census Bureau shows that the combined millennial, Generation Z and younger generations numbered 166 million people. The combined Generation X, baby boomer, and older cohorts represented 162 million U.S. residents. Those under age 40 are more diverse than the older cohorts, with almost half identifying as being part of a racial or ethnic minority. Past surveys show that the younger generations split from the older generations on issues such as immigration reform, criminal justice reform and environmental protection, and the pandemic and recent racial justice protests are likely to galvanize the younger groups to promote an array of progressive causes.*

[U.S. Navy’s first Black female tactical jet pilot gets her “wings of gold”](#) [Kelsie Smith, *CNN*, 31 July 2020]

*The U.S. Navy’s first Black female tactical aircraft pilot, Lt. j.g. Madeline Swegle, received her “wings of gold” on Friday, marking a historic milestone for naval aviation. Swegle became the Navy’s first Black female strike pilot after completing tactical strike training at NAS Kingsville on July 7. A strike pilot flies the Navy’s strike aircraft, including fighter jets like the F/A-18 Super Hornet and the F-35C Joint Strike Fighter, or the EA-18G Growler electronic warfare aircraft. “I think representation is important because we are a very diverse nation,” Swegle said in a [video](#) released by the Navy earlier this week. “I would like everyone to believe that they can achieve whatever they want to do.”*

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## CULTURE

[The Long, Bloody Strike For Ethnic Studies \[AUDIO\]](#) [NPR, 5 August 2020]

*The largest public university system in the country, the Cal State system, just announced a new graduation requirement: students must take an ethnic studies or social justice course. But ethnic studies might not even exist if it weren't for some students at a small commuter college in San Francisco. Fifty years ago, they went on strike — and while their bloody, bitter standoff has been largely forgotten, it forever changed higher education in the United States.*

[Air Force women can now shed floor-length skirt for pants in formal “mess dress” uniform](#) [Wyatt Olson, *Stars and Stripes*, 4 August 2020]

*Before the change in policy, which was effective immediately, women were required to wear a floor-length skirt with the mess dress uniform, which is the Air Force equivalent to the civilian world's black-tie tuxedo or evening gown. It is worn during official formal and semi-formal functions. The pants option came as a result of “overwhelming feedback from the field” and is “a step in the right direction in creating an inclusive culture,” the Air Force said in a statement Tuesday. “We hear you,” Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth Wright said in the statement. “This is a bit of good news for some of our teammates who've wanted this change for a while now. A small thing, but one that I hope can go a long way to helping Airmen realize that we listen, we hear and we care.”*

[MLB Commemorates The 100th Anniversary Of The Negro Leagues](#) [Doug Tribou, *NPR*, 31 July 2020]

*As protests over racial injustice in the U.S. continue, Major League Baseball is honoring an institution created 100 years ago because of its own racist past. The Negro Leagues showcased Black baseball players when they were banned from the big leagues. Today, Negro Leagues stars such as Josh Gibson, Buck Leonard and Satchel Paige are in the Baseball Hall of Fame. But thousands of Black and Latino players endured bigotry throughout their careers. Minnie Forbes owned the Detroit Stars from 1956 to 1958. She lives in Grand Rapids, Mich., and is the last living Negro Leagues team owner. “The players, traveling, they had nowhere to stay because of the discrimination, so they slept in the buses. And they couldn't go in places to eat,” Forbes said. “So, one person would go to the back door, and get food for all the players.”*

[NBA: Black Lives Matter and basketball's role in discussion on racism \[COMMENTARY\]](#) Boer Deng, *BBC News*, 31 July 2020]

*Big moments - like the raising of a fist by Tommie Smith and John Carlos in a Black power salute as the “Star Spangled Banner” played at the 1968 Olympics - have become iconic images. More recent gestures, like those sparked by Colin Kaepernick's refusal to stand for the national anthem, have become a contentious point of political debate in the United States. Race, as the respected San Antonio Spurs coach Gregg Popovich puts it, is the “elephant in the room in our country” - one that has come charging into the locker room on many occasions. Of all sports, basketball is arguably the most obvious place for an unvarnished conversation. The league says it will embrace the conversation head-on this time. But will it be any different than in the past - and will it make a difference?*

[There's a movement building to reverse DOD's policy on LGBTQ pride flag and other banners](#) [Meghann Myers and Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 31 July 2020]

*Dozens of House lawmakers on Thursday sent a letter to Defense Secretary Mark Esper calling for him to reverse a recent policy change banning display of LGBTQ pride flags in public areas at*

bases, saying it runs counter to the military's stated goals of inclusion and respect. "The implicit banning of these symbols of diversity and inclusion runs counter to our ideals as a nation and a military," the letter reads, signed by Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif., Rep. Anthony Brown, D-Md., Rep. Chris Pappas, D-N.H. "The Department must have the strength and courage to be able to simultaneously stand against a symbol of hate and oppression in the Confederate Battle Flag while allowing the display of support for civil rights, equity, and justice."

