

DEOMI NEWS LINKS 12 MARCH 2021

HIGHLIGHTS

[Biden pledges to end “scourge of sexual assault in the military”](#) [Morgan Chalfant and Ellen Mitchell, *The Hill*, 8 March 2021]

President Biden on Monday pledged to “end the scourge of sexual assault” in the military while marking International Women’s Day by honoring two female generals he has [nominated](#) to helm combatant commands. Biden said it was imperative to “shine the light” on their accomplishments in order to demonstrate to new female service members what is possible. The Biden administration has made clear it intends to address the pervasive issue of sexual assault and harassment in the military, last month ordering a civilian-led commission at the Pentagon to investigate the problem. “Recruiting more women to our military, adjusting policies to retain more women, enforcing policies to protect women and ensure they are heard, and advancing more women on fair and equal footing will without any question make our nation safer,” Harris, who is the first female vice president, said. “And that’s the work ahead.”

[OPM Issues Guidance Revoking Diversity Training Ban](#) [Erich Wagner, *GovExec*, 9 March 2021]

The Office of Personnel Management on Monday [issued guidance](#) formally implementing one of the first actions President Biden’s took after he entered the Oval Office: reinstating diversity and inclusion training at federal agencies and contractors. Last fall, the Trump administration controversially banned what administration officials called “divisive” diversity and inclusion training at federal agencies and by federal contractors if it involved critical race theory, “race and sex scapegoating” or unconscious bias, and threatened discipline for federal employees and contractors who engaged in it. On Monday, Acting OPM Director Kathleen McGettigan implemented new guidance rescinding the agency’s previous instructions on the issue. In a memo to agency heads, McGettigan encouraged agencies to resume activities related to diversity and inclusion.

[[SEE ALSO](#)]

[“Troubling new gap” based on gender, race and politics growing among military officers, study warns](#) [Karen Zeitvogel, *Stars and Stripes*, 9 March 2021]

*The military needs to act to stop a divide from growing in the officer ranks, where White conservative men are more likely than others to feel pride in service and that the military culture is superior to civil society, a study has found. “Military elites’ feelings of superiority over the rest of society are more prevalent among conservatives, Republicans, Whites, and men ... than among liberals, Democrats, women, and African Americans,” said the [study published](#) in the spring issue of the *Texas National Security Review*. Just under a quarter of the 1,281 U.S. Military Academy cadets and active-duty military officers polled for the study between December 2017 and March of last year said they felt a sense of exceptionalism, while 43% said they did not and the rest had no opinion.*

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

CULTURE

[Alabama House votes to end yoga ban, but don't say "Namaste"](#) [Kim Chandler, *The Associated Press*, 12 March 2021]

The Alabama House of Representatives voted 73-25 to approve a bill that will authorize school systems to decide if they want yoga to be allowed in K-12 schools. The bill now moves to the Alabama Senate. Yoga done in school would be limited to poses and stretches. The bill says the use of chanting, mantras and teaching the greeting "Namaste" would be forbidden. The Alabama Board of Education voted in 1993 to prohibit yoga, hypnosis and meditation in public school classrooms. The ban was pushed by conservative groups. Under the bill, the moves and exercises taught to students must have exclusively English names. Gray said students would also have the option to not participate and instead do an alternative activity. The 1993 Alabama yoga ban got new attention in 2018 when an old document circulated listing yoga—along with games like tag—among inappropriate activities in gym class.

[Berlin Film Festival awards gender-neutral acting prize to Maren Eggert](#) [BBC News, 6 March 2021]

*The new award, which was announced by the festival last August, means both male and female actors now compete in the same category. German actress Eggert won for her performance as a museum researcher in the sci-fi comedy, *I'm Your Man*. Berlin's decision to merge the categories could have a knock-on effect on other film award ceremonies. The idea has previously been welcomed by screen stars such as Cate Blanchett and Tilda Swinton, but it has also sparked heated debate. Mariette Risenbeek, director of the Berlin Film Festival said genderless award was intended to spark further discussions around gender justice.*

[Book excerpt: "You Don't Belong Here"](#) [Elizabeth Becker, *Military Times*, 8 March 2021]
[COMMENTARY]

Kate Webb, an Australian iconoclast, Catherine Leroy, a French daredevil photographer, and Frances FitzGerald, a blue-blood American intellectual, arrived in Vietnam with starkly different life experiences but one shared purpose: to report on the most consequential story of the decade. At a time when women were considered unfit to be foreign reporters, Frankie, Catherine, and Kate challenged the rules imposed on them by the military, ignored the belittlement of their male peers, and ultimately altered the craft of war reportage for generations. In ["You Don't Belong Here,"](#) Elizabeth Becker uses these women's work and lives to illuminate the Vietnam War from the 1965 American buildup, the expansion into Cambodia, and the American defeat and its aftermath. Arriving herself in the last years of the war, Becker writes as a historian and a witness of the times.

[Burger King UK under fire for tweeting "Women belong in the kitchen" on International Women's Day](#) [Brett Molina, *USA TODAY*, 9 March 2021]

Burger King's attempt to highlight gender disparity in the restaurant industry with a provocative tweet appears to have backfired. On Monday, which is also International Women's Day, the Twitter account for Burger King UK tweeted "Women belong in the kitchen." In a series of subsequent threaded tweets, the fast food giant pointed out the lack of female chefs in the

restaurant business. “If they want to, of course,” reads a follow-up from Burger King UK. “Yet only 20% of chefs are women. We’re on a mission to change the gender ratio in the restaurant industry by empowering female employees with the opportunity to pursue a culinary career.” In its apology tweet, Burger King UK said, “We hear you. ... We will do better next time.”

[“The Eyes of Texas” is here to stay, UT says. So is the fight over its roots.](#) [Candace Buckner, *The Washington Post*, 9 March 2021]

Weeks before the University of Texas’s 2020 football season was defined by a nearly 120-year-old song, the team huddled with then-coach Tom Herman to talk about not singing it. It was the height of last summer’s racial reckoning. Several Black players expressed concern about the postgame tradition of belting out the school’s alma mater, “The Eyes of Texas”; its title was believed to have been inspired by Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee, and it was first performed in a minstrel show. The choice was theirs, players were told. They would not be forced to remain on the field and sing following games. The marching band even elected not to play it. But then the Longhorns lost a big rivalry game, and fans noticed the players’ absence during the playing of “The Eyes of Texas.” Cue the uproar. Fans criticized players on social media. Alumni sent an avalanche of emails to administrators, including some that invoked racist tropes. Big-pocketed donors threatened to end their patronage.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Florence Price: Forgotten work by pioneering composer rediscovered](#) [Mark Savage, *BBC News*, 8 March 2021]

*A forgotten work by the pioneering composer Florence Price has been rediscovered and performed for the first time in nearly 80 years. Price made history in 1933 when she became the first African-American woman to have a symphony performed by a major U.S. orchestra, in Chicago. Despite that success, she often struggled to get her music played in a more sexist and segregated era. Her work faded into obscurity after her death in 1953. Much of it was thought to be lost, until a cache of music was found in her former summer house in Chicago in 2009. It was released on Monday, International Women’s Day, alongside recordings of Price’s other *Fantasies* and various “sketches and snapshots” that was found in the archive.*

[From Citizen Soldier to Secular Saint: The Societal Implications of Military Exceptionalism](#)

[Susan Bryant, Brett Swaney and Heidi Urben, *The Texas National Security Review*, 11 March 2021]

For nearly 40 years, the American public has placed extraordinary trust and confidence in the military, celebrating heroism and service in diverse venues ranging from religious services to theme parks to sporting events. Survey after survey has shown that Americans revere their military, at least superficially. How members of the military feel about their own service, sacrifices, and relationship to the rest of society has been an open question. To help explore these questions, we surveyed more than 1,200 midgrade to senior military officers and West Point cadets between 2017 and 2020 regarding their political views, their sacrifices, and their pride in service. In addition to confirming past research indicating that servicemembers are increasingly isolated and have a growing sense of exceptionalism, our results also indicate that the attitudes of military elites who are in the minority in terms of race, gender, and political views vary

considerably at times from their majority peers, raising questions about the degree of inclusivity within the ranks today.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Golden Globe organizers hire advisers to tackle diversity and ethical issues](#) [Reuters, 9 March 2021]

The organizers of the Golden Globes on Tuesday announced they have hired experts to tackle concerns around diversity and ethics following a furor over the lack of Black members in the group. The Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA) said in a statement that Dr. Shaun Harper, founder of the Race and Equity Center at the University of Southern California, would conduct a review to help develop “a comprehensive, multi-year, diversity, equity and inclusion strategy.” The HFPA said it has also retained a law firm that will develop a system “for investigating alleged violations of our ethical standards and code of conduct.” The moves follow a probe last month by the Los Angeles Times that noted there were currently no Black people among the 87-member group of foreign entertainment journalists who make up the HFPA.

