

DEOMI NEWS LINKS 21 MAY 2021

HIGHLIGHTS

[Biden signs bill to counter spike in anti-Asian hate crime](#) [Darlene Superville, *The Associated Press*, 20 May 2021]

President Joe Biden on Thursday signed legislation to curtail a dramatic rise in hate crimes against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and expressed pride that lawmakers who seem to agree on little else came together against hate and racism. Biden lavished praise on Democrats and Republicans for approving the bill by lopsided margins and sending it to the White House for his signature. Several dozen lawmakers attended the bill signing ceremony, one of the largest groups to visit the Biden White House during the pandemic. The House approved the bill 364-62 this week, following the Senate's 94-1 vote in April. Biden, who stressed his wish to help unite the country as he campaigned for office, said during the East Room event that [fighting hate and racism](#) should bring people together.

[Divide over scope of military's extremism problem impedes culture, policy changes](#) [Mark Satter, *Roll Call*, 20 May 2021]

Christopher Warnagiris last week became the fifth servicemember, and the first on active duty, arrested for participating in the Jan. 6 pro-Trump insurrection at the Capitol. The Marine Corps major is charged with a slew of federal offenses after video and photographs showed him violently storming the Capitol, pushing through a line of police officers guarding the East Rotunda doors and using his body to keep the door open and pull others inside. His arrest seemingly adds to the growing body of evidence that extremism is fomenting in the military ranks and, according to some lawmakers, defense officials and experts, needs to be addressed. "People in the White supremacist movement share a mindset that they're besieged—they feel like they're in enemy territory. And they recruit veterans to help them fight back," says Chuck Leek, a Navy veteran who once recruited more than a dozen of his military colleagues to a White supremacist group. Leek, who now works to bring others out of extremism, says he is certain that servicemembers and veterans are still being recruited.

[This New Navy Tool Will Help Commanders See Risk of Sexual Assault In Their Unit](#) [Patricia Kime, *Military.com*, 19 May 2021]

The Navy is working on a new mechanism to help commanders assess the risk of sexual assault within their units—one that relies on survey results and data to better understand the warning signs of a potential problem. Acting Navy Secretary Thomas Harker said Wednesday that the department is creating a "dashboard" containing data from multiple sources that will let leaders "assess their risk and take actions" to prevent sexual assault in their commands. According to Harker, the tool will draw from Defense Organizational Climate Surveys, pop-up surveys and other analytics, including military justice cases or reports of sexual assault or harassment, to provide a risk analysis for a unit. Commanders will access the information in the same place they can get particulars on units ranging from financial information to COVID data, he said. "These are all things we're looking to do to try to increase commanders' ability to take action on this, so we can prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault," Harker said. "This is something they haven't seen yet."

CULTURE

[42% In The U.S. Can't Name A Single Prominent Asian American, A Survey Finds](#) [Dustin Jones, NPR, 16 May 2021]

A recent survey found that nearly 80% of Asian Americans don't feel respected and say they are discriminated against by their fellow Americans. Additionally, a significant portion of respondents of multiple races said they were unaware of an increase in hate crimes and racism against Asian Americans over the past year. The [survey](#), commissioned by the new nonprofit Leading Asian Americans to Unite for Change (LAAUNCH), was based on responses from 2,766 U.S. residents between March 29 and April 14. Other results found 90% of Black Americans and 73% of Hispanic/Latino Americans say they are discriminated against in the U.S. "Most Asian Americans are still in stereotypical roles—waiters, sex workers, kung fu guys—the roles are always one dimensional and stereotypical," LAAUNCH CEO Norman Chen says. "Our data just really reinforced the opportunity for us to create well-rounded, prominent characters in movies and TV."

[After Capitol Riot, Some States Turn to Civics Education](#) [Matt Vasilogambros, Stateline, 19 May 2021]

After waiting two hours for her chance to speak, high school student Samantha Oliver chimed in to the Delaware House Education Committee hearing last week with a succinct message: Young people should be active participants in our democracy. "It is a necessity that we, the next generation, learn how to use our voices for good, for change, effectively and earnestly," said Oliver, a junior at the Sussex Academy of Arts, on the Zoom call. "We will be the ones to lead the charge of our country for the years to come." She was speaking in favor of a [measure](#) that would give sixth- through 12th-grade students one excused absence per year from school to participate in a civic activity such as attending a rally or visiting the state Capitol. If the bill passes, Delaware will become the only state in the country to offer this opportunity to students.

[Army policy offering up to three-year service break](#) [Thomas Brading, Army News Service, 17 May 2021]

A retention policy offering Soldiers a chance to take a break in service while receiving pay and benefits for up to three years is now a permanent program. The sabbatical program, called the Career Intermission Program, or CIP, is a way for Soldiers to take a knee in service for personal or professional goals when they might have otherwise left the Army, said Rowland Heflin, a personnel policy integrator with the Army G-1. During their sabbaticals, Soldiers might use the time to start families, care for ailing parents, attend college, or whatever else they need a break for, he said. While in the CIP program, Soldiers are given a monthly stipend of two-thirtieths of their basic pay along with the same medical benefits and commissary privileges. In addition, they can carry forward up to 60 days of leave on their return to active duty, Heflin said.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Comment section removed from Army recruiting ad featuring soldier with two moms](#) [Sarah Sicard, Army Times, 20 May 2021]

Two weeks ago, the Army’s official recruiting website released a series of animated advertisements showcasing the stories of several soldiers on their journey to join the nation’s oldest branch. One in particular features Cpl. Emma Malonelord, a soldier raised in California by two moms. Since its upload to YouTube, however, this video’s comment section has been disabled. It currently has nearly a million views, 36,000 dislikes and only 775 likes. “Beginning May 12 we started noticing a significant uptick in negative commentary,” Laura DeFrancisco, public affairs chief for the Army Enterprise Marketing Office, told Army Times. “The comments violated our social media policy and were not aligned with Army values. Out of respect for the safety and wellbeing of our soldiers and their families, we have disabled the comments.” [Hers is one](#) of five stories selected by the branch for recruiting advertisements under the series, titled “The Calling.”

[Demi Lovato is non-binary and is changing pronouns to they/them, singer announces](#) [BBC News, 19 May 2021]

Non-binary people don't identify as male or female, and tend not to conform to gender norms of either. “Today is a day I’m so happy to share more of my life with you all,” Demi, who’s 28, wrote on Twitter. Demi said they came to understand their gender identity after spending time doing “healing and self-reflective work” over the past year. Using they/them as pronouns “best represents the fluidity I feel in my gender expression”, the Sorry (Not Sorry) singer added. The singer said they are still “learning and coming into myself” and doesn’t consider themselves an “expert or spokesperson” on the subject. They said they will speak to other non-binary people in a video series about gender identity.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Here Are the Pioneering Women who Will Be on New Quarters](#) [Alexa Mikhail, *The 19th*, 20 May 2021]

Beginning in 2022, women’s faces will circulate through the nation’s currency on quarters—something long overdue, according to Rep. Barbara Lee, a California Democrat who has been working on this legislation since 2017. The program will have the United States Mint circulate up to five chosen women on the reverse (tail) side of the quarter-dollar from 2022 to 2025—allowing for up to 22 women to have their faces on U.S. quarters by the end of 2025. The Mint selected the first two women to be in circulation by 2022: the civil rights activist and poet Maya Angelou and astronaut Dr. Sally Ride. It’s not just about the coins, but about what they represent and the power they have to start a dialogue in this nation around women who were trailblazers in their field, Lee said. The last time a woman appeared on U.S. currency was in 2000, when gold \$1 Sacagawea coins went into circulation, honoring the Indigenous woman who helped the Lewis and Clark expedition explore the Louisiana Purchase territory.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Lego unveils first LGBTQ set ahead of Pride Month](#) [Zamira Rahim, CNN, 20 May 2021]

Lego fans can build castles, jungles and entire town centers with the right set of bricks. But from June, the company will launch a brand new product—its first ever LGBTQ-themed set, named “Everyone Is Awesome.” The 346-piece set contains 11 figures, each with an assigned rainbow color. “I wanted to create a model that symbolizes inclusivity and celebrates everyone, no matter

how they identify or who they love,” the set’s designer Matthew Ashton said in a statement Thursday. “Having LGBT-inclusive toys creates a space for families to let LGBT children know that they are loved and accepted,” Joe Nellist, from the UK’s LGBT Foundation, told CNN.

[Loosened hairstyle standards for Army women bring out critics on social media](#) [Erica Earl, *Stars and Stripes*, 14 May 2021]

One week after the Army changed its policy to permit female service members to wear their hair in something other than a bun, the verdict from social media is anything but unanimous. The change allows women to wear ponytails and braids in all duty uniforms, but a common complaint on social media forums like Facebook, Twitter and TikTok, particularly from men, is that the change makes unfair concessions to women. The hairstyle change follows another the Army made in January to provide relief to soldiers suffering migraines and traction alopecia, a hair loss condition caused by repeated pulling and tension on the hair and scalp. The changes come from a uniform policy board helmed by Sgt. Major Brian Sanders that met with female soldiers in December. The Army in January said the change was also meant to be more accommodating for Black women and permits “multiple hairstyles at once,” including twists, braids, locs and cornrows.