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Navy Football Creates Players Council for Racial Equality](#) [Bill Wagner, *The Capital Gazette*, (Annapolis, Md.), 30 July 2020]

Head coach Ken Niumatalolo termed those sessions "powerful, productive and impactful." In fact, the 12th-year head coach was so moved by what he heard from players of all races and ethnicities he felt compelled to continue the conversation. In June, Niumatalolo quietly created the Navy Football Players Council for Racial Equality. Veteran assistant Robert "RB" Green was appointed Director of Racial Equality to help shepherd the newly formed panel. "I just wanted to keep the momentum going. This is a critical time in our country, and I believe our football program can be at the forefront of enacting change," said Niumatalolo, who was recently named to the American Athletic Conference Racial Equality Action Group.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[She's helping health care workers during the pandemic by redesigning the hijab](#) [Gabriel Kinder, *CNN*, 29 July 2020]

During a hospital shift, Hilal Ibrahim noticed that a patient's blood got on her uniform. The hospital stocked extra scrubs for her to change into, but because her hijab was also soiled, she had no choice but to go home. This is just one incident in Ibrahim's more than 10 years of volunteering and working at Park Nicollet Health Services, in her hometown of Minneapolis, that inspired her to design headscarves that meet the unique needs of the healthcare industry. While working in the hospital, she saw that when a patient or employee needed to replace their hijab, the only option was a white hospital blanket. When Covid-19 hit, Ibrahim said that her hospital co-workers feared the hijabs they wore around patients could carry the virus to their families. "In addition to the emotional and physical stress of everything that's happening now, Muslim health care professionals have to think 'am I going to bring this home with me?'"

[Crayola launches box of crayons with diverse skin tones](#) [Josh Rivera, *USA Today*, 22 May 2020]

No more green, red or blue people. Crayola is launching a box of crayons with different skin tones for children to "accurately color themselves into the world." "[Colors of the World](#)" crayons, the company said in a statement, includes 24 new crayons designed to mirror and represent over 40 different skin tones. "With the world growing more diverse than ever before, Crayola hopes our new Colors of the World crayons will increase representation and foster a greater sense of belonging and acceptance," said Crayola CEO Rich Wuerthele in the statement. "We want the new Colors of the World crayons to advance inclusion within creativity and impact how kids express themselves."

## **DISCRIMINATION**

[New York county agrees to “landmark” transgender jail reforms](#) [Tim Fitzsimons, *NBC News*, 6 August 2020]

Authorities in New York’s Steuben County agreed to [sweeping changes](#) to its jail and prison policies after settling a discrimination lawsuit filed by a transgender inmate. The New York Civil Liberties Union, the Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund and the firm Baker-Hostetler [announced the settlement](#) Wednesday as containing “one of the strongest jail or prison policies in the country protecting the rights of transgender, gender nonconforming, nonbinary and intersex people in custody” and called upon other jails around the country to use the policy as their own. “The mistreatment of transgender and gender-nonconforming people in prison and jails is something that happens around the country and the state despite the fact that there are clear legal protections in place that prohibit this kind of treatment and discrimination against transgender folks,” Bobby Hodgson, a staff attorney at NYCLU, told *NBC News*.

[Military Leaders Are Confronting a New Form of Discrimination: Pregnancy Bias](#) [Oriana Pawlyk, *Military.com*, 2 August 2020]

“It was a constant battle,” said the officer, who gave birth to her second child two years ago. She asked not to be identified for fear of reprisal, but said she works in health care at a Texas base. Her coworkers began accusing her of “taking advantage of pumping time to avoid assignments or putting my own needs ahead of my patients,” she said in a recent interview with *Military.com*. “None of that was true.” Her situation underscores the challenges and backlash women still face when they have babies while in the military. Some end up leaving service because they don’t find their duty compatible with having a family, and others have been passed over for promotion just because they took time to have a baby, according to experts who spoke with *Military.com*.

[Gay officer who settled suit will resign from diversity unit](#) [*The Associated Press*, 31 July 2020]

A gay St. Louis County police lieutenant who settled a discrimination lawsuit against the police department for \$10.25 million said Friday he is resigning from his job as commander of the department’s new diversity and inclusion unit. Keith Wildhaber, who is White, said he was the victim of racism in a Facebook post, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported. He alleged in his suit that he was passed over for promotion 23 times and was told to “tone down” his “gayness.” Jurors awarded him nearly \$20 million in October, but he and the county settled for the lower amount in February. “The dog whispers of a gay, White guy being unable to lead Diversity and Inclusion were loud and clear,” he wrote. “Systemic racism is alive and well. I tried to ignore the background noise, but I’m not battling ESOP and the activists for another 3 years. This afternoon, I notified the department of my decision to transfer back to Patrol.”

