

DEOMI NEWS LINKS, JUNE 5, 2020

SPECIAL: THE GEORGE FLOYD INCIDENT

[“Get your knee off our necks!” Floyd mourned in Minneapolis](#) [Aaron Morrison and Tim Sullivan, *The Associated Press*, 5 June 2020]

Celebrities, musicians and political leaders gathered in front of George Floyd’s golden casket Thursday for a fiery memorial service for the man whose death at the hands of police sparked global protests, with a civil rights leader declaring it is time for Black people to demand, “Get your knee off our necks!” The service — the first in a series of memorials set for three cities over six days — unfolded in Minneapolis at a sanctuary at North Central University as a judge a few blocks away set bail at \$750,000 each for the three fired police officers charged with aiding and abetting murder in Floyd’s death.

[Florida Highway Patrol trooper among 2 state employees fired for “hateful, racist” comments about George Floyd protesters](#) [James Call, *USA Today*, 4 June 2020]

A Florida Highway Patrol trooper and a Tallahassee employee of the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles have been fired for making “abhorrent” comments about George Floyd protesters, the department said. The two workers had directed “hateful, racist and threatening remarks” toward Florida demonstrators calling for better policing as part of nationwide protests in the wake of Floyd’s death in police custody on Memorial Day in Minneapolis.

[Charge upgraded against Minneapolis policeman](#) [*The Associated Press*, 3 June 2020]

*Prosecutors are charging a Minneapolis police officer accused of pressing his knee against George Floyd’s neck with second-degree murder, and for the first time are leveling charges against three other officers. The officer, Derek Chauvin, was fired May 26 and initially charged with third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter. Three other officers were also fired but weren’t immediately charged. The Star Tribune reports that Attorney General Keith Ellison will charge Thomas Lane J. Kueng and Tou Thao with aiding and abetting murder. The newspaper cited multiple law enforcement sources familiar with the case that spoke on condition of anonymity and an attorney who represents one of the officers told *The Associated Press* the report was accurate.*

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[“Dangerous”: Around world, police chokeholds scrutinized](#) [John Leicester, *The Associated Press*, 3 June 2020]

Three days after George Floyd died with a Minneapolis police officer choking off his air, another Black man writhed on the tarmac of a street in Paris as a police officer pressed a knee to his neck during an arrest. Immobilization techniques where officers apply pressure with their knees on prone suspects are used in policing around the world and have long drawn criticism. One reason why Floyd’s death is sparking anger and touching nerves globally is that such techniques have been blamed for asphyxiations and other deaths in police custody beyond American shores, often involving non-White suspects.

[Goldfein: “Every American should be outraged” at police conduct in death of George Floyd](#)

[Stephen Losey, *Air Force Times*, 2 June 2020]

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Dave Goldfein denounced the death of George Floyd and the conduct of the Minneapolis police who killed him in a strongly-worded memo Monday night. In the memo, distributed to Goldfein’s wing commanders and other commanders and obtained by Air Force Times, Goldfein called Floyd’s death “a national tragedy.” Goldfein’s memo was sent hours after his top enlisted advisor, Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth Wright, who is Black, posted a lengthy Twitter thread about the deaths of Black men at the hands of police that declared, “I am George Floyd.”

[SEE ALSO]

1. [More U.S. military leaders decry bigotry and violence amid U.S. unrest](#)
2. [“We Are All Hurting:” Space Force Leaders Speak Out on Death of George Floyd](#)
3. [Top military leaders speak out about racism in wake of George Floyd’s death in police custody](#)
4. [“Acting with Their Heart:” How the Air Force Led the Services in Talking About Race](#)

[“I Am George Floyd:” Top Enlisted Airman Voices Outrage, Calls for Justice Review](#) [Oriana Pawlyk, *Military.com*, 1 June 2020]