[A New Crowdsourcing App Hopes to Serve as the “Green Book” for LGBTQ People of Color](#) [Madeleine Carlisle, *TIME*, 18 May 2021]

As Black Americans prepared to travel in Jim Crow-era America, they might have consulted the [Green Book](#)—an extensive travel guide of hotels, restaurants, gas stations and more that welcomed Black customers. The guide, which published annually from the 1930s into the 1960s, became a crucial tool for Black Americans navigating racist and segregationist laws. Today, following the Green Book’s model, the National Black Justice Coalition (NBJC)—a civil rights organization dedicated to serving the Black LGBTQ community—has launched a web-based app called “the Lavender Book,” which lists businesses and facilities across the U.S. that are safe and inclusive spaces for LGBTQ people of color. The [crowdsourced app](#) launched in partnership with the nonprofit Out In Tech—which supports LGBTQ people in the tech industry—and allows users to search for queer-friendly businesses as they plan travel or events. Users can curate their searches by inclusive attributes: whether the venue offers gender-neutral restrooms, for example, or is Black owned, queer owned, or trans owned.

[A New Spin On A Classic Video Game Gives Native Americans Better Representation](#) [Anna King, *NPR*, 12 May 2021]

The company Gameloft tackled the redesign of Oregon Trail for Apple Arcade just in time for the increase in worldwide play because of the coronavirus pandemic. Its target audience: the now-40-year-old original fans and their kids. And more Native American players. Gameloft Brisbane creative director Jarrad Trudgen had to root out historical inaccuracies and clichés about Native American culture. “Well, as a White, middle-class Australian, I don’t think I can really speak to that,” he says. “I’d like help with that. And I’d like to talk to some Native Americans and some Native American history professors.” So he brought in three Indigenous historians. They listened to early test music for the game and said, back off the drums and flutes! And don’t use broken stilted English. Trudgen got it. “It’s like a trope to make Native American people seem primitive

somehow,” he says, “when actually there were a lot of bilingual or polylingual Native Americans at that time.” The team of historians came up with more appropriate names for game characters and advocated for new roles for Native Americans, not just roles as guides or trappers.

[“On our own terms”: How scholars of color are correcting the narrative of national tragedies](#)

[Christine Fernando, *USA TODAY*, 20 May 2021]

The day she found out George Floyd had been murdered, Nadia Brown sat on her patio and watched her three children play. She thought about Floyd calling out to his mother as former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin pressed his knee on Floyd’s neck for more than nine minutes. “What is something that I can do to make me feel like I have a bit of agency?” Brown, an associate professor of political science at Purdue University, asked herself. “What can I do for my girls?” Brown’s answer came in the form of a public syllabus, called the #BlackLivesMatter PGI Syllabus. A year later, Brown still gets emails from teachers, librarians and policymakers who use the guide she created. Public syllabuses often start out as loose lists of resources shared through social media and organized into online guides. As tragedies, from the pandemic to shootings, have shaken the nation and left teachers scrambling to help students make sense of them, public syllabuses have offered a starting point to contextualize current events. Experts say public syllabuses have allowed scholars of color to lead the way in academic spaces that have long excluded them and to explore issues affecting their own communities.

[Remarkable National Park Stories of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders](#)

[Rebecca Watson, *National Parks Foundation Blog*, 19 May 2021]

Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders have shaped the history of the United States and the world at large for thousands of years, with rich heritage and cultural traditions. National parks across the country highlight the triumphs, perseverance, and contributions of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders and visitors today continue to bring their own experiences and stories to our national parks. The National Park Foundation (NPF) and our work in preserving history and culture in parks aims to share more comprehensive and inclusive stories that amplify the full range of experiences and voices that are woven into the fabric of the United States, including those of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders. Join us in exploring a few of these stories told and preserved in national parks.

[Surviving members of Hitler’s Third Reich speak in chilling new documentary “Final Account”](#)

[Claire Barrett, *Military Times*, 18 May 2021]

The way in which one traditionally views the Holocaust is inevitably through the lens of the victim. However, director Luke Holland, driven by his own family’s connection to the horrific period surrounding World War II, attempted to explore a seldom investigated narrative—that of the perpetrator. Filmed over the course of a decade, Holland’s “Final Account” is a stirring oral history of the “individual motivations, actions, and attempted justifications of those who perpetrated the Shoah,” according to the USC Shoah Foundation. Although Holland died from brain cancer last year at the age of 71, his final work remains a living testament to his lifelong desire to preserve an important narrative largely missing from the historiography of the Holocaust. Prior to the theatrical May 21 release of “Final Account,” the film’s associate producer Sam Pope and Dr. Stephen Smith, executive director of the USC Shoah Foundation,

spoke with Military Times about the late director's final project and one of the last portraits of participants who served under Adolf Hitler's Final Solution

[\[TRAILER\]](#)

[They gave birth and love their children. And they want to remind you “not all pregnant people are women.”](#) [Grace Hauck, *USA TODAY*, 21 May 2021]

Myles Brady-Davis, who uses gender-neutral pronouns, is transmasculine and nonbinary. They were assigned female at birth but know themselves to be masculine, and their gender identity falls outside the categories of man and woman. At the end of 2019, they gave birth to their first child, Zayn. Brady-Davis is just one of many transgender, nonbinary and other gender-nonconforming people worldwide who have given birth. The topic gained public attention earlier this month when several U.S. lawmakers used the terms “pregnant people” and “birthing people” at a Congressional hearing, spurring critique from colleagues and a swirl of backlash on social media. But at the heart of the issue is real families living ordinary lives—people who want to see their experiences reflected in the language used by lawmakers and medical professionals so they can ensure the health and safety of themselves and their loved ones. “Building a family is a universal desire,” said Trystan Reese, 38, an educator and consultant who trains medical professionals on LGBTQ inclusion. “The reality is, hundreds and maybe thousands of transgender people like me have given birth all over the world over the last at least 21 years, that we know of,” Reese said, referencing a friend he said gave birth “very quietly” decades ago.

[Veterans urge Navy to name ship after first Filipino to receive Medal of Honor](#) [Seth Robson, *Stars and Stripes*, 21 May 2021]

American veterans in the Philippines are backing a campaign to name a U.S. warship after the only Filipino in the Navy to receive the Medal of Honor. Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion posts in Angeles City approved resolutions last month calling on the Navy to name a new warship after Telesforo Trinidad. Trinidad's bravery aboard the USS San Diego during a disaster at sea earned him the nation's highest military honor, according to the Naval History and Heritage Command. Tens of thousands of Filipinos have served in the U.S. military. After the Philippines obtained independence in 1946, over 35,000 Filipinos were recruited into the U.S. Navy from 1952 to 1992 under a provision of the Republic of the Philippines-United States Military Bases Agreement. In an April 20 letter to Acting Secretary of the Navy Thomas Harker, Rep. Joe Courtney, D-Conn., wrote: “Naming a future Navy warship after this hero, Telesforo Trinidad, sends a powerful and timely message about our nation and our Navy's diversity.”

DISCRIMINATION

[Black homeowner had a White friend stand in for third appraisal: Her home value doubled](#) [Alexandria Burris, *The Indianapolis Star*, 14 May 2021]

Carlette Duffy felt both vindicated and excited. Both relieved and angry. For months, she suspected she had been low-balled on two home appraisals because she's Black. She decided to put that suspicion to the test and asked a White family friend to stand in for her during an appraisal. Her home's value suddenly shot up. A lot. During the early months of the coronavirus pandemic last year, the first two appraisers who visited her home in the historic Flanner House

Homes neighborhood, just west of downtown, valued it at \$125,000 and \$110,000, respectively. But that third appraisal went differently. To get that one, Duffy, who is African American, communicated with the appraiser strictly via email, stripped her home of all signs of her racial and cultural identity and had the White husband of a friend stand in for her during the appraiser's visit. The home's new value: \$259,000. "I had to go through all of that just to say that I was right and that this is what's happening," she said. "This is real."