[Native Americans Feel Devastated by the Virus Yet Overlooked in the Data](#) [Katie Conger, Robert Gebeloff and Richard A. Oppel, Jr., *The New York Times*, 31 July 2020]

By mid-July, more than 650 members of the Yakama Nation, in central Washington State, had contracted the virus — about 6 percent of the total membership. Twenty-eight people have died, Delano Saluskin, chairman of the Yakama Nation, said in a [video update](#). The situation among the Yakama Nation is not unique. Even with significant gaps in the data that is available, there are strong indications that Native Americans have been disproportionately affected by the coronavirus. “I feel as though tribal nations have an effective death sentence when the scale of this pandemic, if it

*continues to grow, exceeds the public resources available,” said Fawn Sharp, the president of the Quinault Indian Nation and of the National Congress of American Indians.*

[Transgender Americans barred from service have reason to hope for Pentagon ban reversal](#) [Corey Dickstein, *Stars and Stripes*, 31 July 2020]

*Last spring, Nicolas Talbott quietly left the Kent State University ROTC program he had hoped would earn him a commission into the U.S. Army’s officer corps and fulfill his dream to serve. After a year in the Army’s officer-training program, that dream died April 12, 2019. Even as he remains barred from the military, he has new hope. In recent days, lawmakers have renewed efforts to end the Pentagon’s ban, and LGBTQ community advocates have shared policy plans that would allow the Defense Department to do so quickly, if it were ordered to reverse course.*

## **DIVERSITY**

[There Are No Women Leading Marine Infantry Platoons. The Corps Wants to Change That](#) [Gina Harkins and Hope Hodge Seck, *Military.com*, 5 August 2020]

*The Marine Corps put out a service-wide message this week soliciting female company-grade officers to volunteer to go infantry. The Infantry Officer Course is typically open to second lieutenants just out of The Basic School. Nearly 300 female Marines have moved into combat-arms jobs that were, up until less than five years ago, previously open only to men. But only one female officer has led a Marine infantry platoon so far. The possible career switch is open only to those on active duty who haven't yet been considered for promotion to major. They must have completed The Basic School prior to January 2016, when combat jobs across the military opened to women. They must also be in top shape physically with a first-class physical fitness test score, and have current marksmanship and swim qualifications.*

[Snap releases diversity report for the first time in its history, shows Black and Latinx employees comprise 10.9% of staff](#) [Paige Leskin, *Business Insider*, 29 July 2020]

*Snap released its first-ever [diversity report](#) on Wednesday. In its nearly-nine-year history, the company has refused to release this data publicly as other tech companies have done, and has recently come under increased pressure from employees for that decision. The release of Snap’s internal diversity numbers, for the year 2019, comes a month after [Business Insider reported](#) CEO Evan Spiegel had defended the company’s decision to not release diversity numbers in an all-hands meeting. During the meeting, Spiegel told employees that releasing Snap’s diversity data would reinforce the idea that minority groups are underrepresented in the tech industry. That meeting followed a [report from Mashable](#) where employees who worked at Snap between 2015 and 2018 alleged discrimination, including by leadership.*

## **HUMAN RELATIONS**

[COVID-19 Etiquette: 6 Common Conundrums \(And A Printable Pocket Guide\)](#) [Malaka Gharib, *NPR*, 4 August 2020]

*Last week, I was inside a convenience store, and a deliveryman was stocking up sodas in the refrigerated aisle without wearing a mask. It made me feel uncomfortable. We were in a small, windowless space together. If the deliveryman had been sick and shedding virus, it could have easily*



*spread through the air inside the store. As I waited in the checkout line, I felt my anxiety growing. What should I do in this situation? Should I say something? That's when I could have really used the advice of Elaine Swann, founder of the [Swann School of Protocol](#), an etiquette training institute. She trains people on good manners, for example, how to engage in small talk or which fork to use at the dinner table. Now, amid the coronavirus pandemic, she has been helping people navigate some tricky new social dilemmas — like my convenience store situation.*

## MISCELLANEOUS

[The Voting Rights Act was signed 55 years ago. Black women led the movement behind it.](#) [N'dea Yancey-Bragg, *USA Today*, 6 August 2020]

*Boynton Robinson's mother was a suffragist and she grew up in a "culture of justice," according to Faya Rose Touré, a fellow activist and lawyer. She said Boynton Robinson and her husband Sam, also a voting rights advocate, came to Selma in the 1920s where they started their own insurance business. "They saw [voting rights] as a key to the road to justice, to equality. They saw it as the key to end Jim Crow segregation in the South," Touré said. "They lived long enough and were smart enough to know that voting rights may not be a panacea, but it was certainly something that could be fought for."*