In a lengthy [Twitter](#) thread posted Monday, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright encouraged “everyone to fight, not just for freedom, justice and equality, but to fight for understanding.” He also called for an “independent review” of the military justice system, saying equitable justice was an area in the service where progress has lagged. “Who am I? I am a Black man who happens to be the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force. I am George Floyd ... I am Philando Castile, I am Michael Brown, I am Alton Sterling, I am Tamir Rice,” Wright began his thread. “Just like most of the Black Airmen and so many others in our ranks ... I am outraged at watching another Black man die on television before our very eyes.” Wright, who’s set to retire in coming months, noted that racism, discrimination and exclusion “does not care much about position, titles or stature, so yes, it could happen to you,” he said.

CULTURE

[Virginia city removes 176-year-old slave auction block](#) [The Associated Press, 5 June 2020]

A 176-year-old slave auction block has been removed from a Virginia city’s downtown. The 800-pound (363-kilogram) stone was pulled from the ground at a Fredericksburg street corner early Friday after the removal was delayed for months by lawsuits and the coronavirus pandemic, The Free Lance-Star reported. The weathered stone was sprayed with graffiti twice and chants of “move the block” erupted this week during local demonstrations over the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, city officials said in a [statement](#) announcing the removal.

[Books about racial discrimination become best-sellers as U.S. protests grow](#) [Jill Serjeant, *Reuters*, 4 June 2020]

From “White Fragility” to “The New Jim Crow,” literature about the history of racial discrimination in the United States is selling out as White Americans seek to educate themselves as nationwide protests grow over the killing of unarmed Black people. As the death of George Floyd, who was pinned under the knee of a White police officer in Minneapolis, has prompted more than a

week of street protests throughout the states, Americans at home are turning to books, movies and television shows that lay bare decades of discrimination. Non-fiction books about the Black experience head the Amazon.com best-seller list, including children's books, such as the "We're Different, We're the Same" from the Sesame Street stable. Many titles are sold out and used editions carry asking prices of up to \$50 each.

[21 books Barack Obama says you should read if you want to become an authority on race relations in the U.S.](#) [Marguerite Ward, *Business Insider*, 3 June 2020]

President Barack Obama recently spoke out about racism and inequality following a wave of protests across the U.S. in the wake of George Floyd's death. In a Medium post, he shared lessons about ushering in change. While these lessons come from his own experience as a Black man and as the first Black president of the U.S., they also are likely informed by reading books on racial justice. Obama, who achieved notable progress concerning criminal justice reform, has recommended dozens of books on race relations throughout, and since, his presidency.

[As Audiobook Market Grows, Narrators of Color Find Their Voice](#) [Fabrice Robinet, *The New York Times*, 3 June 2020]

Publishers are increasingly seeking out audio talent that reflects the race and experience of the books' authors and characters. But what constitutes a Black, Latino or Asian voice? When the actor and audiobook narrator Cary Hite learned he had been cast to read a novella for a sci-fi anthology, he was ecstatic — and not just because he loved the genre. Until that point, Hite, who is African-American, was mainly hired to narrate urban lit, from classics like Iceberg Slim's "Pimp" to Wahida Clark's best-selling "Honor Thy Thug."

[Frank Rizzo statue removed from outside the Municipal Services Building in the middle of the night](#) [Robert Moran, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 3 June 2020]

In the predawn hours Wednesday, the city unceremoniously removed the controversial statue of former Mayor and Police Commissioner Frank Rizzo, who was known for his aggressive tactics policing the Black and gay communities of Philadelphia. "The statue is a deplorable monument to racism, bigotry, and police brutality for members of the Black community, the LGBTQ community, and many others. The treatment of these communities under Mr. Rizzo's leadership was among the worst periods in Philadelphia's history," Mayor Jim Kenney said in a written statement.

[John Lewis Documentary "Good Trouble" Offers Historical Context for Current Crisis](#) [Holly Aguire, *Military.com*, 3 June 2020]

As our country experiences its most intense civil rights demonstrations in more than 40 years, "Good Trouble," a new documentary about activist-turned-Congressman John Lewis, arrives to give younger generations some important historical background. Rep. John Lewis, a Georgia Democrat, has fought for civil rights his entire career. As a longtime advocate of peaceful demonstrations, of getting in "good trouble, necessary trouble," he's been beaten, threatened, spat upon and arrested more than 40 times while advocating for change. The new documentary film by Dawn Porter, details important milestones in the political icon's pilgrimage. Through "This is Your Life" moments and historical footage, we watch Lewis react and reflect on some of our nation's most defining days.

[\[WATCH TRAILER\]](#)

[Virginia governor to announce removal of Lee statue](#) [Alan Suderman and Sarah Rankin, *The Associated Press*, 3 June 2020]

Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam is expected to announce plans Thursday to remove one of the country's most iconic monuments to the Confederacy, a statue of Gen. Robert E. Lee along Richmond's prominent Monument Avenue, a senior administration official told The Associated Press. The move would be an extraordinary victory for civil rights activists, whose calls for the removal of that monument and others in this former capital of the Confederacy have been resisted for years. "That is a symbol for so many people, Black and otherwise, of a time gone by of hate and oppression and being made to feel less than," said Del. Jay Jones, a Black lawmaker from Norfolk. He said he was "overcome" by emotion when he learned the statue was to come down.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Decades-old Confederate statue removed from Alexandria intersection](#) [Patricia Sullivan, *The Washington Post*, 2 June 2020]

The Confederate statue "Appomattox," which depicts a southern-facing Civil War soldier and has stood in an Alexandria intersection for decades, was removed Tuesday morning, a month earlier than planned. The monolith commemorates the mustering at the start of the Civil War of Alexandria citizens who marched south to join the Confederate forces. Hence, the soldier faces south. Black residents have long considered it an affront and a reminder that their town sided with those who supported slavery. Defenders said it reminded the city of its Southern heritage.

[As protests rage, African American Museum offers new forum for talking about race](#) [Peggy McGlone, *The Washington Post*, 1 June 2020]

As mass demonstrations protesting the death of a Black man in police custody continue in cities across the nation, the National Museum of African American History and Culture has introduced a digital program exploring race, racial identity and its influence on American society. "[Talking About Race](#)" is a Web-based initiative that uses videos, role-playing exercises and question-based activities to explore the origins and definitions of race and identity. Built on the museum's long-standing educational work, the project was released Sunday to respond to the current crisis, according to Candra Flanagan, the Smithsonian museum's director of teaching and learning.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Bundesliga investigates George Floyd tributes](#) [Alex Butler, *United Press International*, 1 June 2020]

Several German soccer players could face discipline after they showed support for the slain George Floyd with on-field tributes over the weekend in the Bundesliga. "These reviews are also aimed at determining whether the game and the field are the right place for these actions," the German Football Association said. "Internationally, the immediate phase of the game should remain free of political statements and messages of any kind. The focus should be on the sporty and fair competition stand, before and after the whistle there are of course possibilities for appropriate actions." It remains to be seen whether there will be sanctions in these cases." German Football Association president Rainer Koch said he was "proud" of the players.

[Grindr Will Remove Race and Ethnicity Filter From Gay Dating App in Support of Black Lives Matter](#) [Todd Spangler, *Variety*, 1 June 2020]

Grindr said it will remove the racial and ethnic filter from its popular gay dating and social-networking app, citing user feedback and a commitment to the Black Lives Matter movement. Currently, the Grindr app allows paying users to set preferences for “ethnicity,” among other criteria specifying the kinds of people they want to connect with. “We will not be silent, and we will not be inactive,” the company said in posts on social media Monday. “We will continue to fight racism on Grindr, both through dialogue with our community and a zero-tolerance policy for racism and hate speech on our platform. As part of this commitment, and based on your feedback, we have decided to remove the ethnicity filter from our next release.”