[A Skin Condition Makes It Hard For Some Black Men To Shave—And Get Ahead In The Military](#) [Carson Frame, *Texas Public Radio (San Antonio, Texas)*, 19 May 2021]

*Tech Sgt. Joshua Nixon joined the Air Force in 2011 in hopes of becoming a recruiter like his older brother. But the then 19-year-old struggled to keep up with the Air Force requirement that he shave his face every day. The Air Force granted Nixon a shaving profile, a waiver that allowed him to wear some short facial hair. But because of that, he found himself out of the running for certain opportunities, including the recruiting job he wanted so badly. "My commander was like, 'Yes, you're the perfect ideal. You're great with people,'" Nixon said. "But I was turned down because I had a shaving waiver. That's what made me look at everything differently. On paper, I'm the perfect airman. But because I have this medical diagnosis, I can't represent the Air Force in that aspect." According to a [recent study](#) from the journal *Military Medicine*, other airmen with shaving profiles share Nixon's frustration. In a survey, some said the profiles had hurt their military careers by disqualifying them from prestigious positions, leadership opportunities, or awards. Others said they were singled out or looked down upon by their commanders and colleagues. 63% of those who perceived a negative bias were Black.*

[Supreme Court rules ban on Jim Crow-era split juries can't be applied retroactively](#) [Erik Ortiz, *NBC News*, 17 May 2021]

The Supreme Court on Monday said a [previous ruling](#) that forbids nonunanimous jury verdicts in trials for serious crimes can't be applied retroactively, a blow to criminal justice reform advocates and defense attorneys in two states where hundreds of cases have been called into question. The justices ruled 6-3 along ideological lines that defendants convicted by split juries and whose appeals have been fully exhausted don't automatically get to challenge their convictions and benefit from new trials. The ruling, however, doesn't stop prosecutors in Louisiana and Oregon—states that historically have allowed nonunanimous juries—from granting new trials in individual cases. While advocates had been hopeful that the justices would determine that their decision in 2020 to ban split juries should be applied retroactively, the Supreme Court was required to consider whether doing so would warrant "watershed" status, a high bar related to ensuring that there is "fundamental fairness and accuracy" in criminal proceedings.

[Wisconsin DOJ official alleges racial, sexual harassment](#) [Todd Richmond, *The Associated Press*, 17 May 2021]

A top Wisconsin Department of Justice administrator filed a federal complaint alleging that she's being underpaid and harassed at work because she's a Black woman. DOJ Division of Law Enforcement Services Administrator Tina Virgil filed the complaint on April 16 with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission seeking an unspecified amount of lost wages,

damages and legal fees. “This ongoing harassment and the DOJ’s unwillingness to put a stop to it has caused me emotional distress, anxiety, and other health challenges,” Virgil wrote in the complaint. According to her complaint, Virgil is the only Black administrator in the DOJ. Her salary when she began her new position in 2019 was less than her White predecessor’s pay and she remains the second-lowest paid administrator at the agency, the complaint alleges. She’s also paid less than some deputy administrators and directors who are White but rank beneath her.

DIVERSITY

[Chicago mayor: Reporters of color get 2-year mark interviews](#) [Don Babin and Sophia Tareen, *The Associated Press*, 20 May 2021]

Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot announced Wednesday that she will grant one-on-one interviews to mark the two-year anniversary of her inauguration solely to journalists of color, saying she has been struck by the “overwhelmingly” White press corps in Chicago. “I ran to break up the status quo that was failing so many,” Lightfoot, who is Black, tweeted, also issuing a detailed letter to City Hall reporters on her decision. “That isn’t just in City Hall. It’s a shame that in 2021, the City Hall press corps is overwhelmingly White in a city where more than half of the city identifies as Black, Latino, AAPI or Native American.” While the move isn’t unprecedented in recent years, it drew fierce scrutiny among the city’s press corps and beyond with members of the media quickly taking Lightfoot to task for her decision. Journalism has long grappled with lack of racial diversity. More than 75% of newsroom employees are White, according to a 2018 Pew Research Center analysis of census data. In turn, reporters of color note they’re often shut out when scoring high profile interviews.

[Democratic lawmakers urge Biden to act on gender-neutral federal IDs](#) [Amanda Becker, *The 19th*, 18 May 2021]

A group of congressional Democrats is asking President Joe Biden on Tuesday to fulfill a campaign promise and use his executive authority to mandate the inclusion of a gender-neutral “X” marker on federal IDs. The federal government currently requires gender markers on a variety of identification documents, including passports and Social Security cards, but in most instances only the “F” or “M” designation is available. Adding an “X” marker to these documents—and mandating that issuing agencies accept an individual’s self-attestation of gender, instead of having to provide medical documentation—would support individuals who “merely want to have their information accurately displayed on identifying documents,” the lawmakers write. Separately, the administration is waiting for the conclusion of a multi-year legal battle between [Navy veteran Dana Zzyym](#) and the State Department over the agency’s continued refusal to issue them an accurate passport with an “X” marker.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[DON announces Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Planning Actions](#) [U.S. Navy Press Office, *Navy.mil*, 17 May 2021]

Acting Secretary of the Navy Thomas Harker released a [memo](#) announcing specific actions towards the Department’s diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. The effort directs the Chief Diversity Officer of the Navy, Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs)

(ASN (M&RA)), Ms. Cathy Kessmeier, to lead a Strategic Planning Team and develop an action plan to promote DEI in Department-wide policies, programs and operations. Harker's memo formalizes guidance and establishes a framework to develop a strategic plan, identify actionable measures to integrate ongoing DEI efforts and recommend new initiatives.

[Female welders torch glass ceiling in male-dominated field](#) [Cynthia McFadden, Jake Whitman and Rich Schapiro, *NBC News*, 17 May 2021]

Women make up only about 5 percent of the welding workforce. Four years ago, Bailey Steele was working a minimum-wage job at Taco Bell. Now, she's a full-time welder, making more money doing something she loves. Steele's journey from low-paid taco-maker to highly skilled ironworker was sparked by a unique Detroit organization that teaches women to weld. The intensive course run by nonprofit [Women Who Weld](#) has trained roughly 400 aspiring ironworkers since its launch seven years ago. At many of the places where they work, there isn't even a women's bathroom on the factory floor. The job is demanding and the environment is far from luxurious, but Steele said she takes special pride knowing that her work will outlive her.

[Marines Still Under The Gun To Integrate Women Despite Success Of First Boot Camp Class](#) [Steve Walsh, *PBS*, 17 May 2021]

Now that one group of female Marines has graduated boot camp in San Diego, the Corps is still under a Congressional deadline to end gender segregation. The young, female recruits are moving faster than their leaders. Pfc. Emily Zamudio, 19, of Madera, California is part of the first female platoon to graduate Marine boot camp in San Diego. The female platoon had the top scores in physical fitness and combat fitness—over five male platoons in their company. Female Marines call themselves “The Fewer, The Prouder,” a play on the tag line for one of the most famous Marine recruiting slogans, “The Few, The Proud, The Marines.” Even after all combat roles in the U.S. military were opened in 2015, there are still few women in the infantry. Zamudio signed up to be one of them. The law still says the Marine Corps must fully integrate by 2028. Senior Drill Instructor Amber Straoscik doesn't want to wait any longer. “There are people who don't want to break away from tradition, but this isn't breaking away from tradition,” she said. “It's introducing something to the tradition. It's allowing us to be part of that, which ultimately could have been done a long time ago.”

[Oregon to recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day in October](#) [The Associated Press, 21 May 2021]

The state of Oregon will recognize the second Monday in October as Indigenous Peoples' Day under a new bill passed by the Oregon Legislature. Oregon Public Broadcasting reports that beginning with Monday, Oct. 11, the state will recognize that Christopher Columbus' “discovery” of the Americas is historically inaccurate and unworthy of celebration due to his voyage opening the door to “heinous crimes against humanity.” The bill was brought forth by the Legislature's only Indigenous lawmakers, Rep. Tawna Sanchez, D-Portland, and Rep. Teresa Alonso-Leon, D-Woodburn. “Back in 1937 Columbus Day became a federal holiday. While Oregon does not formally observe Columbus Day as a state holiday, it has been celebrated nationwide since 1971,” Sen. Majority Leader Rob Wagner said. “The state of Oregon will become the 11th state to formally recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day. Our Indigenous people,

language and cultures contribute incredible richness and vitality to the tapestry of the place we now call Oregon.”

[Race on Campus: “A Canoe Trying to Change the Direction of a Battleship”](#) [Vimal Patel, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 18 May 2021]

The North Star State’s tribes have many disputes with the University of Minnesota, an institution that, like many colleges, was built on tribal land. These include questions about land ownership, exploitative research, and artifacts displayed in university museums that belong to the tribes. So university leaders created a new, and rare, position to help settle these issues and repair the relationship with the state’s 11 tribes: a senior adviser to the president for Native American affairs. The new administrator will try to build trust with the tribes and help the university’s own indigenous students succeed. The hire comes at a time when academe, like all of American society, is reckoning with its racist history. At the University of Minnesota, this includes efforts toward reconciliation with the state’s tribes based on a broad investigation into its history, says President Joan Gabel. “Just saying ‘trust me’ is wholly insufficient,” Gabel says. “Our commitment is to being a partner with the tribes in how we look at our history, with all of the vulnerability that requires, and doing it together rather than the university doing it on its own and expecting everyone to just receive the information.”