[Census Bureau Says It Will Stop the Count A Month Early](#) [Andrea Noble, *Route Fifty*, 4 August 2020]

*The Census Bureau will end its efforts to count the U.S. population a month early, at the end of September, even as more than a third of the nation has yet to respond to the decennial questionnaire. The bureau released a [statement](#) late Monday indicating its door knocking efforts would cease and online self-response options would close on Sept. 30 to allow for data processing. The bureau said the deadline shift would not negatively affect its efforts to count the U.S. population, but experts caution that bumping up the deadline would lead to undercounting of minority populations. An undercount of just 1% of the population could have dramatic implications for state coffers. About 300 federal programs rely on census data to make decisions about the allocation of more than \$800 billion a year in funds.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Jamaica's high court ruled a school was legally right in banning a child with dreadlocks](#) [Alaa Elassar, *CNN*, 4 August 2020]

*A school that said a student couldn't attend classes if she didn't cut her dreadlocks did not infringe on the child's constitutional rights, the Supreme Court of Jamaica [ruled](#) Friday. The issue began in July 2018 when Kensington Primary School asked the mother of a 5-year-old -- identified as ZV since she's a minor -- to cut the child's hair or her acceptance into the school would be withdrawn. With just one month left before students in Jamaica are set to return to school following a shutdown in March because of the coronavirus, her Mother said she has yet to decide where to place her child, who is now 7 years old. But what isn't up for debate is what she will do with her daughter's hair. "We will not be cutting her locks. We will not erase her identity or our family's identity," her mother said.*

[As Rich People Locked Down for COVID-19, the Poor Moved More](#) [GovExec, 3 August 2020]

Wealthier communities went from being the most mobile before the COVID-19 pandemic to the least mobile, according to a new study. Meanwhile, poorer areas have gone from the least mobile to the most mobile, the researchers report. The study in the [Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences](#) used anonymized data from mobile device location pings between January and April 2020 to find that social distancing in the United States varies strongly by income. The study showed about a 25% jump of the wealthiest census tracts staying completely at home compared with a 10% increase in staying at home in the poorest communities.

[Navy investigating video of military dogs attacking man in Colin Kaepernick jersey during demonstration](#) [Haley Britzky, *Task & Purpose*, 2 August 2020]

The video's caption reads "Colin Kaepernick stand in Josh gets attacked by 5 Navy SEAL dogs for not standing during the National Anthem at a Navy SEAL Museum fundraiser." "The inherent message of this video is completely inconsistent with the values and ethos of Naval Special Warfare and the U.S. Navy," the [statement](#) said. "We are investigating the matter fully, and initial indications are that there were no active duty Navy personnel or equipment involved with this independent organization's event." The Navy SEAL Museum, located in Fort Pierce, Florida, is a non-profit "dedicated solely to preserving the history of the U.S. Navy SEALs and their predecessors," according to its website. The board of directors includes seven retired SEALs. [SEE ALSO [1](#), [2](#)]

[Woman who refused to give up bus seat to be honored](#) [The Associated Press, 1 August 2020]

A North Carolina woman whose refusal to go to the back of a bus in 1952 led to a lawsuit that sparked a change in law is being honored with a special day. Sarah Keys Evans was being honored by the city of Roanoke Rapids on Saturday with a plaza bearing her name and murals depicting her arrest, news outlets reported. Evans, who is Black and lives in Brooklyn, New York, is expected to address the event by telephone. Evans was on leave from the U.S. Army Women's Army Corps when she boarded a bus from Trenton, New Jersey, to Washington, North Carolina. When the bus stopped in Roanoke Rapids on Aug. 2, 1952, Evans refused the request of the bus driver to move to the back and was arrested.

[New Community College of the Air Force degree coming for thousands of airmen](#) [Stephen Losey, *Air Force Times*, 31 July 2020]

Approximately 12,000 students will benefit from the roll-out of the Military Technology and Applied Sciences Management degree, including AFSC 3F4X1, Equal Opportunity. The Associate of Applied Science in the MTASM degree will be a more flexible option for airmen who don't have enough formal skills training to meet the requirements for current degree programs, Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama [announced](#) in a release Wednesday. It will differ in several ways from the community college's other degrees, Air University said. Students must take 39 semester hours of leadership or leadership-related courses and military science and technology courses, instead of the technical core and elective courses other degrees require.

