

LOVE TO WOMAN!!!

NEXT TO GOD WE ARE INDEBTED TO
WOMEN, FIRST FOR LIFE ITSELF AND
THEM FOR MAKING IT WORTH LIVING.

— Mary McCloud Bethune

XOXO

MY "HER-RO"

I HONOR HER !!!

Biddy Mason, California

After suing for her Freedom from Slavery at the Age of 38, Mason worked as a Nurse, investing in land in the growing city of Los Angeles and became a Millionaire Philanthropist.

JUSTICE AIN'T FREE!!!

STILL IN DENIAL

USMAGAZINE.COM

JULY 29, 2019, P. 33

UPDATE:

"HOT TOPIC"

LORI LOUGLIN, 55

AND LOYAL HUSBAND

MOSSIMO GIANULLI, 56

FEDS TURN UP PRESSURE

NBC NEWS.COM / NBC NIGHTLY NEWS

MON. 10-21-2019 5:30 P.M. CD

The U.S. Federal Prosecutor Andrew Lelling is ANXIOUS he CANNOT CONVICT YOU TWO IN A JURY TRIAL!

"WITHOUT MALICE"

[PAUL NEWMAN'S FLICK]

Persecutor Andrew Lelling has gone ROGUE ON TV and media to FORCE YOU

1 OF 5

into a "Plea Bargain" for less time?

This shows a weak hand!!!

Therefore, he is undertaking this extraordinary underhanded scheme in the media to publicly pressure you both to "Plea bargain"...

ATTORNEY DAN ABRAMS

ABCNEWS.COM/ABC6MA
LEGAL EXPERT

AUTHOR

WED. 10-23-2019 7:AM CD

NEW TWIST IN COLLEGE SCANDAL!!

Atty. Abrams correctly dared to assert-
ed "persecutor" misconduct. He specif-
ically cited new set of charges, i.e.,
Bribery counts.

PROSPECTIVE JURORS
[AKA FANS]!!!

They well know the system is broken
[NOT INNOCENT FOLKS LIKE YOU

-2 of 5

AS YOU ARE QUOTED SAYING: BAD I HAD
TO WORK THE SYSTEM...

BAD NEWS 2008

2008 Wall Street bank Robbers!
President Obama's Administration (DOJ)
SENT NOT ONE CROOK TO PRISON!

CELEBRITIES TRIALS AND ACQUITTAL

A] FATTY ARBUCKEL
[MURDER]

B] LANA TURNER'S
DAUGHTER'S
[MURDER]

C] ERROL FLYNN

[TEENAGE FEMALE
UNDERAGE SEX [RAPE]]

D] ALEX BALDWIN
[ON CAMERA ASSAULT]

E] O.J.
[TOO WELL KNOWN]

~~20~~ 4 OF 4

THAT'S WHAT PEOPLE SAY:

YOU CAN'T FIX THE PROBLEM
IF YOU'RE CONSUMED WITH
FIXING THE BLAME.

— UNKNOWN

WHAT'S THE LATEST ? ! !

Representative Tulsi Gabbard CD -
Hawaii) My Number-one issue:
"ENDING COUNTERPRODUCTIVE regime -
CHANGE WARS."

REQUEST !

Rep Gabbard, Please Loudly and
Boldly Educate US To The Real World
FACTS OF LIFE, which is - USA has
NOT WON A WAR SINCE World
War II ! ! !

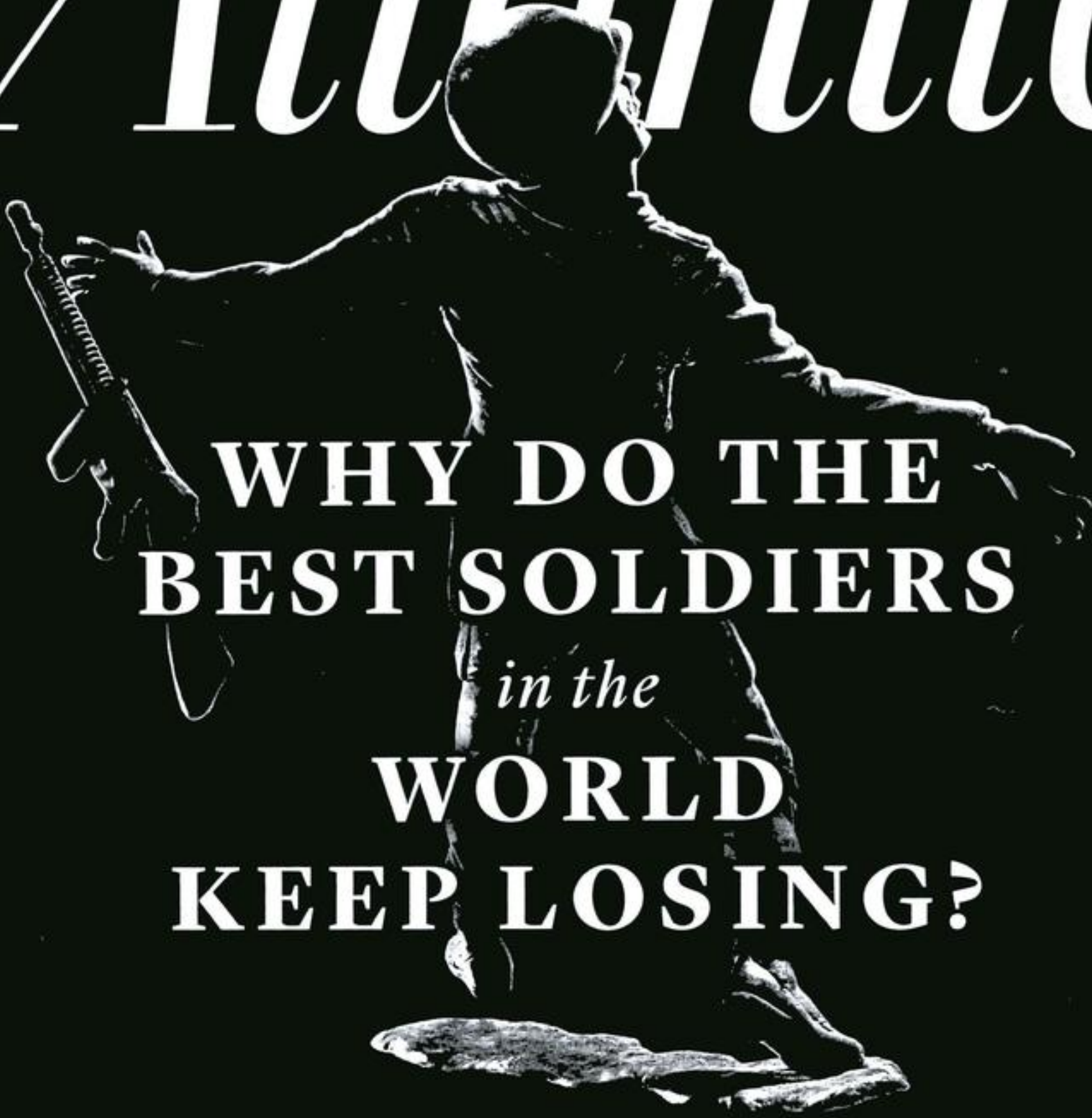
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The Atlantic

America's
Most Powerful
Conservative
p. 60

Living
Aboard
the Space
Station
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SEX ON CAMPUS:
Taming the College Male
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**WHY DO THE
BEST SOLDIERS**
in the
WORLD
KEEP LOSING?

The Tragic Decline of the
American Military

By JAMES FALLOWS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2015
THEATLANTIC.COM

2015



The American public and its political leadership will do anything for the military except take it seriously. The result is a chickenhawk nation in which careless spending and strategic folly combine to lure America into endless wars it cannot win.

**THE
TRAGEDY
OF
THE
AMERICAN
MILITARY**
BY JAMES
FALLOWS

Photograph by Adam Voorhes

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IN MID-SEPTEMBER, while President Obama was fending off complaints that he should have done more, done less, or done something different about the overlapping crises in Iraq and Syria, he traveled to Central Command headquarters, at MacDill Air Force Base in Florida. There he addressed some of the men and women who would implement whatever the U.S. military strategy turned out to be. ¶ The part of the speech intended to get coverage was Obama's rationale for reengaging the United States in Iraq, more than a decade after it first invaded and following the long and painful effort to extricate itself. This was big enough news that many cable channels covered the speech live. I watched it on an overhead TV while I sat waiting for a flight at Chicago's O'Hare airport. When Obama got to the section of his speech announcing whether he planned to commit U.S. troops in Iraq (at the time, he didn't), I noticed that many people in the terminal shifted their attention briefly to the TV. As soon as that was over, they went back to their smartphones and their laptops and their Cinnabons as the president droned on.

Usually I would have stopped watching too, since so many aspects of public figures' appearances before the troops have become so formulaic and routine. But I decided to see the whole show. Obama gave his still-not-quite-natural-sounding callouts to the different military services represented in the crowd. ("I know we've got some Air Force in the house!" and so on, receiving cheers rendered as "Hooyah!" and "Oorah!" in the official White House transcript.) He told members of the military that the nation was grateful for their nonstop deployments and for the unique losses and burdens placed on them through the past dozen years of open-ended war. He noted that they were often the face of American influence in the world,

being dispatched to Liberia in 2014 to cope with the then-dawning Ebola epidemic as they had been sent to Indonesia 10 years earlier to rescue victims of the catastrophic tsunami there. He said that the "9/11 generation of heroes" represented the very best in its country, and that its members constituted a military that was not only superior to all current adversaries but no less than "the finest fighting force in the history of the world."

If any of my fellow travelers at O'Hare were still listening to the speech, none of them showed any reaction to it. And why would they? This has become the way we assume the American military will be discussed by politicians and in the press: Overblown, limitless praise, absent the caveats or public skepticism we would apply to other American institutions, especially ones that run on taxpayer money. A somber moment

to reflect on sacrifice. Then everyone except the few people in uniform getting on with their workaday concerns.

The public attitude evident in the airport was reflected by the public's representatives in Washington. That same afternoon, September 17, the House of Representatives voted after brief debate to authorize arms and supplies for rebel forces in Syria, in hopes that more of them would fight against the Islamic State, or ISIS, than for it. The Senate did the same the next day—and then both houses adjourned early, after an unusually short and historically unproductive term of Congress, to spend the next six and

a half weeks fund-raising and campaigning full-time. I'm not aware of any midterm race for the House or Senate in which matters of war and peace—as opposed to immigration, Obamacare, voting rights, tax rates, the Ebola scare—were first-tier campaign issues on either side, except for the metaphorical "war on women" and "war on coal."

THIS REVERENT BUT DISENGAGED attitude toward the military—we love the troops, but we'd rather not think about them—has become so familiar that we assume it is the American norm. But it is not. When Dwight D. Eisenhower, as a five-star general and the supreme commander, led what may have in fact been the finest fighting force in the history of the world, he did not describe it in that puffed-up way. On the eve of the D-Day invasion, he warned his troops, "Your task will not be an easy one," because "your enemy is well-trained, well-equipped, and battle-hardened." As president, Eisenhower's most famous statement about the military was his warning in his farewell address of what could happen if its political influence grew unchecked.

At the end of World War II, nearly 10 percent of the entire U.S. population was on active military duty—which meant most able-bodied men of a certain age (plus the small number of women allowed to serve). Through the decade after World War II, when so many American families had at least one member in uniform, political and journalistic references were admiring but not awestruck. Most Americans were familiar enough with the military to respect it while being sharply aware of its shortcomings, as they were with the school system, their religion, and other important and fallible institutions.

Now the American military is exotic territory to most of the American public. As a comparison: A handful of Americans live on farms, but there are many more of them than serve in all branches of the military. (Well over 4 million people live on the country's 2.1 million farms. The U.S. military has about 1.4 million people on active duty and another 850,000 in the reserves.) The other 310 million-plus Americans



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President Obama at Central Command, at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, after being briefed on U.S. military operations in the Middle East, September 2014

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PHILAN M. EBENHACK/AP



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 "Full victory—nothing else": General Dwight D. Eisenhower gives the order to paratroopers in England the night before they board planes to join the first assault in the D-Day invasion of Europe.

