



**Carmage Walls**  
**Commentary Prize**

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**Please give a brief explanation of issues discussed and the results achieved. (This space will expand as you type in your comments.)**

The Arkansas Legislature passed four bills restricting abortion in Arkansas during the 2017 legislative session. At least six different anti-abortion groups filed either lawsuits against the legislation (state and federal lawsuits) or "friend of the court" briefs to sway judges to rule against the laws. Which one judge did. The bills were, in the eyes of our editorial writers, perfectly reasonable. One law (on hold now) would require law enforcement to be contacted if a young girl, unable to provide consent, were to seek an abortion. Another would put obstacles in front of those who'd use abortion as a way to select a child's sex. Other bills put even more restrictions on the practice. But a judge did intervene, as we note in our editorials, and put the laws on hold. More's the pity. As far as "results achieved," Arkansas' Newspaper will keep printing its opinions on this matter, no matter how many judges rule, for our writers believe it is a matter of life and death. The next judicial phase in this case, however, won't come around until probably September.





## EDITORIALS

# 'Baby in the womb'

## The ongoing battle for language

IT CAN be an education to listen to those on the other side of the abortion question when they deliver their talking points from wherever they get them. It may be that they've repeated them so often, like mantras, that they aren't paying attention any longer. Forgive them Father, for they know not what they say.

This past week, after the United States House of Representatives voted 237-189 to ban abortion after 20 weeks, we got this bit of PR from Planned Parenthood, which really has the wrong name: "It is unbelievable that politicians in Congress are once again attempting to interfere in a woman's ability to make personal decisions about her pregnancy in consultation with her doctor and others she trusts. If the last few months have shown us anything, it's that Americans want policymakers working to improve health care access and rights for women, not take them away."



sops, in his opinion, didn't deserve a special place inside Hell proper.

"The U.S. is one of only seven countries that allows elective abortions after the 20-week mark," noted French Hill, the congressman from (and with) central Arkansas. "And some of those award-winning countries include North Korea and China, so I'm pleased that we're doing this and I think it's the right thing to do."

His colleagues from the Natural State agreed. Such as Congressman Steve Womack: "Medical science has concluded that at the 20-week mark, the neurological development of a baby in the womb is sufficient to feel pain. I think we're on the right side of this issue."

There he goes again. Using the phrase "baby in the womb." My, my, but the folks at Planned Parenthood must be clutching their pearls over such uncultured truth.

SOMEONE once said that the Little Round Top in this debate, like so many others, has always been the language. Hold that ground, and you have an advantage over your opponent. Which is why there is a move in some quarters to discuss "abortion care" at "clinics" for "women's health." That way you have a license to kill, as long as you have a doctor's excuse. Call it the American way of death.

Abortion is no longer a crime—at least as far as the courts are concerned. So why all the attempts to conceal what's happening? Can even those in the pro-abortion lobby understand what dilate and evacuate mean? They haven't yet figured out a way to stop Americans from using the phrase "partial-birth abortion." It's impossible to put that any plainer, but the pro-abortionists will surely come up with something cleaner, neater, more tolerable soon enough.

But will calling it something else make it something else? As a man named Lincoln once asked, how many legs does a dog have if you call its tail a leg? Answer: Four. Calling a tail a leg doesn't make it one.

No matter what the pro-abortion lobby comes up with next in this battle of the language, abortion will remain abortion. And, as our good congressman noted, a baby in the womb remains so. Until—or maybe if—it is allowed to be born.

## OTHERS SAY

# Cuba must answer

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

Whatever and whoever is behind the so-called sonic attacks targeting Americans in Havana, one party—the government of Cuba—is responsible for getting to the bottom of it. The growing scandal threatens Cuba's image, and it has all the reason in the world to solve the mystery.

The attacks first were reported in August as having targeted members of America's diplomatic community. But more recent reporting specifies that U.S. intelligence officers (operating under diplomatic cover) were the first and biggest group affected.

In all, at least 21 Americans have experienced hearing or cognitive problems because of the 50 or so attacks, which began in November, days after the U.S. presidential election of Donald Trump. They occurred at the victims' homes and hotels where they were staying. Some of the victims are spouses of U.S. government employees; a Canadian diplomat was also among those injured. Some victims have reported hearing cricket-like noises before symptoms appeared while others recall nothing out of the ordinary before hearing loss or other damage manifested itself. In a few cases, the injuries appear to be permanent.

It is tempting to view the attacks as simply another plot twist in U.S.-Cuban relations, which warmed under President Barack Obama and quickly cooled again under President Donald Trump. However, it has the look of something

more complicated than post-Cold War spy games pitting one old foe against another. Times have changed. It would be shortsighted of Cuba to attack U.S. personnel in retaliation for Trump's hard-line stance.

President Raul Castro's response also was telling. He denied responsibility for the attacks but seemed sincerely perplexed by them—and invited U.S. officials to send FBI agents to Havana to investigate. That was a big move for the old Cold Warrior.

But Castro was acting with enlightened self-interest. Cuban authorities have as much reason as Washington does to identify and punish whoever is responsible.

America already had ordered non-essential diplomatic personnel out of Cuba and warned other Americans to stay away, saying their safety cannot be guaranteed. That will scare off some tourists no doubt, but it's unlikely to affect the growing number of cultural and humanitarian cross-border partnerships.

An independent party's involvement in the attacks—a rogue nation such as North Korea comes to mind—seems possible. FBI agents may do what they can to help, but Cuban authorities are better positioned than anyone else to investigate crimes on their sovereign territory. Cold War veterans like Castro ought to know who is capable of such deeds and why. Dealing quickly and efficiently with the problem will do much to improve bilateral relations in the way Cuba desires.



## COLUMNISTS

# Effort above and beyond

Back in December, Tom Reilley, the man behind Pine Bluff's \$229 million Highland Pellets plant, spoke at a graduation ceremony for Southeast Arkansas College.

Reilley and his efforts to transform Pine Bluff are the focus of a story on the cover of this section. He talked at the graduation ceremony about how he had come to love the city and its people during the months it took to get the wood pellets plant up and running.

"I learned that this plant was more important to many people than it was to me," Reilley said that evening. "Almost 1,000 indirect jobs will come from cutting and hauling 1.4 million tons of pine pulpwood. I had caring emails and letters asking for jobs. I was in awe of what this could mean. . . . Something special happens when you lose yourself. You get out of the greed, get out of the vanity, get out of the false promise and you focus on what's real. I promise you there were some moments between permitting and contracting time when I feared that things would not work out. I fought like I've never fought before so the other side knew this was not just about a contract or a permit. This was about lives."

"We won. We got it done, but only because of the strength and fellowship that this community gave me. It has been the most impactful thing I've ever done, and I've learned so much. I have you to thank for your gift and your grace. I'll forever be in your debt."

Reilley's efforts go beyond the plant. His Pine Bluff Rising organization is working to reopen the Hotel Pines and soon will begin other developments downtown. His timing is good because there are additional initiatives coming together that could lead to an economic rebirth in Pine Bluff.

For the first time in my life, I can make this statement with a straight face: I'm bullish on Pine Bluff. Arkansans who have spent years making jokes about a place they called Crime Bluff likely don't realize that reported crime has dropped in seven of the past eight months when compared to the previous year. They also don't realize that tens of millions of public and private dollars are being raised for future developments.

Current efforts include:

■ The Go Forward Pine Bluff initiative. In June, a sales tax increase passed by more than a 2-to-1 margin. Proceeds from the five-eighths-of-a-cent sales tax will produce about \$4 million annually for the next seven years. Go Forward Pine Bluff officials hope to raise another \$20 million in private funds (Pine Bluff-based Simmons First National Corp. is expected to be a major supporter of the effort). That will give the city almost \$48 million to implement Go Forward Pine Bluff recommendations. During 2016, dozens of Pine Bluff residents participated in a planning process funded by the Simmons First Foundation. Earlier this year, a 27-point plan for city revitalization was unveiled.

Tommy May of the Simmons First Foundation and Mary Pringos and Carla Martin of Go Forward Pine Bluff wrote in the introduction to the revitalization plan: "Our community has been the talk of Arkansas, and the conversation is not flattering. The media have used words and phrases to describe Pine Bluff such as 'war zone,' 'a town full of crumbling buildings,' 'the



**Rex Nelson**

worst place in America to live' and 'identifying towns or cities facing years of neglect, despair and desolation as the Pine Bluff syndrome.' . . . It's time to put up or shut up. We truly believe that change is not only essential; we believe it is our last real chance to turn things around and to begin recovering from two decades or more of a downward spiral."

■ A new library. In November of last year, Jefferson County voters approved a three-mill property tax increase to construct a library in downtown Pine Bluff while also improving existing facilities at White Hall, Altheimer, Redfield and the Watson Chapel neighborhood of Pine Bluff. It's hoped that a new downtown library will be the same kind of catalyst for development that the Central Arkansas Library System's main branch was for the River Market District in Little Rock. Last month, the Pine Bluff/

Jefferson County Library Board of Trustees voted to hire the Little Rock architectural firm Polk Stanley Wilcox to design the building. Polk Stanley Wilcox has done extensive work for CALS. Taylor Eubank, the interim library director, said: "We've got a chance for the Pine Bluff library to be transformative architecture."

■ A \$6.5 million aquatics center near the city's civic complex. Pine Bluff voters approved a bond issue and a five-eighths-of-a-cent sales tax for the aquatics center and other projects in a February 2011 special election. Reilley is hopeful that the next step in the neighborhood after completion of the aquatics center will be a renovation of the Pine Bluff Convention Center and the hotel adjacent to it.

■ Construction of a walking trail around Lake Saracen along with a playground along the lake's shores that will be accessible for children with disabilities. Joy Blankenship, executive director of Pine Bluff Downtown Development Inc., said: "All of the trail funding has come from federal highway grants. Students from UAPB, retirees, families wanting to have a healthy lifestyle and downtown employees walk or bike the trail for exercise and for the beauty of the lake." Blankenship's organization also restored two downtown murals this year. A \$4.5 million downtown beautification plan is expected to be completed in early 2019.

Last month the Pine Bluff City Council voted to re-activate a long-dormant urban renewal agency with the power of eminent domain and the ability to issue bonds. Pine Bluff first created an urban renewal agency in 1961 and disbanded it almost a decade later. The reactivated agency is expected to play a key role in the revitalization of downtown Pine Bluff. Should all of the above efforts come to fruition, I have no doubt that the rebirth of Pine Bluff will be considered one of the great Arkansas success stories of the next decade.

Rex Nelson is a senior editor at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

# Ol' Rex never had a chance

ALBERT R. HUNT  
BLOOMBERG VIEW

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson insists that he's staying at Foggy Bottom following reports that, after one humiliation on top of another from President Donald Trump, he threatened to quit.

Despite Tillerson's ineptitude as secretary, his departure wouldn't be altogether welcome. He is part of the Trump administration's "sane caucus" led by Defense Secretary James Mattis, bringing rational judgment to decisions on explosive foreign-policy issues involving North Korea, Iran, Russia and the Persian Gulf. The counter caucus is led by Trump himself.

Still, it's impossible to defend Tillerson's tenure. He has ignored or alienated much of the foreign service, and mid-career diplomats are leaving in droves. U.S. foreign policy will pay a price for this brain drain well after Trump is gone. He's obsessed with reorganizing the department.

Tillerson is politically tone-deaf. He doesn't

appreciate the importance of public diplomacy, he has a weak staff—his communications chief was press secretary for Newt Gingrich's presidential campaign—and he hasn't cultivated good relations with Congress nor consulted much with past secretaries.

As a result of his rift with Trump, Tillerson has limited credibility with foreign leaders.

Mattis has been more successful. For one thing, he's better versed in the ways of Washington. He also appeals to Trump on a visceral level, though for the wrong reason; the president, who fancies himself a tough guy, loves that Mattis' Marine nickname was "Mad Dog." He may not know that it's an ill-chosen label that Mattis doesn't like.

Many Washington observers expect Tillerson to be replaced by United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley. A former governor of South Carolina, Haley has displayed a good sense of public diplomacy, is politically skillful and excels at one key magic trick: She knows how to flatter Trump without seeming foolish.

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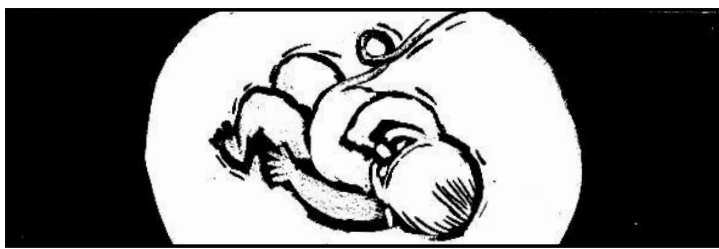
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## EDITORIALS



# Words, words, words

## And the American way of death

“What do you read, my lord?”  
—Polonius

“Words, words, words.”  
—Hamlet

**T**HIS STATE’S Board of Health met in august session late last week to clear up a certain number of matters in regard to state laws and such. Emphasis on clear up.

For that board voted to use the word “death” when describing an abortion of an unborn child. Which is as clear as it gets.

Imagine that. Using the language to properly explain what’s happening.

That is unusual when it comes to the abortion debate in this country. Language is the Little Round Top of any debate, and both sides have been trying to gain the better ground for a generation.

It may have all started when the pro-abortionists began calling themselves Pro Choice, and the media went along with the euphemism. As if those who preferred to choose life didn’t like choices. Or if the infant involved in the matter had a vote at all.

And all these abortions—pardon us, “terminated pregnancies”—were occurring in “clinics,” doncha know. And it was a matter of “women’s health,” even if the child killed was a female. And none of it was a crime. At least not on the books.