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

DISCRIMINATION

[Military children shouldn’t be penalized for seeking mental health care, senators say](#) [Karen Jowers, *Military Times*, 2 June 2020]

Senators are seeking to end “undue discrimination” against military dependents and civilians with prior mental health conditions who seek to enter the military. “Children who face the stress of parents being deployed, moving frequently and other sacrifices should never be penalized for seeking mental health care,” said Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., who introduced legislation in May, along with Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis. The proposal would require the service surgeons general to give “liberal consideration” to children raised in a military family, because of the potential challenges of military family life, when deciding whether to grant a waiver allowing them to join the military despite prior mental health conditions. If the waiver is denied, a mental health provider would have to review the request.

[COVID-19 Is Crushing Black Communities. Some States Are Paying Attention](#) [Michael Ollove and Christine Vestal, *Stateline (The Pew Charitable Trust)*, 27 May 2020]

As states begin to ease quarantine restrictions, epidemiologists caution that success in conquering the next wave of the pandemic largely will depend on taking extra precautions to protect the most vulnerable—the elderly and people of color. African Americans are at much higher risk of contracting COVID-19 than the rest of the population, and they are much more likely than White people to die from the virus. To find out whether any states were taking concrete actions to stem COVID-19 cases and deaths in Black communities, Stateline contacted the 16 states where Black residents make up a larger percentage of the population than the national rate of 13%.

[REPRINT]

DIVERSITY

[Army to place women in last all-male infantry, armor companies](#) [Nancy Montgomery, *Stars and Stripes*, 3 June 2020]

The Army will place female infantry and armor enlisted soldiers into its last nine all-male brigade combat teams after changing rules that required multiple women in unit leadership. The service will integrate women into the BCTs over the rest of the year, Maj. Melissa Comiskey, chief of command policy for the Army’s personnel office, said in a statement. Two other BCTs integrated women into their companies earlier this year, she said. The moves come after the Army changed “leaders first” rules enacted three years ago that required infantry and armor companies to have two female

officers, or noncommissioned officers of the same job specialty, in each company that accepted junior enlisted women straight from initial-entry training.

[Historic nomination of first Black service chief to move forward after lawmaker lifts secret hold](#) [Joe Gould and Valerie Insinna, *Defense News*, 3 June 2020]

As the country is gripped by civil unrest over racial injustice and the death of George Floyd, the U.S. Senate has been poised to confirm the first Black chief of a military service branch. But the nomination was being quietly delayed by one senator as leverage in a basing decision for the KC-46 aerial refueling tanker. Sen. Dan Sullivan has lifted a legislative hold he placed on the nomination of Air Force Gen. Charles Q. Brown, Defense News has learned. The Alaska Republican established the hold shortly after Brown's confirmation hearing in front of the Senate Armed Services Committee in early May, preventing his nomination from moving forward, according to three sources with knowledge of the matter.

[New Mexico close to historic all-female U.S. House delegation](#) [Russell Contreras, *The Associated Press*, 3 June 2020]

New Mexico has moved closer to possibly sending a historic delegation of all women of color to the U.S. House. According to unofficial results from Tuesday's primary, Democrat Teresa Leger Fernandez, a Latina, won a seven-way race to capture her party's nomination for the Democratic-leaning seat in northern New Mexico. She joins incumbents Rep. Deb Haaland — a Laguna Pueblo member and one of the nation's first Native American congresswomen — and U.S. Rep. Xochitl Torres Small, the granddaughter of Mexican immigrants, on the all women of color Democratic U.S. House slate.

[The Hardest Part of Having a Nonbinary Kid Is Other People \[OPINION\]](#) [Sandy Jorgenson, *The New York Times*, 1 June 2020]

From the beginning, as parents, my husband and I weren't the blue-for-boys, pink-for-girls type. We let M dress in the clothing they gravitated toward and wear their hair in whichever style they liked. We made a point to shy away from anything overtly gendered, or from the notion that our child was only entitled to half the world's opportunities. Still, we were happily raising our child as cisgender without thinking anything of it. Roughly a year ago, when M was 6, they began referring to themselves as "a they," but my husband and I didn't read too much into it. We had equipped them with the language and basic knowledge around the gender spectrum. But kids are unpredictable, distractible and fickle about everything from their favorite food to their best friend, so upon hearing our child mention a couple of times that they wanted us to use these gender-neutral pronouns, we agreed somewhat coolly, with the intention of offering up a halfhearted attempt to see if they would notice. It felt like a reliable way to see if they really meant it or not.

HUMAN RELATIONS

[What is a microaggression? 14 things people think are fine to say at work — but are actually racist, sexist, or offensive](#) [Marguerite Ward and Rachel Premack, *Business Insider*, 3 June 2020]

Recent protests over the killing of George Floyd have sparked a nationwide conversation about racism in all areas of American life, including in the office. Prejudice, bias, and discrimination at work are a lot more common than many business leaders would like to admit. A [survey](#) by Glassdoor

of 1,100 U.S. employees found that 61% of U.S. employees had witnessed or experienced workplace discrimination based on age, race, gender, or LGBTQ identity.

[Governors Ask Residents to Stop Mask-Shaming](#) [Kate Elizabeth Queram, *Route Fifty*, 26 May 2020]

Two Republican governors in the past week have pleaded with residents to stop mask-shaming people who wear face coverings in public places in an attempt to limit the spread of the novel coronavirus. Burgum's comments came as the decision to wear—or eschew—a face covering in public continued to morph into a political issue. People protesting stay-at-home orders and business closures have ridiculed others for wearing face coverings, and some local governments have amended emergency orders requiring people to wear masks in public after threats of violence.

MISCELLANEOUS

[Senators take on some core issues for military families](#) [Karen Jowers, *Military Times*, 3 June 2020]

The “Command Accountability for Military Family Readiness Act” would require the service secretaries to identify which commanders will be responsible for supporting military family readiness. These commanders will be subject to a command climate assessment that takes those efforts into account. These commanders would receive comprehensive training and guidance to help them direct families to resources and information available locally, through their branch of service, and through DOD. “These bills demonstrate Congress’ willingness to listen to the stories that military families share through our annual Military Lifestyle Survey, to take concerns like child care and quality of life issues seriously, and to act in a way that sets the conditions for military families to thrive.” said Kathy Roth-Douquet, CEO and co-founder of Blue Star Families, in a statement.

[Risk for drug abuse higher in older lesbian, gay, bisexual adults, study finds](#) [Brian P. Dunleavy, *United Press International*, 2 June 2020]

Middle-aged and older adults who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual are more than twice as likely to abuse prescription tranquilizers and opioid pain medications compared to their heterosexual peers, a study published Tuesday by the [Journal of General Internal Medicine](#) has found. Lesbian, gay and bisexual older adults were also nearly three times as likely to use cannabis for non-medical purposes, the authors observed. Conversely, the use of drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamine was roughly the same—and low—among both populations of older adults, they said. But drug use among older adults in general -- regardless of sexual orientation -- is hardly “rampant,” researchers said. “A multitude of stressors can be a risk factor for unhealthy substance use,” co-author Dr. Benjamin Han, an assistant professor of geriatric medicine and palliative care at NYU Langone Health, told UPI.

MISCONDUCT

[Soldiers Pull BLM Signs, Confederate Flag from Vehicles After Viral Confrontation](#) [Hope Hodge Seck, *Military.com*, 4 June 2020]

A heated exchange between two Fort Campbell, Kentucky, soldiers that was captured on video was followed by a conversation, apology and resolution, base officials said Wednesday. In the one-minute, spliced video, a soldier in a yellow pickup truck demands that another soldier, out of frame,

remove “Black Lives Matter” decals from the front of his personal vehicle. “Are you wearing a uniform right now? Where in the Uniform Code of Military Justice does it say that you can participate in any political protest that is going on?” the soldier in the truck says. The other soldier, identified in the Facebook video as a specialist, retorts that other’s truck has a Confederate flag in it.

RACISM

[Floyd death pushes military to face “own demons” on race](#) [Robert Burns and Lolita C. Baldor, *The Associated Press*, 5 June 2020]

The death of George Floyd in police hands has pushed the U.S. military to search its soul and to admit that, like the rest of America, it has fallen short on racial fairness. Although the military historically has prided itself on diversity, leaders acknowledge that Black troops often are disproportionately subject to military legal punishment and are impeded in promotions.

[Goldman Sachs executive’s email making plea for racial equality goes viral at firm](#) [Iman Moise and Sinead Cruise, *Reuters*, 4 June 2020]

An email by a Goldman Sachs Group Inc (GS.N) employee about his experiences of racial injustice and criticizing managers at the Wall Street bank for not supporting junior bankers from diverse backgrounds went viral at the firm this week. The email by Frederick Baba, a managing director at the bank who is Black, coincides with other Wall Street executives and companies speaking out against racial inequality after the death of an African American man, George Floyd, during an arrest by a White police officer who held a knee on his neck in Minneapolis on May 25. On Tuesday, Bank of America Corp (BAC.N) pledged \$1 billion to help communities address economic and racial inequality. Goldman Sachs on Wednesday created a \$10 million fund for racial equity. The CEOs of JPMorgan Chase & Co (JPM.N), Citigroup (C.N) and Wells Fargo & Co (WFC.N) have also made statements denouncing racism and discrimination.

[Top Air Force Lawyer Calls for Proposals on Improving Racial Disparity in Military Justice](#) [Oriana Pawlyk, *Military Times*, 4 June 2020]

In a June 3 letter issued to the JAG corps, Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Rockwell, the service’s judge advocate general, said the request to submit proposals is a crucial step to “break down barriers and promote conversation, productive debate and further analysis.” Rockwell said a broader conversation must be had on the reasons that Black junior enlisted airmen are punished at a much higher rate than their non-Black counterparts.

[Thousands in Europe decry racial injustice, police violence](#) [Pan Pylas and Jill Lawless, *The Associated Press*, 3 June 2020]

Thousands of people demonstrated in London on Wednesday against police violence and racial injustice following the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, which has set off days of unrest in the United States. Some of them converged on Parliament and the nearby Downing Street office of Prime Minister Boris Johnson. A few scuffles erupted between protesters and police outside the street’s heavy metal gates. Inside, Johnson told a news conference that he was “appalled and sickened” by Floyd’s death on May 25 when a White Minneapolis officer, Derek Chauvin, pressed his knee on the handcuffed Black man’s neck for several minutes.

[Black Liberty U. alums rebuke Falwell after blackface tweet](#) [Elana Schor and Sarah Rankin, *The Associated Press*, 1 June 2020]

*Nearly three dozen Black alumni of Liberty University denounced school President Jerry Falwell Jr. on Monday, suggesting he step down after he mocked Virginia’s mask-wearing requirement by invoking the blackface scandal that engulfed the state’s governor last year. In a letter to Falwell, shared with *The Associated Press*, 35 faith leaders and former student-athletes told Falwell that his past comments “have repeatedly violated and misrepresented” Christian principles. They said they would stop urging students to attend Liberty, would no longer donate to the university, and would urge fellow people of faith to avoid speaking at the school unless Falwell changes his behavior or steps aside.*

[Coronavirus: What attacks on Asians reveal about American identity](#) [Heiler Cheung, Zhaoyin Feng and Boer Deng, *BBC News*, 27 May 2020]