"honor" their stalwart farmers, but generally don't know them. So too with the military. Many more young Americans will study abroad this year than will enlist in the military—nearly 300,000 students overseas, versus well under 200,000 new recruits. As a country, America has been at war nonstop for the past 13 years. As a public, it has not. A total of about 2.5 million Americans, roughly three-quarters of 1 percent, served in Iraq or Afghanistan at any point in the post-9/11 years, many of them more than once.

The difference between the earlier America that knew its military and the modern America that gazes admiringly at its heroes shows up sharply in changes in popular and media culture. While World War II was under way, its best-known chroniclers were the Scripps Howard reporter Ernie Pyle, who described the daily braveries and travails of the troops (until he was killed near the war's end by Japanese machine-gun fire on the island of Iejima), and the *Stars and Stripes* cartoonist Bill Mauldin, who mocked the obtuseness of generals and their distance from the foxhole realities faced by his wise-cracking GI characters, Willie and Joe.

From *Mister Roberts* to *South Pacific* to *Catch-22*, from *The Caine Mutiny* to *The Naked and the Dead* to *From Here to Eternity*, American popular and high culture treated our last

For today's generals and politicians, there is almost no accountability for military failure.

mass-mobilization war as an effort deserving deep respect and pride, but not above criticism and lampooning. The collective achievement of the military was heroic, but its members and leaders were still real people, with all the foibles of real life. A decade after that war ended, the most popular military-themed TV program was *The Phil Silvers Show*, about a con man in uniform named Sgt. Bilko. As Bilko, Phil Silvers was that stock American sitcom figure, the lovable blowhard—a role familiar from the time of Jackie Gleason in *The Honeymooners* to Homer Simpson in *The Simpsons* today. *Gomer Pyle, USMC*; *Hogan's Heroes*; *McHale's Navy*; and even the anachronistic frontier show *F Troop* were sitcoms whose settings were U.S. military units and whose villains—and schemers, and stooges, and occasional idealists—were people in uniform. American culture was sufficiently at ease with the military to make fun of it, a stance now hard to imagine outside the military itself.

Robert Altman's 1970 movie *M*A*S*H* was clearly "about" the Vietnam War, then well into its bloodiest and most bitterly divisive period. (As I point out whenever discussing this topic, I was eligible for the draft at the time, was one of those protesting the war, and at age 20 legally but intentionally failed my draft medical exam. I told this story in a 1975 *Washington Monthly* article, "What Did You Do in the Class War, Daddy?") But *M*A*S*H*'s ostensible placement in the Korean War of the early 1950s somewhat distanced its darkly mocking attitude about military competence and authority from fierce disagreements about Vietnam. (The one big Vietnam movie to precede it was John Wayne's doughily prowar *The Green Berets*, in 1968. What we think of as the classic run of Vietnam films did not begin until the

end of the 1970s, with *The Deer Hunter* and *Apocalypse Now*.) The TV spin-off of Altman's film, which ran from 1972 through 1983, was a simpler and more straightforward sitcom on the Sgt. Bilko model, again suggesting a culture close enough to its military to put up with, and enjoy, jokes about it.

Let's skip to today's Iraq-Afghanistan era, in which everyone "supports" the troops but few know very much about them. The pop-culture references to the people fighting our ongoing wars emphasize their suffering and stoicism, or the long-term personal damage they may endure. *The Hurt Locker* is the clearest example, but also *Lone Survivor*; *Restrepo*; the short-lived 2005 FX series set in Iraq, *Over There*; and Showtime's current series *Homeland*. Some emphasize high-stakes action, from the fictionalized 24 to the meant-to-be-true *Zero Dark Thirty*. Often they portray military and intelligence officials as brave and daring. But while cumulatively these dramas highlight the damage that open-ended warfare has done—on the battlefield and elsewhere, to warriors and civilians alike, in the short term but also through long-term blowback—they lack the comfortable closeness with the military that would allow them to question its competence as they would any other institution's.

The battlefield is of course a separate realm, as the literature of warfare from Homer's time onward has emphasized. But the distance between

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today's stateside America and its always-at-war expeditionary troops is extraordinary. Last year, the writer Rebecca Frankel published *War Dogs*, a study of the dog-and-handler teams that had played a large part in the U.S. efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Part of the reason she chose the topic, she told me, was that dogs were one of the few common points of reference between the military and the larger public. "When we cannot make that human connection over war, when we cannot empathize or imagine the far-off world of a combat zone ... these military working dogs are a bridge over the divide," Frankel wrote in the introduction to her book.

It's a wonderful book, and dogs are a better connection than nothing. But ... dogs! When the country fought its previous wars, its common points of reference were human rather than canine: fathers and sons in harm's way, mothers and daughters working in defense plants and in uniform as well. For two decades after World War II, the standing force remained so large, and the Depression-era birth cohorts were so small, that most Americans had a direct military connection. Among older Baby Boomers, those born before 1955, at least three-quarters have had an immediate family member—sibling, parent, spouse, child—who served in uniform. Of Americans born since 1980, the Millennials, about one in three is closely related to anyone with military experience.

The most biting satirical novel to come from the Iraq-Afghanistan era, *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*, by Ben Fountain, is a takedown of our empty modern "thank you for your service" rituals. It is the story of an Army squad that is badly shot up in Iraq; is brought back to be honored at halftime during a nationally televised Dallas Cowboys Thanksgiving Day game; while there, is slapped on the back and toasted by owner's-

box moguls and flirted with by cheerleaders, "passed around like everyone's favorite bong," as platoon member Billy Lynn thinks of it; and is then shipped right back to the front.

The people at the stadium feel good about what they've done to show their support for the troops. From the troops' point of view, the spectacle looks different. "There's something harsh in his fellow Americans, avid, ecstatic, a burning that comes of the deepest need," the narrator

Always supportive of the troops: Crowds in Macon welcome back 200 members of the Georgia National Guard's 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team returning from Afghanistan. September 2014.



says of Billy Lynn's thoughts. "That's his sense of it, they all need something from him, this pack of half-rich lawyers, dentists, soccer moms, and corporate VPs, they're all gnashing for a piece of a barely grown grunt making \$14,800 a year." Fountain's novel won the National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction in 2012, but it did not dent mainstream awareness enough to make anyone self-conscious about continuing the "salute to the heroes" gestures that do more for the civilian public's self-esteem than for the troops'. As I listened to Obama that day in the airport, and remembered Ben Fountain's book, and observed the hum of preoccupied America around me, I thought that the parts of the presidential speech few Americans were listening to were the ones historians might someday seize upon to explain the temper of our times.

I. Chickenhawk Nation

If I were writing such a history now, I would call it *Chickenhawk Nation*, based on the derisive term for those eager to go to war, as long as someone else is going. It would be the story of a country willing to do anything for its military except take it seriously. As a result, what happens to all institutions that escape serious external scrutiny and engagement has happened to our military. Outsiders treat it both too reverently and too cavalierly, as if regarding its members as heroes makes up for committing them to unending, unwinnable missions and denying them anything like the political mindshare we give to other major public undertakings, from medical care to public education to environmental rules. The tone and level of public debate on those issues is hardly encouraging. But for democracies, messy debates are less damaging in the long run than letting important functions run on autopilot, as our military essentially does now. A chickenhawk nation is more likely to keep going to war, and to keep losing, than one that wrestles with long-term questions of effectiveness.

Americans admire the military as they do no other institution. Through the past two decades, respect for the courts, the schools, the press, Congress, organized religion, Big Business, and virtually every other institution in modern life has plummeted. The one exception is the military. Confidence in the military shot up after 9/11 and has stayed very high. In a Gallup poll last summer, three-quarters of the public expressed "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in the military. About one-third had comparable confidence in the medical system, and only 7 percent in Congress.

Too much complacency regarding our military, and too weak a tragic imagination about

DAVID GOLDMAN/AP

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At a Pentagon briefing in August 1990, Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell discuss deployments to the Persian Gulf at the beginning of the Gulf War—the last war America won.

the consequences if the next engagement goes wrong, have been part of Americans' willingness to wade into conflict after conflict, blithely assuming we would win. "Did we have the sense that America cared how we were doing? We did not," Seth Moulton told me about his experience as a marine during the Iraq War. Moulton enlisted after graduating from Harvard in 2001, believing (as he told me) that when many classmates were heading to Wall Street it was useful to set an example of public service. He opposed the decision to invade Iraq but ended up serving four tours there out of a sense of duty to his comrades. "America was very disconnected. We were proud to serve, but we knew it was a little group of people doing the country's work."

Moulton told me, as did many others with Iraq-era military experience, that if more members of Congress or the business and media elite had had children in uniform, the United States would probably not have gone to war in Iraq at all. Because he felt strongly enough about that failure of elite accountability, Moulton decided while in Iraq to get involved in politics after he left the military. "I actually remember the moment," Moulton told me. "It was after a difficult day in Najaf in 2004. A young marine in my platoon said, 'Sir, you should run for Congress someday. So this shit doesn't happen again.'" In January, Moulton takes office as a freshman Democratic representative from Massachusetts's Sixth District, north of Boston.

What Moulton described was desire for a kind of accountability. It is striking how rare accountability has been for our modern wars. Hillary Clinton paid a price for her vote to authorize the Iraq War, since that is what gave the barely known Barack Obama an opening to run against her in 2008. George W. Bush, who, like most ex-presidents, has grown more popular the longer

If more members of Congress or the business and media elite had had children in uniform, the United States would probably not have gone to war in Iraq.

he's been out of office, would perhaps be playing a more visible role in public and political life if not for the overhang of Iraq. But those two are the exceptions. Most other public figures, from Dick Cheney and Colin Powell on down, have put Iraq behind them. In part this is because of the Obama administration's decision from the start to "look forward, not back" about why things had gone so badly wrong with America's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. But such willed amnesia would have been harder if more Americans had felt affected by the wars' outcome. For our generals, our politicians, and most of our citizenry, there is almost no accountability or personal consequence for military failure. This is a dangerous development—and one whose dangers multiply the longer it persists.

OURS IS THE best-equipped fighting force in history, and it is incomparably the most expensive. By all measures, today's professionalized military is also better trained, motivated, and disciplined than during the draft-army

years. No decent person who is exposed to today's troops can be anything but respectful of them and grateful for what they do.

Yet repeatedly this force has been defeated by less modern, worse-equipped, barely funded foes. Or it has won skirmishes and battles only to lose or get bogged down in a larger war. Although no one can agree on an exact figure, our dozen years of war in Iraq, Afghanistan, and neighboring countries have cost at least \$1.5 trillion; Linda J. Bilmes, of the Harvard Kennedy School, recently estimated that the total cost could be three to four times that much. Recall that while Congress was considering whether to authorize the Iraq War, the head of the White House economic council, Lawrence B. Lindsey, was forced to resign for telling *The Wall Street Journal* that the all-in costs might be as high as \$100 billion to \$200 billion, or less than the U.S. has spent on Iraq and Afghanistan in many individual years.

Yet from a strategic perspective, to say nothing of the human cost, most of these dollars might as well have been burned. "At this point, it is incontrovertibly evident that the U.S. military failed to achieve any of its strategic goals in Iraq," a former military intelligence officer named Jim Gourley wrote recently for Thomas E. Ricks's blog, *Best Defense*. "Evaluated according to the goals set forth by our military leadership, the war ended in utter defeat for our forces." In 13 years of continuous combat under the Authorization for the Use of Military Force, the longest stretch of warfare in American history, U.S. forces have achieved one clear strategic success: the raid that killed Osama bin Laden. Their many other tactical victories, from overthrowing Saddam Hussein to allying with Sunni tribal leaders to mounting a "surge" in Iraq, demonstrated great bravery and skill. But they brought no lasting stability to, nor advance of U.S. interests in, that part of the world. When ISIS troops overran much of Iraq last year, the forces that laid down their weapons and fled before them were members of the same Iraqi national army that U.S. advisers had so expensively yet ineffectively trained for more than five years.