[No Charges for Ferguson Officer Who Killed Michael Brown, New Prosecutor Says](#) [John Eligon, *The New York Times*, 30 July 2020]

Six years after a White police officer shot and killed Michael Brown, a Black teenager, in Ferguson, Mo., another investigation into the killing has come to the same conclusion as the first: The officer

*should not be charged. The officer, Darren Wilson, already had been cleared by a grand jury and a federal investigation months after the shooting in 2014. But Thursday's announcement by a new prosecutor, Wesley Bell, most likely marks the end of the legal saga in a case that started the global rise of the Black Lives Matter movement, which has led to some major shifts in American policing and forced a renewed conversation about racism.*

## **MISCONDUCT**

[Murder, sexual harassment rates at Fort Hood among highest in the service, Army secretary says](#)

[Kyle Rempfer, *Army Times*, 6 August 2020]

*Fort Hood has become the subject of an independent command climate review that will attempt to identify causes of the high crime rates, Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy told reporters Thursday during a visit to the central Texas installation. The independent review team will look at not only Fort Hood, but also the surrounding community. During his two-day visit, McCarthy said he met with soldiers across the post, from "private first classes all the way to general officers." McCarthy said he told soldiers that the Army was sending the "independent group of investigators to understand the root causes associated with the rise of felonies, violent acts [and] to better understand why this is happening at this installation."*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

## **RACISM**

[Lynchings are part of Georgia's past and present](#) [Sandy Hodson, *The Augusta Chronicle*, (Augusta, Ga.), 7 August 2020]

*Amaud Arbery's death has been labeled a lynching, which is defined as a killing by three or more people claiming extrajudicial reasons to kill. The renowned educator, adviser to presidents and first president of Tuskegee University Booker T. Washington was among the first to find a need to document lynchings in the country. He set the standard for Monroe Work, a Black sociologist who built the archives and documented lynchings between 1881 and 1936. Lynchings weren't just hangings. People — the vast majority of whom were Black, 94 percent in Georgia and 96 percent in South Carolina — were also shot, beaten, stabbed, drowned, tortured and burned alive. Sometimes all of the above. There are 4,745 documented lynchings in the collection Work started in 1904. If anything, it's a vast under-count, said Dana Chandler, associate professor for Tuskegee University Archives who is in charge of Work's lynching files at the historic Black university. Lynching was used to control people, Chandler said. It was telling people to stay in their place. "It's a form of terrorism."*

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Michigan governor signs order calling racism a public health crisis](#) [Marty Johnson, *The Hill*, 5 August 2020]

*Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D) signed an executive order on Wednesday, officially declaring racism a public health crisis. In an effort to "elevate Black voices," the order also mandates that a state advisory council centered around Black leadership be created. Additionally, Whitmer wants the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to have all state employees complete implicit bias training in an effort to "make health equity a major goal." "We must confront systemic racism*



*head on so we can create a more equitable and just Michigan,” Whitmer said in a statement. “This is not about one party or person. I hope we can continue to work towards building a more inclusive and unbiased state that works for everyone.”*

[It’s More Than Racism: Isabel Wilkerson Explains America’s “Caste” System \[COMMENTARY\]](#)

[Terry Gross, *NPR*, 4 August 2020]

*Pulitzer Prize-winning author [Isabel Wilkerson](#) says racism is an insufficient term for the systemic oppression of Black people in America. Instead, she prefers to refer to America as having a “caste” system. Wilkerson describes caste an artificial hierarchy that helps determine standing and respect, assumptions of beauty and competence, and even who gets benefit of the doubt and access to resources. “Caste focuses in on the infrastructure of our divisions and the rankings, whereas race is the metric that’s used to determine one’s place in that,” she says.*

[Two Black moms took their kids to the Mall. Secret Service officers confronted them with guns, they said.](#) [Katie Mettler, *The Washington Post*, 3 August 2020]

*It was a hot Thursday afternoon, so India Johnson, 26, and Yasmeen Winston, 25, decided to take their babies to splash in the fountains at the World War II Memorial. The women, best friends since seventh grade, parked on Constitution Avenue near the White House and prepared to walk to the Mall. Their babies were in the back seat, Mother Goose Club was singing through the car speakers, and the mothers were digging around in diaper bags when they heard the crash and felt the jolt. Johnson and Winston looked up. A Secret Service cruiser had driven into their front left bumper, Winston told *The Washington Post*. Within seconds, Winston recalled, a uniformed Secret Service officer was pointing a rifle at them, yelling “Get out!” and “Put your hands in the air!” “I could have been another Breonna Taylor,” Winston said. “I could have been another innocent woman who has no record and got shot.”*

[How “good White people” derail racial progress \[COMMENTARY\]](#) [John Blake, *CNN*, 2 August 2020]