Large numbers of Asian Americans, and Asians in the U.S., have described a sharp change in their experiences following the outbreak. Kimberly Ha, 38, says she noticed the difference in February, after a stranger began shouting at her as she walked her dog in New York. “He yelled: ‘I’m not scared of radioactive Chinese people’ and started pointing at me, shouting ‘you people shouldn’t be here, get out of this country, I’m not scared of this virus that you people brought over,’” the Chinese Canadian, who has lived in New York for over 15 years, said. In the weeks that followed, she also noticed that “about one in 10” people she encountered in public appeared angry when they saw her. “I’ve never felt that level of hostility before,” she says.

RELIGION

[Amid protests, U.S. faith leaders engage racism and politics](#) [Elana Schor, *The Associated Press*, 3 June 2020]

As days of anti-racism protests sparked by police killings push Americans toward a national reckoning, religious leaders are stepping more directly into the politics surrounding discrimination, entering into a dialogue that cuts across lines of faith and color. Groups from multiple denominations across Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths have publicly called for action against racism, aligning with peaceful demonstrators’ goals following the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Even beyond those statements, the amount and diversity of religious involvement in the ongoing protests suggests a possible sea change for faith-driven engagement in racial justice issues.

SEXISM

[Veterans Affairs Lawmaker Calls for Gender-Neutral VA Motto](#) [Patricia Kime, *Military.com*, 3 June 2020]

The House Veterans Affairs Committee’s ranking Republican has thrown his support behind an effort to make the Department of Veterans Affairs’ mission statement more inclusive by shedding its masculine pronouns and reference to widows. Rep. Phil Roe of Tennessee, former chairman of the committee, said Wednesday he wants to “associate himself” with the push to change the motto from “To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan” to “To care for those who have borne the battle, and for their families and survivors.”

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[Audit: Alaska National Guard improves sex assault responses](#) [The Associated Press, 1 June 2020]

An Alaska Department of Administration audit has found that the state's National Guard units improved the handling of sexual assault and sexual harassment since 2014, but some problems remain. The administration department's oversight unit said the National Guard increased sexual assault and prevention training, set up new procedures for addressing complaints and created a new military judicial system under laws passed by the Alaska Legislature, The Anchorage Daily News reported Sunday.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[The Air Force Investigated Martha McSally for Seeking Advice After Sexual Assaults](#) [Oriana Pawlyk, *Military.com*, 30 May 2020]

While serving in the U.S. Air Force, Martha McSally experienced multiple incidents of sexual abuse and assault. But when she sought advice about how to talk publicly about experiences she'd had with the abusive culture of the Air Force, the service decided to look into her behavior instead of that of the alleged offenders. McSally, now a Republican senator from Arizona, writes about multiple incidents of sexual abuse -- one by a high school coach; another by an upperclassman at the Air Force Academy; and the third by a superior officer who preyed on her early in her career. McSally, who graduated from the academy in 1988, didn't trust the military judicial system or anyone "in the chain of command to believe [women] or do anything about it. We endured it," she writes.

SUICIDE

[Even with 10-day waiting period, suicide by gun risk surges after purchase](#) [Gene Emery, *Reuters*, 3 June 2020]

The risk of suicide by firearm jumps 100-fold during the first month after purchasing a handgun, even if the buyer is subject to a 10-day waiting period, according to results from the largest long-term analysis of gun ownership in the United States. The [study, reported by the New England Journal of Medicine](#), also found the danger of suicide by firearm is more than four times higher for women than for men. "The risk for owners is stratospheric," lead author Dr. David Studdert of Stanford University told Reuters in a phone interview. The risk declines over time, plateaus, but stays high for years, researchers found.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Seeking the Military Suicide Solution Podcast, Episode 21: Betsey Mercado, director of the Objective Zero Foundation](#) [*Military Times*, 2 June 2020]

Betsey Mercado became involved in Objective Zero after seeing the positive influence that intervention had on veterans in crisis. Mercado has committed herself to making a difference in the lives of soldiers, veterans and their families. Her experience working with military spouses and leading multiple Family Readiness Groups supporting active-duty units gives her a unique perspective that she brings to the Objective Zero team. She volunteers her time to assist with development of the Objective Zero mobile app, maintain the website, and manage Objective Zero's administration. Betsey holds a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration.