"We are vulnerable," the author William Greider wrote during the debate last summer on how to fight ISIS, "because our presumption of unconquerable superiority leads us deeper and deeper into unwinnable military conflicts." And the separation of the military from the public disrupts the process of learning from these defeats. The last war that ended up in

TANNEN MAURY/AP

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circumstances remotely resembling what prewar planning would have considered a victory was the brief Gulf War of 1991.

After the Vietnam War, the press and the public went too far in blaming the military for what was a top-to-bottom failure of strategy and execution. But the military itself recognized its own failings, and a whole generation of reformers looked to understand and change the culture. In 1978, a military-intelligence veteran named Richard A. Gabriel published, with Paul L. Savage, *Crisis in Command: Mismanagement in the Army*, which traced many of the failures in Vietnam to the military's having adopted a bureaucratized management style. Three years later, a broadside called *Self-Destruction: The Disintegration and Decay of the United States Army During the Vietnam Era*, by a military officer writing under the pen name Cincinnatus (later revealed to be a lieutenant colonel serving in the reserves as a military chaplain, Cecil B. Currey), linked problems in Vietnam to the ethical and intellectual shortcomings of the career military. The book was hotly debated—but not dismissed. An article about the book for the Air Force's *Air University Review* said that "the author's case is airtight" and that the military's career structure "corrupts those who serve it; it is the system that forces out the best and rewards only the sycophants."

Today, you hear judgments like that frequently from within the military and occasionally from politicians—but only in private. It's not the way we talk in public about our heroes anymore, with the result that accountability for the career military has been much sketchier than during our previous wars. William S. Lind is a military historian who in the 1990s helped

develop the concept of "Fourth Generation War," or struggles against the insurgents, terrorists, or other "nonstate" groups that refuse to form ranks and fight like conventional armies. He wrote recently:

The most curious thing about our four defeats in Fourth Generation War—Lebanon, Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan—is the utter silence in the American officer corps. Defeat in Vietnam bred a generation of military reformers ... Today, the landscape is barren. Not a military voice is heard calling for thoughtful, substantive change. Just more money, please.

During and after even successful American wars, and certainly after the standoff in Korea and the defeat in Vietnam, the professional military's leadership and judgment were considered fair game for criticism. Grant saved the Union; McClellan seemed almost to sabotage it—and he was only one of the Union generals Lincoln had to move out of the way. Something similar was true in wars through Vietnam. Some leaders were good; others were bad. Now,

for purposes of public discussion, they're all heroes. In our past decade's wars, as Thomas Ricks wrote in this magazine in 2012, "hundreds of Army generals were deployed to the field, and the available evidence indicates that not one was relieved by the military brass for combat ineffectiveness." This, he said, was not only a radical break from American tradition but also "an important factor in the failure" of our recent wars.

Partly this change has come because the public, at its safe remove, doesn't insist on accountability. Partly it is because legislators and even presidents recognize the sizable risks and limited payoffs of taking on the career military. When recent presidents have relieved officers of

command, they have usually done so over allegations of sexual or financial misconduct, or other issues of personal discipline. These include the cases of the two famous four-star generals who resigned rather than waiting for President Obama to dismiss them: Stanley A. McChrystal, as the commander in Afghanistan, and David Petraeus in his post-Centcom role as the head of the CIA. The exception proving the rule occurred a dozen years ago, when a senior civilian official directly challenged a four-star general on his military competence. In congressional testimony just before the Iraq War, General Eric Shinseki, then the Army's chief of staff, said that many more troops might be necessary to successfully occupy Iraq than plans were allowing for—only to be ridiculed in public by Paul Wolfowitz, then Shinseki's superior as the deputy secretary of defense, who said views like Shinseki's were "outlandish" and "wildly off the mark." Wolfowitz and his superior, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, ostentatiously marginalized Shinseki from that point on.

In that case, the general was right and the politicians were wrong. But more often and more skillfully than the public usually appreciates, today's military has managed to distance itself from the lengthening string of modern military failures—even when wrong. Some of this PR shift is anthropological. Most reporters who cover politics are fascinated by the process and enjoy practitioners who love it too, which is one reason most were (like the rest of the country) more forgiving of the happy warrior Bill Clinton than they have been of the "cold" and "aloof" Barack Obama. But political reporters are always hunting for the gaffe or scandal that could bring a target down, and feel they're acting in the public interest in doing so.

Most reporters who cover the military are also fascinated by its processes and cannot help liking or at least respecting their subjects: physically fit, trained to say "sir" and "ma'am," often tested in a way most civilians will never be, part of a disciplined and selfless-seeming culture that naturally draws respect. And whether or not this was a conscious plan, the military gets a substantial PR boost from the modern practice of placing officers in mid-career assignments at think tanks, on congressional staffs, and in graduate programs across the country. For universities, military students are (as a dean at a public-policy school put it to me) "a better version of foreign students." That is, they work hard, pay full tuition, and unlike many international students face no language barrier or difficulty adjusting to the American style of give-and-take classroom exchanges. Most cultures



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At a Pentagon briefing in August 2002, seven months before the invasion of Iraq, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld discusses U.S. intelligence reports of militants operating in northern Iraq who might have ties to al-Qanda and Saddam Hussein.

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A new F-35, part of the first delivery of an anticipated 144 planes, in a hangar at Luke Air Force Base, in Glendale, Arizona, before an unveiling ceremony, March 2014

esteem the scholar-warrior, and these programs expose usually skeptical American elites to people like the young Colin Powell, who as a lieutenant colonel in his mid-30s was a White House fellow after serving in Vietnam, and David Petraeus, who got his Ph.D. at Princeton as a major 13 years after graduating from West Point.

And yet however much Americans “support” and “respect” their troops, they are not involved with them, and that disengagement inevitably leads to dangerous decisions the public barely notices. “My concern is this growing disconnect between the American people and our military,” retired Admiral Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under George W. Bush and Barack Obama (and whose mid-career academic stint was at Harvard Business School), told me recently. The military is “professional and capable,” he said, “but I would sacrifice some of that excellence and readiness to make sure that we stay close to the American people. Fewer and fewer people know anyone in the

ROSS D. FRANKLIN/AP

The tragedy of the F-35 is that a project meant to correct problems in designing and paying for weapons has come to exemplify them.

military. It’s become just too easy to go to war.”

Citizens notice when crime is going up, or school quality is going down, or the water is unsafe to drink, or when other public functions are not working as they should. Not enough citizens are made to notice when things go wrong, or right, with the military. The country thinks too rarely, and too highly, of the 1 percent under fire in our name.

II. Chickenhawk Economy

America’s distance from the military makes the country too willing to go to war, and too callous about the damage warfare inflicts. This distance also means that we spend too much money on the military and we spend it stupidly, thereby shortchanging many of the functions that make the most difference to the welfare of the troops and their success in combat. We buy weapons that have

less to do with battlefield realities than with our unending faith that advanced technology will ensure victory, and with the economic interests and political influence of contractors. This leaves us with expensive and delicate high-tech white elephants, while unglamorous but essential tools, from infantry rifles to armored personnel carriers, too often fail our troops (see “Gun Trouble,” by Robert H. Scales, on the next page).

We know that technology is our military’s main advantage. Yet the story of the post-9/11 “long wars” is of America’s higher-tech advantages

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yielding transitory victories that melt away before the older, messier realities of improvised weapons, sectarian resentments, and mounting hostility to occupiers from afar, however well-intentioned. Many of the Pentagon's most audacious high-tech ventures have been costly and spectacular failures, including (as we will see) the major air-power project of recent years, the F-35. In an America connected to its military, such questions of strategy and implementation would be at least as familiar as, say, the problems with the Common Core education standards.

Those technological breakthroughs that do make their way to the battlefield may prove to be strategic liabilities in the long run. During the years in which the United States has enjoyed a near-monopoly on weaponized drones, for example, they have killed individuals or small groups at the price of antagonizing whole societies. When the monopoly ends, which is inevitable, the very openness of the United States will make it uniquely vulnerable to the cheap, swarming weapons others will deploy.

The cost of defense, meanwhile, goes up and up and up, with little political resistance and barely any public discussion. By the fullest accounting, which is different from usual budget figures, the United States will spend more than \$1 trillion on national security this year. That includes about \$580 billion for the Pentagon's baseline budget plus "overseas contingency" funds, \$20 billion in the Department of Energy budget for nuclear weapons, nearly \$200 billion for military pensions and Department of Veterans Affairs costs, and other expenses. But it doesn't count more than \$80 billion a year of interest on the military-related share of the national debt. After adjustments for inflation, the United States will spend about 50 percent more on the military this year than its average through the Cold War and Vietnam War. It will spend about as much as the next 10 nations combined—three to five times as much as China, depending on how you count, and seven to nine times as much as Russia. The world as a whole spends about 2 percent of its total income on its militaries; the United States, about 4 percent.

Yet such is the dysfunction and corruption of the budgeting process that even as spending levels rise, the Pentagon faces simultaneous crises in funding for maintenance, training, pensions, and veterans' care. "We're buying the wrong things, and paying too much for them," Charles A. Stevenson, a onetime staffer on the Senate Armed Services Committee and a former professor at the National War College, told me. "We're spending so much on people that we don't have the hardware, which is becoming more expensive anyway. We are flatlining R&D."

Here is just one newsworthy example that illustrates the broad and depressingly intractable tendencies of weapons development and spending: the failed hopes for a new airplane called the F-35 "Lightning."

Today's weapons can be decades in gestation, and the history of the F-35 traces back long before most of today's troops were born. Two early-1970s-era planes, the F-16 "Fighting Falcon" jet and the A-10 "Thunderbolt II" attack plane, departed from the trend of military design in much the same way the compact Japanese cars of that era departed from the tail-fin American look. These planes were relatively cheap, pared to their essentials, easy to maintain, and designed to do a specific thing very well. For the F-16, that was to be fast, highly maneuverable, and deadly in air-to-air combat. For the A-10, it was to serve as a kind of flying tank that could provide what the military calls "close air support" to troops in combat by blasting enemy formations. The A-10 needed to be heavily armored, so it could absorb opposing fire; designed to fly as slowly as possible over the battlefield, rather than as rapidly, so that it could stay in range to do damage rather than roaring through; and built around one very powerful gun.

There are physical devices that seem the pure expression of a function.

GUN TROUBLE

The rifle that today's infantry uses is little changed since the 1960s—and it is badly flawed. Military lives depend on these cheap composites of metal and plastic. So why can't the richest country in the world give its soldiers better ones?

BY ROBERT H. SCALES

ONE AFTERNOON just a month and a half after the Battle of Gettysburg, Christopher Spencer, the creator of a seven-shot repeating rifle, walked Abraham Lincoln out to a grassy field near where the Washington Monument now stands in order to demonstrate the amazing potential of his new gun. Lincoln had heard about the mystical powers of repeating rifles at Gettysburg and other battles where some Union troops already had them. He wanted to test them for the rest of his soldiers. The president quickly put seven rounds inside a small target 40 yards away. He was sold.

But to Army bureaucrats, repeaters were an expensive, ammunition-wasting nuisance. Ignorant, unimaginative, vain, and disloyal to the point of criminality, the Army's chief of ordnance, General James Wolfe Ripley, worked to sabotage every effort to equip the Union Army with repeating rifles, mostly because he couldn't be bothered. He largely succeeded. The Civil War historian Robert V. Bruce speculated that had such rifles been widely distributed to the Union Army by 1862, the Civil War would have been shortened by years, saving hundreds of thousands of lives.

Ripley's bureaucratic victory over Lincoln was the beginning of the longest-running

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defense scandal in American history. I should know. I was almost one of Ripley's victims. In June of 1969, in the mountains of South Vietnam, the battery I commanded at Firebase Berchtesgaden had spent the day firing artillery in support of infantry forces dug into "Hamburger Hill." Every person and object in the unit was coated with reddish-brown clay blown upward by rotor wash from Chinook helicopters delivering ammunition. By evening, we were sleeping beside our M16 rifles. I was too inexperienced—or perhaps too lazy—to demand that my soldiers take a moment to clean their guns, even though we had heard disturbing rumors about the consequences of shooting a dirty M16.