*In 2020, White support for the Black Lives Matter movement is at an all-time high. People are buying so many books on antiracism that booksellers are having trouble keeping them in stock. A commentator said the George Floyd protests that erupted this spring may lead to “audacious steps to address systemic racial inequality — bold, sweeping reparative action.” Yet any attack against entrenched racism will run into one of the most formidable barriers for true change: Good White people.*

[Asian Americans face dual challenges: surging unemployment and racism](#) [Caitlin Yoshiko Kandil and Kimmy Yam, *NBC News*, 31 July 2020]

*A new [study](#) from UCLA reports that since the start of the pandemic, 83 percent of the Asian American labor force with high school degrees or lower has filed unemployment insurance claims in California — the state with the highest population of Asian Americans — compared to 37 percent of the rest of the state's labor force with the same level of education. At the same time, new research shows that discrimination against Asian Americans is surging. Nearly one-third of Asian Americans report having been the target of slurs or jokes because of their race or ethnicity since the pandemic began, according to the [Pew Research Center](#), while one-third of all people — including 60 percent*

of Asians — have witnessed someone blaming Asians for the pandemic, according to a [Center for Public Integrity/Ipsos poll](#).

[My father, George Soros, is White supremacists' favorite target. But they won't stop us. \[OPINION\]](#) [Alexander Soros, NBC News, 31 July 2020]

*The senseless killings of George Floyd and countless other Black Americans while in police custody have sparked the largest and most diverse mass protests in the history of the United States. You might think everyone would now be focusing on how to fix a system that has mercilessly subjugated, brutalized and killed Black and brown people in this country. But you would be wrong. Instead of trying to come together and figure out how America can live up to its promise of equality for all, too many people prefer to stoke the flames of anti-Semitism. The wave of outrage over systemic racism has provoked anti-Semitic accusations that Jews — specifically my father, George Soros — are organizing the protests behind the scenes.*

[How Portland's Racist History Informs Today's Protests](#) [Ari Shapiro, NPR, 30 July 2020]

*As one of the whitest big cities in the America, Portland's outsized role in the nationwide protests may strike some as surprising. Oregon has a long history of entrenched racism, dating back to its statehood in 1859, when the state constitution barred Black people from entering or living there. Yet the recent protests in Portland are part of another long history of Black and White Oregonians combating that lingering racism, says Lisa Bates, an associate professor of urban studies at Portland State University. "As much as there is far-right activity in Oregon and Portland, there's also left activity," Bates says. "There's also always been a left movement here, and a history of pretty significant protests."*

## RELIGION

[Court Rules Against Soldier Who Says He Was Forced to Retire Due to Religious Beliefs](#) [Hope Hodge Seck, Military.com, 5 Aug 2020]

*A former master sergeant in the Army Band who claims service officials forced him into retirement because of expressions of his Christian faith and conservative opinions says he plans to appeal after an adverse ruling in his case. The U.S. Court of Federal Claims published a ruling Tuesday in favor of a government motion to dismiss the case brought by Nathan Sommers, saying that, because he'd chosen retirement over separation from the military, the move was not involuntary. "The issue has to do with whether or not Master Sgt. Sommers voluntarily retired," Sommers' attorney, John Wells of the legal group Military Veterans Advocacy Inc., told Military.com. "He did not accept retirement until the last day. That's no real decision; he fought it until the last minute of the last day." The court disagreed, however.*

[Catholic bishops fear Scotland's hate crime law could criminalize Bible and Catechism](#) [The Catholic News Agency, 29 July 2020]

*Catholic bishops have said that proposed hate crime legislation in Scotland could criminalize the Bible and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. In a [statement](#) issued July 29, the bishops argued that the Scottish Government's new [Hate Crime and Public Order Bill](#) could lead to censorship of Catholic teaching. "We are also concerned that section 5 of the Bill creates an offense of possessing inflammatory material which, if taken with the low threshold contained therein, could render*

material such as the Bible, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and other texts such as Bishops' Conference of Scotland submissions to government consultations, as being inflammatory under the new provision," they said. The proposed legislation creates a new crime of stirring up hatred against any of the protected groups covered by the bill, which include race, religion, sexual orientation, and transgender identity.