[How Pepe Le Pew became the latest character in the culture war](#) [Michael Cavna, *The Washington Post*, 9 March 2021]

Ted Geisel and Chuck Jones, the late friends turned creative collaborators during World War II and again many years later for such TV classics as 1966's “How the Grinch Stole Christmas!,” are again under cultural scrutiny. After the news that six of Geisel’s Dr. Seuss books would cease publication because of racist and insensitive imagery, Jones’s Pepe Le Pew has brought Looney Tunes into the culture war over which classic children’s characters are so problematic that they should be updated or disappeared. Deadline reported that Pepe Le Pew will “likely be a thing of the past across all media,” and the Hollywood Reporter also noted that “there are no current plans for the controversial cartoon skunk to return.” On Deadspin, Julie DiCaro said Pepe Le Pew deserved to be “canceled,” writing that since his World War II-era creation, “we’ve learned a lot more about consent and women have fought and won more recognition of their bodily autonomy. And yet, we continued to see these same old ‘she’s just playing hard to get’ trope[s] in entertainment even today.”

[NFL makes Maia Chaka its 1st Black female official](#) [Scott Stump, *TODAY*, 5 March 2021]

Seven years after she was one of only two women selected for an NFL officiating developmental program, Maia Chaka has made history. The NFL announced exclusively on TODAY Friday that Chaka has become the first Black woman to join the ranks of officials at football’s highest level. She is also just the second woman to become an NFL official after Sarah Thomas, who made history in 2015 and broke more ground last month when she became the first female referee to work in the Super Bowl. Chaka received the life-changing call on March 1, when NFL vice president of officiating evaluation and development Wayne Mackie told her she was joining the ranks of NFL officials.

[North Carolina sued to reverse decision to drop license plates with Confederate flag](#) [Rich McKay, *Reuters*, 8 March 2021]

The North Carolina chapter of the Sons of Confederate Veterans filed a civil lawsuit on Monday against the state over its decision to stop issuing vehicle license plates featuring the Confederate battle flag. The state's Division of Motor Vehicles discontinued the specialty plates in January after more than 20 years of issuance, citing their potential offensive nature. Frank Powell, a spokesman for the state chapter of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, said officials never discussed the move with the group or suggested any alternatives. "They just cut us off without warning, after what, 23 years without a problem," Powell said.

[Raya and the Last Dragon: Disney's new heroine representing 670 million people](#) [Yvette Tan, *BBC News*, 7 March 2021]

*It's taken almost 90 years—but Disney's first South East Asian heroine premiered on Thursday. Raya is the titular character of *Raya and the Last Dragon*, which sees her travel around the region to reunite its people and attempt to save the world in the process. But aside from bearing the weight of humanity on her shoulders—she's got another burden to bear. South East Asia is a region that is home to 11 countries and 673 million people. There are dozens, if not hundreds of different cultures in this region, which begs the question—what exactly is a South East Asian identity and can Disney's latest heroine really embody it? Some online complain that the movie is essentially picking and choosing bits and pieces from different cultures in the region and throwing it together into one film. But Malaysian-born Adele Lim, who is the co-scriptwriter for the movie, says it goes "deeper". "When you talk about cultural inspiration, it wasn't just like 'Oh, we like how this looks, [so we] put it in'. It was much deeper than that," she said.*

[Social Media Checks Can Bring Bias To Hiring](#) [Matt Shipman, *Futurity*, 4 March 2021]

The way human resources professionals review online information and social media profiles of job candidates highlights how so-called "cybervetting" can introduce bias and moral judgment into the hiring process. "The [study](#) drives home that cybervetting is ultimately assessing each job candidate's moral character," says Steve McDonald, corresponding author of the study and a professor of sociology at North Carolina State University. "It is equally clear that many of the things hiring professionals are looking at make it more likely for bias to play a role in hiring." For this study, the researchers conducted in-depth interviews with 61 human resources professionals involved in recruitment and hiring across many industries. Study participants ranged from in-house HR staff to executive recruitment consultants to professionals at staffing agencies.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Study: Lack of diversity in Hollywood costs industry \\$10B](#) [Jake Coyle, *The Associated Press*, 11 March 2021]

For years, researchers have said a lack of diversity in Hollywood films doesn't just poorly reflect demographics, it's bad business. A [new study](#) by the consulting firm McKinsey & Company estimates just how much Hollywood is leaving on the table: \$10 billion. The McKinsey report, released Thursday, analyzes how inequality shapes the industry and how much it ultimately costs its bottom line. The consulting firm deduced that the \$148 billion film and TV industry loses \$10 billion, or 7%, every year by undervaluing Black films, filmmakers and executives. The study, spanning the years 2015-2019, was conducted over the last six months and drew on earlier

research by the University of California, Los Angeles, the University of Southern California and Nielsen. The BlackLight Collective, a coalition of Black executives and talent in the industry, collaborate with McKinsey researchers. The company also interviewed more than 50 executives, producers, agents, actors, directors and writers anonymously.

[This Russian Poetry Speaks Against Authoritarian Norms](#) [James Devitt, *Futurity*, 8 March 2021] *It's a harrowing time to speak out as a feminist or advocate for LGBTQ+ rights in Russia. The signing by president Vladimir Putin of the country's federal "gay propaganda law" in 2013 "coincided with an uptick in often-gruesome vigilante violence against LGBT people in Russia," Human Rights Watch concluded in a 2018 report, and was followed by the killing of an LGBTQ activist and related atrocities. Feminist activists have been similarly targeted under Russian law. Even in Europe and the United States, where the Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act and paved the way for legalizing same-sex marriage with a pair of 2013 rulings, progress on LGBTQ+ equality remains uneven at best, with new legal gains often precipitating a backlash by those seeking to roll back rights. So what do activists there do? Many have turned to a weapon deployed by demonstrators and dissidents over centuries: the written word and, specifically, poetry.*

[Unilever to stop using "normal" on all hair and skin products, won't alter model's shape, size or skin color](#) [Jon Haworth, *ABC News*, 10 March 2021]

Unilever has announced that it will stop using the word "normal" on all of its beauty and personal care products and brands as well as ceasing the practice of digitally editing model's shape, size or skin color. In a [statement issued](#) on March 9, Unilever—which owns brands Dove, Vaseline, Lifebuoy, Sunsilk and Axe—said that the company intends to "champion a new era of beauty which is equitable and inclusive, as well as sustainable for the planet," according to Unilever. The company said that they conducted a global study between January and February 2021 with 10,000 respondents who took 25-minute surveys across nine countries—Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, the U.K. and the U.S.—with the goal of investigating consumer's experiences and expectations of the beauty industry and to learn "positive actions that can be taken to foster a more globally inclusive beauty culture."

DISCRIMINATION

[Push Is On for States to Ban Organ Transplant Discrimination](#) [Sara Reardon, *Kaiser Health News*, 8 March 2021]

Denying organ transplants to people with intellectual and neurodevelopmental disabilities like Down syndrome or autism is common in the United States, even though it is illegal under the Americans with Disabilities Act. According to one [widely cited 2008 study](#), 44% of organ transplant centers said they would not add a child with some level of neurodevelopmental disability to the organ transplant list. Eighty-five percent might consider the disability as a factor in deciding whether to list the person. According to a 2019 [report](#) from the NCD, many physicians and organ transplant centers worry that patients with intellectual or neurodevelopmental disabilities are more likely to have co-occurring conditions that would make a transplant dangerous, or that these patients' quality of life is unlikely to improve with a

transplant. Others believe that these patients may not be able to comply with post-transplant requirements, such as taking immunosuppressive drugs.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[South Dakota Passes Bill Restricting Transgender Girls From Sports Teams](#) [Lee Strubinger, *NPR*, 8 March 2021]

Monday, the South Dakota state Senate passed a bill that restricts transgender women athletes from competing on high school and college girls' and women's teams. The measure now goes to Republican Gov. Kristi Noem who has said she is excited to sign the bill into law. "This is a very simple bill. It's a bill to protect women's sports," says Republican State Sen. Maggie Sutton, one of the primary sponsors of the legislation. "It's not against transgenders," Sutton says. "To me, it looks an awful lot like bullying," says Democratic state Sen. Reynold Nesiba, who voted against the bill. Janna Farley is the spokesperson for the ACLU of South Dakota. She says it is disheartening that legislators are spending their time on bills like this. "We don't need to have discrimination like this codified into law."

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

[What we owe foreign-born recruits](#) [Ankit Gajurel, *Military Times*, 12 March 2021]

[COMMENTARY]

In May 2016, I signed an eight-year contract with the U.S. Army Reserves. A native of Nepal, I'd recently received a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology. But even with my in-demand STEM skills, I knew it wasn't easy to secure visa sponsorship from an employer. When a friend told me about a special military program for immigrants, I contacted a recruiter. He presented me with a simple and honorable exchange: a pathway to American citizenship in return for defending the country I hoped to call home. At the time, I didn't realize how much could go wrong—and my experience should be instructive for the new administration. As President Biden advocates for a more welcoming and fair immigration system, he cannot ignore foreign-born recruits who put their lives and livelihoods on the line to fight for America. We are part of an historic legacy of immigrant soldiers, yes, but we are also vital to the military and American national security.