[Racism drove first Vietnamese-born U.S. Army general’s passion for diversity, inclusion](#) [Erica Earl, *Stars and Stripes*, 20 May 2021]

For the Army’s first Vietnamese-born general officer, the trauma of escaping to America with his family during the Vietnam War was a call to foster a more inclusive military. Maj. Gen. Viet Luong, commander of U.S. Army Japan, was 9 years old when he fled Vietnam with his family in 1975. He shared his story during a U.S. Army Japan Facebook Live event on Tuesday as part of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Luong faced racism as a young immigrant growing up in Los Angeles, he told Stars and Stripes via email Wednesday. The coupling of his family’s harrowing ordeal in Vietnam and the discrimination he faced drove his passion for diversity and inclusion, he said. “Just to be honest, the scars from that event are indelible,” he said during the Facebook Live interview. “I don’t like to retell that story all that much, but I think it’s a story that needs to be told because it’s part of who we are as Americans.”

[“That was because of the Army”: Fort Bragg four-star general promotes Army hiring days](#) [Rachael Riley, *The Fayetteville Observer*, (Fayetteville, N.C.), 19 May 2021]

Gen. Michael Garrett is the commander of the U.S. Army Forces Command, which leads more than 750,000 regular Army and Reserve soldiers across the nation. His own introduction to the Army started with his father, retired Command Sgt. Maj. Edward Garrett, who served for 35 years. “Like many people who join the Army, my dad was looking for a way to better his lot in life,” Garrett said. “He was looking for increased opportunities.” Garrett said he thinks the same opportunities that prompted his father to join the Army as a young Black man in Cleveland during the 1950s still exist today. “He came into the Army with a 10th-grade education and went on to have a distinguished career and college degrees—and that was because of the Army,” Garrett said. As local recruiting stations and recruiters hold virtual career fairs during Army National Hiring Days to discuss the benefits soldiers receive, Garrett is also sharing the same

information. He is a former deputy commanding general of Army Recruiting Command. Garrett said he views diversity in the force as an asset. He is the ninth African American four-star general in the Army's history.

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[VMI Gets 1st Female Commander of Corps of Cadets](#) [The Associated Press, 14 May 2021]

The Virginia Military Institute is getting its first female commander of the Corps of Cadets. Cadet Kasey Meredith took on the role at a change of command parade on Friday. She is the first female regimental commander in VMI's 182-year history. The rising senior will be the military commander of the corps, responsible to the commandant of cadets for the training, appearance, discipline, health, welfare and morale of about 1,700 cadets. VMI, founded as an all-male military college, was the nation's last state-supported college to become coeducational. The first women enrolled in 1997 after a legal battle that went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. On Friday, the college honored the 592 cadets and alumni who have been killed in action with a parade. Until this year, the annual parade only honored the cadets who died fighting for the Confederacy during the Civil War's Battle of New Market. The change comes amid a state-ordered investigation into racism on the campus.

EXTREMISM

[Black, Brown and extremist: Across the far-right spectrum, people of color play a more visible role](#) [Hannah Allam and Razzan Nakhlawi, *The Washington Post*, 16 May 2021]

People of color are playing increasingly visible roles across the spectrum of far-right activism. Today, non-White activists speak for groups of radicalized MAGA supporters, parts of the "Patriot" movement, and, in rare cases, neo-Nazi factions. Although a few have concealed their identities, many others proudly acknowledge their backgrounds and offer themselves as counterpoints to charges of pervasive racism in right-wing movements. The "multiracial far right," as it's sometimes called, adds another layer to an already fraught debate over how to address violent extremism, the top domestic terrorism threat. People of color are a tiny fraction of that world, but analysts say they play an outsized role in challenging perceptions. The common refrain that White supremacy is a main driver of the far right is complicated when Black or Brown figures speak publicly for Stop the Steal, the Proud Boys, Patriot Prayer and other factions that are under scrutiny. The trend is forcing new ways to think about, and talk about, the far right's appeal.

[He bragged at the dentist's office about attending the Capitol riot, feds say. Another patient turned him in.](#) [Timothy Bella, *The Washington Post*, 18 May 2021]

During a routine checkup on Jan. 12, a patient listened in as an alleged rioter who was getting his teeth cleaned bragged about his breach of the building, according to federal authorities. Daniel Warmus, of Alden, N.Y., talked of smoking marijuana inside the Capitol and refusing a police officer's order to leave the building, and even proudly played a video from Jan. 6, a federal complaint states. After the patient "overheard Warmus talking about his experience while at a dentist's office," the person, who authorities said wished to remain anonymous, alerted the FBI and passed along Warmus's phone number and home address. That mundane trip to the

dentist's office led to an investigation that concluded this week with Warmus, 37, in police custody. Warmus was arrested Tuesday in Buffalo for his role in the Capitol riot, the Justice Department announced, joining more than 410 people who've been arrested since Jan. 6. He's been charged with violent entry and disorderly conduct on Capitol grounds, knowingly entering or remaining in any restricted building without lawful authority and knowingly and with intent to impede or disrupt the orderly conduct of government business.

[House strikes deal to create independent January 6 commission](#) [Jeremy Herb, Ryan Nobles and Annie Grayer, CNN, 14 May 2021]

The top Democrat and Republican on the House Homeland Security Committee struck a deal to create a bipartisan commission to investigate the January 6 attack on the Capitol, breaking a months-long logjam between House leaders about how to structure the independent panel. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said in a letter to lawmakers on Friday that the House would vote on the legislation creating the commission next week, as well as a \$2 billion supplemental funding bill to bolster security at the Capitol. The commission proposed plan would include a 10-member panel, with half appointed by Democratic congressional leaders, including the chair, and half by Republicans, including the vice chair. The panel will have the power to issue subpoenas if they are signed off by both the chair and vice chair, according to a summary released by the committee. The commission would be tasked with issuing a final report by the end of this year, making it a quick timeline for the panel to put out a final product.

[The link between extremism and military functioning](#) [Marek N. Posard, William Marcellino and Todd Helmus, *Military Times*, 20 May 2021] [COMMENTARY]

The Department of Defense clearly prohibits service members from actively participating in extremist activities. Now, some are proposing that this policy should be broader and include passive forms of participation like possessing extremist literature. It's possible that two problems might arise by broadening policy to include passive forms of extremist activities. First, there seems to be no clear standard for what is (or is not) extremism. For example, past military training materials have grouped together evangelical Christians, orthodox Judaism, and the Ku Klux Klan as extremism. Second, military commanders are already responsible for intervening when they observe extremist activities. Indeed, current policy on extremism places a tremendous responsibility on commanders: they must enforce the current ban on active forms of extremist participation and also intervene when they observe behaviors that may rise to the level of violating this policy in the future.

[Pentagon pushes back on report of anti-extremism social media surveillance program](#) [Meghann Myers, *Military Times*, 18 May 2021]

The Defense Department is not planning to troll troops' social media accounts for extremist activity, the Pentagon's top spokesman told reporters on Tuesday, contrary to a Monday report about a pilot program to that effect. The Intercept cited documents and a "senior Pentagon official" in a story about a program that would "continuously monitor military personnel for 'concerning behaviors,'" online, spearheaded by the Pentagon's extremism working group and its chair, Bishop Garrison. "There's no pilot program being run by Mr. Garrison or the extremist working group to examine social media," John Kirby said, calling the story "misreporting." he

working group is tasked with reviewing current Pentagon policy that touches on extremism, Kirby said, but not with making new policy. The group is also charged with creating a department-wide definition of extremism, revising transition materials to prevent veterans from being targeted and to launch studies or surveys to get into the prevalence of extremist views among service members.

[U.S. to ramp up tracking of domestic extremism on social media](#) [Momaan Merchant, *The Associated Press*, 20 May 2021]

The Department of Homeland Security plans to ramp up social media tracking as part of an enhanced focus on domestic violent extremism. While the move is a response to weaknesses exposed by the deadly U.S. Capitol insurrection, it's raising concerns about undermining Americans' civil liberties. President Joe Biden's top appointees have called White supremacists the greatest security threat to the country and are pushing for bolstered intelligence gathering. Closely watching are advocates for communities of color and groups that have previously been the focus of intensified surveillance, sometimes unlawfully. DHS in recent weeks has announced a new office in its intelligence branch focusing on domestic extremism and a new center to facilitate "local prevention frameworks" that, according to a statement, can better identify people "who may be radicalizing, or have radicalized, to violence."