At 3 o'clock in the morning, the enemy struck. They were armed with the amazingly reliable and rugged Soviet AK-47, and after climbing up our hill for hours dragging their guns through the mud, they had no problems unleashing devastating automatic fire. Not so my men. To this day, I am haunted by the sight of three of my dead soldiers lying atop rifles broken open in a frantic attempt to clear jams.

With a few modifications, the weapon that killed my soldiers almost 50 years ago is killing our soldiers today in Afghanistan. General Ripley's ghost is with us still. During my 35 years in the Army, it became clear to me that from Gettysburg to Hamburger Hill to the streets of Baghdad, the American penchant for arming troops with lousy rifles has been responsible for a staggering number of unnecessary deaths. Over the next few decades, the Department of

Defense will spend more than \$1 trillion on F-35 stealth fighter jets that after nearly 10 years of testing have yet to be deployed to a single combat zone. But bad rifles are in soldiers' hands in every combat zone.

IN THE WARS fought since World War II, the vast majority of men and women in uniform have not engaged in the intimate act of killing. Their work is much the same as their civilian counterparts'. It is the infantryman's job to intentionally seek out and kill the enemy, at the risk of violent death. The Army and Marine Corps infantry, joined by a very small band of Special Operations forces, comprises roughly 100,000 soldiers, some 5 percent of uniformed Defense Department employees. During World War II, 70 percent of all soldiers killed at the hands of the enemy were infantry. In the wars since, that proportion has grown to about 80 percent. These are the (mostly) men whose survival depends on their rifles and ammunition.

In combat, an infantryman lives an animal's life. The primal laws of tooth and fang determine whether he will live or die. Killing is quick. Combat in Afghanistan and Iraq reinforces the lesson that there is no such thing in small-arms combat as a fair fight. Infantrymen advance into the killing zone grimy, tired, confused, hungry, and scared. Their equipment is dirty, dented, or worn. They die on patrol from ambushes, from sniper attacks, from booby traps and improvised explosive devices. They may have only a split second to lift, aim, and pull the trigger before the enemy fires. Survival depends on the ability to deliver more killing power at longer ranges and with greater precision than the enemy.

Any lost edge, however small, means death. A jammed weapon, an enemy too swift and elusive to be engaged with aimed fire, an enemy out of range yet capable of delivering a larger volume of return fire—any of these cancel out all the wonderfully superior and expensive American air- and sea-based weapons that may be fired in support of ground troops. A soldier in basic training is told that his rifle is his best friend and his ticket home. If

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A custom M4, similar to the one used by infantry today. The M4 is a lighter version of the M16, which killed so many of the soldiers who carried it in Vietnam.

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the lives of so many depend on just the development of a \$1,000, six-pound composite of steel and plastic, why can't the richest country in the world give it to them?

THE ANSWER IS both complex and simple. The M4, the standard carbine in use by the infantry today, is a lighter version of the M16 rifle that killed so many of the soldiers who carried it in Vietnam. (The M16 is still also in wide use today.) In the early morning of July 13, 2008, nine infantrymen died fighting off a Taliban attack at a combat outpost near the village of Wanat in Afghanistan's Nuristan province. Some of the soldiers present later reported that in the midst of battle their rifles overheated and jammed. The Wanat story is reminiscent of experiences in Vietnam: in fact, other than a few cosmetic changes, the rifles from both wars are virtually the same. And the M4's shorter barrel makes it *less* effective at long ranges than the older M16—an especially serious disadvantage in modern combat, which is increasingly taking place over long ranges.

The M16 started out as a stroke of genius by one of the world's most famous firearms designers. In the 1950s, an engineer named Eugene Stoner used space-age materials to improve the Army's then-standard infantry rifle, the M14. The 5.56-mm cartridge Stoner chose for his rifle was a modification not of the M14's cartridge but of a commercial Remington rifle cartridge that had been designed to kill small varmints. His invention, the AR-15, was light, handy, and capable of controlled automatic fire. It outclassed the heavier, harder-recoiling M14. Yet the Army was again reluctant to change. As James Fallows observed in this magazine in 1981, it took the "strong support" of President Kennedy and Defense Secretary Robert McNamara to make the Army consider breaking its love affair with the large-caliber M14. In 1963, it slowly began adopting Stoner's invention.

The "militarized" adaptation of the AR-15 was the M16. Militarization—more than 100 proposed alterations to supposedly make the rifle combat-ready—ruined the first batch to arrive at the front lines, and the cost in dead soldiers was horrific. A propellant ordered by the Army left a powder residue that clogged the rifle. Finely machined parts made the M16 a "maintenance queen" that required constant cleaning in the moisture, dust, and mud of Vietnam. In time, the Army improved the weapon—but not before many U.S. troops died.

Not all the problems with the M16 can be blamed on the Army. Buried in the M16's, and now the M4's, operating system is a flaw that no amount of militarizing and tinkering has ever erased. Stoner's gun cycles cartridges from the magazine into the chamber using gas pressure vented off as the bullet passes through the barrel. Gases traveling down a very narrow aluminum tube produce an intense "puff" that throws the bolt assembly to the rear, making the bolt assembly a freely moving object in the body of the rifle. Any dust or dirt or residue from the cartridge might cause the bolt assembly, and thus the rifle, to jam.

In contrast, the Soviet AK-47 cycles rounds using a solid operating rod attached to the bolt assembly. The gas action of the AK-47 throws the rod and the bolt assembly back as one unit, and the solid attachment means that mud or dust will not prevent the gun from functioning. Fearing the deadly consequences of a "failure to feed" in a fight, some top-tier Special Operations units like Delta Force and SEAL Team Six use a more modern and effective rifle with a more reliable operating-rod mechanism.

**To this day,
I am haunted by
the sight of
three of my
dead soldiers
lying atop
rifles broken
open in a
frantic attempt
to clear jams.**



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A U.S. rifleman aims his M16 toward a Vietcong bunker entrance close to the Cambodian border, April 1967.

But front-line Army and Marine riflemen still fire weapons much more likely to jam than the AK-47. Failure to feed affects every aspect of a fight. A Russian infantryman can fire about 140 rounds a minute without stopping. The M4 fires at roughly half that rate.

DURING THE CIVIL WAR, General Ripley argued, among other things, that infantry soldiers would have trouble handling the complexity of new repeating weapons. We hear similarly unconvincing arguments now. Today's grunt has shown in 13 years of war that he can handle complexity. He's an experienced, long-service professional who deserves the same excellent firearm as the more "elite" Special Operations forces, who have the privilege of buying the best civilian gear off the shelf if they want to.

What should a next-generation, all-purpose infantry rifle look like? It should be modular. Multiple weapons can now be assembled from a single chassis. A squad member can customize his weapon by attaching different barrels, buttstocks, forearms, feed systems, and accessories to make, say, a light machine gun, a carbine, a rifle, or an infantry automatic rifle.

The military must change the caliber and cartridge of the guns it gives infantry soldiers. Stoner's little 5.56-mm cartridge was ideal for softening the recoil of World War II infantry calibers in order to allow fully automatic fire. But today's cartridge is simply too small for modern combat. Its lack of mass limits its range to less than 400 meters. The optimum caliber for tomorrow's rifle is between 6.5 and 7 millimeters. The cartridge could be made almost as light as the older brass-cased 5.56-mm by using a plastic shell casing, which is now in final development by the Marine Corps.

The Army can achieve an infantry version of stealth by attaching newly developed sound suppressors to every rifle. Instead of merely muffling the sound of firing by trapping gases, this new technology redirects the firing gases

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forward, capturing most of the blast and flash well inside the muzzle. Of course, an enemy under fire would hear the muted sounds of an engagement. But much as with other stealth technology, the enemy soldier would be at a decisive disadvantage in trying to determine the exact location of the weapons firing at him.

Computer miniaturization now allows precision to be squeezed into a rifle sight. All an infantryman using a rifle equipped with a new-model sight need do is place a red dot on his target and push a button at the front of his trigger guard; a computer on his rifle will take into account data like range and "lead angle" to compensate for the movement of his target, and then automatically fire when the hit is guaranteed. This rifle sight can "see" the enemy soldier day or night at ranges well beyond 600 meters. An enemy caught in that sight will die long before he could know he was seen, much less before he could effectively return fire.

But infantrymen today do not use rifles equipped with these new sights. Hunters do. In fact, new rifles and ammunition are readily available. They are made by many manufacturers—civilian gun makers and foreign military suppliers that equip the most-elite Special Operations units. Unlike conventional infantry units, top-tier Special Operations units are virtually unrestricted by cumbersome acquisition protocols, and have had ample funding and a free hand to solicit new gun designs from private industry. These units test new guns in combat, often with dramatic results: greater precision, greater reliability, greater killing power.

The Army has argued that, in an era of declining resources, a new rifle will cost more than \$2 billion. But let's say the Army and Marine Corps buy new rifles only for those who will use them most, namely the infantry. The cost, for about 100,000 infantrymen at \$1,000 each, is then reduced to roughly \$100 million, less than that of a single F-35 fighter jet. The Army and the Marine Corps can keep the current stocks of M4s and M16s in reserve for use by non-infantry personnel in the unlikely event that they find themselves in combat.

From the time of General James Ripley to today, the Army has found reasons to deny its soldiers in the line of fire the safest and most efficient firearms. It doesn't have to be this way. A few dollars invested now will save the lives of legions of brave infantrymen and -women for generations to come. ■

Robert H. Scales is a retired major general and former commandant of the Army War College.

The Eames chair, a classic No. 2 pencil, the original Ford Mustang or VW Beetle, the MacBook Air—take your pick. The A-10, generally known not as the Thunderbolt but as the Warthog, fills that role in the modern military. It is rugged; it is inexpensive; it can shred enemy tanks and convoys by firing up to 70 rounds a second of armor-piercing, 11-inch-long depleted-uranium shells.

And the main effort of military leaders through the past decade, under the Republican leadership of the Bush administration and the Democratic leadership of Obama, has been to get rid of the A-10 so as to free up money for a more expensive, less reliable, technically failing airplane that has little going for it except insider dealing, and the fact that the general public doesn't care.

The weapon in whose name the A-10 is being phased out is its opposite in almost every way. In automotive terms, it would be a Lamborghini rather than a pickup truck (or a flying tank). In air-travel terms, the first-class sleeper compartment on Singapore Airlines rather than advance-purchase Economy Plus (or even business class) on United. These comparisons seem ridiculous, but they are fair. That is, a Lamborghini is demonstrably "better" than a pickup truck in certain ways—speed, handling, comfort—but only in very special circumstances is it a better overall choice. Same for the first-class sleeper, which would be anyone's choice if someone else were footing the bill but is simply not worth the trade-off for most people most of the time.

Each new generation of weapons tends to be "better" in much the way a Lamborghini is, and "worth it" in the same sense as a first-class airline seat. The A-10 shows the pattern. According to figures from the aircraft analyst Richard L. Aboulafia, of the Teal Group, the "unit recurring flyaway" costs in 2014 dollars—the fairest apples-to-apples comparison—stack up like this. Each Warthog now costs about \$19 million, less than any other manned combat aircraft. A Predator drone costs about two-thirds as much. Other fighter, bomber, and multipurpose planes cost much more: about \$72 million for the V-22 Osprey, about \$144 million for the F-22 fighter, about \$810 million for the B-2 bomber, and about \$101 million (or five A-10s) for the F-35. There's a similar difference in operating costs. The operating expenses are low for the A-10 and much higher for the others largely because the A-10's design is simpler, with fewer things that could go wrong. The simplicity of design allows it to spend more of its time flying instead of being in the shop.

In clear contrast to the A-10, the F-35 is an ill-starred undertaking that would have been on the front pages as often as other botched federal projects, from the Obamacare rollout to the FEMA response after Hurricane Katrina, if, like those others, it either seemed to affect a broad class of people or could easily be shown on TV—or if so many politicians didn't have a stake in protecting it. One measure of the gap in coverage: Total taxpayer losses in the failed Solyndra solar-energy program might come, at their most dire estimate, to some \$800 million. Total cost overruns, losses through fraud, and other damage to the taxpayer from the F-35 project are perhaps 100 times that great, yet the "Solyndra scandal" is known to probably 100 times as many people as the travails of the F-35. Here's another yardstick: the all-in costs of this airplane are now estimated to be as much as \$1.5 trillion, or a low-end estimate of the entire Iraq War.

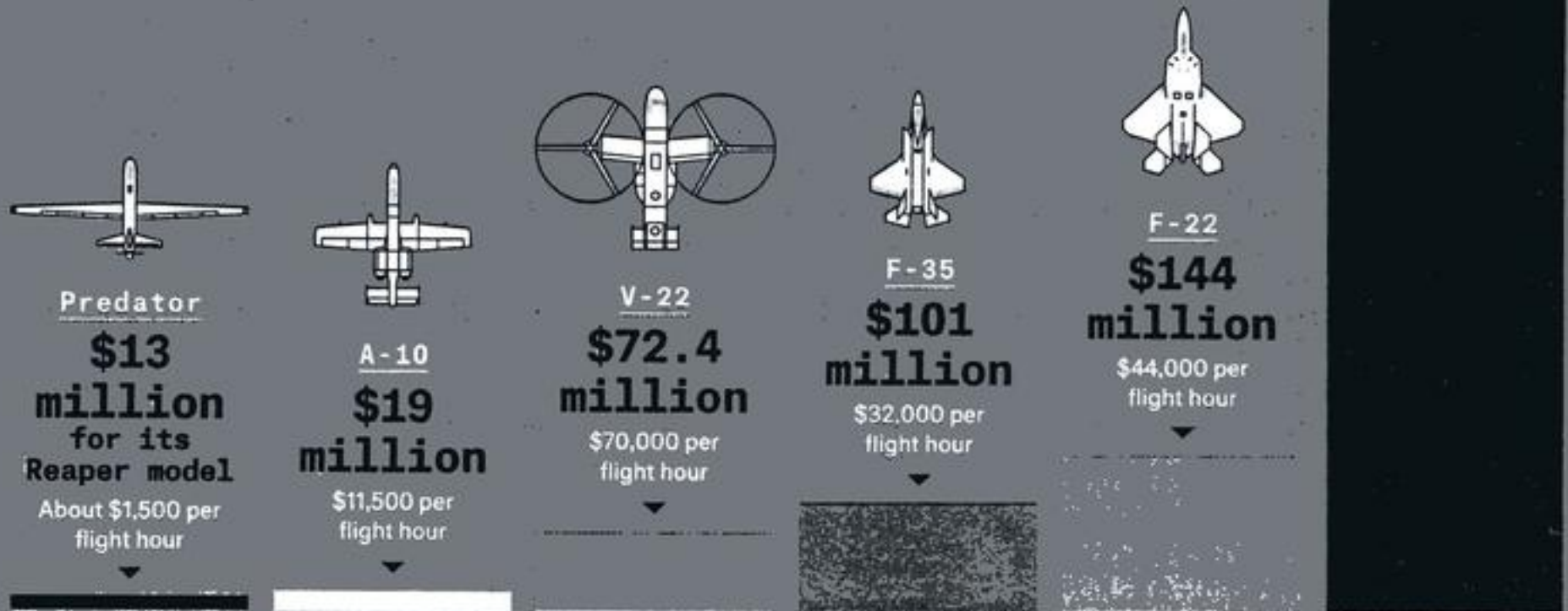
The condensed version of this plane's tragedy is that a project meant to correct some of the Pentagon's deepest problems in designing and paying for weapons has in fact worsened and come to exemplify them. An aircraft that was intended to be inexpensive, adaptable, and reliable has become the most expensive in history, and among the hardest to keep out of the

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HIGH AIRFARE

Illustrations by Haisam Hussein

AS THE COST OF DEFENSE GOES UP, with little political resistance and barely any public discussion, few question the rising costs of each generation of “better” weapons. A comparison of the acquisition and operation costs of fighter, bomber, and multipurpose planes shows how misleading the idea of “better” can be. Other than the unmanned Predator drone, the efficient A-10 “Warthog” has the lowest per-flight-hour cost, because it needs so little maintenance—yet the military plans to phase it out. The F-35, which was supposed to bring new efficiency to plane design, costs five times as much per plane and three times as much per flight hour.



shop. The federal official who made the project a symbol of a new, transparent, rigorously data-dependent approach to awarding contracts ended up serving time in federal prison for corruption involving projects with Boeing. (Boeing’s chief financial officer also did time in prison.) For the record, the Pentagon and the lead contractors stoutly defend the plane and say that its teething problems will be over soon—and that anyway, it is the plane of the future, and the A-10 is an aging relic of the past. (We have posted reports on the A-10, pro and con, at theatlantic.com/chickenhawk, so you can see whether you are convinced.)

In theory, the F-35 would show common purpose among the military services, since the Air Force, the Navy, and the Marine Corps would all get their own custom-tailored versions of the plane. In fact, a plane designed to do many contradictory things—to be strong enough to survive Navy aircraft-carrier landings, yet light and maneuverable enough to excel as an Air Force dogfighter, and meanwhile able to take off and land straight up and down, like a helicopter, to reach marines in tight combat circumstances—has unsurprisingly done none of them as well as promised. In theory, the F-35 was meant to knit U.S. allies together, since other countries would buy it as their mainstay airplane and in turn would get part of the contracting business. In

fact, the delays, cost overruns, and mechanical problems of the airplane have made it a contentious political issue in customer countries from Canada and Holland to Italy and Australia.

The country where the airplane has *least* been a public issue is the United States. In their 2012 debates, Mitt Romney criticized Barack Obama for supporting “green energy” projects, including Solyndra. Neither man mentioned the F-35, and I am still looking for evidence that President Obama has talked about it in any of his speeches. In other countries, the F-35 can be cast as another annoying American intrusion. Here, it is protected by supplier contracts that have been spread as broadly as possible.

“Political engineering,” a term popularized by a young Pentagon analyst named Chuck Spinney in the 1970s, is pork-barrel politics on the grandest scale. Cost overruns sound bad if someone

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else is getting the extra money. They can be good if they are creating business for your company or jobs in your congressional district. Political engineering is the art of spreading a military project to as many congressional districts as possible, and thus maximizing the number of members of Congress who feel that if they cut off funding, they'd be hurting themselves.

A \$10 million parts contract in one congressional district builds one representative's support. Two \$5 million contracts in two districts are twice as good, and better all around would be three contracts at \$3 million apiece. Every participant in the military-contracting process understands this logic: the prime contractors who parcel out supply deals around the country, the military's procurement officers who divide work among contractors, the politicians who vote up or down on the results. In the late 1980s, a coalition of so-called cheap hawks in Congress tried to cut funding for the B-2 bomber. They got nowhere after it became clear that work for the project was being carried out in 46 states and no fewer than 383 congressional districts (of 435 total). The difference between then and now is that in 1989, Northrop, the main contractor for the plane, had to release previously classified data to demonstrate how broadly the dollars were being spread.

Whatever its technical challenges, the F-35 is a triumph of political engineering, and on a global scale. For a piquant illustration of the difference that political engineering can make, consider the case of Bernie Sanders—former Socialist mayor of Burlington, current Independent senator from Vermont, possible candidate from the left in the next presidential race. In principle, he thinks the F-35 is a bad choice. After one of the planes caught fire last summer on a runway in Florida, Sanders told a reporter that the program had been “incredibly wasteful.” Yet Sanders, with the rest of Vermont's mainly left-leaning political establishment, has fought hard to get an F-35 unit assigned to the Vermont Air National Guard in Burlington, and to dissuade neighborhood groups there who think the planes will be too noisy and dangerous. “For better or worse, [the F-35] is the plane of record right now,” Sanders told a local reporter after the runway fire last year, “and it is not gonna be discarded. That's the reality.” It's going to be somewhere, so why not here? As Vermont goes, so goes the nation.

The next big project the Air Force is considering is the Long Range Strike Bomber, a successor to the B-1 and B-2 whose specifications include an ability to do bombing runs deep into China. (A step so wildly reckless that the U.S. didn't consider it even when fighting Chinese troops



during the Korean War.) By the time the plane's full costs and capabilities become apparent, Chuck Spinney wrote last summer, the airplane, “like the F-35 today, will be unstoppable.” That is because even now its supporters are building the plane's “social safety net by spreading the sub-contracts around the country, or perhaps like the F-35, around the world.”

III. Chickenhawk Politics

Politicians say that national security is their first and most sacred duty, but they do not act as if this is so. The most recent defense budget passed the House Armed Services Committee by a vote of 61 to zero, with similarly one-sided debate before the vote. This is the same House of Representatives that cannot pass a long-term Highway Trust Fund bill that both parties support. “The lionization of military officials by politicians is remarkable and dangerous,” a retired Air Force colonel named Tom Ruby, who now writes on organizational culture, told me. He and others said that this deference was one reason so little serious oversight of the military took place.

T. X. Hammes, a retired Marine Corps colonel who has a doctorate in modern history from Oxford, told me that instead of applying critical judgment to military programs, or even regarding national defense as any kind of sacred duty, politicians have come to view it simply as a teat. “Many on Capitol Hill see the Pentagon with admirable simplicity,” he said: “It is a way of directing tax money to selected districts. It's part of what they were elected to do.”

In the spring of 2011, Barack Obama asked Gary Hart, the Democratic Party's most experienced and best-connected figure on defense reform, to form a small bipartisan task force that would draft recommendations on how Obama might try to recast the Pentagon and its practices if he won a second term. Hart did so (I was part of the group, along with Andrew J. Bacevich of Boston University, John Arquilla of the Naval Postgraduate School, and Norman R. Augustine, the former CEO of Lockheed Martin), and sent a report to Obama that fall. He never heard back. Every White House is swamped with recommendations and requests, and it responds only to those it considers most urgent—which defense reform obviously was not.

Soon thereafter, during the 2012 presidential race, neither Barack Obama nor Mitt Romney said much about how they would spend the billion and a half dollars a day that go to military programs, except for when Romney said that if elected, he would spend a total of \$1 trillion more. In their only direct exchange about military policy, during their final campaign debate, Obama said that Romney's plans would give the services more money than they

become just too easy to go to war,” says Admiral Mike Mullen, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.



Top left: Chuck Spinney, a former Air Force engineer and Pentagon analyst, at the Air Force Memorial, December 2013. Above: Senator Bernie Sanders, the onetime Socialist mayor of Burlington, who has lobbied to have F-35s based in Vermont.

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were asking for. Romney pointed out that the Navy had fewer ships than it did before World War I. Obama shot back, "Well, Governor, we also have fewer horses and bayonets, because the nature of our military's changed. We have these things called aircraft carriers, where planes land on them. We have these ships that go underwater, nuclear submarines." It was Obama's most sarcastic and aggressive moment of any of the debates, and was also the entirety of the discussion about where those trillions would go.

JIM WEBB is a decorated Vietnam veteran, an author, a former Democratic senator, and a likely presidential candidate. Seven years ago in his book *A Time to Fight*, he wrote that the career military was turning into a "don't break my rice bowl" culture, referring to an Asian phrase roughly comparable to making sure everyone gets a piece of the pie. Webb meant that ambitious officers notice how many of their mentors and predecessors move after retirement into board positions, consultancies, or operational roles with defense contractors. (Pensions now exceed preretirement

pay for some very senior officers; for instance, a four-star general or admiral with 40 years of service can receive a pension of more than \$237,000 a year, even if his maximum salary on active duty was \$180,000.)

Webb says it would defy human nature if knowledge of the post-service prospects did not affect the way some high-ranking officers behave while in uniform, including "protecting the rice bowl" of military budgets and cultivating connections with their predecessors and their postretirement businesses. "There have always been some officers who went on to contracting jobs," Webb, who grew up in an Air Force family, told me recently. "What's new is the scale of the phenomenon, and its impact on the highest ranks of the military."

Of course, the modern military advertises itself as a place where young people who have lacked the chance or money for higher education can develop valuable skills, plus earn GI Bill benefits for post-service studies. That's good all around, and is part of the military's perhaps unintended but certainly important role as an opportunity creator for under-credentialed Americans. Webb is talking about a different, potentially corrupting "prepare for your future" effect on the military's best-trained, most influential careerists.

"It is no secret that in subtle ways, many of these top leaders begin positioning themselves for their second-career employment during their final military assignments," Webb wrote in *A Time to Fight*. The result, he said, is a "seamless interplay" of corporate and military interests "that threatens the integrity of defense procurement, of controversial personnel issues such as the huge 'quasi-military' structure [of contractors, like Blackwater and Halliburton] that has evolved in Iraq and Afghanistan, and inevitably of the balance within our national security process itself." I heard assessments like this from many of the men and women I spoke with. The harshest ones came not from people who mistrusted the military but from those who, like Webb, had devoted much of their lives to it.

A man who worked for decades overseeing Pentagon contracts told me this past summer, "The system is based on lies and self-interest, purely toward the end of keeping money moving." What kept the system running,



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Former Senator Jim Webb, a decorated veteran of the Vietnam War, has lamented the "seamless interplay" of corporate and military interests.

HOW I LEARNED TO LOVE THE DRAFT

A veteran of the Cold War-era draft argues that once again sharing the burden of defending the country would produce better foreign policy—and better Americans.

BY JOSEPH EPSTEIN

AS THE STRUGGLE with the Islamic State, or ISIS, grows more intense and the Obama administration's air-attack strategy—if the experts turn out to be correct—proves unavailing, the calls for boots on the ground in Syria and Iraq are likely to become more insistent. Despite the coalition of nations aligned against ISIS and other terrorist groups, no one doubts that any such boots will be preponderantly American. Our current volunteer military will fill those boots.

Which prompts a question: Should the burden of defending America be exclusively theirs? When one watches those heartbreaking segments on the national news of men and women returning from Middle Eastern wars with missing limbs, and reads accounts of their suffering from mental-health problems as a result of their experiences in battle, one feels an essential unfairness about current military arrangements. True, these men and women volunteered for battle, yet in a democracy it somehow feels wrong for a small segment of the population to

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CHADLER CHADAPAK/AP

Hate has 4 letters, so does Love.

Enemies has 7 letters, so does Friends. Lying has 5 letters, so does Truth. Negative has 8, so does Positive. Under has 5, so does above. Cry has 3 letters, so does Joy. Anger has 5 letters, so does Happy. Right has 5 letters, so does wrong. Hurt has 4 letters, so does Heal. It means life is like double edged sword... so transform every negative side into an aura of positivity... We should choose the better side of the life.

Start Where You Stand

By Berton Braley

The past won't help you in beginning new,
If you have left it all behind at last
Why, that's enough, you're done with it, you're through;
This is another chapter in the book,
This is another race that you have planned,
Don't give the vanished days a backward look,
Start where you stand.

The world won't care about your old defeats
If you can start anew and win success;
The future is your time, and time is fleet
And there is much of work and strain and stress;
Forget the buried woes and dead despairs,
Here is a brand-new trial right at hand,
The future is for him who does and dares,
Start where you stand.

MY HEARTBREAK TALE

"Clinton Says Russian is Grooming
a 2020 candidate for an independent
run." ABC NEWS.COM/GMA SAT
TICKER 10-19-2019 7:AM.

With NO Glass Ceiling TO CRACK!
Hillary Cracked-up!

Did the Russians help Obama
win in 2008.

OR Barney Sanders in 2016
IN MI. and WI. Primaries!!

HIGHEST NEGATIVE
OF ANY PRESIDENTIAL
CANDIDATE

Away from N.Y. and CA Voters
Do NOT want you to be President
LOFS

This Why Trumped Keep running
Against the Clinton Team!

2020

If you do not Fade Away, if he
runs he shall be re-elected.

MY SEXY LIBERAL

STEPHANNE MILLER.COM

MON. 10-21-2019

She broke my heart, Fido! She
broke her vow NOT criticize DEM.
Presidential Candidates.

She and her crew your mad
cut joined you in that McCarthyism
(TRUMPISM) B.S! Shame on you!

CRAZY ENABLERS!

2013

No wonder Hillary can't accept
The Voters Rejection.

3 of 3 10-24-19

"I'll BEAT TRUMP LIKE A DRUM!"
JOE BIDEN

BIDEN V. TRUMPED

ROUND#1: HUNTER BIDEN

JOB IN UKRAINE! HE QUIT!
HE "APPOLOGIZED"!

ABC NEWS.COM/GMA

ROUND#2: TRUMPED USED "LYNCH"
[10-22-2019]

VP BIDEN: "APPOLOGIZED"
FOR HAVING USED IT DURING
CLINTON'S IMPEACHMENT.

IT'S 2NG AGAIN! [2020]

DECISION

Biden is mismatched against Trumped.
O, A STREET FIGHTER, NO RULES! |

SEE CBS 60 MINUTES 10-27-19.

10-24-19

SPREAD THE KINDNESS!!!

ELLEN DEGENERES

GAY ADVOCATE / POLITICIAN

GEORGE W. BUSH
FORMER PRESIDENT
(R.TX.)

IRAQ WAR

BUSH V. GORE

U.S. SUPREME COURT [2006]

ELLEN Hilter Needs
Some "KINDNESS" !

#VOTEFOR GAY RIGHTS

#PREZ OBAMA

#REPENT!!!

SEE: NBC NEWS.COM / TODAY
FIRST HOUR TUES. 10-08-2019 7:AM. CDT

SHOUT IT OUT LOUDER !!!

"Knowledge is Power,
if you know it about the
right person."

Author Ethel Watts Mumford,
quoted in the LOS ANGELES TIMES

WHO SAID THAT ?!

HE DIED FOR
A JOKE!

SHANE GLLIS

COMEDIAN, ENTERTAINER, etc.

"SNL FIRES CAST MEMBER
OVER (PAST) RACIAL SLURS!"

← ABC NEWS.COM / THE VIEW.COM
TUES. 09-17-2019, 10:AM, CDT

#LENNYBRUCE

#SNL

#ELITISTCANCEL CULTURE

10-06-2019

UPDATE

NEW OLD NEWS

NEW MOVIE I HIGHLY COMMENT TO
THE "NEED TO KNOW" UNIVERSAL
MIND!!

"WHERE IS MY ROY COHN"

- ROY COHN MOVIE.COM

- Donald J. Trump... quote,

LOOKING BACK TO SEE
THE PRESENT...

From Prez Trumped 2016 Election
WIN, I have written you to check-out
this Mr. Roy Marcus Cohn, 1927-1986,
Lawyer and NOTRIOUS FIXER [Wash-
ington, D.C. and NYC]!!!

TELL IT LIKE
IT IS!

Mr. Cohn is Gay!!
Who, of course, liked young boys.
He was young Donald's
Mentor!

SEE THOM HARTMANN.COM
RADIO INTERVIEW WITH
MOVIE DIRECTOR, ETC.,
TUES. 10-01-2019.

ELITIST INTELLECTUAL

AS WE SEE Circa three years
later, the elitist intellectuals
have woke-up to the Grassroots
were vigorously advocating to
NEED KNOW THIS "HOT TOPIC"
TO THE PEOPLE..

MUST SEE ILLUMINATING
NEW MOVIE

A BLAST FROM THE PAST -1

SCREAM OUT TO!!!!!!

OPRAH

WHOOPI

SHERYL UNDERWOOD

OCTAVIA SPENCER

NELL CARTER

STEROTYPES, etc,

Thanks For... To your kind - For
Erasing From TV

" VICTORIA SECRETS "
MODELS !!!

HOLLYWOOD

Babysitter goes to prison for injuring child 6/25-19

She gets 3 years; victim still enduring effects

Sydney Czyzon

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

Candace Turner, a 34-year-old former Shorewood babysitter, will spend three years in prison for felony child neglect after a toddler in her care sustained serious brain damage and injuries.

Turner pleaded guilty to felony child neglect earlier this month. As part of her plea deal, a felony charge of child abuse was dismissed.

Silas Holmes, a 20-month-old boy, sustained serious brain damage after being left in Turner's care on Feb. 2, 2018. The two were at Turner's home in Shorewood, where she was watching other children, including her own two daughters.

After Turner texted the child's parents that Silas "bonked his head pretty bad today" and did not wake up from a nap, the baby's father urged her to call



Turner

911. Police found about 30 bruises on Silas' neck, forehead, head, arms, legs and stomach.

Prosecutor Abbey DeSiato described the situation as "a parent's worst nightmare."

Turner said the injuries were from another child pushing a picnic table, causing the 20-month-old to fall to the ground. She also said another child "got spooked" from the crying, hitting the 20-month-old with a baby walker.

A doctor who evaluated Silas described the injuries as "severe, life-threatening child physical abuse" that were "inconsistent with the history of a short household fall."

DeSiato called Turner's explanation of events "simply ludicrous." She said Turner changed details of the story when talking to various people, including what she was doing when her version of the incident happened. She told some people she saw the incident, while she told others she was washing dishes when it happened.

The doctor said the neck bruising

was "highly suggestive of (the baby) being forcibly and suddenly grabbed from behind by an article of clothing, causing the seam of the collar to cause traumatic injury to the neck."

Silas was taken to Children's Hospital of Wisconsin in critical condition. The doctor told police he had no activity on the right half of his brain and would likely suffer permanent damage from the injuries.

DeSiato said Silas is unable to use his left arm and hand, has impairments to his left field of vision and experiences problems with spatial awareness and depth perception.

Silas' parents, Kristen and Samuel Holmes, spoke about the long-lasting effects of their son's injuries. He will receive a wheelchair this fall, and the parents are unsure whether he will be able to learn to drive, play sports or develop reasoning skills.

"I will never forget the picture of seeing him lying lifeless in someone's arms while the paramedics tried to wake him," Kristen said about when she arrived on the scene.

Defense attorney Travis Schwantes

said child abuse pediatricians, including the doctor cited in this case, tend to view injuries through a lens of assumed guilt by a perpetrator.

He said a separate diagnostic radiologist looked at the brain scans and said blunt force trauma was not the only potential cause of the toddler's brain injuries.

Schwantes added that the doctor found that choking did not seem to be a plausible explanation for the brain damage.

Milwaukee County Circuit Judge Mark Sanders read the radiologist's report and said the choking may not have been sufficient for brain damage, but it doesn't mean choking did not occur.

Sanders said he doesn't believe Turner's explanation of events "even for a second."

"Kids fall all the time," Sanders said, showing the court a picture of Silas in the hospital. "And that doesn't happen."

Turner apologized to Silas' family in court. Schwantes said Turner feels regret for not getting the baby medical attention earlier in the day, when she first realized his symptoms.

Milwaukee man sentenced to 25 years for 2017 shooting death of bowling friend

Sydney Czyzon Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

Robert Maurice Black Jr., 39, will spend 25 years in prison for the Dec. 4, 2017, shooting death of his co-worker Ricky Riggins.

A jury found Black guilty Feb. 7 of first-degree reckless homicide. The shooting, which happened shortly

after 3 a.m. in the 1400 block of West Mineral Street, came about after Black accused the 44-year-old Riggins of stealing \$80 from his car.

Milwaukee County Circuit Judge Joseph Wall followed the prosecution's recommended sentence in court Wednesday afternoon. Black's sentence includes seven years of extended supervision. The defense did not oppose the recommendation.

Riggins was found with eight shots in the neck, chest, abdomen and arm in a backyard near the house he lived in. Police found seven .45-caliber shell casings near his body.

Black told police he went bowling with Riggins the night before. Black said Riggins borrowed his car to buy cigarettes, and when Black later stopped at a gas station, he found the money missing from his center console. In a phone call with Black, Riggins denied taking the money.

Cellphone records showed Black was at the shooting scene at the time neighbors heard gunshots. Black said he was drunk and had no explanation for this evidence. Black told police he was wearing the shooter's distinctive clothing seen in surveillance video.

Although Black maintains his innocence, Wall said he is convinced Black is the person who killed Riggins. "It was essentially a hunting down and killing of another human being," Wall said, referring to Riggins' attempt to run away when confronted by Black.

Court records show that Black has had four separate defense attorneys in his case. His current attorney, Patrick Flanagan, filed a motion to withdraw as counsel after he said Black became angry when asked to prepare for sentencing before today's hearing. Flanagan said Black wants to file post-conviction motions and appeal his case.

Riggins' family members asked Wall for the maximum sentence of 40 years.

"I've had to watch Robert Black have no remorse for murdering my husband Ricky," said Riggins' wife, Ivette Santiago.

Leane Riggins, Riggins' mother, said her son was a "friendly person" and it would've taken "something worse" than \$80 for homicide to ensue. She said she believes Black was jealous of her son over a woman. The mother also expressed sorrow for Black's mother, whose life has been altered as well. "I was young when I had Ricky. We grew up together," Leane said. "He meant so much to me — he still does."

Wednesday's sentencing hearing was Riggins' birthday. He would've been 46.

Riggins had two children, Leane said, as well as two young grandchildren he never got to meet.

Black spoke to Riggins' family in court, repeating that he did not commit the crime.

"I'm OK with accepting how you guys feel," Black said to the family. "And I'm here to endure it."



Black Jr.

\$3.99
watch battery installed
no limit - expires 9-30-19
*Some restrictions apply. See store for details.



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SEASON!

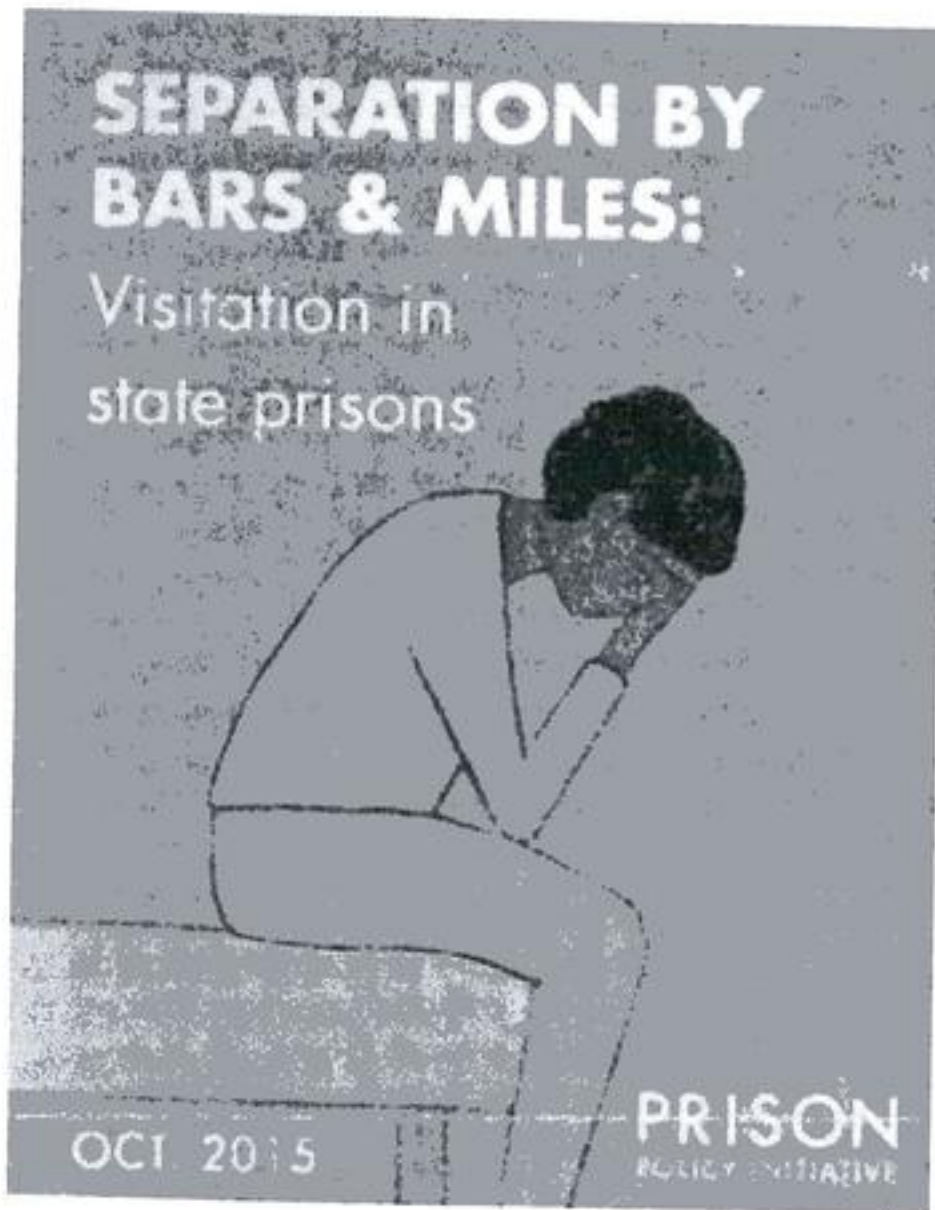
is on Tuesdays
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& Fashioneds.
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d (3rd place)

Party Room Available

Pizza

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By Bernadette Rabuy and Daniel Kopf
October 20, 2015

Most of today's prisons were built in an era when the public safety strategy was to "lock 'em up and throw away the key." But now that there is growing interest from policymakers and the public to help incarcerated people succeed after release, policymakers must revisit the reality of the prison experience and the false assumptions of that earlier era.

Almost by definition, incarceration separates individuals from their families, but for decades this country has also placed unnecessary burdens on the family members left behind. Certainly in practice and perhaps by design, prisons are lonely places. Analyzing little-used government data, we find that visits are the exception rather than the rule. Less than a third of people in state prisons receive a visit from a loved one in a typical month:

Type/time frame	Percent receiving that contact
Personal visit in the past month	31%
Phone in the past week	70%

Figure 1. The data on how family ties are maintained in state prison shows that prison visits are rare while the telephone is a more common way of staying in touch. Thankfully, the FCC's upcoming order to cap the costs of calls home from prisons and jails should increase call volume.

Despite the breadth of research showing that visits and maintaining family ties are among the best ways to reduce recidivism, the reality of having a loved one behind bars is that visits are unnecessarily grueling and frustrating. As a comprehensive 50-state study on prison visitation policies found, the only constant in prison rules between states is their differences. North Carolina allows just one visit per week for no more than two hours while New York allows those in maximum security 365 days of visiting. Arkansas and Kentucky require prospective visitors to provide their social security numbers, and Arizona charges visitors a one-time \$25 background check fee in order to visit. And some rules are inherently subjective such as Washington State's ban on "excessive emotion," leaving families' visiting experience to the whims of individual officers. With all of these unnecessary barriers, state visitation policies and practices actively discourage family members from making the trip. The most humane and sensible government policies would instead be based on respect and encouragement for the families of incarcerated people.

Given the great distances families must travel to visit their incarcerated loved ones, it is inexcusable for states to make the visiting process unnecessarily stressful. Using the same dataset, we find that most people (63%) in state prison are locked up over 100 miles from their families, and unsurprisingly, distance from home is a strong predictor for whether a person in a state prison will receive a visit in a given month.

Locking people up far from home has the unfortunate but strong effect of discouraging visits. We found that among incarcerated people locked up less than 50 miles from home, half receive a visit in a month, but the portion receiving visits falls as the distance from home increases:

Distance	Percent visited last month
Less than 50 miles	49.6%
Between 50 and 100 miles	40.0%
Between 101 and 500 miles	25.9%
Between 501 and 1,000 miles	14.5%

Figure 2. Incarcerated people in state prisons report whether they were visited in the past month, by distance from home (in miles).

And while there are a variety of reasons why an incarcerated person might not receive a visit, the fact that most prisons were built in isolated areas ensures hardship on the families of incarcerated people. Studies of incarcerated people in California, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, South Dakota, and Tennessee found that distance is a top barrier preventing them from in-person contact with their families.

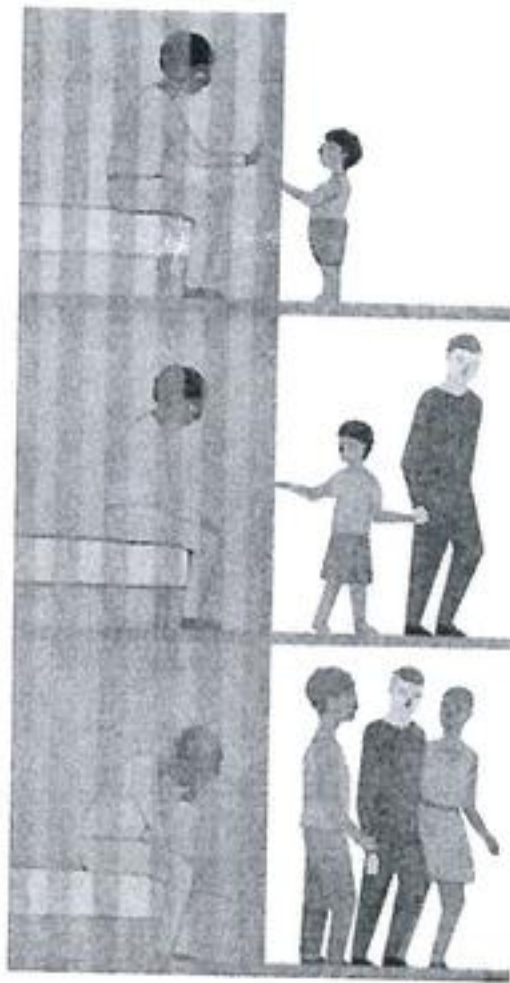
Millions of families are victims of mass incarceration, and policymakers are starting to understand that. Having established that large distances discourage visitation, this report makes several recommendations for how the U.S. criminal justice system can support — rather than punish — the families of incarcerated people. States should:

Use prison time as an option of last resort. Understanding how putting great distances between incarcerated people and their families is often damaging, states should implement alternatives to incarceration that can keep people home or closer to home such as Washington State's Family and Offender Sentencing Act, which allows judges to waive prison time and instead impose community custody for some primary caregivers of minor children. At the same time, states' criminal justice policies should match their rhetoric of decarceration. States such as California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, South Carolina, and Texas should recognize that they have been able to successfully reduce both imprisonment and crime and lead the rest of the nation by closing remote prisons.

Eliminate and refrain from adopting visitation policies that dehumanize families and actively encourage visitation. States should recognize that incarceration is often an emotional and vulnerable time for families and should actively encourage visiting by making the prison environment as comfortable as possible. States such as California and Massachusetts should stop their unnecessary and dehumanizing strip and dog searches of visitors. States can enact family-friendly visitation programs such as the children's center in New York State's Bedford Hills Correctional Facility and Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency's program in Michigan that allows incarcerated fathers to have several hour-long visits with their children with room for activities. In the short-term, states can make visits more comfortable for families with children by making crayons and coloring books available.

Willingly cooperate with the Federal Communications Commission's upcoming prison and jail telephone regulations, and have the courage to reduce the costs to families even further. Stop making other forms of communication exploitative. Fortunately, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is finally poised to end \$1-per-minute phone calls from prisons and jails with its strong proposal to regulate local, intra-state, and inter-state calls as well as ancillary fees. The FCC will be encouraging states to view these rate caps as a federal ceiling. States can and should reduce the costs to families even further, and states such as Arkansas and Indiana should stop fighting the regulations. Further, states should avoid implementing video visitation as a replacement for in-person visits — as has been done in hundreds of local jails throughout the country — and avoid overly restrictive mail policies like those of the New Hampshire Department of Corrections that ban children's drawings and greeting cards.

Listen to the recommendations of incarcerated people and their families who can best identify the obstacles preventing them from staying in touch during incarceration. Families have long been saying that no matter how much they would like to



visit and see firsthand that their loved ones are safe, sometimes the money and time required make visiting incarcerated loved ones virtually impossible. The sad reality is that currently, a majority of incarcerated parents of minor children do not receive visits from any of their children during their prison sentence. Recognizing that their families are often the main source of hope for people during their incarceration and the main source of support upon release, correctional facilities should gather and seriously consider family input when making decisions about visitation and communication policies.

Implement programs that assist families who want to visit. The costs of visitation and communication literally drive some families of incarcerated people into debt. States should consider implementing free transportation to prisons as the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision did before budget cutbacks

in 2011. Departments of Corrections should also consider video visitation as a supplement to in-person visits, especially for remote prisons. The Oregon Department of Corrections first implemented video visitation as a supplement to traditional visits in its two most remote prisons, and it has since expanded the technology to prisons throughout the state. States can also easily model video visitation programs after that of the Mike Durfee State Prison in South Dakota where, for 12 hours every week, incarcerated people have access to free video visits using Skype.

When faced with prison overcrowding, explore sentencing and parole reforms instead of prison expansion and out-of-state transfers. Often, when states are faced with prison overcrowding, they adopt band-aid fixes like sending people to out-of-state prisons where they will be even further from their families. More effective solutions are to first adopt low-hanging fruit reforms such as reducing the aging prison population or allowing primary caregivers to serve their sentences in the community, and then to explore larger-scale sentencing and parole reforms.

For the footnotes and methodology to this report, see prisonpolicy.org/reports/prisonvisits.html

To join our newsletter and receive more cutting edge research and advocacy, go to prisonpolicy.org/subscribe/



PEN PAL & MOTHERS DAY PROJECT

My goal in writing him was to provide him with support while he was in prison; to be someone he could count on to receive a letter from each month; to be someone he could vent his frustration to if he needed that. While he does get visits from a friend, I initially didn't know that and thought perhaps I could be his visitor via letters. As we continued to write each other, he shared with me the way he coped with being in prison. Since he was in a medium security prison, he was challenged sometimes by community time with other prisoners and the promise he believes that he had been given of being released in 2018. He was so certain that he would be released that he planned a BBQ and wanted me to attend. At that point I told him that my goal was to support him and try to bring joy to his life while he was in prison, but when he was released my focus would then be on another inmate. I was certain he would get angry and decide that our friendship via letters was complete. Much to my surprise he accepted my boundaries and it seemed that he respected me for setting them. He currently has taken tests that tell him his strengths and weaknesses. He sent me a copy and so I shared my thoughts with him about how he can apply those skills in a work program and his life upon release. He acknowledges he has done "some really bad things" in his life, but has selected Christ as his guide now. We talk about how he can continue with Christ as guide when he is released and how this world is quite different now than it was when he was imprisoned. I see part of my mission is to try to keep him abreast of what is happening in society. He may have a TV in his cell for entertainment, but TV isn't real life and he needs be aware of that. Our society currently marginalizes many people. My corresponding with a prisoner has given me one way to expand my understanding of those who have threatened our society and yet long for many of the same values we have."

Mail is so important. You can start a pen pal club at your church or organization. Please let me know. If you are imprisoned, we are working hard to recruit more volunteers. Our list of those wanting a pen pal remains very long. We would be willing to add your name to that list though if you are willing to be patient.

Mother's Day Project

"Thank you so much for the lovely Mother's Day cards. You always brighten up our lives. God bless you." Words from a woman who received one of the 3500 packets of stationery and cards we made available to people who are imprisoned (mostly women and juveniles) in 12 institutions. We were able to do this with donations and help from people all over the state. We are grateful to all of you.

We are also appreciate so much the churches who help preparation of these packet events:

Trinity United Methodist in Mt. Prospect
Knox Presbyterian in Naperville
St. Katherine Drexel Catholic in Sugar Grove
Grace United Methodist in Naperville

Thanks to new board officers

Our board has an exciting new look with several new members, including three men. All are working hard to further our work. We are especially grateful for the three who have accepted officer positions:

Marci – President.

Robert – Vice President

Patrick – Secretary

And the person who will become our Treasurer.

If you would be interested in joining these great people on our board or know of someone who would be willing to be a board member, please let us know. We need committed people to carry us into the future.

Pen Pal Reflections

Companions now has about 9 pen pal groups. Some are small. Two have as many as 20 volunteers. We have long known how important mail is to prisoners. Below are reflections from two people who have found corresponding with someone who is imprisoned has enriched their lives.

From Sharee: "It is wonderful to have a pen pal," says Sharree. "I wait on pins and needles until I receive his next letter." Sharee has been writing to her pen pal for about a year. He was locked up when he was a teenager and is serving an 80 year sentence. The correspondence is also meaningful to her pen pal. He told her that he heard God speaking to him through her letters and that was something he really needed. When he first wrote to us, he said how very alone he felt. Sharree has filled a deep need in his life. Sharree says the rewards she has received are so much greater than the time and effort she puts into this correspondence. She is so proud of how her pen pal is learning and growing. He is taking advantage of several education opportunities, and they often explore the meaning of Bible verses with each other. She is touched by the depth of sharing he has done with her. She would encourage others to become pen pal volunteers.

From Mary Jane: "Starting in 2015 I began writing a prisoner who was expected to be released in 2025. Our first letters were basically getting- to- know -you letters. His likes and dislikes, what his day in prison was like and how God was helping him through this difficult time. I shared the same kind of information with him. As our correspondence continued we each shared our concerns for each other and the joys in our lives. (continued on pg. 2)

Insidenotes

New Board Officers & Pen Pals	pg. 1
Pen Pal & Mothers Day Project	pg. 2
Board Profile & A Woman of Integrity	pg. 3

NEEDS

- ◆ Board members
- ◆ Groups to fundraise
- ◆ Postage stamps / envelopes
- ◆ Computer project assistance
- ◆ Opportunities to speak
- ◆ Prayers

Spring, 2019

*"Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass,
It's learning to dance in the rain."*

*"You can't change how the wind will blow.
You can set your sails in the direction you choose to go."*

Dear Companions on the Journey With Us:

One of my early mentors, a man who did 30 years in prison in bits and pieces all acquired from his need to support a drug habit, frequently told me something like this. "Jana," he would say, "You can't always control what happens to you in life. You can always choose how you respond."

Over the years of my life during difficult times, I have learned to ask, "What can I learn from this experience?" For whatever reason it seems that I gain more wisdom from periods of hardship than from the good times. I know it is always important to acknowledge and live into such periods of pain and suffering. Pain needs to be healed. Humor and quiet moments of peace and joy are important in giving me the strength to deal with the situations.

One of the privileges of my life has been to meet so many of you who are living in such harsh conditions, who have experienced lives of pain and trouble, and who have in the process become so wise. So many of you like my mentor of bygone years have helped me become a better person. I am so grateful.

I ask you to consider:

What is the storm you are facing right now? Can you try to find ways to live more fully? How can you avoid the trap of just waiting for it to pass?

What can you learn from the situation(s) you are experiencing right now?

What gives you moments of peace and even quiet joy? What are you grateful for today?

Who are the people in your life who teach you wisdom and the pathway to being strong and growing more into the person you were created to be?

What do you need to help you set your sails on the course you want to go?

Thank you! Thank you for letting me be your companion. Thank you for inspiring me. Thank you for being part of our Companions family.

May you receive many blessings.

Jana Minor

BOARD PROFILE & A WOMAN OF INTEGRITY



Get to Know Board Member Patrick Griffin:

(1) As a new Board member at CJT, can you tell us a little bit about yourself?

I'm a Senior Program Officer at the MacArthur Foundation in Chicago, where I've worked in the Justice Program for 8 years. I also teach criminology and undergrad courses part-time at Loyola University. I've been a lawyer, a writer, a researcher in delinquency, and a bunch of other things. I'm married and have two grown sons.

(2) Tell us about your work with Aunt Mary's Storybook in the Cook County Jail. How did you get involved, and what do you like most about your volunteering?

I haven't been doing it for that long, but I wanted to volunteer in part to learn more about our work. I do enjoy it, and I can see that the inmates appreciate what we do. As a father, I loved reading to my kids when they were young—I still love kids' books. So I feel like I'm getting in on that stuff again, alongside other fathers.

I'm also curious about the jail and the people in it. My foundation job is all about supporting efforts around the country to reduce jail usage—to get America to "rethink jails," as we put it. It's useful work but it's pretty abstract most of the time. Volunteering for AMS gives me a chance to see what it's like for people inside these places.

(3) What inspired you to join the Board?

Since my job is to fund nonprofits, I thought I could be helpful. I also serve on another board—the statewide school board for kids in the custody of the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice—and I thought the two might be complementary. The CJT Board has a great line-up of people now, a great range of perspectives. It's a privilege to work with them.

(4) What do you hope to accomplish during your term as a Board member?

I want more people to know about us! I think there's a lot of potential support out there for the work we do. All we have to do is tell our story.

Joclede Benn – A Woman of Integrity and Vision

It was 1993 when we approached Superintendent Joclede Benn who ran the Women's Division at the Cook County Jail with a unique idea. The Neediest Kids Fund had given us a grant to provide gifts for children visiting their mothers at the jail during the Christmas season.

We asked if we could give mothers confined in her division the opportunity to choose new books for their children and to let us record those mothers reading the stories. The children would then receive these very special gifts of new books and their mothers' voices. Supt. Benn immediately grasped the possibilities of this venture: connecting those mothers with their children using books. She provided us with the information we needed and guided us through the process. With her help, it worked. Today we are serving people imprisoned in 10 state prisons and 7 county jails.

Supt. Benn passed away last month. She was creative and knew how to make programs work in correctional settings. Her motto was: you can be fair and firm without disrespecting people. She interacted with her staff, the women confined at the jail and we who volunteered there in such a manner. She was a gift to so many.

We are very grateful to her for her role in starting our Aunt Mary's Storybook Project which has become so special to us and to those we serve. May she rest in peace.

journeynotes

7



Companions, Journeying Together, Inc.

P.O. Box 457

Western Springs, Illinois 60558-0457

OUR GOALS ● OUR VISION ● OUR COMMITMENT

- ◆ To bridge the gaps between the free and the unfree worlds in our society.
- ◆ To implement programs that foster the personal growth of incarcerated people and their families.
- ◆ To promote family literacy, lifelong learning and positive parenting techniques
- ◆ To recruit and educate volunteers about the criminal justice system and restorative justice.

*Journeynotes is a publication of
Companions, Journeying Together, Inc.
Visit us at www.cjtinc.org*

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30 YEARS OF COMPANIONS!

The Companions staff would like to hear from you.

Scott@cjtinc.org (Executive Director)

Jana@cjtinc.org (Founding Director)

Call at (630) 481-6231

[facebook.com/cjtinc](https://www.facebook.com/cjtinc)



An electronic version of our *JourneyNotes* publication is now available! Please visit our website at www.cjtinc.org to sign up!

Needs

Board members: our board is small. We need the help of others.

Groups to hold fund raisers or hold book drives for us: As we grow, our need for additional funds becomes critical. Would you or your group be willing to organize a big or small event, to collect money or new books? Perhaps a shower of books or donations to honor a special person, a bake sale, craft booth, or any other creative idea. We would be grateful.

Postage stamps: Postage stamps are used in Christmas card and Mothers Day projects. We mail about 80 birthday cards per month. Letters are mailed to prisoners hungry to hear from someone in the world outside the fences that confine them.

People to help with computer projects: We are constantly in need of people to prepare packages for Aunt Mary's Storybook, and keep records. If you have computer skills, please call or email.

Prayers: Your prayers are valuable!