DIVERSITY

[Air Force broadens height standards for career enlisted aviator fields](#) [Diana Stancy Correll, *Air Force Times*, 8 March 2021]

The Air Force has established interim height standards for flying enlisted aviator career fields—broadening the pool of airmen who can serve as flight engineers, special-mission aviators and aircraft loadmasters, among other specialties. The new, interim height standards range from 4'10" to 6'8"—depending on career field—while the service awaits results from the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center's anthropometric study to determine crew position-specific requirements for 32 different types of aircraft. The new standards take effect immediately and are a departure from the previous physical qualifications that required all CEAs to be between 5'4" to 6'5"—figures that stemmed from a 1967 study with a sample of predominantly White male pilots. However, the U.S. National Center for Health Statistics reports that 43.5 percent of U.S.

women between the ages of 20 and 29 are shorter than 5'4," and the Air Force said the previous height standards do not "reflect the actual operational requirements of CEAs."

[Air Force diversity efforts aim to mentor, open doors to underrepresented groups](#) [Harm Venhuizen, *Air Force Times*, 8 March 2021]

Senior Air Force officials have insisted that the creation of a force of airmen with diverse backgrounds and experiences is crucial to adapting to the threats of the future. That's why Air Education and Training Command, headquartered at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas, has moved forward with plans to increase diversity and inclusion. Over the past two years, AETC has implemented a number of programs and policy changes intended to draw women and underrepresented minorities into Air Force jobs, including rated (flight) career fields. In addition, the same [news release](#) documented diversity and inclusion programs from across the active-duty Air Force, Air National Guard and Air Reserve targeting youths, young adults and influencers.

[After Delay Under Trump, Two Female Generals Nominated to Run Combatant Commands](#) [Stephen Losey, *Military.com*, 6 March 2021]

Air Force Gen. Jacqueline Van Ovost has been nominated to head U.S. Transportation Command, and Army Lt. Gen. Laura Richardson to head U.S. Southern command and to receive her fourth star, the Pentagon announced Saturday. If they are confirmed by the Senate, Van Ovost and Richardson would become the highest-ranking female officers currently serving in the U.S. military. Only one other woman has ever been in command of a COCOM—now-retired Air Force Gen. Lori Robinson, who became head of U.S. Northern Command in 2016. Although Van Ovost and Richardson are highly regarded and the Pentagon's top leadership agreed they were the best general officers for those jobs, the Times reported, former Defense Secretary Mark Esper and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark Milley "feared that any candidates other than White men for jobs mostly held by White men might run into turmoil once their nominations reached the White House."

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[The first female Army chief will be appointed in the next 20 years, McConville says](#) [Caitlin M. Kenney, *Stars and Stripes*, 11 March 2021]

Gen. James McConville said he believes the Army will have its first female chief of staff in less than 20 years, it's just a matter of making certain that the service retains talented women. The Army is changing and nominees for high-ranking positions such as chief of staff have typically come from combat career fields but that might not be what is needed in the future, McConville said. The Army's list of nominees to be brigadier generals has not yet been released, though McConville hinted the results are "a big step in the right direction" for more women progressing to higher ranks. Competition for talent through recruiting and retention are a major focus for him, even personally. McConville's wife is an Army veteran and his daughter is a captain in the service working as a clinical social worker.

[Meet the master helmsmen, the Navy ship drivers that are barely out of high school](#) [David Roza, *Task & Purpose*, 9 March 2021]

Sonar Technician (Surface) 1st Class Allison Coughlin still remembers the first time she manned the helm of the \$4.5 billion aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt. It was 2017, and she was just 18 years old when it was time for her to take the wheel of the 117,000-ton aircraft carrier while it was conducting a replenishment-at-sea, a dangerous maneuver where two ships slide up next to each other for resupply. “They don’t look at rank or whether you’re a woman or a man; they don’t look at age,” Coughlin said. “I mean, I got qualified at 18, and a couple of the other master helmsmen are currently 18 and 19. When they see that you are capable, no matter who you are, and they trust you, that’s an awesome feeling.” Coughlin is one of only four sailors among the 5,000 aboard the Theodore Roosevelt who, as master helmsmen, are trusted to steer the ship through such conditions. The rarity of the qualification makes it a point of pride.

[Senate confirms Ohio Rep. Marcia Fudge as HUD secretary](#) [Veronica Stracqualursi, CNN, 10 March 2021]

The Senate voted Wednesday to confirm Ohio Democratic Rep. Marcia Fudge as secretary of Housing and Urban Development, adding another African American woman to the ranks of President Joe Biden’s Cabinet. Vice President Kamala Harris will administer the oath of office and swear in Fudge during a virtual ceremony Wednesday night. Fudge has represented Ohio in Congress since 2008 and previously chaired the Congressional Black Caucus. As head of the housing agency, Fudge will inherit the challenges of America’s housing crisis worsened by the Covid-19 pandemic. “My first priority as secretary would be to alleviate that crisis and get people the support they need to come back from the edge,” she said during her Senate confirmation hearing in January.

SPECIAL: EXTREMISM

[Conspiracy Stand Down: How Extremist theories like QAnon Threaten the Military and What To Do About It](#) [Christina Bembenek, *War on the Rocks*, 11 March 2021] [COMMENTARY]

In the past six months, QAnon supporters—including law enforcement officers, veterans, and current military members—spread false information about election results, used violent rhetoric to draw people to the “Stop the Steal” rally in Washington, D.C., and led the mob on Jan. 6 that assaulted and violated the Capitol. The QAnon conspiracy theory is appealing to some servicemembers because its powerful narrative appeals to the same moral foundations which draw them to military service: care for others; sanctity of ideals; respect for authority; and the primacy of fairness, liberty, and loyalty. As a result, the Defense Department should act quickly to “inoculate” troops and veterans against this dangerous extremist group, and those like it, by understanding QAnon’s visceral appeal and using creative storytelling, media literacy training, and civic education to shift the narrative to the authentic values of military service.

[How the quest for significance and respect underlies the White supremacist movement, conspiracy theories and a range of other problems](#) [Arie Kruglanski, *The Conversation*, 11 March 2021] [COMMENTARY]

I am a psychologist who studies the human quest for significance and respect. My research reveals that this basic motivation is a major force in human affairs. It shapes the course of world history and determines the destiny of nations. It underlies some of the chief challenges society is

facing. The very term “supremacism” betrays concern for superior standing. So do names like “Proud Boys” or “Oath Keepers.” Systemic racism is rooted in the motivation to put down one race to elevate another. Islamist terrorism targets the alleged belittlers of a religion. Conspiracy theories identify alleged culprits plotting the subjugation and dishonor of their victims. When the quest for significance and respect is intensified, other considerations such as comfort, relationships or compassion are sidelined. Any actions that promote significance are then seen as legitimate. That includes actions that would otherwise seem reprehensible: violence, aggression, torture or terrorism.

[Inside the Pentagon’s plan to keep extremists from joining up](#) [Meghann Myers, *Military Times*, 8 March 2021]

A June [report](#) to the armed services committees, posted online March 2, paints a detailed picture of the military’s recruit background check process, including profiles of different extremist groups. It also includes seven recommendations to tighten up DOD’s policies. Several of the suggestions involve working more closely with the FBI, which has been sounding the alarm about the dangers of domestic extremism. That would include running questionable recruit tattoos through the FBI’s database, creating a consistent definition of domestic extremism for reference across the services, giving an unclassified version of the FBI’s in-house domestic extremism training, as well as consulting other agencies about updating Standard Form 86, which the federal government uses to build background checks.

[Raskin demands briefing from FBI on extremists infiltrating police, military after report goes public](#) [Josh Margolin, *ABC News*, 10 March 2021]

A top House Democrat, concerned that the FBI has not been candid about extremist efforts to infiltrate law enforcement and the military, is demanding an urgent briefing from the nation’s top law-enforcement agency. Rep. Jamie Raskin, chairman of the House Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Subcommittee, dispatched a letter to FBI Director Christopher Wray Tuesday with a deadline for action. The new urgency comes in the wake of an [ABC News report](#) published Monday detailing a confidential FBI intelligence assessment of the problem of White supremacists and other right-wing extremists plotting to infiltrate police agencies and the military.

[U.S. narrows in on organized extremists in Capitol siege probe](#) [Alanna Durkin Richer and Michael Kunzelman, *The Associated Press*, 10 March 2021]

As members of the Oath Keepers paramilitary group shouldered their way through the mob and up the steps to the U.S. Capitol, their plans for Jan. 6 were clear, authorities say. “Arrest this assembly, we have probable cause for acts of treason, election fraud,” someone commanded over an encrypted messaging app some extremists used to communicate during the siege. A little while earlier, Proud Boys carrying two-way radios and wearing earpieces spread out and tried to blend in with the crowd as they invaded the Capitol led by a man assigned “war powers” to oversee the group’s attack, prosecutors say. Nine people linked to the Oath Keepers have been indicted on charges that they planned and coordinated with one another in the siege. At least 11 leaders, members or associates of the Proud Boys charged in the riots are accused by the Justice

Department of participating in a coordinated attack. Several from both groups remain in federal custody while awaiting trial.