[What we know about the "unprecedented" U.S. Capitol riot arrests](#) [Clare Hymes, Cassidy McDonald and Eleanor Watson, *CBS News*, 18 May 2021]

The Department of Justice told CBS News that as of May 6, approximately 440 defendants had been arrested since the attack. The government has said in court filings that in addition to the more than 400 people who had already been charged, federal prosecutors still expect to charge at least 100 more. Prosecutors have called the case "unprecedented" in scale, and the government said in a March court filing that the Capitol attack "is likely the most complex investigation ever prosecuted by the Department of Justice." At least 47 of those arrested are current or former military members. Of those, one is an active duty service member, four are current part-time troops in the Army Reserve or National Guard, and 42 previously served in the military, according to attorney statements, military service records and court documents obtained by CBS News. Authorities have connected at least 57 alleged rioters to extremist groups, including the Proud Boys, Oath Keepers, Three Percenters, Texas Freedom Force and the conspiracy ideology QAnon.

HUMAN RELATIONS

[Air Force commander hopes to break the stigma of mental health by sharing her story](#) [Steve Dent, *Idaho News 6*, (Boise, Idaho), 18 May 2021]

May is mental health awareness month and that holds a lot of weight for Lt. Col. Angelina Stephens who commands the 366th Fighter Wing Maintenance Squadron at Mountain Home Air Force Base. Stephens has had a successful career alongside her husband, an F-15 pilot, but that doesn't mean it has been an easy journey. "Every day was very difficult to see past the mental illness that I was dealing with," said Stephens. "I was still doing my job, I was still taking care of my kid and interacting with people it was all really hard." Eventually, Stephens got help from a mental health professional to process her journey but her experience as a commander has shown

the impact of early intervention and how it can make a big difference. “I was terrified to go to mental health and I remember sitting in that chair at that first appointment and I asked more questions about what it would look like for my career.” Mental health used to be a huge stigma in the military, but that has changed over the years and Stephens wants the airmen that she commands to know that it’s okay to seek help.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Navy secretary asks for funding to embed mental health professionals in units](#) [Caitlin Doornbos, *Stars and Stripes*, 19 May 2021]

The Navy has submitted a reprogramming request to the Defense Department that would allow the service to reallocate some of its current budget to spend on mental health services, acting Navy Secretary Thomas Harker told reporters Wednesday. The move would fund more embedded mental health practitioners “at the pointy end of the stick with the sailors and Marines, being able to give them services at the units where they are,” Harker said. “This is an area that we strongly believe in because it helps get people access to treatment at an early level, access to informal treatment.” The program sends hospital corpsman who have taken behavioral health technician classes into units to act as an “immediate first response” for sailors suffering from mental health issues, Harker said. About 35% of those trained as mental health practitioners in the Navy are embedded now.

[OPM Urges Agencies to Support Feds’ Mental Health](#) [Erich Wagner, *GovExec*, 17 May 2021]

The Office of Personnel Management last week urged federal agencies to focus on employees’ mental health and work-life balance after a year where many feds have remained isolated at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In a [memo](#) to agency heads, OPM Associate Director for Employee Services Rob Shriver noted that President Biden declared May to be [National Mental Health Awareness Month](#) and said supporting federal workers’ mental health is essential to fostering high performance. The importance of focusing on mental health is even greater now, after workers have lived for more than a year of a deadly pandemic. On Thursday, OPM will host a panel discussion for work-life coordinators and other HR officials at federal agencies on “radical self care, resilience and suicide prevention,” featuring experts from the National Institutes of Health, the University of Maryland School of Social Work and the Black Mental Health Alliance. And the agency [posted](#) a series of tips for supervisors and HR professionals on best practices to support mental health in the federal workforce, especially “as agencies prepare for a post-pandemic workplace.”

MISCELLANEOUS

[Afghans who helped the U.S. now fear being left behind](#) [Rahim Faiez and Ben Fox, *The Associated Press*, 17 May 2021]

He served as an interpreter alongside U.S. soldiers on hundreds of patrols and dozens of firefights in eastern Afghanistan, earning a glowing letter of recommendation from an American platoon commander and a medal of commendation. Still, Ayazudin Hilal was turned down when he applied for one of the scarce special visas that would allow him to relocate to the U.S. with his family. Now, as American and NATO forces prepare to leave the country, he and thousands of

others who aided the war effort fear they will be left stranded, facing the prospect of Taliban reprisals. “We are not safe,” the 41-year-old father of six said of Afghan civilians who worked for the U.S. or NATO. “The Taliban is calling us and telling us, ‘Your stepbrother is leaving the country soon, and we will kill all of you guys.’” The fate of interpreters after the troop withdrawal is one of the looming uncertainties surrounding the withdrawal, including a possible resurgence of terrorist threats and a reversal of fragile gains for women if chaos, whether from competing Kabul-based warlords or the Taliban, follows the end of America’s military engagement.

[Citizenship rules eased for kids born abroad to same-sex couples](#) [Suzanne Monyak, *Roll Call*, 18 May 2021]

The State Department on Tuesday made it easier for American citizens who used reproductive technology, including many in same-sex marriages, to confer U.S. citizenship on children they had while abroad, scrapping a previous genetic requirement imposed under prior administrations. Under the department’s new interpretation, children born abroad to married parents may be entitled to birthright citizenship as long as one parent is a U.S. citizen and the child is related either genetically, or gestationally, to one parent. Critically, the department will no longer require the child to be biologically related to the American parent in order for that child to be recognized as a U.S. citizen at birth, an issue that had a disproportionate impact on gay couples. The State Department said in a statement the updated interpretation “takes into account the realities of modern families and advances in [assisted reproductive technology].”

[COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy higher among soldiers, Black service members, study shows](#) [Harm Venhuizen, *Military Times*, 17 May 2021]

Service members’ decisions on whether or not to get vaccinated vary significantly between different demographic groupings, according to a new military study. In addition to race, ethnicity, and age, researchers found that initiation of the vaccine process varied by branch of service, occupational specialty, and level of education. Between the four military branches, the Army had the lowest rate of vaccination. Marines were 52 percent more likely to get vaccinated than soldiers. Sailors and airmen were respectively 45 percent and 15 percent more likely. Black service members were least likely to choose to receive the COVID-19 vaccination, as well as female service members and those with lower ranks and education levels. [Research surveying the civilian population](#) also suggests high rates of vaccine hesitancy among Black Americans. During the term of the study, 29 percent of White service members initiated the vaccine process, while only 25.5 percent of Hispanic and 18.7 percent of Black service members across the military chose to do so. The study was published in the [April edition of the Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#), the military’s peer-reviewed medical journal.

[DOD Official Discusses “Moral Obligation” to Help Those in Afghanistan Who Helped U.S.](#) [Todd Lopez, *DOD News*, 20 May 2021]

While soldiers leave the country, many Afghans who provided support to the U.S. and its allies will remain behind. They and their families may face the threat of retribution for having provided support to the Americans. The Defense Department believes it’s important those individuals and their families are taken care of. “We have a moral obligation to help those that have helped us

over the past 20 years of our presence and work in Afghanistan,” David Helvey, the acting assistant secretary of defense for Indo-Pacific security affairs, said during a hearing today before the Senate Armed Services Committee. Right now, Helvey said, the DOD is working with the State Department and other government agencies to look at programs, including the Special Immigrant Visa Program, as a solution to help partners in Afghanistan who won’t be retrograded out of the country along with soldiers, helicopters and weapons systems. But the SIP is limited in its ability, Helvey said. Two other options, he said, might include humanitarian or significant public benefit parole, which U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services can use to let some classes of individuals who are currently outside the United States into the country.

[Navajo Nation surpasses Cherokee to become largest U.S. tribe](#) [Felicia Fonseca, *The Associated Press*, 19 May 2021]

The Navajo Nation has by far the largest land mass of any Native American tribe in the country. Now, it’s boasting the largest enrolled population, too. Navajos clamored to enroll or fix their records as the tribe offered hardship assistance payments from last year’s federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act. That boosted the tribe’s rolls from about 306,000 to nearly 400,000 citizens. The figure tops the Cherokee Nation’s enrollment of 392,000. But it, too, has been growing, said tribal spokeswoman Julie Hubbard. The Oklahoma tribe has been receiving about 200 more applications per month from potential enrollees, leaving Navajo’s position at the top unstable. The numbers matter because tribes often are allocated money based on their number of citizens. Each of the 574 federally recognized tribes determines how to count its population. Navajo, for example, requires a one-quarter blood quantum to enroll. Cherokee primarily uses lineal descent.

[Pentagon Needs Better Data on Domestic Abuse in the Military Community, Audit Finds](#)

[Patricia Kime, *Military.com*, 17 May 2021]

The Defense Department recorded more than 42,000 incidents of domestic abuse in its population from 2015 to 2019, but the real number is likely higher. That’s because the data collected by the department is incomplete, according to a new report from the Government Accountability Office. By law, the DOD must collect and report data on incidents that meet its criteria for domestic abuse. But it fails to consistently collect information on all domestic abuse allegations and fails to substantiate many complaints, making it difficult for the Pentagon to understand the scope of the problem, GAO auditors told Congress in a report released earlier this month. While the DOD has broad definitions for the varying types of abuse and collects data on incidents that meet its criteria, it does not collect data on all allegations—something it has been required to do by law since 1999—nor does it track actions taken by commanders in response to abuse allegations.