We remember Ted Kennedy talking—as always, at length—about “pregnancy-related services” when what he was really talking about was abortion on demand. Always the charlatan, Sen. Kennedy knew better than to make things clear. Better if he sounded like he was offering prenatal care rather than prenatal death.

Once language is abused this way, soon thinking can be, too. And so the killing of a child becomes antiseptic. Clean.

Here is one board member on the decision that the term death will now be used, officially: “We are requiring that women with unwanted pregnancies be told that a decision to proceed with a medication or a procedure that is legal

in all 50 states is tantamount to killing her baby.”

By jingos, we think he’s got it! Yes, isn’t that what’s happening during an abortion? Or does he think something else is going on?

We’re sure that those who support this American way of death would like for it all to be shielded from view. For it is horrible. But others of us would like for these “medications” and “procedures” to be explained in full. After all, this isn’t a pedicure we’re talking about.

The governor of this state, the Hon. and honorable Asa Hutchinson, seems to understand as much. Last year the board tried to replace “death of the unborn child” with “termination of the pregnancy.” As if somebody was canceling a magazine subscription. The governor rejected the change and sent the matter back to the board. Good for him. Asa Hutchinson always did seem to be straightforward.

Another pol, a congressman named Steve Womack from Arkansas, offended the delicate sensibilities of our betters a few weeks ago when he used the term “baby in the womb” during an argument about abortion. Oh, such uncultured truth! What’s next? Up is up and down really is down? He’d make an awful debate coach.

**E**ARLIER this year, in one of the never-ending stories surrounding the controversies of Planned Parenthood (another euphemism), some clumsy soul used the phrase “abortion care” when describing the killing of a child in the womb.

Imagine. Abortion care! As Paul Krugman noted in a column not long ago, “It’s not just false. It’s almost the opposite of truth.”

Language is important. No where more important than in this debate over abortion. Is this just a “procedure” to remove an unwanted growth? Or is it the killing of a human? We know what we think.

We’re glad to know that the state wants to put it plainly, too.

## OTHERS SAY

# Over there

BLOOMBERG NEWS

**I**f there is anything to be gained from President Donald Trump’s disgraceful attack on the credibility of the widow of a U.S. Special Forces soldier killed in Niger, it’s that Americans are finally becoming aware of the expanding U.S. mission against extremist violence now spreading across the Sahel region of Africa.

As Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Joseph Dunford explained, the role of the U.S. military over the last decade has been critical: helping local nations defeat a variety of armed threats. These include affiliates of al-Qaida and Islamic State, local extremist groups such as Boko Haram, traffickers in migrants and arms, criminal syndicates, and tribal rebels.

The good news is that, aside from this month’s tragic ambush, in which five Nigerian troops were also killed, the strategy has shown promising results. The U.S. mission, involving several hundred special forces, has been successfully training troops from Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and other states. The key has been a bottom-up approach, working with local rather than central governments.

Inexplicably, Washington is balking at fully funding the G5 through the United Nations.

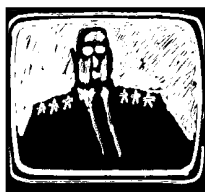
The U.S.’ short-sightedness is also evident in its tendency to view Africa through the lens of individual states. The borders on the map are irrelevant on the ground in the Sahel and else-

where, which means solutions have to be regional. And it’s not just a military problem: Lasting progress depends on Western nations and global nongovernmental groups helping these impoverished countries improve governance and development.

The National Security Council should rethink its Africa policy more along transnational lines. The State Department needs to improve coordination and information-sharing among its embassies in the Sahel. The military, meanwhile, needs more funding to support effective security and public services along in sparsely populated areas of Mali and Chad. But sending a lot more troops and advanced equipment that the local forces are unable to operate would be a mistake—a slippery slope toward the U.S. owning a mission that the locals must fight themselves.

Last, Congress can do its part by passing a new war authorization to avoid mission creep and give a strong legal basis for counterterrorism operations far away from the original battlefields in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Eventually the facts on the ill-fated Niger mission will come out, just as Trump will eventually lose interest in his feud with Sgt. La David Johnson’s widow. Ideally, both the Pentagon and the president will incorporate what they’ve learned into better strategies. But there’s no need to wait to address the danger of increasing extremism in Africa.



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## COLUMNISTS

# Foundations crumble



**Bret Stephens**

**T**hat was quite a philippic Arizona Republican Jeff Flake delivered last week from the Senate floor, announcing his decision not to seek re-election while denouncing Donald Trump’s “reckless, outrageous and undignified” behavior and “flagrant disregard for truth and decency.”

And that was some speech George W. Bush gave in New York the other day, too, warning pointedly of “nationalism distorted into nativism,” and a politics “more vulnerable to conspiracy theories and outright fabrication.”

And who will ever forget Republican Sen. Bob Corker’s acid description of the White House as an “adult day care center,” or John McCain’s magnificent denunciation of “people who would rather find scapegoats than solve problems?”

Who will forget? Republicans will, led by the pro-Trump intelligentsia that has spent the past 18 months abasing itself so it could normalize him.

In 1927 French philosopher Julien Benda wrote *The Treason of the Intellectuals* (*La Trahison des Clercs*), a short book that pointed a damning finger at the ultra-nationalist thinkers of his time.

Benda excoriated them for “the intellectual organization of political hatreds.” He condemned them for worshipping a “cult of success,” which “says that when a will is successful that fact alone gives it a moral value, whereas the will which fails is for that reason alone deserving of contempt.”

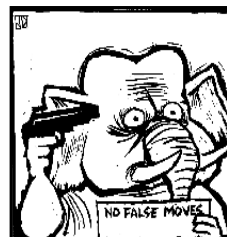
He warned, prophetically, that this “great betrayal” of their philosophical vocation, along with their “desire to abase the values of knowledge before the values of action,” had put mankind on the road to “the greatest and most perfect war ever seen in the world.”

Benda is often celebrated by conservative writers for his understanding of how prone intellectuals can be to fatal political misjudgments. Think of Michel Foucault’s embrace of Ayatollah Khomeini, Noam Chomsky’s excuses for the Khmer Rouge or Naomi Klein’s effusions for Venezuela’s Hugo Chávez. The list of intellectuals making fools of themselves is long.

So where are Benda’s conservative disciples today, the ones I remember from panel discussions on the importance of moral character, the dangers of relativism or the postmodern assault on the concept of truth?

It’s instructive to read the high-minded defenses of Trump offered by writers in Breitbart, the *Washington Times*, the *Federalist* and the rest of the pro-Trump press.

Their chief argument for Trump is that he won and is therefore a winner. Their argument against Never Trumpers is that we failed and are therefore losers. What about Trump’s character? It doesn’t matter so long as the Supreme Court



remains conservative. Legislative failures are always and only the fault of “establishment Republicans.” Boorish habits are merely a matter of taste and something of a virtue in the era of snowflakes. As for the criticisms from Flake, Bush, Corker and McCain, who needs moral instruction from those sore losers and political has-beens?

Most telling is the Trumpians’ inability ever to utter a whisper of criticism of their man. Even Never Trumpers will occasionally find themselves agreeing with the administration over one issue or another. Not so the Trumpians. With instincts that recall the Stalinist intelligentsia of the 1940s, they mix the logical elasticity of the sophist with the unflinching loyalty of the toady. They are never anything except always all in.

All this suggests that what the media now trumpets as a looming GOP civil war isn’t going to happen. Corker and Flake aren’t stepping up; they’re bowing out. Political retirees are good for leading charities, not movements.

**A**s for the rest of the conservative movement, through its liaison with Trump it is participating in its own moral degradation in much the same way that Xaviera Hollander—a Dutch consular secretary who realized she could make a much better living as a call girl and brothel operator—became the notorious Happy Hooker of the 1970s. Shameless, yes. Criminal, also. But a runaway success all the same, with a memoir that sold north of 15 million copies and a movie about her starring Lynn Redgrave.

The default assumption of nearly every opponent of Donald Trump is that, sooner or later, he is bound to fail, either because he will be overwhelmed by events, undermined by scandal or abandoned by his own supporters.

So far none of that has happened. In one key respect, he is the most successful president in modern times. He has ripped out the ideological foundations on which his party once stood. The Democratic Party was still recognizably itself after Bill Clinton left office. The GOP will not be after Trump is done with it. Like it or not, that’s a testament to his charisma and power—aided and abetted by those conservative intellectuals who proved so quick to prostitute themselves on his behalf.

*Bret Stephens is a New York Times columnist.*

# Then came Harvey

JONATHAN CAPEHART  
THE WASHINGTON POST

**I**n October 1991 the phrase “sexual harassment” and the menacing environment it created for women in the workplace exploded onto the national consciousness. Like the rest of the nation, I sat riveted in front of my television as I listened to the reluctant testimony of Anita Hill during the confirmation hearings of then-Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas. Despite Hill’s stunning allegations, Thomas was confirmed. But what she said changed the dialogue in this country.

Hill gave voice to the silent indignities endured by women, professional women in particular, at the hands of men who subjected them to lewd comments, propositioned them wherever and whenever, or chased them around a desk or office sofa. The nation was forced to acknowledge that sexual harassment was pervasive in the workplace and that it could no longer be tolerated.

And then came Harvey Weinstein. Nearly 26 years to the day of the Anita Hill hearings, the *New York Times* and Ronan Farrow writing for the *New Yorker* revealed that movie mogul Weinstein allegedly harassed and assaulted actresses for years. The number of accusers is now more than 50.

Veteran journalist Mark Halperin is the latest addition to the dishonor roll. CNN reports that

five women accused the former NBC News political analyst of sexual harassment in the 1990s through the mid-2000s when he worked at ABC News.

What another woman—Emily Miller, who is not a part of the CNN story—posted on Twitter is very telling.

She added, “I did not report Halperin to ABC because I thought I was the only one, and I blamed myself, and I was embarrassed and I was scared of him.”

What Miller said she did hearkens back to the days of silence about sexual harassment that Hill’s testimony exposed. It also showed that the potency of the power dynamic that allows such abuse to occur and go unreported. But Miller’s tweet and the punitive actions that have taken place in the aftermath of Weinstein represent something new.

Hill’s testimony ushered in an era of recognition of a problem. What we are witnessing now is empowerment to say something and do something about it.

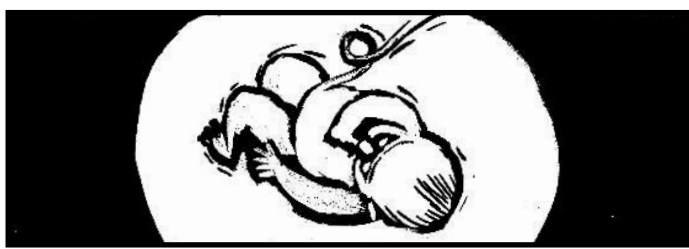
“Abused women feel liberated to bring down powerful men in government, media, tech, politics, business and pop culture,” Mike Allen of *Axios* wrote Thursday. “It’s spreading by the day.”

If I may put an even finer point on it: They have found the courage to hold their tormentors accountable. And those men are being held accountable.



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## EDITORIALS



# The meaning of life

And the meaning of the words we use

IT WAS partially a pleasure to read the email from a fellow journalist—as many journalists are defined today, which is to say, loosely—after we had read all the news stories over the weekend about Arkansas' abortion laws. Or the laws that are almost-laws. For a judge has put a hold on more than one as the lawyers do their work.

The papers say there's a federal lawsuit challenging four laws that the Arkansas General Assembly passed in 2017. Then there are three other abortion-related lawsuits over in the Eastern District of Arkansas as well. And a fifth was filed in Washington County Circuit Court last month. All in different states of appeal. We suppose lawyers have to eat, too.

While we were pondering weak and weary over the comments from proponents and opponents to these Arkansas laws—why would anybody oppose notifying law enforcement when a 13-year-old girl, who cannot give consent, seeks an abortion?—our email pinged. It's such a common sound that it almost blends in with the background noise.

The email was from somebody in an outfit that touted itself as “the only non-profit, independent daily publication focused on reproductive justice,” and called itself *rewire.news*.

How wonderful, we first thought. An entire publication devoted to justice for those who should be protected in their mother's wombs, but instead are oft times put in the most dangerous positions. Yes, join hands and join the ranks, fellow justice-seekers! Let us call out wrong when we see it, and do right as He gives us to see the right, and see that justice is done in this country, even for the least of these. For who is more vulnerable than a child unborn?

Then we read *rewire.news* and discovered it's every bit as devoted to reproductive justice as Planned Parenthood is to parenthood.

Oh, what crimes have been committed against the language in this battle. Just as those in Arkansas call an abortion procedure Dilation and Evacuation, or Dilation and Extraction, or— even better—D&E or D&X, in an attempt to clean up any real image of the bloody mess, so too must the abortionists fog the area when discussing “reproductive justice.” And for the same reason smoke bombs are launched onto a beach before the infantry lands.

Blur, obscure, complicate. Never allow abortion to be debated with straightforward words and clear language. Especially if you can't defend your position while using them.

Our new email correspondents write that several new laws in Mississippi are “anti-choice.” As if, during an abortion, the child has any choice in the matter. They call the state's requirements “that only physicians provide abortion care” a scheme. But we'd ask: Who else would they allow to do this? And what the bloody hell is abortion care? It seems that abortion and care are polar opposites. What next, a debate about death health?

Humpty Dumpty once told Alice that he was the master of words, and he could use them to mean anything. “When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.” He'd fit in nicely today as Americans debate Choice, as long as there is only one.

EUPHEMISM isn't unknown among the Arkansas stories, either. In one of those many lawsuits flying around the Natural State, a group calling itself Biomedical Ethicists filed something called an amicus brief, or friend-of-the-court brief, on behalf of an abortion doctor in Little Rock. We note that Biomedical Ethicists, the group, is a collection of a couple-dozen physicians and professors around the country.

The group's filing says the Arkansas laws, still on the shelf for now, “prevent physicians from upholding their ethical obligations.”

Ethical obligations of physicians? Like, for example: First, do no harm? As the language is misemployed in this discussion, it may become harder and harder for many of us to realize it when debate descends to farce. For when serious people use phrases like “reproductive justice” for the killing of an unborn child, and “abortion care” for the removal of a person, limb by limb, from a mother's womb, and a group called Biomedical Ethicists goes on the record saying such procedures are ethical obligations among doctors, words fail us. Almost.

Call it the American way of death, as corporate-speak comes to a more important item on the agenda. God have mercy on us.

## OTHERS SAY

# Researching gun violence

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Every mass shooting, most recently the slaughter at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida, brings a familiar and usually fruitless call and response. Gun control advocates urge tighter laws; gun rights advocates argue that those measures are too harsh or won't work.

What's missing from this debate are studies that provide evidence of strategies proven to reduce gun violence, and of those shown to have little or no effect. In that void, lots of people voice assertions that may or may not be accurate.

Why the dearth of data? One reason is that a 1996 congressional amendment barred the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention from spending to “advocate or promote gun control.” The amendment, sponsored by the late GOP Rep. Jay Dickey of Arkansas, for two decades has been credited—and blamed—for tamping down government-funded gun research.

That could change. Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar recently promised the CDC will resume research to find ways to curb gun violence. “We're in the science business and the evidence-generating business,” Azar says, vowing the agency's researchers

will be “certainly working in this field, as they do across the broad spectrum of disease control and prevention.” Bravo.

Even Dickey apparently recognized the damage done by his amendment. Six years ago, he co-authored a *Washington Post* op-ed that called lawmakers' fears of such research “senseless.” “We must learn what we can do to save lives,” Dickey and his co-author wrote.

Gun violence is a public health crisis, as urgent and lethal as cigarette smoking or Ebola. There will be intense debate. Good. Let rival gun control and gun rights advocates debate the paths research should follow, argue the merits of studies, and poke holes in conclusions. That's how science works.

Many may not have believed the initial studies that showed a link between cigarette smoking and lung cancer. They shrugged off the dangers, or justified smoking for its pleasures. But the evidence of health risks grew overwhelming over time. So did the number of people who quit—or never started.

It's a rough analogy, but the overarching point is: Let's establish some evidence about the gun epidemic and what can curtail it. Then Americans can decide what additional gun measures, if any, they will support.



PEERING ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE © 2018 CREATORS.COM

## COLUMNISTS

# That elusive fair housing

CHARLES LANE  
THE WASHINGTON POST

Fifty years ago last week, an assassin's bullet claimed the life of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., and cities erupted in violent protest.

Fifty years ago this week, the House, galvanized (or embarrassed, or scared) by the crisis, passed the much-postponed Civil Rights Act of 1968, better known as the Fair Housing Act.

In his April 11, 1968, signing statement, President Lyndon B. Johnson alluded to the 1964 and 1965 laws that outlawed racial discrimination in employment, public accommodations and voting rights, and declared that the measure filled one of the biggest remaining gaps in the new structure of justice.

“Fair housing for all human beings who live in this country—is now a part of the American way of life,” Johnson said.

Is it? There has unquestionably been progress. Between 1970 and 2010, the average U.S. metropolitan area's “dissimilarity index,” a widely used measure of segregation between blacks and whites, declined from 78 to 60, according to sociologists Jacob Rugh of Brigham Young University and Douglas Massey of Princeton University: To achieve an even racial distribution would have required relocating 60 percent of an area's African Americans in 2010, as opposed to 78 percent 40 years earlier.

That's a 23 percent improvement. The United States as a whole is approaching a level of black-white residential segregation that researchers customarily consider “moderate,” and in places such as Blacksburg, Va., or Fort Collins, Colo., housing segregation is in the “low” range, as Massey notes in a review of the data soon to be published in the *Journal of Catholic Social Thought*.

Nevertheless, black Americans remain far more likely than others to be concentrated racially and isolated geographically, Massey reports. For blacks, nine of the 10 most segregated metropolitan areas are northern cities such as Detroit, Cleveland, Chicago and Philadelphia. Their average dissimilarity index stands at 76, down only slightly from 84 in 1970. These figures do not capture the various deprivations, in transportation, employment and education, that go along with ghettoization, but those are very real too.

Persistent racial isolation does not result only from natural demographic processes, or private prejudice, though both have played a part. Rather, it is to a large degree a legacy of conscious federal actions that helped ghettoize blacks as they migrated from south to north in the mid-20th century.

When the Roosevelt administration bailed

out the housing industry during the Great Depression, it did so on a discriminatory basis, steering Federal Housing Administration subsidies to whites-only neighborhoods, purportedly to avoid the property devaluation that black residents caused. When the federal government built housing for World War II defense plant workers, it did so on a segregated basis. FHA and GI Bill housing benefits also favored white suburbs after the war.

The Fair Housing Act represented a federal promise not only to prevent new discrimination but also to reverse damage Washington did.

It has been more successful at the former task than the latter. Overt racial bias in renting and selling homes—of the kind for which the Justice Department sued Donald Trump, his father, Fred, and their apartment company in 1973—is less common than it was. (The Trumps settled out of court, promising not

to discriminate without admitting wrongdoing.) Yet successive presidential administrations have balked at full enforcement of the 1968 law's requirement that federally aided local governments take “affirmative” steps for residential desegregation. Many predominantly white communities resisted; they were happy to take federal money but didn't want fair-housing strings attached.

The Obama administration wrote regulations to carry out this long-dormant provision in 2015, but President Trump's housing secretary, Ben Carson, who previously denounced the whole idea as “social engineering,” recently postponed implementation of the Obama rule until late 2020.

Ironically, the purpose of these federal regulations in many cases would be to counteract the effect of other government rules, enacted at the local level: Land-use restrictions—zoning, minimum lot sizes, growth controls and the like—that effectively enable upper-income households to create their own residential enclaves are a major culprit in the persistence of segregation by both class and race.

Deregulating local residential real estate might get at the root causes more efficiently. A recent paper by Michael Lens and Paavo Monkkonen of the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs suggests that state government intervention can help, by offsetting local interest group pressure.

As social “sorting” and political polarization advance, it seems more important than ever to tear down barriers that prevent Americans from living together as equals.

# John Bolton's new stance

NOAH FELDMAN  
BLOOMBERG

Here's a prediction that is sure to annoy everyone: Now that he's national security adviser, John Bolton will become more moderate.

Some extremists moderate when they take public office because of bureaucratic push-back from the middle. Don't expect that from Bolton. He's made a career of fighting the bureaucracy from the right.

Bolton will moderate for the opposite reason: In this stage of President Donald Trump's administration, there's almost no one left to push back at Bolton from the center. Without such opposition, Bolton is going to realize that he's the grownup in the room, and the closest thing to a realist anywhere in Trump's foreign policy circles.

He will have to take the role of war-skeptic, asking the president to consider the consequences of aggressive action and intervention.

Ideologically, Bolton is a nuts-and-bolts national power right-winger who thinks the U.S. needs to project power outward and use force when it's pragmatically necessary to do so. That means he will also consider when the use of force could backfire—especially if no other senior member of the administration is looking out for the risks.

Even if Trump now thinks he has surrounded himself with advisers who will let him indulge extremist impulses, he hasn't, at least not in Bolton. Bolton will likely constrain Trump.

Bolton has consistently occupied a position at the right extreme of Republican foreign policy. But he has never been truly outside the spectrum. To the contrary, Bolton has always made sure that he was a member of the establishment, albeit the

member with no one remaining to his right.

In government, Bolton worked for the Justice Department and the State Department in assistant secretary level roles. Those are the insider-power positions of these large bureaucracies. You have to fight to move the agenda, but you still have to play as part of the team.

Out of government, Bolton held a senior position at the American Enterprise Institute, a think tank within the mainstream conservative establishment. He wrote for the *Weekly Standard*—again, establishment conservative. He has been a commentator on Fox News, not a Breitbart contributor.

The point is not only that Bolton's niche has always been at the right wing of the establishment. It's that he has always had others in the conservative establishment to push back against him. He's never had to be the backstop against extremism, so he's always been free to advocate the most right-wing stance.

That's about to change. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has been replaced by Mike Pompeo, a former congressional ideologue who is further right than Bolton. If Gina Haspel is confirmed as the director of the Central Intelligence Agency, the agency will likely have trouble occupying the “voice of caution” role.

Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis might be the only figure against whom Bolton could struggle from the right. That depends, however, on whether Mattis himself stays in place—and whether he is interested in trying to constrain Trump from using military force abroad.

It's one thing to be the most right-wing member of the establishment. It's another thing to put policies in place that break the establishment's norms altogether.

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