[\[LISTEN\]](#)

VETERANS

[On sad anniversary, few to mourn the D-Day dead in Normandy](#) [Raf Casert, *The Associated Press*, 5 June 2020]

At least the dead will always be there. All too many have been, for 76 years since that fateful June 6 on France's Normandy beaches, when allied troops in 1944 turned the course of World War II and went on to defeat fascism in Europe in one of the most remarkable feats in military history. Forgotten they will never be. Revered, yes. But Saturday's anniversary will be one of the loneliest remembrances ever, as the coronavirus pandemic is keeping almost everyone away — from government leaders to frail veterans who might not get another chance for a final farewell to their unlucky comrades.

[Last Person to Receive a Civil War Pension Dies at 90](#) [Blake Stillwell, *Military.com*, 3 June 2020]

*The Department of Veterans Affairs' motto is "to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan." The meaning of those words was perhaps never more apparent than in the case of Irene Triplett, who died Tuesday from surgical complications following a fall at a North Carolina nursing home, according to *The Wall Street Journal*. She was the last person to receive a pension from a veteran's Civil War service.*

[Read a Free Graphic Novel Honoring Medal of Honor Recipient Sen. Daniel Inouye](#) [James Barber, *Military.com*, 3 June 2020]

The nonprofit Association of the United States Army (AUSA) continues its series of graphic novels honoring Medal of Honor recipients with "Medal of Honor: Daniel Inouye," available now as a [free download](#). After witnessing the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Inouye volunteered for the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, which became one of the most decorated units of World War II. Second Lt. Inouye led an assault on German forces in Italy during the final weeks of the war and continued to fight after losing an arm.

[How World War II Vet Herb Stempel Ignited the 1950s Quiz Show Scandal](#) [James Barber, *Military.com*, 1 June 2020]

Herbert Stempel, at one time the most famous Army veteran in America, died at age 93 on April 7. His death was confirmed this weekend by his former stepdaughter, Bobra Fyne. Back in 1956, Stempel was perhaps the biggest television star the young medium had ever seen as the reigning champion on the television quiz show "21." Imagine if "Jeopardy" was the No. 1 show in prime time when champions Ken Jennings or James Holzhauer made their legendary runs. When producer Dan Enright started feeding him answers to make sure he won, Stempel went along with the charade, both because he could use the prize money and he convinced himself to buy into the producer's defense of the practice. When he was instructed to intentionally lose to Van Doren, Stempel was promised a \$250 per week job as a question consultant on "21" and another television job as a panelist on competing game show "High Low."

[VA Reverses Course, Will Remove Headstones with Nazi Symbols](#) [Richard Sisk, *Military.com*, 1 June 2020]

In a reversal, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced late Monday that it had begun the process removing the headstones of three German POWs from World War II bearing Nazi symbols

from two VA national cemeteries. “It is understandably upsetting to our veterans and their families to see Nazi inscriptions near those who gave their lives for this nation,” he said in a statement. “That’s why VA will initiate the process required to replace these POW headstones.”

[National World War II Memorial is vandalized](#) [Meredith Tibbetts, *Stars and Stripes*, 31 May 2020]

The National World War II Memorial was among the landmarks in the nation’s capital that were vandalized amid weekend protests. In the wake of the death of African American George Floyd, the vandals asked in graffiti on the outside of the memorial’s central fountain whether Black veterans count. The Friends of the National World War II Memorial responded to the question affirmatively on Twitter, adding that the memorial honors and remembers the one million Black veterans who served.