[Poll Details The Very Different Views Of Black And White Americans On Race And Police](#)

[Domenico Montanaro, *NPR*, 17 May 2021]

White and Black Americans have very different views of race in America and have had very different experiences when it comes to dealing with discrimination and trusting police, a [new NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist poll](#) details. And three-quarters of American adults agree with the guilty verdict for former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin for the murder of George Floyd, though about half of Republicans and Trump supporters think it was either the wrong

decision or they aren't sure. The survey also found a big gender gap on the threat of White supremacy. Americans are split on whether it represents the "most lethal terrorist threat to the homeland today," as President Biden said recently. The majority of women said it does; the majority of men said it doesn't.

[VA accountability office says it's improved, but whistleblowers aren't so sure](#) [Nicole Ogrysko, Federal News Network, 19 May 2021]

The Department of Veterans Affairs' Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection (OAWP) is at a crucial moment in its short-lived tenure. Congress is considering new legislation that it hopes will make the office more effective after years of fielding complaints about its performance from VA whistleblowers, oversight groups and even OAWP employees themselves. Current OAWP leaders said they've made progress since 2019, when the VA inspector general said the office failed to protect whistleblowers and often misinterpreted its statutory mission. The VA accountability office conducted roughly 350 investigations and issued 99 disciplinary recommendations since last April, Hansel Cordeiro, acting assistant secretary for the VA accountability office, told the House Veterans Affairs Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee. But the department implemented about half of OAWP's recommendations last year, and whistleblower advocates and oversight groups say the VA accountability office hasn't done nearly enough to earn the trust of employees.

[Why Millennials Can't Grow Up](#) [Annie Lowrey, The Atlantic, 13 May 2021]

[COMMENTARY]

Millennials, as just about everyone knows at this point, are a generation delayed. The pandemic recession has led not-so-young adults to put off having kids, buying a house, getting married, or investing in a car—yet again. Marriage is a prime example. Millennials are [getting hitched](#) later in life than people in prior generations did. In terms of income and, especially, wealth, Millennials as a class have fallen behind, accumulating billions and billions of dollars less in net worth than Gen Xers and Baby Boomers did at the same point in their lives. [Data](#) from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis suggest that older Millennials have roughly 11 percent less wealth than expected, given rates of inflation, and may well be the first generation in modern life to end up poorer than their parents. The [skew](#) becomes even larger when comparing White Millennials with Black Millennials: This is a generation committed to racial equality, but not one manifesting it. Younger White families are roughly as wealthy now as young White families were a few decades ago. But Black Millennials are poorer, on average, their collective net worths trailing by half.

[REPRINT]

MISCONDUCT

[Marine Cpl. Thae Ohu out of the brig, final decision on discharge delayed](#) [Philip Athey, Marine Corps Times, 17 May 2021]

After almost a year in pretrial confinement Cpl. Thae Ohu is free. The Marine, then an administrative specialist at the Marine Corps Intelligence Schools in Virginia Beach, Virginia, was arrested and charged with attempted murder, multiple accounts of assault, and destruction of

government property stemming from an April 2020 incident where she tried to stab her then-boyfriend, Michael Hinesley, a Marine at the time. She claims that the incident was a result of trauma from a previous sexual assault while in the Marine Corps. On Wednesday, as part of a plea deal, Ohu pleaded guilty to one count of aggravated assault on an intimate partner with a dangerous weapon, two counts of assault consummated by battery, one count of destruction of government property, and one count with two specifications of willfully disobeying a superior commissioned officer. Prosecutors dropped the murder charges as part of the plea deal.

[Space Force CO Who Got Holiday Call from Trump Fired Over Comments Decrying Marxism in the Military](#) [Oriana Pawlyk, *Military.com*, 15 May 2021]

*A commander of a U.S. Space Force unit tasked with detecting ballistic missile launches has been fired for comments made during a podcast promoting his new book, which claims Marxist ideologies are becoming prevalent in the United States military. Lt Col. Matthew Lohmeier, commander of 11th Space Warning Squadron at Buckley Air Force Base, Colorado, was relieved from his post Friday by Lt. Gen. Stephen Whiting, the head of Space Operations Command, over a loss of confidence in his ability to lead, *Military.com* has exclusively learned. For a self-published work, policies that may apply include DOD Directive 1344.10 and associated guidelines discussing political activity in uniform. According to the services' standards, personnel may express their views freely, but they are still expected to uphold their branch's core values both on and off duty.*

[SEE ALSO] [Space Force CO Fired Over Comments About Marxism in the Military Now Subject of IG Probe](#)

[Watchdog: More than 80 CBP employees violated social media policies](#) [Suzanne Monyak, *Roll Call*, 14 May 2021]

The Homeland Security Department's Office of Inspector General found that, from January 2016 through June 2019, CBP handled the cases of 83 employees who "posted or commented on inappropriate content on social media." The flagged cases included one instance in 2018 when an Office of Field Operations employee posted "a Valentine's Day greeting from Adolf Hitler and anti-immigrant content" on a personal Instagram account. Later that year, another OFO employee posted anti-immigrant content on Twitter, including "a cartoon depicting children locked in kennels," according to the report published Friday. The inspector general also revealed the existence of a private Facebook group, called "Laredo Choir Practice," where seven Border Patrol employees posted racist content. A final agency decision issued as part of the Equal Employment Opportunity complaint process found the two supervisors who handled the seven employees' cases were "ineffective and inappropriate" and that it appeared "management took very little initiative to address the racial harassment," according to the OIG report.

[SEE ALSO]

RACISM

[Covid "hate crimes" against Asian Americans on rise](#) [BBC News, 19 May 2021]

An elderly Thai immigrant dies after being shoved to the ground. A Filipino-American is slashed in the face with a box cutter. A Chinese woman is slapped and then set on fire. These are just

examples of recent violent attacks on Asian Americans, part of a surge in abuse since the start of the pandemic a year ago. From being spat on and verbally harassed to incidents of physical assault, there have been thousands of reported cases in recent months. Advocates and activists say these are hate crimes, and often linked to rhetoric that blames Asian people for the spread of Covid-19. The FBI warned at the start of the Covid outbreak in the U.S. that it expected a surge in hate crimes against those of Asian descent. Federal hate crime data for 2020 has not yet been released, though hate crimes in 2019 were at their highest level in over a decade. Late last year, the [United Nations issued a report](#) that detailed “an alarming level” of racially motivated violence and other hate incidents against Asian Americans.

[Don't overreact to the N-word. Banishing it won't end racism. We have real work to do.](#) [Michael J. Stern, *USA TODAY*, 19 May 2021] [OPINION]

On more than one occasion I've used the “N-word” in public, when speaking to a group of strangers. Each time, I was standing in a federal court addressing a jury and quoting a defendant's own words at his trial. While I always warned the jury at the outset of the trial that I would be repeating direct quotations that included offensive words, I never worried doing so would jeopardize my job or brand me a racist. This is how things worked when I was a federal prosecutor. Because no one with a lick of common sense would think that quoting a racial epithet in this context meant I advocated the bigotry that word carries when it is launched as an insult from a passing car at an African American walking home from the grocery store. When used as an insult directed at someone, the N-word is reprehensible. It isn't just a slur; it conjures a shameful time in American history when it was intertwined with violence and legal discrimination designed to keep an entire race down. But there is a difference between using the word as a slur and repeating it as a quotation, using it as a historical reference or including it in the arts.

[Fauci says pandemic exposed “undeniable effects of racism”](#) [*The Associated Press*, 16 May 2021]

The immunologist who leads the COVID-19 response in the United States said Sunday that “the undeniable effects of racism” have led to unacceptable health disparities that especially hurt African Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans during the pandemic. “COVID-19 has shone a bright light on our own society's failings,” Dr. Anthony Fauci said during a graduation ceremony for Emory University. Speaking by webcast from Washington, Fauci told the graduates in Atlanta that many members of minority groups work in essential jobs where they might be exposed to the coronavirus. He also said they are more likely to become infected if exposed because of medical conditions such as hypertension, chronic lung disease, diabetes or obesity.

[How colorism haunts dark-skinned immigrant communities](#) [Fred de Sam Lazaro and Adam Raney, *PBS News*, 19 May 2021]

In almost every corner of the planet, there's a huge social dividend that comes from being lighter-skinned. Sociologists trace it back centuries to European colonization, slavery and class or caste. Studies show people with lighter complexions earn more, are less likely to be arrested and, if convicted, serve shorter sentences than people with darker skin. Whiteness is the global beauty standard. It is reinforced in marketing by the multibillion-dollar business of skin lightening products, hundreds of obscure brands, and some very well-known ones as well. Fair & Lovely is

one of the most recognizable brands across South Asia and parts of Africa. It's made by Unilever, better known in America for Dove, Caress and dozens of other household products. Minneapolis dermatologist Dr. Margareth Pierre-Louis says some creams don't work as advertised. Others have varying degrees of toxicity. The most dangerous, and very popular, she adds, are steroid-based cream. Due to both the stigma and isolation of many consumers, it's a problem that gets little public attention.