## **SEXISM**

[“Be a bro”: How a commander’s sexism derailed this pilot training class — and brought down AETC leaders](#) [Stephen Losey, *Air Force Times*, 3 August 2020]

*There are two types of women who fly in Combat Air Forces, a female student pilot was told by her flight commander in early 2018. First, there are the “bros,” female pilots who have “tough skin” and simply shrug off offensive comments, the flight commander told her during a mid-term feedback session after her checkride in a T-38. These women are more likely to be chosen for leadership positions, he said. Then there are those women who are “easily offended,” he said, according to her responses to a May 1, 2018, commander-directed investigation into harassment, sexual misconduct, hazing and other misconduct in the 87th Flying Training Squadron, part of the [47th Flying Training Wing](#) at Laughlin Air Force Base in Texas. Their future opportunities would be limited, he implied. One thing that didn’t factor into his calculus, he told her: Flying ability.*

[Debate over Draft Registration for Women Takes Deadly Twist](#) [Patricia Kime, *Military.com*, 3 August 2020]

*A radical men’s rights attorney and self-described “anti-feminist” is the primary suspect in the murder of a California lawyer who represented a group suing to include women in the draft, as well as the killing of the son of a federal judge considering a different draft registration case. New York attorney Roy Den Hollander, 72, died July 20 of a self-inflicted gunshot wound after allegedly shooting and killing 20-year-old Daniel Anderl, son of Judge Esther Salas, at his family’s home in New Jersey. Den Hollander was later implicated in the July 11 killing of Marc Angelucci, 52, who served as vice president of the National Coalition for Men and was representing the organization in a [lawsuit challenging the constitutionality](#) of the Selective Service System’s male-only registration requirement.*

## **SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT**

[Army Special Forces Colonel Faces Court-Martial on Sexual Assault Charges](#) [Matthew Cox, *Military.com*, 4 August 2020]

*A U.S. Army Special Forces colonel is awaiting court-martial on multiple counts of sexual assault. Col. Kevin M. Russell, who has had extensive operational experience with the 7th Special Forces Group, is facing five counts of violating Article 120 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, [Task & Purpose reported](#). U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) released a statement, confirming that Russell “is accused of sexual assault and abusive sexual contact.” Russell’s court-martial is set to begin Aug. 25 at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, according to the statement.*

[Exclusive: U.N. staffer who complained of sexual assault appeals dismissal - documents](#) [Emma Forge, *Reuters*, 4 August 2020]

*A policy adviser fired by the U.N. agency fighting AIDS is appealing her dismissal for misconduct, saying she was actually sacked for reporting that she had been sexually assaulted by a senior colleague, her appeal documents show. Martina Brostrom, from Sweden, was fired for sexual and financial misconduct in December. “It becomes absurd to the point of being ironic that the one person who filed a sexual assault complaint is the one who is found guilty of sexual misconduct,” she said in an interview. Then UNAIDS Deputy Executive Director Luiz Loures denies her accusation that he groped her in a hotel elevator in Thailand in 2015 and tried to drag her towards his room. Brostrom went public with her complaint in 2018.*

[“Defund the police” movement could offer sexual assault survivors a different path for justice, experts say](#) [Wilson Wong, NBC News, 2 August 2020]

*Amid the national protests about racial injustice and policing, the once-extreme demand to “defund the police” has gained traction, with Minneapolis taking steps to remake its police department and other cities, like New York City, pledging to shift some funding away from the police and instead use that money for social services. Some scholars, activists and lawyers who work on behalf of sexual assault victims are encouraged by “defund the police” efforts, telling NBC News that the existing criminal justice system has failed to address the economic, sociopolitical and mental health factors that often correlate with sexual violence. As a society, experts say, there is an overall lack of education to help unpack issues such as a rape culture, consent and body autonomy — and too seldom are people actually held accountable for their wrongdoings.*

[Military veterans demand justice for victims of sexual assault at Balboa Park rally](#) [Jeff McDonald, The San Diego Union-Tribune, 1 August 2020]

*Nearly a dozen people attended a protest at the Veterans Memorial Garden in Balboa Park on Saturday to draw attention to victims of military sexual trauma, the San Diego rendition of a broader awareness effort that stretched across the country. Ariana Hudzinski, the local organizer for a national advocacy campaign called the [Our Sister’s Keeper Movement](#), said more than 20,000 military members are victims of sexual assault and harassment each year. The Our Sister’s Keeper Movement was organized to help spur justice for women like Vanessa Guillen, a U.S. Army soldier who reported being sexually harassed at Fort Hood, Texas, before going missing in April. The hour-long event, which was replicated in New York, Atlanta, Seattle, Sacramento and a host of other American cities, featured guest speakers invited to share their own experiences of sexual assault in the U.S. military.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

## **SUICIDE**

[Suicide Prevention Bill Named for SEAL Commander Passes Senate; Fate Uncertain](#) [Patricia Kime, Military.com, 6 August 2020]

*The Senate passed a veteran suicide prevention bill Wednesday that aims to expand vets’ access to mental health programs outside the Department of Veterans Affairs and improve health care for troops transitioning out of the military. Named for a Navy SEAL who died by suicide in 2018, the [Cmdr. John Scott Hannon Veterans Health Care Improvement Act](#) would require the VA to hire additional suicide prevention coordinators, give grants to organizations that focus on veterans’*

mental health and conduct several studies on vets' mental well-being and various approaches to suicide prevention.

[Brandon Act, fighting suicide in the military, draws more support in Congress](#) [Nikki Wentling, *Stars and Stripes*, 4 August 2020]

*A suicide prevention measure that would create a safe word for troops to seek mental health care was introduced in the Senate last week and added to the House's version of the annual defense bill — giving it a greater chance of becoming law. The legislation, called the Brandon Act, is named for 21-year-old sailor Brandon Caserta, who died by suicide in 2018 after throwing himself into the spinning tail rotor of a MH-60s helicopter at Naval Station Norfolk, Va. A command investigation into his death determined that belligerent and brash leadership of his unit contributed to Caserta's decision to end his life. He felt alone, stuck and afraid of retaliation, said his parents, Patrick and Teri Caserta. The goal of the Brandon Act is to create a pathway for service members to seek mental health evaluations in confidence, without disclosing to their command.*

[Seeking the Military Suicide Solution Podcast, Episode 28: Tom Cruz — attempt survivor and suicide prevention advocate](#) [Military Times, 4 August 2020]

*Tom Cruz is an active duty master sergeant in the United States Army with over 25 years of service. He has deployed in support of Operation Joint Guardian, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Jordan. He has experience with suicide prevention and awareness resulting from an attempt in 2010 to take his life. Since his attempt, he became a huge advocate of more awareness and prevention for veterans. Tom has taken his skills to social media, where he assisted in pioneering two organizations to identify and assist veterans with mental health issues, suicidal ideations, relationship issues, financial concerns and other veteran specific issues. With his own recovery breaking the stigma within the military on career status, family life and security clearance myths, he has pushed to bring holistic means to veterans to the road of recovery.*

[\[LISTEN\]](#)

## VETERANS

[75 Years Ago: The Flight of the Enola Gay](#) [Jeremy Kinney, *Smithsonian Air & Space*, 6 August 2020]

*After “Little Boy” left the forward bomb bay, Enola Gay lurched upward, and Tibbets initiated a high angle evasive maneuver to get as far away from Hiroshima as possible. A bright flash overwhelmed the senses of the crew. The bomber traveled 11.5 miles before it experienced the shock waves from the atomic blast. Staff Sgt. George R. “Bob” Caron in the tail gun position took a photograph of the mushroom cloud over Hiroshima. Radar operator Sgt. Joe Stiborik recalled the crew was speechless overall. Robert Lewis wrote in his journal and may have subconsciously said out loud over the radio intercom, “My God, what have we done?” Enola Gay landed back at Tinian 12 hours later at approximately 3 pm.*

[SEE ALSO [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)]

[Full Senate to Take Up “Deborah Sampson” Landmark Bill on Female Veterans’ Health](#) [Patricia Kime, *Military.com*, 6 August 2020]



*The measure, [S. 514](#), would require the VA to offer primary care for female veterans at all medical centers and clinics, expand eligibility and access to counseling for female vets who experience sexual trauma, improve standards for providing women's health care services and provide access to counseling for post-traumatic stress disorder at retreats. The proposal also would require the VA to offer gender-specific medical equipment such as mammography machines at each VA medical center, expand health care coverage for newborns of veterans from seven to 14 days, and establish a VA Office of Women's Health.*

[Events marking 75th anniversary of WWII's end to continue — with safety precautions](#) [Christine Bartruff, *Stars and Stripes*, 4 August 2020]

*The 75th Anniversary of the End of World War II Commemoration, which includes events in Washington, D.C., and Honolulu, Hawaii, will continue with adjustments and safety precautions to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, according to organizers. The Arsenal of Democracy Flyover in Washington, D.C., was originally scheduled for Victory in Europe Day in May, but was rescheduled to Sept. 25 because of the pandemic. The Victory Gala planned for Sept. 24 is canceled, as is a ceremony at the National World War II Memorial, said Leah Block, the vice president of marketing for the Commemorative Air Force, one of the organizations involved in the planning for these events.*

[Veterans, what's your experience with your education benefits? The VA wants to know.](#) [Hannah Graf, *Military Times*, 3 August 2020]

*The Department of Veterans Affairs [announced](#) a new survey to gauge veterans' experiences with education benefits. The survey, which will be distributed through the department's Veterans Signals, or VSignals, program will be emailed to a random selection of veterans or beneficiaries who have recently taken part in the Veterans Benefits Administration's (VBA) [education program](#). The new survey was designed with the help of beneficiaries to improve veterans' experiences with the program, which provides education benefits to over 900,000 veterans each year, according to the VA. The survey will assess veterans' experiences in one of three aspects of the education benefits program: applying for benefits, enrolling in school or receiving education benefits through VBA.*