[Veteran charged in Capitol riot once served in Marine One squadron, officials say](#) [Alex Horton, *The Washington Post*, 10 March 2021]

A Marine Corps veteran charged in the Capitol riot once served as a crew chief for the presidential helicopter squadron, a highly restrictive unit that requires a top-secret security clearance, officials said Wednesday. John Daniel Andries, 35, of Piney Point, Md., was arrested last month and charged with two felonies, including violent entry and disorderly conduct on the Capitol grounds. Andries, who enlisted in the Marine Corps in 2004, joined Marine Helicopter Squadron One in 2006, officials said. His duties included aircraft maintenance as a presidential helicopter crew chief. The squadron's members must receive a top-secret clearance and receive a special higher-level clearance known as Yankee White, officials said, which is reserved for personnel close to the president. His assignment within the squadron covered the George W. Bush and Obama administrations.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[White supremacists “seek affiliation” with law enforcement to further their goals, internal FBI report warns](#) [Josh Margolin, *ABC News*, 8 March 2021]

Based on investigations between 2016 and 2020, agents and analysts with the FBI's division in San Antonio concluded that White supremacists and other right-wing extremists would “very likely seek affiliation with military and law enforcement entities in furtherance of” their ideologies, according to a confidential intelligence assessment issued late last month. The document, obtained by ABC News, was distributed to law enforcement agencies both in Texas and elsewhere in the country. It focuses on extremists inspired by the White-supremacist publication “Siege,” which served as motivation for the neo-Nazi group known as “Atomwaffen Division,” among others. The report is titled “Siege-Inspired Actors Very Likely Seek Military and Law Enforcement Affiliation, Increasing Risk of Tradecraft Proliferation and Color of Law Offenses in the FBI San Antonio Area of Responsibility.”

HUMAN RELATIONS

[Why Aren't People Good at Thinking Just for Fun?](#) [Alisson Clark, *Futurity*, 5 March 2021]

*If you find it harder to be pleasantly lost in your thoughts or daydreams these days, you're not alone. “This is part of our cognitive toolkit that's underdeveloped, and it's kind of sad,” says Erin Westgate, a psychology professor at the University of Florida. The ability to think for pleasure is important, and you can get better at it, Westgate says. The first step is recognizing that while it might look easy, daydreaming is surprisingly demanding. Westgate wants to help people recapture that daydream state, which may boost wellness and even pain tolerance. In a [study](#) published today in the journal *Emotion*, Westgate and colleagues Timothy Wilson, Nicholas Buttrick, and Rémy Furrer of the University of Virginia and Daniel Gilbert of Harvard University instructed participants to think meaningful thoughts. Westgate anticipated that this would guide the thinkers into a rewarding experience, but they actually found it less enjoyable than their unguided thoughts. [\[REPRINT\]](#)*

MISCELLANEOUS

[Ageism in the Workplace: Companies Breaking the Mold](#) [Diane Eastabrook, *Nextavenue.org*, 28 February 2021]

Last May, Mike Ungar, 62, happily headed off to retirement. After 35 years working in management for tire manufacturer Michelin North America, Ungar, of Simpsonville, S.C., was looking forward to volunteer work and spending more time with his then 2-year-old grandson. But despite those best-laid plans, Ungar’s retirement only lasted about a month. At the end of June, he spied an opportunity on Michelin’s retiree site that he couldn’t pass up: a six-month project developing and conducting unconscious bias training, following the George Floyd killing and Black Lives Matter protests. Ungar is among hundreds of Michelin retirees pressed back into service under the company’s 12-year-old Returning Retiree Program. It’s open to all Michelin retirees, regardless of tenure, and taps their skills for short- and long-term projects.

[Bloody Sunday memorial honors late civil rights giants](#) [*The Associated Press*, 8 March 2021]

Activists who gathered virtually and in person to commemorate a pivotal day in the civil rights struggle that became known as Bloody Sunday called on people to continue the fight for voting rights as they also honored giants of the civil rights movement, including the late U.S. Rep. John Lewis, who died last year. The Selma Bridge Crossing Jubilee marks the 56th anniversary of Bloody Sunday—the day on March 7, 1965, that civil rights marchers were brutally beaten by law enforcement officers on Selma’s Edmund Pettus Bridge. Lewis, the Rev. Joseph Lowery, the Rev. C.T. Vivian, and attorney Bruce Boynton were the late civil rights leaders honored on Sunday. The day became a turning point in the fight for voting rights. Footage of the beatings helped galvanize support for passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965... President Joe Biden appeared via a prerecorded message, in which he announced [an executive order](#) aimed at promoting voting access.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Bowling Green State University student dies after alleged fraternity hazing incident](#) [Marlene Lenthang and Nicholas Cirone, *ABC News*, 7 March 2021]

Stone Foltz, a Bowling Green State University student, died Sunday after an alleged hazing incident involving alcohol. Foltz, a sophomore in the university’s College of Business, was hospitalized Thursday after “alleged hazing activity involving alcohol consumption” at an off-campus Pi Kappa Alpha event in Bowling Green, Ohio, the university said in a statement. He was in critical condition at the ProMedica Toledo Hospital for three days. The Delta Beta Chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha at Bowling Green State University has been placed on administrative suspension following the incident, per the international fraternity.

[Census 2021: Judge orders change to sex question guidance](#) [*BBC News*, 9 March 2021]

Part of the census guidance for England and Wales accompanying the question on a person’s sex should be withdrawn, a High Court judge has ordered. Campaign group Fair Play for Women argued it unlawfully allowed “self-identification” as male or female. The guidance said people can use the sex listed on their passport—which can be changed without a legal process. The Office for National Statistics said it was asking the same question on sex it had done since 1801.

Taking place in England, Wales and Northern Ireland on 21 March, the census aims to provide a snapshot of the population of the country which can then be used to make decisions about services—and which this year will be used to understand the impact of the pandemic.

[EU declared “LGBT freedom zone” in response to Poland’s “LGBT-free zones”](#) [BBC News, 11 March 2021]

The European Parliament has declared that the whole of the European Union is an “LGBTIQ Freedom Zone”. The symbolic resolution was passed in response to local authorities in Poland labelling themselves “LGBT ideology-free zones” in recent years. The resolution declares that “LGBTIQ persons everywhere in the EU should enjoy the freedom to live and publicly show their sexual orientation and gender identity without fear of intolerance, discrimination or persecution”. It adds that “authorities at all levels of governance across the EU should protect and promote equality and the fundamental rights of all, including LGBTIQ persons”. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen had already backed the resolution before it went to a debate on Thursday. “Being yourself is not an ideology. It’s your identity,” she tweeted on Wednesday. “No one can ever take it away. The EU is your home. The EU is a #LGBTIQFreedomZone.”

[Exclusive: Stark divide on race, policing emerges since George Floyd's death, USA](#)

[TODAY/Ipsos Poll shows](#) [Susan Page, Sarah Elbeshbishi, and Mabinty Quarshie, USA TODAY, 5 March 2021]

Americans’ trust in the Black Lives Matter movement has fallen and their faith in local law enforcement has risen since protests demanding social justice swept the nation last year, according to an exclusive USA TODAY/Ipsos Poll. The debate over the intersection of racism and policing will be in the spotlight again as jury selection opens Monday in the Minneapolis trial of former police officer Derek Chauvin in the death of George Floyd, which sparked nationwide marches last year. The survey finds complicated and shifting views about Chauvin’s actions and broader questions of race. On many issues, there is a chasm in the perspective between Black people and White people.

[Fauci Says Military Who Refuse Covid-19 Vaccine Are “Part Of The Problem” After High Rate Of Service Members Refuse Job](#) [Robert Hart, Forbes, 5 March 2021]

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the U.S.’ top infectious disease official, told military families Thursday that service members who refuse to take the Covid-19 vaccine are “inadvertently being part of the problem” and urged them to trust the experts who cleared the vaccines and follow public health guidelines, as the U.S. military is one of a number of frontline professions reporting startlingly high rates of vaccine refusal, despite clear evidence that the vaccines are safe and effective. First Lady Jill Biden, who spoke at an earlier event with Fauci, said it was important for military families to “feel confident in the health decisions you make for your family” and have “direct access to the experts”.

[Malcolm X’s Boston home is officially added to National Register of Historical Places](#) [Shirin Ali, CNN, 5 March 2021]

Civil rights icon Malcolm X's former home in Boston has officially been added to the National Register of Historic Places, further cementing the civil rights leader's place in history. Rodney Collins, Malcolm X's nephew, nominated the Boston home through the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The commission then approved the nomination to move forward to The National Park Service, which added the home to the national register last month. The 2 ½ story home is the only surviving property associated with the former civil rights leader who moved to Boston as a 16-year-old in 1941 to live under the care of his older sister. Collins hopes the designation will allow the family to turn the property into a home for graduate students studying Black history and civil rights, according to Massachusetts Secretary of State's office in an emailed statement to CNN.

[Support for making women register in the draft, but none for mandatory military service, commission says](#) [Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 11 March 2021]

Officials from the [National Commission on Public Service](#) offered a host of ideas to increase young Americans' interest in serving in the military in testimony before Congress on Thursday, including better marketing, more incentives, and increased career flexibility. One idea that didn't get much support, however, was making every American serve. "If you talk to the Department of Defense, they will echo the fact that at no point in time have we had such a professional force as we have now with the all-volunteer force," said former Rep. Joe Heck, chairman of the commission. "And there are concerns about rotating people in for a one-year conscription, putting them through boot camp and then having them leave." Despite opposition to that idea, officials said they support maintaining the Selective Service System in case of such an emergency, even though critics have called it an unneeded waste of time and resources. It costs about \$23 million annually to maintain, but hasn't been used to mobilize personnel in more than 45 years.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Trust in the military is dropping significantly, new survey suggests](#) [Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 10 March 2021]

Trust in the U.S. military has decreased significantly in recent years, but armed forces still remain among the most respected institutions in the country, according to a [new public opinion poll](#) released by the Ronald Reagan Institute this week. About 56 percent of Americans surveyed said they have "a great deal of trust and confidence" in the military, down from 70 percent in 2018. The poll includes views of more than 2,500 individuals who were asked questions in early February 2021. "To see this drop is quite a concern," said Roger Zakheim, Washington director of the institute. "This is not just the events of the past 12 months. We're seeing this trend now."

[\[PRESS RELEASE\]](#)

RACISM

[3 Alabama professors on leave over insensitive photos](#) [The Associated Press, 6 March 2021]

Three professors at the University of South Alabama have been placed on leave after racially insensitive Halloween photos surfaced of them, the university said. USA President Tony Waldrop made the announcement Friday. An independent investigation into the incident will be conducted by attorney Suntrease Williams-Maynard, a former trial attorney for the U.S. Equal Employment

Opportunity Commission in Mobile and a former assistant U.S. attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Alabama and the Southern District of Texas, he said. The pictures were taken at an on-campus Halloween party in 2014, according to a petition created by USA students, multiple news agencies reported. Then-Dean of the Mitchell College of Business and current finance professor Bob Wood was dressed in a Confederate soldier's uniform, while professors Alex Sharland and Teresa Weldy posed with a whip and noose.

[Amanda Gorman says she was racially profiled near her home](#) [*The Associated Press*, 6 March 2021]

Amanda Gorman, the 22-year-old poet who captured hearts at the inauguration of President Joe Biden, posted to social media that she was followed home by a security guard who demanded to know where she lived because she "looked suspicious." "I showed my keys & buzzed myself into my building," she tweeted of the incident Friday night. "He left, no apology. This is the reality of Black girls: One day you're called an icon, the next day, a threat." The post was met with thousands of messages of support on Twitter and Instagram. She followed up her post with a second comment that said: "In a sense, he was right. I AM A THREAT: a threat to injustice, to inequality, to ignorance. Anyone who speaks the truth and walks with hope is an obvious and fatal danger to the powers that be. A threat and proud."

[Boarded up and lined with barbed wire, Minneapolis braces for murder trial in George Floyd's death](#) [*Holly Bailey, The Washington Post*, 7 March 2021]

Everywhere, there are signs seen and unseen that Minneapolis is bracing for the landmark trial of the former police officer charged with second-degree murder and manslaughter in Floyd's death. Jury selection begins Monday in the case, poised to be a defining moment in the history of a nation that is grappling with a racial reckoning. Derek Chauvin has indicated that he'll mount a "not guilty" defense, and hundreds of proposed witnesses means the trial could stretch through late April or early May. It will be live-streamed from three courtroom cameras. Determined to avoid a repeat of last summer's chaos and destruction, which included the burning of the 3rd Precinct police station, Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey, a Democrat, and other local leaders have sought to display an unprecedented level of security in the city. The area around the downtown Minneapolis courthouse has been transformed into a militarized zone where armed National Guard troops will soon take up positions alongside local police.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[California woman charged with spitting on Asian American man in racist attack: "It's very targeted vitriol"](#) [*Andrea Salcedo, The Washington Post*, 9 March 2021]

An Asian American man was sitting outside a restaurant in downtown Mountain View, Calif., last month when a White woman suddenly approached and spat on him, police said. Then she allegedly told him to go back "where you came from" and called him a racist slur. On Monday, the woman, identified by police as Karen Marie Inman, 39, was charged with a hate crime and battery for allegedly attacking the stranger, the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office announced in a statement. The incidents come amid a recent wave of racist attacks and harassment against Asian Americans, with many advocates linking the trend to former president Donald Trump's rhetoric blaming China for the coronavirus pandemic. Attacks have targeted

several seniors, including an 84-year-old man who died days after he was shoved in the Bay Area. Last month, a Filipino man was slashed with a box cutter aboard a New York City train.

[Couple claims they were segregated at Orlando restaurant, which later apologizes](#) [Garfield Hylton, *The Orlando Sentinel*, 8 March 2021]

A couple on vacation in Orlando says they were separated by race at a restaurant. Dorothy Moody published a story on [Instagram](#) detailing the night she spent at Maggiano's Little Italy in Pointe Orlando to celebrate her husband, Colin O'Hanlon. Moody, going by "itzmoody" on the social media site, said a Black male server greeted the New Jersey couple at the restaurant on March 1. She said the host was ready to seat them right away when a White female hostess "whispered to the male...they're going to have to go to table 113." According to News 6, a Maggiano's spokesperson provided the following statement: "We understand that two valued Guests felt unwelcome when they dined at our Maggiano's restaurant in Orlando on Sunday, February 28, and for that we sincerely apologize. "When we learned of the couple's experience through social media, our Guest Engagement Team reached out and spoke with the wife to express our apologies..." "We couldn't believe what we were witnessing," Moody said in the Instagram caption. She said they'd kept watch of other patrons, who were Black and people of color, as they were seated near the back of the restaurant.

[Creighton's men's basketball head coach suspended after "plantation" comment](#) [Jill Martin and Susannah Cullinane, *CNN*, 5 March 2021]

Creighton University has suspended its men's basketball head coach Greg McDermott, who apologized earlier this week for making what he said was a "terribly inappropriate analogy" about a plantation when talking to his team following a loss on Saturday. "Specifically, I said: 'Guys, we got to stick together. We need both feet in. I need everybody to stay on the plantation. I can't have anybody leave the plantation,'" McDermott said in a statement posted to Twitter on Tuesday. The coach said he made the remarks in the locker room after an "emotionally tough loss" and immediately recognized his mistake. Creighton assistant coach Terrence Rencher [released a statement](#) the same day through Coaches For Action, which was founded by 21 assistant coaches in the Big East Conference "on a shared mission to use the platform of athletics to educate and bring awareness to social injustices," according to the group's website.

[A drained swimming pool shows how racism harms White people, too](#) [John Blake, *CNN*, 6 March 2021]

Heather McGhee tells the story of the Fairground Park pool in her powerful new book, "The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together." McGhee employs the metaphor of a drained, cracked public pool to make a larger point: White refusal to share resources available to all U.S. citizens doesn't just hurt people of color. It damages their families and their future, too. The Fairground Park pool in St. Louis was the largest public pool in the U.S. when it was built in 1919. It featured sand from a beach, a fancy diving board and enough room for up to 10,000 swimmers. It was dug during a pool-building boom when cities and towns competed to provide their citizens with public amenities that promoted civic pride and symbolized a perk of the American dream. These public pools, of course, were for Whites only. But when civil rights leaders successfully pushed for them to be integrated, many cities either sold the pools to

private entities or, in the case of Fairground Park, eventually drained them and closed them down for good.

[Georgetown law professor fired after complaining about Black students' grades on Zoom call](#)

[Dustin Barnes, *USA TODAY*, 12 March 2021]

Georgetown University Law Center fired a professor over “reprehensible statements” made concerning Black students during a Zoom call, the law school’s dean confirmed Thursday. Another professor who was seen nodding in agreement during the conversation has been placed on administrative leave pending an investigation. The university immediately terminated its relationship with Sandra Sellers after a [recording of the video chat](#) was shared online and drew national attention, according to a [statement](#) from Bill Treanor, dean of the law center. “I hate to say this,” Sellers said on the call when discussing the evaluation of students. “I end up having this angst every semester that a lot of my lower ones are Blacks—happens almost every semester. And it’s like, ‘Oh, come on.’ You know? You get some really good ones. But there are also usually some that are just plain at the bottom. It drives me crazy.” Treanor said Batson will remain on administrative leave pending an investigation by Georgetown’s Office of Diversity, Equity and Affirmative Action. “Until the completion of the investigation, Professor Batson will have no further involvement with the course in which the incident arose.”

[Journal’s “appalling” racism podcast, tweet prompt outcry](#) [Lindsay Tanner, *The Associated Press*, 5 March 2021]

A prominent medical journal’s provocative tweet was meant to prompt interest in a podcast on racism. Instead, the Twitter post and the podcast stoked backlash and admonishment from the doctors’ group that publishes the journal. The tweet from the Journal of the American Medical Association said in part, “No physician is racist, so how can there be structural racism in health care?” It was promoting a [podcast episode](#) featuring two White doctors: a deputy journal editor and a physician who runs a New York City health system. They were discussing how structural racism worsens health outcomes and what health systems can do to address it, JAMA said in an online description. The episode, designed for doctors, was first posted last week and was billed as a discussion for skeptics. It included comments that racism is illegal and a term that should be avoided because it evokes negative feelings.

[Judge tosses suit over “race-norming” in NFL dementia tests](#) [Maryclaire Dale, *The Associated Press*, 9 March 2021]

A federal judge on Monday dismissed a lawsuit that challenged “race-norming” in dementia tests for retired NFL players, a practice that some say makes it harder for Black athletes to qualify for awards that average more than \$500,000. The judge instead ordered the NFL and the lead lawyer in the overall \$1 billion settlement to resolve the issue through mediation. That process would appear to exclude the Black players who sued. “We are deeply concerned that the Court’s proposed solution is to order the very parties who created this discriminatory system to negotiate a fix,” said lawyer Cyril V. Smith, who represents ex-players Kevin Henry and Najeh Davenport, and filed a notice to appeal the dismissal late Monday. “The class of Black former players whom we represent must have a seat at the table and a transparent process.” The demographic factors that doctors consider during testing for dementia often include race. If so, lawyers say, the testing

assumes that Black athletes start with worse cognitive functioning than White people—which means it’s harder for them to show a deficit.

[Julian Edelman writes heartfelt open letter to Meyers Leonard after anti-Semitic slur](#) [Charles Curtis, *MSN Sports*, 10 March 2021]

After Miami Heat center Meyers Leonard used an anti-Semitic slur on a live Twitch stream (which he apologized for), it’s once again Julian Edelman who is publicly reaching out to connect and “offer some perspective,” as he wrote on Wednesday. Last July, then-Philadelphia Eagles wide receiver DeSean Jackson posted anti-Semitic quotes on Instagram, which he later apologized for. It was the New England Patriots wide receiver—who is Jewish—who reached out publicly over social media to make an offer to go with Jackson to the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. and they could “have those uncomfortable conversations.” On Wednesday, Edelman wrote an [open letter](#) to Leonard, and said he wanted to do a Shabbat dinner with Leonard in Miami sometime:

[The jury for the trial in George Floyd’s killing must have Black members](#) [Paul Butler, *The Washington Post*, 7 March 2021] [OPINION]

Jury selection begins this week in the trial of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, who is charged with killing George Floyd—the most high-profile police brutality trial in U.S. history. The jury that decides Chauvin’s fate must include African Americans if its verdict is to have any legitimacy. In presiding over jury selection in Chauvin’s case, Hennepin County District Judge Peter Cahill’s most important test for jurors will be simple: “Can you set aside what you have heard and decide the case based only on the evidence presented?” Yet no sentient human being should be able to forget watching the agonizing video of Floyd’s death, nine excruciating minutes with the White police officer’s knee pressing on the Black man’s neck.

[Meghan and Harry interview: “Royalty is not a shield from the despair of racism”](#) [BBC News, 8 March 2021]

In her emotional interview with broadcaster Oprah Winfrey, the Duchess of Sussex said that racism she experienced as a member of the British Royal Family contributed to her having suicidal thoughts. Racism from within the Royal household and the media had played a part in her feeling she “didn’t want to be alive anymore”, Meghan said. Watching in the U.S., a number of prominent Black women said this showed the devastating effect of bigotry. The impact of “systematic oppression and victimization are devastating, isolating and all too often lethal,” tennis star Serena Williams, who is a friend of Meghan, [posted](#) on Instagram. Others said Americans were likely to be shocked by Meghan’s revelation that concerns were raised about the colour of the couple’s baby’s skin. The Royal Family has not yet responded to the claims made by Meghan and Prince Harry.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[New York City school segregation perpetuates racism, lawsuit contends](#) [Joseph Ax, *Reuters*, 9 March 2021]

A group of New York City students filed a sweeping lawsuit on Tuesday that accuses the United States’ largest public school system of perpetuating racism via a flawed admissions process for

selective programs that favors White students. The lawsuit in state court in Manhattan argues that a “rigged system” begins sorting children academically when they are as young as 4 years old, using criteria that disproportionately benefit more affluent, White students. As a result, minority students are often denied an opportunity to gain access to more selective programs, from elementary to high school, and are instead relegated to failing schools that exacerbate existing inequities, the lawsuit contends. The complaint asks a judge to order the school system to eliminate its current admissions screening process for intensely competitive selective programs, including gifted and talented programs and more academically rigorous middle and high schools.

[Tampa police union will fight firing of Black officer who used racial slur](#) [Tony Marrero, *The Tampa Bay Times*, 4 March 2021]

Tampa’s police union says it will fight for the job of a Black school resource officer who was fired Tuesday for using a racial slur. The Tampa Police Benevolent Association agrees that Officer Delvin White, a school resource officer at Middleton High School, should be punished for using the n-word on two occasions, said spokesman Danny Alvarez. But the union calls firing him too harsh a penalty. “We, including Officer White, believe he should have been punished because we all agree no officer should speak that way, but the punishment does not fit the allegations,” Alvarez said in an interview Wednesday. The union’s action comes as police Chief Brian Dugan received emails supporting White, some describing him as beloved and respected by students and staff at the school. Dugan said White used the phrase “ghetto n-words,” which the chief found to be a troubling blanket statement about the people White serves.

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

[This African American “Old Grad” Delivered a History of Race at West Point](#) [Blake Stilwell, *Military.com*, 4 March 2021]

*“There are plenty of Black folks who can sit in at counters,” Col. Jim Fowler, the fifth African American graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, told Cadet Joe Anderson Jr. “Your job is to get through West Point.” There were only 11 Black cadets at West Point when Anderson began his plebe year in 1961. It was the early days of the Civil Rights Movement, and he was struggling with not being out marching in the streets. Anderson did graduate from West Point in 1965. Today, he is CEO and Chairman of TAG Holdings, and he was the [guest speaker](#) at the academy’s 2021 Henry O. Flipper Award presentation. There, he relayed his memories of serving in a racially charged world. Next, came Anderson’s own story. He grew up in a racially segregated world. The future Army officer and CEO was in grade school in Topeka, Kansas, when the U.S. Supreme Court delivered the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* ruling, which struck down segregation in schools.*

RELIGION

[LGBTQ rights bill ignites debate over religious liberty](#) [David Crary, *The Associated Press*, 8 March 2021]

A sweeping bill that would extend federal civil rights protections to LGBTQ people is a top priority of President Joe Biden and Democrats in Congress. Yet as the Equality Act heads to the Senate after winning House approval, its prospects seem bleak—to a large extent because of

opposition from conservative religious leaders. The public policy arm of the Southern Baptist Convention, the nation's largest Protestant denomination, calls the act "the most significant threat to religious liberty ever considered in the United States Congress." The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has assailed it as discriminating against people of faith. The act is the latest version of proposals previously introduced Congress without success. It would amend existing civil rights law to explicitly cover sexual orientation and gender identity, with protections extending to employment, housing, education, and public accommodations such as restaurants, theaters, hotels, libraries, gas stations and retail stores.

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

[Remains of Emil Kapaun, Kansas priest who died a prisoner of war, have been identified](#) [Jason Tidd, *The Wichita Eagle*, (Wichita, Kan.), 5 March 2021]

The remains of Father Emil Kapaun, a Kansas native and Catholic priest who died while a prisoner of war, have been identified by military officials. Sen. Jerry Moran announced Thursday that the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency of the Department of Defense has identified Kapaun's remains. According to the U.S. Army, Kapaun was a chaplain with the rank of captain in the 8th Cavalry Regiment. During the Battle of Unsan, Kapaun ran from foxhole to foxhole while under fire to provide comfort to soldiers. He helped wounded soldiers to safety, but stayed behind himself in order to care for others. He was then captured by Chinese forces in November 1950. While in captivity, Kapaun continued to care for his fellow soldiers while resisting his captors, including conducting a sunrise service on Easter morning, 1951. He died alone in a p

[REPRINT]

[Sacred Apache land "on death row" in standoff with foreign mining titans](#) [Christine Romo, Cynthia McFadden, Kit Ramgopal and Rich Schapiro, *NBC News*, 3 March 2021]

The rugged patch of land known as Oak Flat sits in the Tonto National Forest. To the San Carlos Apache Tribe, the 740-acre swath of oak groves and sheer cliffs is sacred ground, a place where they have gone for centuries to hold religious ceremonies and communicate with the Creator. "No different than Mount Sinai," said Wendsler Nosie Sr., former chairman of the San Carlos Apache. But Oak Flat is on a path to destruction. The land is scheduled to be transferred to Resolution Copper, a company controlled by two foreign mining giants, and turned into one of the largest copper mines in the country. The transfer was set in motion by an eleventh-hour provision slipped into a 2014 defense bill by Arizona's two Republican senators at the time. The poverty-stricken San Carlos Apache Tribe is fighting back in court, alleging the land belongs to the tribe and holds special religious significance.

[Students at Brigham Young make rainbow light display on "Y"](#) [*The Associated Press*, 5 March 2021]

*Students at Brigham Young University illuminated the letter "Y" on a mountain overlooking the Provo campus on Thursday with rainbow colors in a display meant to send a message to the religious school. The light display on the concrete letter ended "Color the Campus," an organized event where students wore rainbow colors in support of the LGBTQ campus community, *The Salt Lake Tribune* [reported](#). The event came a year after the school, alongside its Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints owners, sent a letter in March 2020 that said "same-*

sex romantic behavior” was prohibited and would lead to discipline under the school code. In February 2020, BYU deleted the words “homosexual behavior” from the school’s honor code, which created confusion among LGBTQ students over what is and what is not allowed. The code prohibited sexual activity outside of marriage, but same-sex couples publicly lauded the code change and shared pictures of themselves holding hands and kissing their partners.

[Supreme Court—over John Roberts’ sole dissent—rules in favor of student in First Amendment case](#) [Ariane de Vogue and Devan Cole, CNN, 8 March 2021]

The Supreme Court on Monday revived a lawsuit brought by a former student seeking to hold his state university accountable for violating his First Amendment rights when it barred him from speaking about his religion and distributing religious literature. Justice Clarence Thomas, writing for an 8-1 majority, allowed the lawsuit to continue even though the student, Chike Uzuegbunam, who has since graduated, was only asking for \$1 in damages and the school’s policy has changed. Thomas wrote that it was “undisputed” that Uzuegbunam’s rights were violated and that he could proceed with the case even though he was only seeking nominal damages. Chief Justice John Roberts, in an unusual lone dissent, said he thought the dispute was now moot. Roberts stressed that the student had graduated and that the challenged restrictions “no longer exist.”

[Switzerland narrowly votes to ban face covering in public](#) [Ivana Kottasová, CNN, 7 March 2021]

Swiss voters have approved a ban on full facial coverings including niqab and burqa in nearly all public places in a closely contested referendum on Sunday. The result means facial covering will be banned in all publicly accessible places, including on the streets, in public offices, on public transport, in restaurants, shops and in the countryside. The only exceptions include places of worship and other sacred sites. Face coverings will also be allowed if worn for health and safety reasons, because of the weather and in situations where it is considered a “local custom” to do so, such as at carnivals, according to the text of the proposal published by the Swiss federal government. The proposal, put forward by several groups including the right wing Swiss People’s Party, does not mention Islam specifically, but has been widely referred to as the “burqa ban” in Swiss media.

[A “wake-up call”? Bible teacher Beth Moore, Black pastors cut ties with Southern Baptists](#) [Holly Meyer, *The Nashville Tennessean*, (Nashville, Tenn.), 11 March 2021]

Popular Bible teacher Beth Moore may be the most high-profile Southern Baptist to publicly cut ties with the conservative evangelical denomination in the last year, but she is not the only one to go. Some say a string of recent departures should serve as a wake-up call for the Nashville-based network of churches. “Southern Baptists need to do some soul searching of why so many African-American leaders have left and now why their most prominent woman leader has left,” said Ed Stetzer, a Southern Baptist pastor and executive director of the Wheaton College Billy Graham Center. Southern Baptists are currently grappling with the influence of partisan politics and the treatment of women and people of color within the church. These major tension points contributed to Moore’s decision to leave as well as those of Black pastors like the Rev. Joel A. Bowman Sr., who announced in December that he was cutting ties with the convention.

SEXISM

[Carlson’s comments on women serving “don’t reflect Army values,” service’s top enlisted leader says](#) [Karin Zeitvogel, *Stars and Stripes*, 11 March 2021]

Women in the military deliver more than babies, senior military leaders said after Fox News host Tucker Carlson said on his show that pregnant women “are going to fight our wars” and make a mockery of the U.S. military. “Women lead our most lethal units with character. They will dominate ANY future battlefield we’re called to fight on,” Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston said on Twitter on Thursday, adding that Carlson’s comments hours earlier were divisive and “don’t reflect Army values.” Carlson said in a roughly 30-second clip on his show Wednesday, “So we’ve got new hairstyles, maternity flight suits. Pregnant women are going to fight our wars.” “It’s a mockery of the U.S. military,” he added, going on to compare America’s armed forces to China’s, which he said were “becoming more masculine” as they assembled the world’s largest navy.

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

[\[VIDEO\]](#)

[Italian dictionary Treccani urged to change “sexist” definition of “woman”](#) [BBC News, 6 March 2021]

About 100 high-profile figures have signed a letter to the Treccani Italian dictionary calling on it to change its definition of the word “woman”. The campaign argues that derogatory terms such as “puttana” (whore) should be removed from the list of synonyms. Such words reinforce “misogynist stereotypes that objectify women and present them as inferior”, it adds. It was written by activist Maria Beatrice Giovanardi, who was also behind an earlier campaign to get the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) to remove words such as “bint” and “bird” as other ways of saying “woman”. After a similar petition attracted tens of thousands of signatures, Oxford University Press updated its definition. Meanwhile, she added, the word “man” was associated with positive terms such as “businessman”. “Language shapes reality and influences the way women are perceived and treated,” she wrote in her letter.

[Missouri pastor on leave after sexist sermon preaching wives need to look good for their husbands](#) [Elisha Fieldstadt, *NBC News*, 8 March 2021]

A Missouri pastor is on leave after a video emerged of him preaching that wives should strive to be thin, made up, well-dressed and satisfying in the bedroom to keep their husbands interested because “God made men to be drawn to beautiful women.” “I want you to know a need that your man has that he won’t ever tell you about, but since I’m the preacher man, I’ll say it: Your man needs an attractive wife,” First General Baptist Church Pastor Stewart-Allen Clark said from the pulpit at the start of the sermon, according to a video posted to Facebook. A statement posted by First General Baptist Church’s deacon ministry team said that “as of March 2, 2021, Pastor Stewart-Allen Clark has taken a leave of absence and is seeking professional counseling.”

[Yellen says women face many obstacles in economics careers](#) [Martin Crutsinger, *The Associated Press*, 8 March 2021]

Janet Yellen, the first woman to head the Federal Reserve and the U.S. Treasury Department, says women seeking to pursue careers in economics face a number of obstacles from the way beginning economics courses are taught to overly aggressive questioning in college seminars. “There is a cultural problem in the profession, and we need to change the culture,” Yellen said Monday. She was appearing at an event with Kristalina Georgieva, only the second woman to head the International Monetary Fund. The two, who spoke at the event recognizing International Women’s Day, discussed the obstacles they both faced embarking on economics careers, a profession where even today, women are in a distinct minority to men. She said women pursuing degrees in economics often face more hostile questioning in college seminar classes from the men in the class, adding to the hurdles women have to face in pursuing advanced degrees.

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[Army must make progress preventing sexual assault or risk civilian intervention, service secretary says](#) [Rose L. Thayer, *Stars and Stripes*, 11 March 2021]

If Army commanders cannot get sexual assault and harassment in the ranks under control, legislation is looming in Congress that will change the ability of military leaders to oversee cases and could bring “unwarranted consequences,” acting Army Secretary John Whitley said Thursday. “The Army has to move the needle now,” he told commanders gathered at the base. “It’s about soldiers, it’s about readiness, it’s about being ready for the next war. It’s about what kind of Army we have.” The legislation that he referenced is the [I Am Vanessa Guillen Act](#), which would take the decision of whether to prosecute a sexual assault or harassment case away from the chain of command and move it to a prosecutor’s office within each military service. Thursday’s event was designed to inspire action while also acknowledging the problem directly, he said. Many conversations throughout the day were uncomfortable, but Bernabe said it was necessary to help commanders find their way to contribute to “positive disruption” on base. “This fratricide must stop. We must strengthen the cohesiveness of teams so that our soldiers protect each other,” he said. “We must confront those who denigrate our teams through action or inaction.”

[Biden order could change how colleges handle sex misconduct](#) [Aamer Madhani, *The Associated Press*, 8 March 2021]

In a first step toward reversing a contentious Trump administration policy, President Joe Biden on Monday ordered his administration to review federal rules guiding colleges in their handling of campus sexual assaults. In an executive order, Biden directed the Education Department to examine rules that the Trump administration issued around Title IX, the federal law that forbids sex discrimination in education. Biden directed the agency to “consider suspending, revising or rescinding” any policies that fail to protect students. Biden also signed a second executive order formally establishing the White House Gender Policy Council, which his transition team had announced before he took office... The orders were issued in advance of remarks by Biden later Monday marking International Women’s Day, a global day marking the achievements of women.

[Catcalling: The sisters who are making a noise to stop street harassment of women](#) [Becky Morton, *BBC News*, 12 March 2021]

Maya Tutton, 22, says that her first experience of street harassment was when she was still at school, recalling: “I remember one particular incident when I was 14 and several men pulled up next to me with two friends and they made some of the most sexually threatening comments I had heard in my life. And I remember just being so scared and never feeling the same way in public spaces again.” But it was her younger sister Gemmas experiences that pushed her to take action. Two years ago the pair, who live in south-east England, founded [Our Streets Now](#), which campaigns for public sexual harassment to be a criminal offence as well as for the issue to be part of the secondary school curriculum. The group has also created free lesson plans and resources for teachers to educate girls—and boys—about public sexual harassment. Engaging boys and men is crucial, Maya says, adding: “We cannot continue to place the onus on the victim’s shoulders. When women are told to change their behaviour to stay safe, perpetrators are still a danger to others,” she explains. “The onus should never be on us to change things,” Maya says. “We’re not tackling the root and the root is male violence.”

[Crime prevention measures, sexual assault training part of changes sparked by Fort Hood report](#) [Rose L. Thayer, *Stars and Stripes*, 9 March 2021]

The Fort Hood Independent Review Committee released a 136-page report three months ago that exposed the faults and missed opportunities of base officials that contributed to Fort Hood having the highest number of crimes in the Army. It also found an environment on base that was “permissive” of sexual assault and harassment and a lack of resources to properly investigate those crimes, which lowered the willingness of victims to report them. The Supporting Warriors Action Team, which is newly designed sexual assault prevention training, kicked off last week with the goal of training soldiers how to recognize signs and early warnings of sexual misconduct, how to intervene in incidents of sexual misconduct and how to advocate for vulnerable service members and the survivors of sexual misconduct, said Lt. Col. Angie Chipman, the operations director for III Corps’ Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program, known as SHARP.

[Miles out at Kansas over behavior with women while at LSU](#) [Ralph D. Russo, *The Associated Press*, 9 March 2021]

Les Miles is out as Kansas’ head coach just days after he was placed on administrative leave amid sexual misconduct allegations from his tenure at LSU. Last week, LSU released a 148-page review by a law firm about the university’s handling of sexual misconduct complaints campus-wide. One part described how Miles “tried to sexualize the staff of student workers in the football program by, for instance, allegedly demanding that he wanted blondes with big breasts, and ‘pretty girls.’” The report also revealed then-LSU athletic director Joe Alleva recommended firing Miles in 2013 to university officials. Miles was investigated at LSU after two female student workers in the football program accused the coach of inappropriate behavior in 2012.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Nearly 1 In 3 Women Experience Violence: Landmark Report From WHO](#) [Maria Godoy, *NPR*, 9 March 2021]

The numbers are stark—and startling. Around the world, almost 1 in 3 women have experienced physical or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime, according to a [new report](#) released by

the World Health Organization. That number has remained largely unchanged over the past decade, WHO said. The report, which WHO says is the largest-ever study of the prevalence of violence against women, draws upon data from 161 countries and areas on women and girls age 15 and up collected between 2000 and 2018. So it does not account for the impact of the pandemic. Lockdowns and related restrictions on movement have led to widespread reports of a “shadow pandemic”—a surge in violence against women and girls around the world, as many found themselves trapped at home with their abusers.

[Okinawa prosecutors charge Marine with assault on a woman, interfering with police](#) [Matthew M. Burke, *Stars and Stripes*, 8 March 2021]

Pfc. Marvin Earl James Jr., 24, a transmission systems operator with 3rd Marine Division at Camp Courtney, was charged Friday with indecent assault and interfering with the public duties of police, an official from the Naha District Public Prosecutors Office told Stars and Stripes by phone Monday. Police alleged that James approached a woman walking home on a Naha street, took her into a parking lot and forcibly tried to kiss her at about 5 a.m. Jan. 31, a spokesman told Stars and Stripes last month. A police officer who viewed James as suspicious approached him walking alone an hour later in the Kumoji area of Naha, police said in February. Police said James had been drinking and shoved the officer who attempted to question him. If convicted of the interference charge, James faces up to three years in prison, with or without hard labor, or up to \$5,000 in fines, according to the Japanese penal code. A conviction of indecent assault brings six months to 10 years with hard labor.

[Op-Ed: Protect the Women Who Protect Us](#) [Kellie Lease Stecher, *Medpage Today*, 9 March 2021] [OPINION]

As a civilian, woman, and physician—who had been indoctrinated into the culture of medicine, which sadly has many parallels to the military—you know that someone is in desperation mode if they are willing to speak out against leadership. They have gone to the point where they have nothing else to lose. They are willing to walk away from a career they worked their entire lives for. This sentiment is repeated over and over again in the military and in medicine. Women aren’t accessories, afterthoughts, or tokens to place on boards. Women are leaders, fighters, activists, politicians, surgeons, friends, allies, and family. Until we make sweeping changes to these industries that have gone ungoverned by the normal legal infrastructure, we won’t progress. Medicine and the military have their own way of dealing with predatory behaviors; much is swept under the rug, men in power are enabled, and many women are complicit.

[We Need to Create an Army EO/SHARP Structure that Will Outlast this Generation](#) [Capt. Tiarra McDaniel, *Military.com*, 11 March 2021] [OPINION]

SHARP/EO military professionals are an integral part of the Army’s success, but manning for and utilization of both programs must be addressed. Manning for Equal Opportunity Advisers, or EOAs, is governed by the Military Table of Organization and Equipment. Army Regulation 600-20 sets forth the requirements for personnel interested in serving in those positions. The credentialing process for an EOA includes an 11-week course at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, and EOA personnel are usually stabilized at one location for three years. In contrast, SHARP assignments show their lack of priority within the Army. SHARP personnel

come from borrowed military manpower. The current Army SHARP/EO program structure does not allow career continuation or progression; rather, they are nominative positions open to volunteer applicants who meet predetermined criteria.

SUICIDE

[Addressing gun suicide should be a top priority for the new VA secretary](#) [Chris Marvin, *Military Times*, 11 March 2021] [COMMENTARY]

Every year, [approximately 4,200 veterans die by gun suicide](#)—that’s about 11 veterans today and every day. As Denis McDonough takes over as President Biden’s secretary of Veterans Affairs, he will have his work cut out for him preventing this deadly crisis. Luckily, he can begin by doing one thing that Secretary Robert Wilkie—President Trump’s appointee—essentially refused to do during his tenure: discuss the role that guns play in veteran suicides.

[Part of plan to curb Alaska suicides, Army installs blackout window shades at Fort Wainwright](#) [Wyatt Olson, *Stars and Stripes*, 9 March 2021]

A \$1.24 million project to install blackout shades on all soldiers’ barracks at Fort Wainwright in Alaska is mostly complete, the Army said Tuesday. The project is among efforts to reduce the risk of soldier suicide by improving overall quality of life. Fort Wainwright is less than 140 miles south of the Arctic Circle, a location that experiences long, dark days in the winter and seemingly endless daylight in the summer. Fairbanks gets about 22 hours of sunlight a day during the height of summer in mid-June. For some individuals, the incessant sunlight interrupts the body’s circadian rhythm that regulates sleep and wakefulness, which can affect mental health. Blackout shades are among several initiatives undertaken by the Army to improve quality of life for soldiers stationed in Alaska, an effort sparked in large part by a spike in suicides in recent years.

VETERANS

[1 of 3 surviving Tuskegee Airmen in Arizona dies at 95](#) [The Associated Press, 11 March 2021]

One of three surviving members in Arizona of the famed all-Black Tuskegee Airmen has died. The Archer-Ragsdale Chapter Tuskegee Airmen confirmed in a news release that Robert Ashby died Friday at his home in the Phoenix suburb of Sun City. He was 95. Born in 1926 in Yemassee, South Carolina, Ashby enlisted at age 17 in the Army Air Corps, which later became the U.S. Air Force. After graduating from high school in Jersey City, New Jersey, he was called into active duty. By December 1944, Ashby went to Tuskegee, Alabama, for aviation training. Ashby was sent to Japan, where he was rejected by two all-White flying units due to segregation policies. He served in all-Black units for the next five years.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Removed from command: A two-star general’s mental health disaster and fight to recover](#) [Gregg Martin and Phillip Martin, *Task & Purpose*, 12 March 2021] [COMMENTARY]

Formerly known as manic depression, bipolar disorder is a general term that, according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), comprises a cluster of related disorders that are characterized by distinctive and extreme shifts or cycles, in mood. These moods

oscillate between varying degrees of two poles: mania and depression, or “highs” and “lows.” That said, a person afflicted with bipolar disorder, through no fault of their own, may damage, harm and erode relationships—sometimes like a human wrecking ball—in their marriage and family, with friends, and with colleagues. I believe that the millions of Americans affected by bipolar disorder who have harmed relationships while in a state of mania or depression regret that these relationships have been damaged, including me.

[Service Dogs Better Than Emotional Support Dogs at Reducing PTSD Symptoms, Study Finds](#)

[Patricia Kime, *Military.com*, 5 March 2021]

Service dogs trained to support veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder can decrease the severity of their symptoms better than companion dogs classified as emotional support animals, according to the results of a long-awaited study by the Department of Veterans Affairs. The research, a copy of which was obtained by Military.com, was a decade in the making. In 2010, Congress ordered the VA to study the impact service dogs may have on veterans with PTSD. At the time, Iraq and Afghanistan veterans were being diagnosed with PTSD at alarming rates, and suicide among veterans was skyrocketing. Responding to questions about the study, which the VA has not yet formally released, department officials said the results show service dogs can be an “effective adjunct to usual care for veterans with PTSD.” “The study does not support the use of service dogs as an alternative to mental health treatment, and VA continues to recommend that veterans be offered evidence-based care for PTSD,” a department official said.

[WWII veteran who broke female barriers inspires generations of family to join military](#) [Anna Sparaco, *13 News Now*, (Hampton, Va.), 9 March 2021]

Sophia Burnell’s daughter says her mother left big shoes to fill growing up with her World War II experiences. Burnell broke barriers when she served from 1943 to 1946 as an air raid warden and then as a decoder. The trailblazer worked alongside groups of men to crack Japanese communication codes. “The Army incorporated us into their system, so we became the Women’s Army Corps,” explained Burnell. “There were no women there. We were the first women that came to that camp.” “It was all men. Some of them were happy to see us, some of them were not because they knew they were going to be sent overseas once we took their job,” said Burnell. Now Burnell’s inspiring experiences are trickling down her family tree. Her daughter, Vallerie, and her son joined the Navy when they were younger and now she has a granddaughter in the Army.