["Not tolerating this nonsense": Seventh noose found at Amazon construction site in Connecticut](#) [Elinor Aspegren, *USA TODAY*, 20 May 2021]

Amazon is shutting down a construction site in Windsor, Connecticut, after a seventh noose was found there, the Connecticut NAACP and the company said Thursday. The latest incident, which occurred Wednesday, comes after the first noose was discovered on April 27, hanging from a steel beam on the second floor of the building, Windsor Police Capt. Andrew Power said in a statement. Amazon is closing the site while security measures are put in place, company spokesperson Brian Griggs said at an NAACP news conference Thursday. "Hate, racism or discrimination have no place in our society and are certainly not tolerated in any Amazon workplace—whether it be under construction like this one, or fully operational," he said. The FBI's Civil Rights Division and the Connecticut State Police are helping with the investigation, Windsor police said. "The implications of a hanging noose anywhere are unacceptable and will always generate the appropriate investigative response," FBI special agent David Sundberg said in a statement.

[On Brown v. Board anniversary, White Americans must still wrestle with legacy of racism](#) [Ross Wiener, *USA TODAY*, 17 May 2021] [OPINION]

As we commemorate the 67th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education, Americans have much to learn about the legacy and unrealized promise that Brown represents. As a student of American history, a civil rights lawyer and an education equity expert, I thought I was well-versed in the landmark decision. A recent discovery about Brown humbled me and reveals something essential about why Americans are still so riven by issues of race and racism. I grew up with reverence for Brown's striking down legal segregation in public schools. I wanted to follow in the footsteps of Justice Thurgood Marshall and advance America's quest for racial justice. Even as I revered Brown and its cause of vindicating the rights of Black Americans, it always struck me as necessary but not sufficient. The ruling talks about the harm of segregation to African American children, but I also wondered: Why weren't we also addressing the toll racism takes on the psychological and moral development of White Americans?

[One of the last survivors of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre—107 years old—wants justice](#) [DeNeen L. Brown, *The Washington Post*, 19 May 2021]

She'd just turned 7 when a White mob descended on her all-Black neighborhood in a murderous rage. "It's hard to talk about it," said Viola Fletcher, now 107 and one of the last living survivors of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. But a century later, as Tulsa prepares to mark the 100th anniversary of the massacre, she's still bearing witness to one of the worst episodes of racial violence in American history. On Wednesday, Fletcher and her 100-year-old brother, Hughes "Uncle Red" Vann Ellis, will testify before a House Judiciary subcommittee studying

reparations for the descendants of millions of enslaved Africans. Fletcher, Ellis and another massacre survivor, Lessie Benningfield Randle, now 106, are lead plaintiffs in a reparations lawsuit filed last year against the City of Tulsa, the County of Tulsa, the State of Oklahoma, and the Tulsa Chamber of Commerce. The lawsuit argues Oklahoma and Tulsa are responsible for what happened during the massacre, which historians believe left as many as 300 Black people dead, 10,000 homeless and the all-Black community of Greenwood destroyed.

[Supreme Court won't hear case involving the N-word](#) [The Associated Press, 17 May 2021]

The Supreme Court is declining to hear a case that would have let the justices decide whether a single use of the N-word in the workplace can create a hostile work environment. The high court said Monday it would not take the case of a former Texas hospital employee who said he was subjected to a hostile work environment, including graffiti in one elevator that used the N-word. As is typical, the court did not comment in turning away the case. It was one of many the court rejected Monday. The hospital's lawyers had urged the court not to take Collier's case. In a statement to The Associated Press, hospital spokesman Michael Malaise noted that there is no evidence "that any Parkland employee was responsible for the alleged graffiti or that it was directed specifically at Mr. Collier."

RELIGION

[Sailors sue U.S. Navy for religious exemption to have beards](#) [Pamela Manson, United Press International, 19 May 2021]

Four sailors have filed a lawsuit seeking to stop the U.S. Navy from forcing them to shave in violation of their religious beliefs. Three of the sailors, a Hasidic Jew and two Muslims, have either been denied a faith-based accommodation to have a neatly maintained beard or told that previous permission to have one is going to be rescinded, the suit says. The other sailor, who is Muslim, suffers from pseudofolliculitis barbae, or "razor bumps," and has had a beard for medical reasons but is required to shave every 30 days to prove he still gets painful swelling on his face each time he does, according to the suit. The suit alleges violations of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and the constitutional rights of free speech, due process, the guarantee of equal protection and the free exercise of religion. The RFRA bars the government from substantially burdening a person's exercise of religion except in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and only if an action is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest.

SEXISM

[The hidden load: How "thinking of everything" holds mums back](#) [Melissa Hogenboom, BBC News, 18 May 2021]

Working out how to hide vegetables in their evening meals, or ensuring there's enough on the shopping list. Worrying about whether your son is on track at school, your daughter needs new shoes and when to replace your washing machine. On their own, these may all seem like small tasks—but they mount up. And if you ask heterosexual couples with children which partner is most likely to handle them, it is probable that most would offer up the same answer: the mother.

Numerous studies show that women in heterosexual relationships still do the bulk of housework and childcare. Many couples aim to [split their responsibilities 50:50](#), yet for various structural and socio-economic reasons, end up allocating tasks along typically gendered lines. Even in couples who think that they have achieved an equal division of labour, the more hidden forms of care generally end up falling to the woman. In fact, an increasing body of research indicates that, for household responsibilities, women perform far more cognitive and emotional labour than men. Understanding why could help explain why gender equality has [not only stalled](#), but [is going backwards](#), despite being more discussed than ever.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Jill Biden's tights and why society is obsessed with what older women wear](#) [Sara M Moniuszko, USA TODAY, 14 May 2021]

When photos were snapped last month of first lady Jill Biden wearing patterned tights, she became the focus of online chatter. Many misidentified the hosiery as fishnet stockings, and some were quick to label Biden as “too old to be dressing like that,” while others defended her. Similarly, when Diane Keaton sported thigh-high boots in April, it made international headlines. Why do we care what older women wear? Experts say it's because our society is inherently sexist and ageist, and as a result women like Keaton, 75, and Biden, 69, are put under a microscope as they make fashion choices, particularly if those choices are not in line with what is deemed “appropriate” for their age. Juliet A. Williams, a professor at UCLA's Department of Gender Studies, says, the image of a carefree, confident woman who is playful with her look is “threatening in our society” because it signals “breaking free of the constraints of beauty.” These constraints can influence how women dress, how they speak and what they say, which leads to the “persistent subordination of women,” according to Williams.

[More Female Soldiers Are Passing the ACFT, But Their Scores Still Trail Men's](#) [Steve Beynon, Military.com, 17 May 2021]

Fewer women are failing the Army's new fitness test since soldiers first started taking the Army Combat Fitness Test, or ACFT, Military.com has learned. “We're seeing that on average, your score increases the more times you take it,” Sergeant Major of the Army Michael Grinston said in a tweet Friday. “Likely just getting familiar with the flow and events. There are also simple tricks (like eating during the test) that people are learning.” Data from the Army's Training and Doctrine Command, or TRADOC, shows the fail rate for women in 2019 was 79% and dipped to 60% in 2020. The data was compiled in April 2020 and was given to Military.com last week through a Freedom of Information Act request. Army leaders are trying to balance test requirements to support a stronger fighting force without creating career disadvantages for women. Some have argued a more challenging fitness test could limit the force's talent pool for jobs that are critical to warfare but not physically demanding, such as cyber roles. Others say soldiers have had plenty of time to train for the test and improve their scores.

[“Stop the social experiment”—New survey spotlights bias against women in Army special ops](#) [Haley Britzky, Task & Purpose, 18 May 2021]

Forty percent of women in Army special operations said they've faced gender bias in the workplace, according to an initial report of a survey put together by the U.S. Army Special

Operations Command. The report included results of a survey of 1,001 women—837 uniformed women, and 164 civilians; 4,009 “non-women” also responded, which the survey said included soldiers who marked the male, transgender, or “do not identify with any gender” categories. “Men are accepted as they are, and have to prove themselves worthless in the unit,” one female non-commissioned officer said in the inaugural Women in Army Special Operations Survey. “Whereas women are expected to be worthless, and have to prove themselves worthy.” It’s no secret that there is a subset of people who believe women have no place in special operations — or combat, or the military. You need to look no further than the comment section of any news article about women in special operations to see baseless arguments that the standards have been lowered to accommodate them, despite women still being a low percentage of special operations soldiers.

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

[Why Can’t More Straight Men Say “I Love You” to Each Other?](#) [Ken Budd, *The Washington Post*, 10 May 2021]

On a gray January day, I speak with Andrew Reiner, who teaches a class on masculinity at Towson University outside Baltimore. Reiner is the author of [“Better Boys, Better Men,”](#) which explores a “masculinity crisis” in America and outdated models of manhood (he has also written for this magazine on why crying in public should be socially acceptable for men). The two hardest things for guys to say, Reiner believes, are “I love you” and “I need help.” In a 2019 [survey](#) of 1,005 Americans by GQ magazine, 97% acknowledged that expectations for male behavior had changed in the past decade—but fewer than half of male respondents were comfortable with it. Older men cling to ideals of manhood that they learned as kids in the 1950s and ‘60s, a Case Western Reserve University [study](#) has noted, and our views of masculinity differ by political party, gender and race, a [2017 Pew Research Center survey](#) found. For many men, that contempt begins as boys. Our emotional suppression could even be killing us. When you don’t talk about your feelings, your risk of death from any cause increases by 35%, and from cancer by 70%, [according to a study](#) in the *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*.

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[After 8 Years of Effort, Senate Has Votes It Needs to Overhaul Military Sexual Assault Prosecutions](#) [Patricia Kime, *Military.com*, 14 May 2021]

After nearly a decade pushing for legislation that would alter the way the U.S. military prosecutes sexual assaults, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., finally has the votes to make it happen. Gillibrand, along with Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., and Republican Sens. Chuck Grassley and Joni Ernst of Iowa, announced Thursday they have more than 60 cosponsors for a bill that would place the decision to prosecute sexual assaults in the hands of trained attorneys, not line commanders. Grassley said the momentum “vindicates years of work to secure justice for military survivors.” “It’s utterly unacceptable that so many of those who serve our country in uniform have dealt with a system that’s broken,” he said. The senators’ announcement comes as more leaders inside the Pentagon have said they are receptive to the move following the recommendations of an independent review panel on the issue.

[Amid lingering reports of sexual harassment in ranks, Biden to address Coast Guard cadets](#)

[Kevin G. Hall, *McClatchy DC Bureau*, 18 May 2021]

A growing debate over the ability of the armed services to investigate sexual assault and harassment provides a backdrop of controversy to President Joe Biden's commencement address this week at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. Coast Guard leadership had been under scrutiny for more than 18 months after the December 2019 release of a congressional report about mishandling of assault and harassment complaints. The service and its elite rescue swimmer program were also the focus of a year-long series of stories, "Silenced No More" in 2020 by the Miami Herald and McClatchy. Now, the New London, Connecticut-based academy where Biden will speak on Wednesday is in the spotlight anew for the abrupt removal on April 27 of Command Master Chief Brett VerHulst. The Navy Times first reported that VerHulst, 50, who was approaching retirement, suddenly quit late last month and was simultaneously removed from his post, at least temporarily, pending a probe. McClatchy and the Miami Herald have learned from multiple sources with knowledge of the case that VerHulst is under investigation for alleged inappropriate sexual conduct with a female cadet at the academy. Inappropriate conduct covers a wide range of possibilities, from innuendo to outright attempts to use rank for sexual favors.

[\[REPRINT\]](#)

[Fort Jackson staff sergeant suspended after being charged in sexual assault](#) [David Travis Bland, *The State (Columbia, S.C.)*, 20 May 2021]

A Fort Jackson soldier accused of sexual assault has been suspended by the Army. Richland County Sheriff's Department charged 28-year-old Kyle Jacob West with third-degree criminal sexual conduct on April 24, according to court records. West is a staff sergeant assigned to the 4th Battalion, 39th Infantry Regiment at the Army basic training installation, a base spokesperson confirmed. "Fort Jackson leadership is aware that Staff Sgt. Kyle Jacob West...was arrested in April by the Richland County Sheriff's Department," spokesperson L.A. Sully said. "The Fort Jackson command and our CID office are fully cooperating with local authorities. We take all allegations of misconduct seriously and, as a result, West has been suspended from his duties until the charges have been adjudicated. Sexual misconduct is not tolerated and is inconsistent with Army values and the Army profession." Third-degree criminal sexual conduct is a felony punishable with up to 10 years in prison.

["So I raped you." Facebook message renews fight for justice](#) [Maryclaire Dale, *The Associated Press*, 17 May 2021]

Shannon Keeler was enjoying a weekend getaway with her boyfriend last year when she checked her Facebook messages for the first time in ages. A name popped up that stopped her cold. "So I raped you," the person said in a burst of unread messages sent six months earlier. The messages rocketed Keeler back to the life-shattering night in December 2013 when an upperclassman at Gettysburg College stalked her at a party, snuck into her dorm and barged into her room while she pleaded with him and texted friends for help. It was the final night of her first semester of college. Eight years later, she still hopes to persuade authorities in Pennsylvania to make an arrest, armed now with perhaps her strongest piece of evidence: his alleged confession, sent via social media. But is it enough? For all the focus on sexual violence in the #MeToo era, and on student protections under Title IX, very few campus rapes are ever prosecuted, according to

victim advocates and the limited crime data available. Only [one in five](#) college sex assault victims report to police. And when they do, prosecutors often hesitate to take cases where victims had been drinking or knew the accused.

[Support for victims of sexual violence, trauma continues year round](#) [Human Performance Resources, *Health.mil*, 13 May 2021]

Bringing attention to and preventing sexual assault and military sexual trauma is an every-day, year-long goal. While National Sexual Awareness and Prevention Month is recognized in April, bringing attention to and preventing sexual assault and military sexual trauma is an every-day, year-long goal. Some people may not be sure how to start fighting sexual assault in the military, but knowing where to find help and support is an important first step. Sexual assault can include unwanted or forcible sexual advances, touching, or any sexual activity that occurs without your consent. It also might include sexual harassment, inappropriate jokes and flirtation, pressure to engage in sexual activity, or rape. It takes a lot of courage to face or report sexual assault, particularly in the military. It's also important to know what resources are available, so you can overcome any challenges that can affect your performance. With support and treatment, growth is possible after trauma. If it feels hard to reach out, start by learning more about military sexual trauma. Visit [Health.mil's Sexual Assault Prevention section](#) for information on DOD programs and resources, as well as a video and links to additional articles.

SUICIDE

[David Axelrod: I'm sharing my father's story to help end a stigma](#) [David Axelrod, *CNN*, 14 May 2021] [COMMENTARY]

This is always a tough time of the year for me. It has been nearly half a century, but I am still haunted by the memory of an ominous knock on my college apartment door just before Memorial Day, 1974. A police officer, standing in a darkened foyer, asking my name and, as tenderly as he could, sharing devastating news. My father was dead. The bitter irony of my dad's suicide is that he was a mental health professional. At his funeral, one after another of his tearful patients consoled my sister and me, telling us that our dad had saved their lives. Yet, he was unable to reach out for the help he needed to save his own. As soon as I began writing and speaking about this, I quickly learned how many others had received that same dreadful knock on the door or call in the night. I've heard from people struggling with depression and countless people who had lost loved ones to suicide. It is a pain so many share.

VETERANS

[94-year-old Korean War veteran and former Army Ranger Ralph Puckett to receive Medal of Honor](#) [Nikki Wentling, *Stars and Stripes*, 19 May 2021]

President Joe Biden will award the Medal of Honor on Friday to Ralph Puckett Jr., a 94-year-old retired Army colonel who led the capture and defense of a hill during the Korean War against an overwhelming Chinese attack. The White House [announced](#) the award Wednesday, saying Puckett distinguished himself with "acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty." South Korean President Moon Jae-in will join the ceremony Friday. Puckett will receive the

Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military award for bravery, for actions he took more than 70 years ago. As a young first lieutenant in November of 1950, Puckett commanded the Eighth Army Ranger Company during a mission to seize "Hill 205" and defend it against a series of chaotic assaults.

[Fort Stewart to Honor Iraq War Hero Alwyn Cashe as Medal of Honor Remains in Limbo](#) [Steve Beynon, *Military.com*, 19 May 2021]

The Army's 3rd Infantry Division will rename its ceremony area after Iraq War hero Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn Cashe, whose Medal of Honor nomination remains in limbo. The division announced it will rename the Marne Garden outside its headquarters at Fort Stewart, Georgia, to the Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn Cashe Garden on Thursday. Procedural hurdles have thwarted previous attempts to upgrade Cashe's Silver Star to a Medal of Honor, the nation's highest recognition for valor, which is often awarded posthumously by the president to the service member's family. Congress passed a law last year removing a rule requiring a Medal of Honor to be approved within five years of the action. Former President Donald Trump signed the bill into law in December; however, he never gave the award to Cashe's family. Task and Purpose reported that a ceremony had been scheduled for Trump to present the medal to Cashe's family, but the event was scrubbed following the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol.