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COSBY TO GET HIS DAY IN COURT

**Pennsylvania
Supreme
Court agrees
to hear Cosby
appeal**



The Pennsylvania Supreme Court has agreed to review Bill Cosby's 2018 sexual-assault conviction. The state Appellate Court denied his earlier requests for relief. Although the state's highest court routinely denies hearing cases, particularly sexual assault cases, the panel has now agreed to hear Cosby, p3.



Government spy planes, drones were surveilling recent Black Lives Matter protests

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New reports have revealed that both the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security were using spy planes and other airborne surveillance technology to monitor the protests for black lives that have been taking place across the country.

Despite saying it does not monitor activity protected by the First Amendment, the FBI used a Cessna jet specially equipped with cameras for long-range video surveillance to capture footage above protests in Washington D.C. earlier this month, reports BuzzFeed News.

From BuzzFeed:

Normally, this elite spy plane is deployed for some of the FBI's

most important surveillance missions, providing eyes in the sky when federal agents arrest drug traffickers or violent gang members. But this isn't the first time it has flown over Black Lives Matter protests: A BuzzFeed News review of flight tracking records has established that the same aircraft circled above Baltimore in April and May of 2015, during the unrest that followed the death of Freddie Gray from severe injuries sustained in police custody.

A Freedom of Information request filed by the ACLU in 2015 revealed that the FBI had recorded video surveillance footage via planes flown over protests in Baltimore against the killing of Freddie Grey.

Forcibly displaced now account for 1% of humanity – UN report

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The number of people forcibly displaced from their homes has doubled over the past decade to almost 80 million, according to the UN refugee agency.

A 9 million rise in the number of those forced to flee in 2019, fuelled by conflict in Syria, Yemen, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burkina Faso, means that one in every 97 people around the world – about 1% of all humanity – is now displaced, according to numbers in UNHCR's annual report, published on Thursday.

The UN high commissioner for refugees, Filippo Grandi, warned of long-term consequences for many of the displaced. "Forced displacement nowadays is not only vastly more widespread but is simply no longer a short-term and temporary phenomenon," he said.

"We need a fundamentally new and more accepting attitude towards all who flee, coupled with a much more determined drive to unlock conflicts that go on for years and that are at the root of such immense suffering."

According to UNHCR's global trends report, only 4 million refugees were able to return to their home countries during the past decade, compared with 1.5 million every year in the 1990s. Protracted



conflicts, the agency warned, were making voluntary repatriations increasingly unlikely.

The report says that many refugees who did return to their homes last year went back to conditions that remained unstable. Only 1 million people were able to resettle long-term during the decade. The UNHCR said that only 0.5% of the world's refugees were resettled in 2019.

The agency said that the coronavirus pandemic had affected the number of people seeking refuge. The EU registered 43% fewer asylum cases in March compared with February.

"It's not surprising that the numbers [of forcibly displaced people] are going up because the rate that people are becoming refugees is greater than the rate that they're finding solutions," said Jeff Crisp, a researcher at Oxford University's Refugee Studies Centre.

Does not look like the protests are causing a COVID-19 spike

PhiladelphiaObserver.com

When tens of thousands of people hit the streets protesting the police killing of George Floyd, many worried that the crowds—often too dense to allow the recommended 6 feet of social distancing—would spark a new wave of COVID-19 cases. Yet in New York, city and state officials tell me, there have been no spikes of the illness.

Nor have there been sudden surges in several other cities where large demonstrations were held, including Minneapolis, where Floyd was killed and the first protests erupted, and Philadelphia. Spikes have occurred elsewhere—especially Texas, Arizona, Florida, and California—but they coincided with the reopening of bars, restaurants, and other indoor establishments, making it hard to trace the upticks to the protests.

The absence of surges in the cities with massive demonstrations but few other large gatherings has taken many officials and health analysts by surprise. However, as they've examined the data and the video footage, one thing has clarified matters, to an extent: A large percentage of the protesters wore masks.

Several recent studies have suggested that masks may be the single biggest impediment to the spread of the coronavirus. What's new in the data about the demonstrations is that social distancing may be much less important, may be not much of a factor at all—at least if the crowds wear masks and the crowding takes place outdoors.

The possible implications are profound. They suggest that a much wider range of outdoor activities—sports events, beaches, swimming pools, playgrounds, and so forth—could be safely permitted much sooner than currently scheduled. As a result, New York officials are contemplating an expansion and acceleration.

However, officials emphasize that this review applies only to outdoor activities, not to concentrations of people indoors—and that, even outdoors, masks should still be worn.

Jeffrey Shaman, director of the climate and health program at Columbia University and the author of widely publicized studies on the spread of COVID-19, told me in a phone conversation Wednesday, "I think, personally, that the lion's share of infection occurs indoors. I think that outdoors, in sunshine, with masks, is a fairly safe environment."

Shaman said that he and his team at Columbia modeled the demonstrations as they were occurring, to see whether they could lead to a surge in COVID-19 infections. They ran their model through three sce-



narios, each with a different premise on how much masks and the open air would suppress transmission of the virus. In the scenario of lowest suppression, there should have been a substantial bump of cases by now, nearly three weeks after the protests began. In the medium scenario, there should have been a slightly lower bump. In the scenario where masks and open air suppressed the transmission to the greatest degree, there was no bump. "That's what we're actually seeing," Shaman said. "The most optimistic scenario turned out to be most accurate."

There are caveats to this news, expressed by Shaman and by New York officials. First, they note, the vast majority of protesters were young. Given that people above the age of 50 are more likely to get sick when exposed to the virus, it is not clear that an older crowd would have emerged equally unscathed.

Second, Shaman stops short of endorsing large outdoor events of all types. "Beaches—you've got open air, sunshine, people spread out on blankets—that's OK," he said. "A baseball stadium—people lined up shoulder to shoulder, semi-outdoors, for hot dogs and beer and for crowded restrooms—I'm not so crazy about that."

Still, Shaman, who advises New York officials on health matters, thinks most purely outdoor events, even large, fairly dense ones, could be held—as long as people wear masks and as long as the people themselves were not in categories of high risk, such as old age or underlying health conditions.

3 Indian soldiers killed in first deadly clash in decades on Chinese border

By Jeffrey Gettleman, Hari Kumar and Sameer Yasir

NEW DELHI — An Indian Army officer and two soldiers were killed by Chinese troops late Monday in a clash along the disputed India-China border, Indian officials said, raising tensions between the world's two most populous nations.

Preliminary reports on Tuesday indicated that the soldiers had not been shot, but had been killed in a brawl involving rocks and wooden clubs that was similar to fights that broke out last month along the border and seriously injured several soldiers on both sides.

It was the first time in decades that soldiers were killed in a skirmish along the border, military



experts said, and it was not immediately clear how India would respond to China, which has a much more powerful military.

Indian officials were tight-lipped about what happened and said they were trying to de-escalate the situation. They had just

indicated that tensions with China were calming down after Indian and Chinese troops had faced off at several points high in the Himalayas in the past few weeks. India seemed caught off guard by the new burst of violence, which the two sides blamed on each other.



Congressional Black Caucus introduces legislation to make police more accountable

U.S. cops kill more people than any other country in the developed world

By Frederick H. Lowe

The Congressional Black Caucus has introduced "The Justice in Policing Act of 2020," legislation designed to make the nation's police more accountable to the nation's citizens, especially its black citizens, in the wake of the brutal in police custody death of George Floyd.

The May 25th murder of Floyd by a Minneapolis cop has sparked worldwide protests about police brutality and has led to a demand in the U.S. for greater accountability by the police.

LISTING THE NAMES OF BLACKS KILLED BY POLICE

Karen Bass, chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, called out the names of other unarmed black men and women killed by police.

Bass (D., California) said the names of several victims before asking other members of the CBC to shout out the names of other black men and black women killed by police.

Audience members screamed the names of Freddie Gray, Oscar Grant, Tamir Rice, John Crawford, Michael Brown, Walter Scott, Dontre Hamilton, Breonna Taylor, Rekia Boyd, Corey Jones, Terrence Crutcher and Botham Jean.

U.S. Senator Kamala Harris (D., California), who helped write the legislation, said, "America's sidewalks are stained with black blood. In the wake of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor's murders, we must ask ourselves: how many more times must our families and our communities be put through the trauma of an unarmed black man or a woman's killing at the hands of police who are sworn to protect and serve them?"

U.S. POLICE KILL MORE PEOPLE THAN POLICE IN ANY OTHER COUNTRY

The CBC introduced the legislation on Monday, June 15, the same day it was reported that U.S. police kill more people than in any other developed country.

A review of Bureau of Justice

Statistics (BJS) by CNN found a total of 1,348 potential arrest-related deaths in the ten months from June 2015 through March 2016 — an average of 135 deaths per month, or just over 4 per day. By comparison only 13 people died in police custody in the U.K. Black men and boys wear targets on their backs as far as the police are concerned. Police officers are more likely to use force on black Americans — and, according to a 2016 study published in the American Journal of Health, black men are nearly three times more likely than white men to be killed by police intervention.

Before the news conference began, CBC members and others, all wearing colorful Kente cloth scarves, knelt in silence on one knee for eight minutes and 24 seconds in Emancipation Hall at the Capitol Visitor Center. It was a gesture designed to illustrate how long former police officer Derek Chauvin pressed his knee into the back of Floyd's neck, killing him.

"What we are witnessing is the birth of a new movement in our country with thousands coming together in every state marching to demand change that ends police brutality, holds officers accountable and calls for transparency," Bass said during a Washington, D.C. news conference. "For over 100 years, Black communities in America have sadly been marching against police abuse and calling the for the police to protect and serve them as they do others. Today, we unveil the Justice in Policing Act, which will establish a bold transformative vision of policing in America. Never again should the world be subjected to witnessing what we saw on the streets in Minnesota with George Floyd."

WHAT THE BILL WOULD DO

The bill, if passed and signed into law, it would:

Ban chokeholds, carotid holds, and no-knock warrants at the federal level and limit the transfer of military-grade equipment to state and local law enforcement

Establish a National Police Misconduct Registry to prevent problematic cops who are fired or leave an agency from moving to

another jurisdiction without any accountability

Amend a federal criminal statute from a "willfulness" to a "recklessness" standard to successfully identify and prosecute police misconduct

Require state and local law enforcement agencies to report us of force data by race, gender, disability, religion and age

Mandate the use of dashboard cameras and body cameras for federal officers and require state and local enforcement to use existing federal funds to ensure the use of police body cameras

Prohibit federal, state and local law enforcement from racial, religious and discriminatory profiling, and mandate training on racial, religious, and discriminatory profiling for all law enforcement

Reform qualified immunity so that individuals are not barred from recovering damages when police violate their constitutional rights

Establish public safety innovation grants for community-based organizations to create local commissions and task forces to help communities to re-imagine and develop concrete, just and equitable public safety approaches

Create law enforcement development and training programs to develop best practices and require the creation of law enforcement accreditation standard recommendations based on President Obama's Taskforce on 21st Century Policing

Improve the use of pattern and practice investigations at the federal level by granting the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division subpoena power and create a grant program for state attorneys general to develop authority to conduct independent investigations into problematic police departments

Establish a Department of Justice task force to coordinate the investigation, prosecution and enforcement efforts of federal, states and local governments in cases related to law enforcement misconduct.

Thirty-five members of the U.S. Senate and 166 members of the House of Representatives are sponsoring the bill.

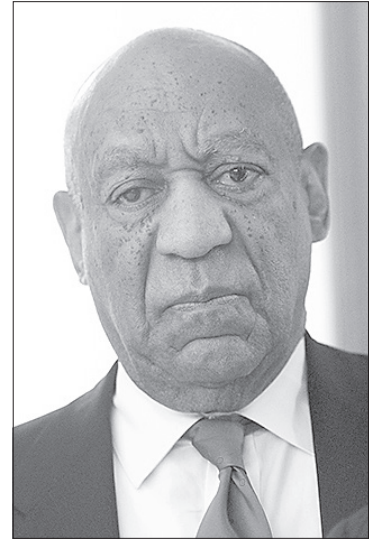
Pennsylvania Supreme Court agrees to hear Cosby appeal

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent

In a significant legal victory for Bill Cosby, the state Supreme Court has agreed to hear the appeal of his 2018 conviction on charges of indecent aggravated assault.

In a stunning ruling handed down on Tuesday, June 23, 2020, the court noted it's allowing the appeal on two specific issues.

The first is regarding the so-called prior bad acts witnesses. Cosby's attorneys argued that six additional women were unlawfully allowed to testify against him based on unproven and uncharged allegations from decades earlier. The women claimed Cosby had provided them Quaaludes, which prosecutors claimed to fit a specific pattern of behavior exhibited by the comedian. District Attorney Kevin Steele claimed that



Cosby had a habit of drugging and assaulting women.

Cosby was convicted of three counts of aggravated indecent

Continued on page 6

Cops fail to arrest armed, violent white thugs after shooting at protest in New Mexico

PhiladelphiaObserver.com

Just days after police in Atlanta responded to a sleepy, unarmed Black man by shooting him in the back, cops in New Mexico didn't use their guns once while detaining armed white vigilantes following a shooting at a protest. It seemed to be the latest example of the stark contrast along racial lines of how police respond to Black and white suspects regardless of their alleged offenses.

Protesters in Albuquerque on Monday were trying to remove a monument to a Spanish conquistador who led the slaughter as well as enslavement and dismemberment of hundreds of Native Americans in the 16th century. That's when members of the New Mexico Civil Guard, an armed militia of white vigilantes without any law enforcement authority arrived with "All Lives Matter" signs, according to the Washington Post.

As the New Mexico Civil Guard clashed with protesters, multiple gunshots were eventually fired and one man was struck.

The shooter was recorded on camera being tackled before he got up, brandished a gun and let off four shots.

While it was unclear whether the shooting victim was a protester or a member of the New

Mexico Civil Guard, police officers responded to the scene by peacefully detaining everybody associated with the armed vigilantes. It was a notable departure from the lethal force police have used on unarmed Black people in recent weeks.

So peacefully, in fact, that not a single arrest had been made as of Tuesday morning. The Albuquerque Police Department had neither offered an account or narrative for what happened nor identified anybody involved.

Instead, the police fired off tear gas at the protesters after carefully detaining the New Mexico Civil Guard members.

New Mexico's governor blasted the vigilantes as only being there to stir up trouble and likely only encouraged the violence.

"The heavily armed individuals who flaunted themselves at the protest, calling themselves a 'civil guard,' were there for one reason: To menace protesters, to present an unsanctioned show of unregulated force," Democratic Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham tweeted early Tuesday morning. "To menace the people of New Mexico with weaponry — with an implicit threat of violence — is on its face unacceptable; that violence did indeed occur is unspeakable."



The Dutch finally cancels 'Black Pete'

By Victor Omondi

Mark Rutte, the Dutch Prime Minister, said his view towards "Black Pete" has changed. The tradition from pre-Christmas celebrations has been an object of criticism; most people see it as a racist figure. Rutte also said that the custom had undergone significant changes in recent years.

According to Rutte, he had changed his attitude in 2013 when he said, "Black Pete is just black, and I can't do much about that". And now he hopes that the tradition will die.

The discussion came up on Thursday when Rutte was contributing towards a parliamentary debate about anti-racism protests in the Netherlands. The protesters joined hands with U.S. demonstrators, following the killing of George Floyd, an unarmed black man in Minneapolis. Floyd is one of the many blacks who have died as a result of police violence.

Based on the Dutch tradition, St. Nicholas brings gifts to kids alongside numerous "Petes", clownish servants represented as white people in blackface paint wearing frizzy

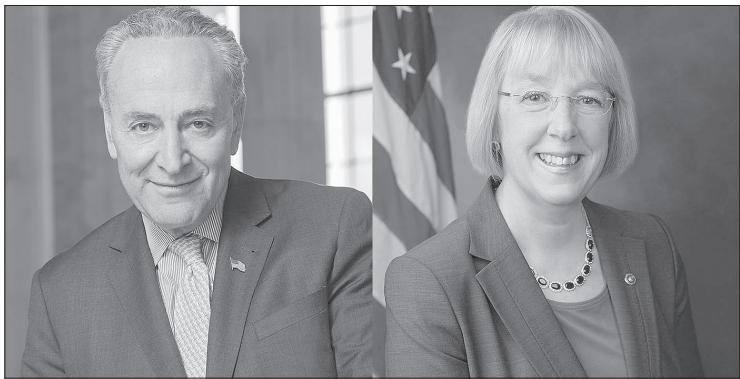


wigs and red lipstick.

The Dutch Prime Minister said that since 2013, he had met several people, including little children, who said they feel discriminated against because Pete is black. Given that Pete is a holiday for children, it shouldn't bring such kind of thoughts to the little ones.

"I met small children, who said 'I feel discriminated (against) because Pete is black,'" Rutte said. "And I thought, that's the last thing that we want in a holiday intended for children."

He expects the tradition to change soon.



Trump Administration withholding \$14 Billion in critical coronavirus funding

By Stacy M. Brown,
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With more than 2.3 million confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus in America and a staggering 122,000 deaths, Democratic Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Senator Patty Murray (D-Washington) say President Donald Trump is sitting on about \$14 billion in funding for virus testing and contact tracing.

In a letter Schumer and Murray sent this week to Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar, the senators reveal that the Trump administration has "still failed" to distribute more than \$8 billion out of \$25 billion appropriated by Congress to expand testing and contact tracing.

The letter noted that Congress passed those funds as part of a coronavirus relief bill in April.

The senators wrote that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also hadn't awarded nearly \$4 billion for surveillance and contact tracing at the state and local levels and tribal territories, and little of the \$2 billion that was set aside for free testing of uninsured people has been disbursed.

"While it has been months since these funds were first appropriated, the Administration has failed to disburse significant amounts of this funding, leaving communities without the resources they need to address the significant challenges presented by the virus," the senators wrote.

The news is particularly alarming as new cases of the virus

begin to mount since most states have reopened. It is also most unnerving in the African American community, where Black people are dying at three times the rate of others.

"This administration will put our country at grave risk if it tries to declare an early victory and leave resources untouched," Schumer and Murray penned in the letter.

"We call on you to immediately disburse the remainder of the \$25 billion in funds to ramp up testing and contact tracing capacity, as well as to make sure providers are aware of and able to easily access the \$2 billion that Congress appropriated to provide testing for the uninsured," the duo wrote.

For the \$8 billion in unused funds for ramping up testing and contact tracing, the senators said that it's critical that the administration immediately release the funds and focus the money on contact tracing and collecting data on racial and ethnic disparities in connection to COVID-19.

Azar had previously come under fire for an earlier interview he did with CNN, suggesting that African Americans were the reason for the spread of the coronavirus.

"Unfortunately, the American population is a very diverse ... It is a population with significant unhealthy comorbidities that do make many individuals in our communities, in particular African American, minority communities particularly at risk here because of significant underlying disease health disparities and disease comorbidities — and that is an unfortunate legacy in our health care system that we certainly do need to address," he told CNN's Jake Tapper on "State of the Union."



Columbus statue. Minnesota

A controversial Confederate monument goes down in Atlanta suburb

PhiladelphiaObserver.com

At Atlanta (CNN)A crowd gathered in the Atlanta suburb of Decatur to watch the removal of a Confederate monument — the latest controversial symbol toppled in the wake of the George Floyd protests.

A DeKalb County judge last week ordered the relocation of the 30-foot obelisk at Decatur Square after the city argued it'd become a threat to public safety during recent protests. He ordered it removed by midnight June 26 and placed in storage until further notice.

As a large crane pulled down the obelisk just before midnight Thursday, people chanted, "Take it down! Take it down!" Others applauded.

A crane removes a Confederate monument from Decatur Square in Georgia on Thursday night.

"The Confederate obelisk has become an increasingly frequent



target of graffiti and vandalism, a figurative lightning rod for friction among citizens, and a potential catastrophe that could happen at any time if individuals attempt to forcibly remove or destroy it," Judge Clarence Seeliger said.

The point of the removal is not to prevent its public display but "instead is an appropriate measure to abate a public nuisance and protect the obelisk," he added.

Floyd's death during an arrest by a White police officer ignited

protests against racism and police brutality. The 46-year-old Black man died on May 25 in Minneapolis in an incident captured on video.

State troopers surround the statue of Christopher Columbus after it was toppled in front of the Minnesota State Capitol on June 10.

Protesters in some cases and city leaders in others have taken down contentious statues, which some people say mark history and honor heritage while others argue they are racist symbols of America's dark legacy of slavery. While some cities have made efforts to remove them, others have passed laws to protect them.

Just this month alone, a series of statues have been removed, including Christopher Columbus, another controversial figure in US history. Some Christopher Columbus statues have been tampered with — one thrown into a lake, one beheaded, and another pulled to the ground.



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Editorial

Philadelphia Observer

Looters, lowlives, and liars

By Julianne Malveaux

According to the Washington Post, the 45th President told 19,126 lies between his inauguration in 2017 and June 1, 2020. By now, the number has likely edged toward 20,000, as his Tulsa «rally» yielded dozens more. This President has no allegiance to the truth, but that's no surprise. Leading up to his ill-timed gathering, amid the coronavirus, he projected more than a million attendees. Instead, the Trump campaign could not even fill the 19,000 seat stadium. And because the Trump campaign has no one to blame but itself for its spotty turnout, 45 instead blamed "bad people," the media, and others.

The President's bizarre bloviation was more evidence of his instability, but also illustrated his venom toward a sizeable portion of the people he purportedly represents. I was especially struck by his constant ridicule of "looters and lowlives," wondering if he comprehended the similarities between the behavior he would describe as "looters and lowlives" with his conduct in office. Not only has he derided "looters and lowlives," but he has also threatened the full force of federal law enforcement to threaten people's legal right to protest. As soon as he uttered those threatening words, 45 was a looter who threatened the civil rights and civil liberties of lawful protestors who have legitimate complaints against nationwide

police brutality.

Who's looting who? If we carefully examine history, it is clear that Black people have been looted (defined as "stealing good from a place, typically in a war or riot"). From my perspective, Black people have been at war with white supremacy forces as long as we have been on these hoes. We have been subject to violence, exploitation, expropriation of fair compensation of our wags, further exploited through Jim Crow, and other laws. There are documented cases of economically envious looting Black communities (Wilmington, Tulsa, Rosewood) because of economic envy, plundering our homes, and then using the power of the majority media to turn a Massacre into a "riot." Accounts from Tulsa 1921 survivor document a massacre, not a riot.

All it took to light the match was Black men standing to speak up for themselves.

White folks could not stand Black self-determination or Black wealth. They destroyed the thriving Greenwood in 1921, but Black men and women are still standing up for ourselves. That's why folks have taken it to the streets, protesting night after night, wearing shirts that say "Black Lives Matter" and "I Can't Breathe." They aren't just Black folks. If you have a heart, it could not help but shatter just a bit when you saw the inexcusable 8:46 minute knee to George Floyd's neck.

If I could have just 3 minutes



with Mr. Turmp, I'd like to ask him, "who's looting who." Changing the tax code to benefit your friends and the wealthy are looting the rest of us. Taking food from hungry people is another form of looting. Losing tax dollars to support your

decrepit lifestyle and multiple golf trips is looting. Taking money from public schools to help your pet private schools is stealing. You see looting when people set fires and break windows. Why don't you think about the fire that ran

people out of Greenwood, the broken windows that destroyed Black presses, the looting that has stolen Black wealth

And then there is the term "lowlife." The dictionary describes such folks as people who have "low social status" or "low moral character." So what kind of moral character does a man have who brags about grabbing women by their genitals? What kind of moral character does a man have who derides people because of their race or gender? What kind of person calls people he disagrees with "sons of bitches." He doesn't know their mamas, but he has insulted them. At 1600 Pennlyvani Avenue, the House that Enslaved People Built, our tax dollars are housing the Lowlife in Chief. We have endured over three years of this man's venom, vituperation, namecalling, and contempt of the people who are merely exercising First Amendment rights by taking it to the streets.

Many of the so-called "looters and lowlives" are descended of enslaved people who have had enough. I stand with the looters and lowlives, the people who, in the shadow of the poet Langston Hughes, ask "what happened to a dream deferred." It explodes. Since 1619, since 1865, since 1964, it has been exploding. Still? I stand with the looters and lowlives and reject a man whose unfamiliarity with truth is a vexation, abomination, and a despicable affront to decency.

Pennsylvania Supreme Court agrees to hear Cosby appeal

From page 3

assault after Steele filed charges in 2014. Those charges stemmed from accusations made by former Temple University employee Andrea Constand, who said Cosby drugged her in 2003 or 2004 and then placed his hands inside her pants.

Constand, who under cross-examination admitted a long-term relationship with Cosby, was allegedly provided two Benadryl tablets from Cosby, which Constand claimed para-

lyzed her.

Cosby's team and police reports indicated that Cosby and Constand had an affair that included petting and kissing. Both admitted that they never engaged in intercourse. The two later settled a civil case for nearly \$4 million.

Cosby has languished in a Pennsylvania prison since September of 2018, serving a three to 10-year sentence. The state Appellate Court denied his earlier requests for relief. The state's highest court routinely

denies hearing cases, particularly sexual assault cases, but the panel has now agreed to hear Cosby.

The judges cited the "unduly remote in time in that the allegations were more than 15 years old and, in some instances, dated back to the 1970s." The court also cited Cosby's attorney's plea that the prior bad act allegations lacked "any striking similarities or close factual nexus to the conduct for which Cosby was on trial." They argued that the Appellate Court

erred in affirming the admission of such evidence.

The state Supreme Court also cited Cosby's lawyer's argument that former Montgomery County District Attorney Bruce Castor promised Cosby that he would never be charged with any crime related to the Constand matter.

In exchange, the comedian waived his fifth amendment rights and testified in a civil deposition related to his relationship with Constand.

The attorneys said the Montgomery County District Attorney's

Office had even issued a formal public statement reflecting that agreement.

Castor, who lost his re-election bid to Steele in 2014, previously told Black Press USA that Cosby was "being illegally prosecuted."

"I can't stand silent while the [current prosecutor] breaks a solid agreement and break the oath of this office," Castor said.

The Supreme Court did not issue a hearing date, and it wasn't immediately clear if Cosby would now be eligible for bail.

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New report on Reconstruction Era: Equal Justice Initiative

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The **Equal Justice Initiative (EJI)**, founded by Bryan Stevenson, released a new groundbreaking [Report on the Era of Reconstruction](#) and the violence that defined that period of time – an era from which our nation has yet to recover.

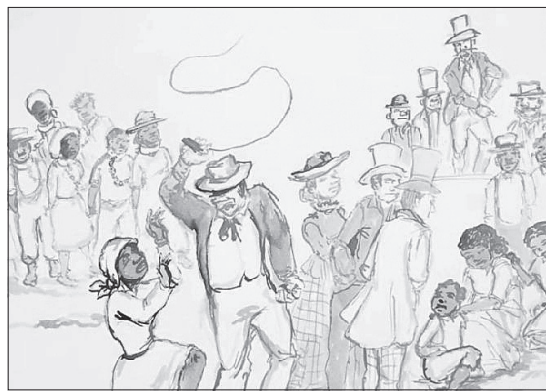
The report is about the legacy of racial violence during Reconstruction, the twelve years after slavery when after emancipation people were filled with hope for change. It examines the horrific violence against Black people by white leaders and the rise of white supremacy destroying hopes for progress.

In 1865, after two and a half centuries of brutal enslavement, Black Americans had great hope that emancipation would finally mean real freedom and opportunity. Most formerly enslaved people in the United States were remarkably willing to live peacefully with those who had held them in bondage despite the violence they had suffered and the degradation they had endured.

Emancipated Black people put aside their enslavement and embraced education, hard work, faith, and citizenship with extraordinary enthusiasm and devotion. By 1868, over 80 percent of Black men who were eligible to vote had registered, schools for Black children became a priority, and courageous Black leaders overcame enormous obstacles to win elections to public office.

The new era of Reconstruction offered great promise and could have radically changed the history of this country. However, it quickly became clear that emancipation in the United States did not mean equality for Black people. The commitment to abolish chattel slavery was not accompanied by a commitment to equal rights or equal protection for African Americans and the hope of Reconstruction quickly became a nightmare of unparalleled violence and oppression.

Between 1865 and 1877, thousands of Black women, men, and children were killed, attacked, sexually assaulted, and terrorized by white mobs and individuals who were shielded from arrest and



prosecution. White perpetrators of lawless, random violence against formerly enslaved people were almost never held accountable—instead, they frequently were celebrated. Emboldened Confederate veterans and former enslavers organized a reign of terror that effectively nullified constitutional amendments designed to provide Black people equal protection and the right to vote.

In a series of devastating decisions, the United States Supreme Court blocked Congressional efforts to protect formerly enslaved people. In decision after decision, the Court ceded control to the same white Southerners who used terror and violence to stop Black political participation, upheld laws and practices codifying racial hierarchy, and embraced a new constitutional order defined by “states’ rights.”

Within a decade after the Civil War, Congress began to abandon the promise of assistance to millions of formerly enslaved Black people. Violence, mass lynchings, and lawlessness enabled white Southerners to create a regime of white supremacy and Black disenfranchisement alongside a new economic order that continued to exploit Black labor. White officials in the North and West similarly rejected racial equality, codified racial discrimination, and occasionally embraced the same tactics of violent racial control seen in the South.

Trump rally in Tulsa spurs renewed call for 1921 racial massacre reparations

PhiladelphiaObserver.com

Donald Trump’s decision to stage a campaign rally in a sports stadium in Tulsa, Oklahoma, is spurring a renewed push for reparations for the racial massacre that devastated the city’s Black community just 10 blocks away from where the president will be speaking on Saturday.

Trump’s appearance at the indoor BOK Center in downtown Tulsa is generating fears that it could spread coronavirus and exacerbate racial tensions amid the overwhelmingly peaceful protests following the death in police custody of George Floyd.

But his scheduled visit is also providing a boost to a justice movement that has coalesced around the 1921 massacre that struck a thriving area of the city known as “Black Wall Street.”

“The visit is galvanizing people,” said Damaris Solomon-Simmons, a civil rights lawyer who represents the last known survivor of the massacre living in Tulsa. “We are all very concerned about Trump coming to Tulsa as he creates violence and intimidation among his supporters, but on the other end it has put the spotlight on the massacre.”

The Tulsa race massacre is widely considered to be one of the worst single acts of racial violence in US history. It erupted over a 24-hour period on the night of 31 May 1921.

The trigger of the attack was a call to lynch a Black man for assaulting a white woman based on flimsy evidence. The wider context was that by the 1920s Greenwood had become one of the most vibrant Black communities in the country boasting many successful businesses – hence its moniker “Black Wall Street.”



Activists who marched with Dr. King offer lessons for those marching for George Floyd

By Ellen Barry

Throughout the past several weeks, as protests over the killing of George Floyd rippled through America’s cities, a 79-year-old retired schoolteacher has spent her days watching the news in her home in Albany, Ga., sometimes with tears running down her face.

For Rutha Mae Harris, who once marched and was jailed with the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., it is like revisiting her past.

There have been times when she wondered what her generation had achieved. But the past weeks — particularly the sight of kneeling police officers and throngs of white faces — have offered some redemption.

“I love it, I love it, I love it,” she said. “It has surprised me, and it gives me hope. I thought what I had done was in vain.”

For the dwindling cadre of civil rights activists like Ms. Harris who took to the streets 60 years ago, this is a moment of trepidation and wonder.

Their activism gave the world images — the snarling police dogs of Birmingham, Ala., the beatings of Selma, Ala. — that changed the trajectory of race in America. Now they are watching another movement unfold, familiar but utterly changed.



Dr. King surrounded himself with a variety of thinkers, and in recent weeks, his allies took different views of the Floyd protests.

But they all marveled at their quicksilver spread. In their time, major actions were the result of months of planning, punctuated by all-night arguments over strategy and phone-tree lobbying to get reporters to show up. Five years passed between Emmett Till’s lynching and the Greensboro, N.C., sit-ins. Another year passed between the sit-ins and the Freedom Rides.

“A movement is different from a demonstration,” said Taylor Branch, a historian of the civil rights era.

“It’s not automatic — it’s the opposite of automatic,” he said, “that a demonstration in the street is going to lead to a movement that engages enough people,

and has a clear enough goal that it has a chance to become institutionalized, like the Voting Rights Act.”

Dr. King’s confidant Bernard Lafayette, 79, could not contain his excitement about recent demonstrations; he has been offering advice to young activists from his home in Tuskegee, Ala. Andrew Young, 88, a former mayor of Atlanta, has vented his frustration over looting and vandalism. And Bob Moses, 85, was cautious in his comments, saying the country seemed to be undergoing an “awakening.”

“I think that’s been its main impact, a kind of revelation about something that has been going on for over a century, a century and a half, right under your noses,” Mr. Moses said. “But there isn’t any indication of how to fix it.”

Pandemics result from destruction of nature, say UN and WHO

PhiladelphiaObserver.com

Pandemics such as coronavirus are the result of humanity’s destruction of nature, according to leaders at the UN, WHO and WWF International, and the world has been ignoring this stark reality for decades.

The illegal and unsustainable wildlife trade as well as the devastation of forests and other wild places were still the driving forces behind the increasing number of diseases leaping from wildlife to humans, the leaders told the Guardian.

They are calling for a green and healthy recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular by reforming destructive farming and unsustainable diets.

A [WWF report](#), also published on Wednesday, warns: “The risk of a new [wildlife-to-human] disease emerging in the future is higher than ever, with the potential to wreak havoc on health, economies and global security.”

WWF’s head in the UK said post-Brexit trade deals that fail to protect nature would leave Britain

“complicit in increasing the risk of the next pandemic”.

High-level figures have issued a series of [warnings](#) since March, with the [world’s leading biodiversity experts](#) saying even more deadly disease outbreaks are likely in future unless the rampant destruction of the natural world is rapidly halted.

Earlier in June, the UN environment chief and a leading economist said Covid-19 was an “[SOS signal for the human enterprise](#)” and that current economic thinking did not recognize that human wealth depends on nature’s health.

“We have seen many diseases emerge over the years, such as Zika, Aids, Sars and Ebola and they all originated from animal populations under conditions of severe environmental pressures,” said Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, head of the UN convention on biological diversity, Maria Neira, the World Health Organization director for environment and health, and Marco Lambertini, head of WWF International, [in the Guardian article](#).



Remembering

“The fans loved Bonnie Pointer, honey!”

Bonnie Pointer, a Grammy-winning singer and songwriter who was a founding member of vocal group the Pointer Sisters, died at the age of 69. Her death was announced in a statement that included a remembrance from her older sister, Anita Pointer. “Bonnie was my best friend and we talked every day. We never had a fight in our life. I already miss her, and I will see her again one day.”

The Pointer Sisters evolved from The Pointers, a San Francisco-based group Bonnie formed in 1969 with her younger sister, June. The duo performed R&B covers in Oakland clubs and was part of the Northern California State Youth Choir. Anita Pointer saw her sisters singing with the choir at the Fillmore West and immediately quit her legal secretary job to sing with them.

The Pointers grew up singing in the choir at their father’s Oakland church and had clandestine sessions listening to secular radio when their parents weren’t home. Some of the artists were Nina Simone, Elvis Presley, Sam Cooke, Etta James. The sisters worked tirelessly on their music, rehearsing, writing and arranging vocals and penning original songs — and soaking up the revolutionary politics, culture and music galvanizing late-’60s San Francisco.

As a trio, they channeled their eclectic musical tastes and stage experience into gigs singing backup for Grace Slick, Sylvester, Boz Scaggs and Elvin Bishop. Bonnie an expressive, buoyant vocalist who embraced elements of soul, pop and jazz — especially gravitated toward such musical

versatility.

“I’m the kind of person who likes to do adventurous, new things. It’s got to be a challenge for me to go forward, because I don’t like to be stuck into just one thing,” Bonnie told *Blues & Soul* in 1979.

That attitude also summarized The Pointer Sisters’ early work, which resisted categorization. An early deal with Atlantic Records went south after the label tried to push them toward straightforward R&B. In *Fairytale: The Pointer Sisters’ Family Story*, Anita Pointer recalled that Bonnie was especially adamant that the group wanted to sound eclectic: “We’ve decided. We want to sing everything.”

Once sister Ruth joined the group and they found a home on the independent label Blue Thumb, the Sisters’ fortunes improved. Their self-titled debut LP, from 1973, opened with their first hit, a cover of Allen Toussaint’s “Yes We Can Can” and ended with a gospel-blues version of “Wang Dang Doodle.” The Pointers also touched on jazz, swing and Broadway.

The following year “That’s A Plenty” featured the country ballad “Fairytale,” which Bonnie and Anita co-wrote. The song crossed over to the pop charts, won Best Country Vocal Performance by a Duo or Group at the Grammys, and was later cut by Elvis Presley.

Bonnie also co-wrote that album’s “Shaky Flat Blues” with her sisters and followed that up with a credit on 1975’s “How Long (Betcha’ Got a Chick on the Side).” She left the group in 1977, launching a solo career with two self-titled albums. She found her



Bonnie Pointer

biggest successes on the dance charts, hitting the top 10 with covers of Motown hits “I Can’t Help Myself (Sugar Pie, Honey Bunch)” and “Heaven Must Have Sent You.”

The latter was her biggest solo hit. Not only did she cut a more traditional version that featured a coda of her scat singing, but she also crafted a revelatory, exuberant disco take after she heard the

Village People’s “Y.M.C.A.”

“That gave me the idea to sing it like that. That’s where we got the rhythm and the beat. So I called up Berry Gordy and told him that’s what we had to do. I didn’t know I was going to scat. That was impromptu. I just did it in the moment out of inspiration,” Bonnie said.

The fifth child of the Reverend Elton Pointer and his wife, Sarah,

Bonnie was born Patricia Eva Pointer in Oakland in 1950. In *Fairytale: The Pointer Sisters’ Family Story*, Anita Pointer said that the nickname Bonnie came from babysitters observing that the young girl was cute as a bunny. In an unusual twist, Bonnie herself chose to modify the term of endearment, renaming herself Bonnie. “I like the idea of naming myself, like making myself. I’m the only one in the family with a nickname.”

That sort of iconoclasm would be a hallmark of Bonnie’s life and career. She was a gifted visual artist and creative writer in addition to being a talented musician. Anita Pointer described her as “the visionary” of

the family, while long-time Pointer Sisters producer David Rubinson said “Bonnie was completely rebellious. She is the spirit of assertiveness and self-confidence. She has an incredibly high energy and intense way of living.”

Bonnie released another solo album in ‘84 *If the Price Is Right*, but then largely stepped away from recording, save for 2011’s *Like a Picasso*. She also occasionally reunited with her sisters to perform. In late 2019, a fan captured Bonnie and Anita Pointer singing an impromptu version of “Fire” at a Las Vegas bar.

“Bonnie always had a particular following. She was the spunkiest of us all. She was the shortest of us all. We would all be at the hotel asleep and Bonnie would be out in the street, partying with the fans. They loved them some Bonnie, honey!” said Ruth Pointer.



The original Pointer Sisters, (not in order) Bonnie, June, Ruth, Anita

Celebrate Black Music Month



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Health

Let's not forget to "Reopen" our children

By Glenn Ellis

Is anybody thinking about what our children and youth are going through during these times?

I mean, I know that we are all adjusting to the disruptions, and in some cases devastation, the past few months have brought us. But, have we stopped long enough to really pay attention to what all of this is doing to the generation, which represents all of our futures?

Just think about what the major things that have happened in the lives of young people in the past few months: 1) an abrupt closing of schools; the major center of the educational and social lives of students; 2) being forced to "shelter in place", indefinitely, cutoff from friends and extended family; 3) most likely, experiencing the illness or death of a loved one from the virus; 4) hearing about some strange symptom of COVID-19 that only happens to children; 5) the most recent murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Rayshard Brooks, 6) the protests and violence; 7) getting "the talk" from adults who have a never-seen fear and sense of urgency in their eyes; 8) in addition to schools, playgrounds, pools, and camps are closed; 9) being cut off from a consistent source of breakfast and lunch and; 10) being petrified with the thought of having to go back in a school building. I could go on, but I won't.

As you can see, the point is that we have undeniably, and unfairly, ignored the well-being and mental health of our children and young people, while we are all going in circles trying to figure out our

own lives. It has been well-documented that collective trauma is a real phenomenon. What would make us think that, collectively and individually, our children are not subject to the same principle? This especially true for Black people, and in this case Black children and youth.

The Washington Post in a May 29th Opinion column, "A 2019 study in the Lancet found that when police kill an unarmed black person, other black people in that state suffer tangible harm to their collective mental health. The study found no similar effect with white people". We all really need to learn more about collective trauma.

The impacts are also emotional and behavioral. Traumatized people are at higher risk for depression, anxiety, PTSD, eating disorders, substance abuse, aggression, and future victimization. Over 90% of adolescents hospitalized for psychiatric problems have a history of trauma, and more than 70% of adults in substance abuse treatment programs have had at least one traumatic experience. Most relevant to this piece: more than nine out of every ten young people involved in the juvenile justice system report trauma.

Trauma sticks with us for life; it doesn't go away. Trauma sticks in the body, and contributes to dysregulated emotions, troubled behavior, relational problems, and physical illness, making it difficult for traumatized young people to thrive.

This is so important for Black boys and Girls. Trauma of the magnitude these young folks are experiencing happens through the



lens of their cultural experience of being an African American; their background, their community, and their methods of communication and language.

The research shows that there are three (3) ways trauma is related to race, and Blacks hit the trifecta with trauma. First, African Americans experience specific events of danger related to race that overwhelm the nervous system and require us to recover. These dangers may be real or perceived discrimination, threats of harm and injury, police incidents, and humiliating and shaming events.

Secondly, African Americans also experience danger is witnessing harm and injury to other African Americans because of real or per-

ceived racism (collective trauma).

A third way African Americans experience danger related to race is living in difficult social conditions because of poverty and race, and traumatic events occur because of these conditions. Segregation by race and social class is common everywhere in the United States. Living in black and poor neighborhoods increases one's risk of experiencing traumatic events like community violence, police incidents, and domestic violence, and it increases the risk of experiencing secondary traumas in witnessing these dangers.

As always with this column, "it ain't rocket science". Our young people have been so neglected, and like everything else, the times

are "pulling back the covers", and revealing all that is terribly wrong and broken in this country. Our precious children have been collateral damage in a bitter war between racially and polarized adults, who consistently make bad decisions on their behalf.

Alas, all is not lost! We are creating "New Normals" in every aspect of our lives. We can easily add the most important treasure to our vision boards. We only need individual and political will, and recovery from trauma can be achieved with specific interventions that improve coping skills and decrease avoiding re-experiencing the trauma.

In the immortal words of Gil Scott-Heron, "We've got to do something to save the children. Soon it will be their turn to try and save the world. Right now they seem to play such a small part of. The things that they soon be right at the heart of...we've got Save the Children."

Remember, I'm not a doctor. I just sound like one. Take good care of yourself and live the best life possible! The information included in this column is for educational purposes only. I do not dispense medical advice or prescribe the use of any technique as a replacement form of treatment for physical, mental or medical problems by your doctor either directly or indirectly.

Glenn Ellis, is a Harvard Medical School Research Bioethics Fellow and author of Which Doctor?, and Information is the Best Medicine. Ellis is an active media contributor on Health Equity and Medical Ethics.

For more good health information visit: www.glennellis.com

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As coronavirus returns to Beijing, schools shut and flights are halted

By Keith Bradsher and Chris Buckley
PhiladelphiaObserver.com

Airlines canceled hundreds of flights. Schools called off classes, forcing students to exchange abrupt farewells. Officials sealed off neighborhoods, and residents stuck inside complained about limited food deliveries. Medical workers tested tens of thousands of residents.

After a fresh outbreak of coronavirus infections, the city of Beijing has begun imposing a milder reprise of the controls that China enforced across the country earlier in the year to stifle the first wave of infections. The outbreak

is a reminder to residents that even in China — with its arsenal of high-tech surveillance tools and other authoritarian powers — the virus that causes Covid-19 can leap back into life, triggering new and disruptive restrictions.

The Chinese Communist Party has reacted to the latest outbreak with a tough approach. Much is at stake for the party's credibility: In recent weeks, officials had been trumpeting their success in stifling the virus. Now it is back in this city of over 21 million.

Party officials in charge of Beijing, including the city's party secretary, Cai Qi, have sounded chagrined about the flare-up of cases that emerged at the large

Xinfadi food market in the city's south.

"The lessons run very deep, the situation for epidemic control is very grim, and this has sounded a warning to us," said an official summary of a city leaders' meeting carried by The Beijing Daily on Wednesday.

So far the scale of infections in Beijing is far from reaching the levels that gripped Wuhan, the central Chinese city where the virus first emerged late last year. Nor are the restrictions in response as severe. The Beijing government reported on Wednesday that the number of coronavirus cases had risen to 137, after an additional 31 cases were reported that day.



Most Beijing streets flowed with traffic on Wednesday, though less than usual, and the public mood appeared resigned rather than panicked. Restaurants still opened for business, though the government has ordered them to

disinfect and check employees. But hundreds of flights to and from Beijing, roughly 60 percent of departures, were canceled. Fear both of infections and of quarantines prompted many passengers to stay put.



South Africa has the continent's highest Covid-19 cases. And it has another pandemic

(CNN)

Early on Sunday morning, the mutilated body of a 42-year-old woman was found in Eersterust, a middle-class township in Pretoria, South Africa.

Two days earlier, residents in the Soweto township of Johannesburg discovered the body of another young woman under a tree. And just over a week ago, a heavily pregnant 28-year-old was found hanging from a tree on the outskirts of Johannesburg.

The three women were among the latest victims in a surge of violence against women in South Africa which the country's president has described as a "pandemic."

"As a man, as a husband, and as a father, I am appalled at what is no less than a war being

waged against the women and the children of our country," said President Cyril Ramaphosa in a nationwide television address Wednesday.

More than 20 women and children have been murdered in South Africa in recent weeks, he added. "These women are not just statistics, they have names, they have families and friends," he said as he read out the names of the victims.

In an earlier statement on Saturday, he said the killings show that perpetrators have "descended to even greater depths of cruelty and callousness."

South Africa has one of the highest femicide rates anywhere in the world. More than 2,700 South African women and 1,000 children were killed last year, according to police figures. According to Ramapho-

sa, around 51% of women in the country have experienced violence at the hands of their partners. Cases have spiked since the country eased some coronavirus lockdown restrictions in June.

"We note with disgust that at a time when the country is facing the gravest of threats from the pandemic, violent men are taking advantage of the eased restrictions on movement to attack women and children," the President said.

Fatimata Moutloatse, founder of the Black Womxn Caucus said South Africa had been battling with issues of gender violence, inequality, and unemployment, and the pandemic could push the nation to the brink.

"We have a crisis, and the lockdown restrictions are amplifying it," Moutloatse said.

Ghana's Minister of Tourism to Black Americans: Come home to Africa

PhiladelphiaObserver.com

Ghana's Minister of Tourism Barbara Oteng-Gyasi capitalized on America's poor race relations, specifically the treatment of Black people, to recruit and nationalize African Americans.

The Minister of Tourism made her appearance at George Floyd's memorial and wreath-laying ceremony. She could not resist and recite her government's message to Black people to "come home."

Because of the current season of civil unrest, the deaths

of Ahmed Arbery, George Floyd, Rayshard Brooks, and Breonna Taylor, Ghana is seizing the opportunity to persuade people of the African diaspora living in America, to move.

"We continue to open our arms and invite all our brothers and sisters home. Ghana is your home. Africa is your home. We have our arms wide open, ready to welcome you home," Quantz reported Oteng-Gyasi to say to the assembly. "Please take advantage. Come home, build a life in Ghana. You have a choice and Africa is waiting for you."



Culture

Matt James named first Black lead of 'The Bachelor'

PhiladelphiaObserver.com

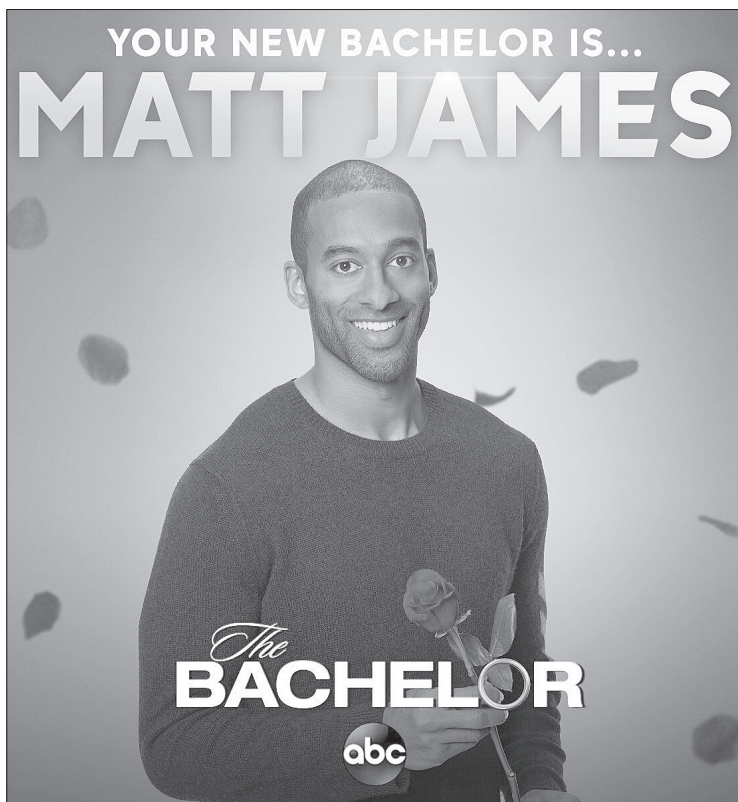
The Bachelor franchise has cast just one Black lead in 18 years, but ABC announced Friday that will be changing in 2021: Matt James, best known as the BFF of Tyler Cameron from "Bachelorette" Season 15, will be the next male lead.

"It's an honor," James told "Good Morning America." "I'm just going to lean into myself and how my mom raised me, and hopefully when people invite me into their homes on Monday night they're going to see that I'm not much different from them and they see that diverse love stories are beautiful."

The announcement comes just four days after fans launched a petition calling for ABC to name a Black Bachelor for the upcoming season. It quickly

racked up tens of thousands of signatures and endorsements from popular "Bachelor" alums including Rachel Lindsay, Kaitlyn Bristowe and Nick Viall.

"We're glad ABC has done the right thing and cast a black lead for the next season of The Bachelor," the organizers of the Bachelor Diversity campaign said in a statement to HuffPost. "While we're thrilled for that first step, we still plan to hold ABC accountable to make sure his representation is handled responsibly. We want to continue seeing greater BIPOC representation within the The Bachelor franchise, both on and off camera — as well as providing the resources and support they need during the show and in its aftermath. There's plenty more work to do, but this is a start."



First Black-owned supermarket to sell products from mostly Black farmers raises \$430K

PhiladelphiaObserver.com

The founders of WeBuy-Black and the developers of the first ever Black-owned supermarket that will primarily sell products from Black farmers and other food manufacturers have reached their first financial goal of \$425,000 to purchase the property! 13,881 people have contributed to the campaign so far, and the Atlanta-based store will be called Soul Food Market, and will be the first grocery store of its kind.

"We are super proud of our unity, and our team is even more inspired by our collective efforts to see this project come to fruition," said CEO Shareef Abdul-Malik in an email to their supporters

and contributors.

The company will continue to raise funds for the renovation of the 20,000 square foot building, and then for the operations. Renovation requires another \$350,000 and operating the building requires another \$420,000 for a grand total of \$1.2 million to fully complete the project.

Just what the community needs

After sampling 500 hundred families in the local Atlanta area where they plan to open the first grocery store, Shareef's data showed that the average household spent \$650 dollars a month for groceries. He comments, "With just 500 families, that's over \$3 million leaving our commu-

nity each year. This campaign is not only to help keep our dollars in our community, but it's also to provide our people with jobs."

As previously reported, it will also help Black entrepreneurs because the selection of naturally grown vegetables and fruits will be sourced from Black farmers in Georgia. Other products produced by Black-owned brands, ranging from everyday necessities such as diapers and detergent to all natural household cleaning products, will stock the shelves! The goal ultimately is to become a nationwide chain.

To learn more about the project and/or to make a donation, visit <https://wefundblack.com/projects/soul-food-market/>

R&B singer songwriter David Lyn speaks on civil unrest in new 'Can't breathe' single

PhiladelphiaObserver.com

Los Angeles, CA – David Lyn, the younger brother of Grammy award-winning producer IzyBeats (Koffee, Jorja Smith, Lila Iké) has just released his debut single "Can't Breathe," produced by Neri Beats, off his upcoming EP set to drop this Summer.

Amid civil and social unrest, the Jamaican American Miami native is using his voice and platform to speak on current issues in the country as it relates to the Black community, most notably racial injustice and police brutality. Following the recent

deaths of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and George Floyd, "Can't Breathe" is a bold statement to systemic injustices that continue to plague Black America. David Lyn exclaimed "I am upset and my music is a form of release. This is my way of venting while also speaking on the current issues we face in this country. This has to stop! There's no more room in this world for racism."

The visuals further amplify David's emotional lyrics as the video opens with a Nelson Mandela quote. You will then find the leading character (David Lyn) in a chilling monologue,

pinned down to a police car fighting to breathe while an officer chokes him as he is restrained. The ending, although traumatic, is a regretful reminder of what has happened way too often – another Black man killed at the hands of police. "Can't Breathe" is a lyrical and literal testament to being Black in America.

As David Lyn gears up for the release of his debut EP due out later this summer, fans will be able to follow his storytelling journey with more captivating singles and visuals. With mentors such as Rick Ross, Flo Rida and the late sing-



er Betty Wright shaping his vast talent in hip hop, R&B, reggae and pop; he is no newbie to the music

industry and his multifaceted and multidimensional artistry will attest to that.



A "Hamilton" movie starring the original Broadway cast, including lead Lin-Manuel Miranda (center), will stream on Disney+ starting July 3. (Photo courtesy Disney)

Disney+ to release explosive 'Hamilton' film over July 4th weekend!

Hallelujah! Fans of one of the most critically-acclaimed shows ever staged and one of the toughest tickets to get – **"Hamilton"** -- which opened in 2015 and earned 11 Tony Awards -- won't have to wait until its original release date October 2021 to see the Pulitzer Prize-winning musical in the comfort of their own homes when it is released exclusively July 3 for Disney

Plus subscribers. The show was filmed at The Richard Rodgers Theatre on Broadway in June 2016, and will feature the original cast, including **Lin-Manuel Miranda** as Alexander Hamilton, **Daveed Diggs** as Marquis de Lafayette/Thomas Jefferson, **Renée Elise Goldsberry** as Angelica Schuyler and **Leslie Odom, Jr.** as Aaron Burr. Directed by **Tommy Kail**, the film tells the story of American Founding

Father Alexander Hamilton, using music that draws heavily from hip-hop, R&B, pop, soul and traditional show tunes while incorporating color-conscious casting of non-white actors as the Founding Fathers and other historical figures. "I'm so proud of how beautifully Tommy Kail has brought 'Hamilton' to the screen. He's given everyone who watches this film the best seat in the house," said creator Miranda.

"I'm so grateful to Disney and Disney+ for reimagining and moving up our release to July 4 weekend of this year, in light of the world turning upside down. I'm so grateful to all the fans who asked for this, and I'm so glad that we're able to make it happen. I'm so proud of this show. I can't wait for you to see it." **Bob Iger**, Executive Chairman of The Walt Disney Company, added: "No other artistic work in the last decade

has had the cultural impact of Hamilton—an inspiring and captivating tale told and performed in a powerfully creative way. In light of the extraordinary challenges facing our world, this story about leadership, tenacity, hope, love and the power of people to unite against the forces of adversity is both relevant and impactful." You can watch it by **signing up to Disney Plus for £5.99 a month or £59.99 a year.**



David Minott a/k/a David M

David M revisits his single, "Lest We Forget"

Posted By **Don Thomas**

Jamaican-born Singer/Songwriter David Minott a/k/a David M released "Lest We Forget," ten years ago which was inspired by events such as Nelson Mandela's release from prison and the election of Barack Obama to the presidency of the United States. The song paints a vivid picture of the struggle people of color endure for equality, justice and advancement in society, both in the past and present.

Fast forward to 2020, when the United States is in turmoil due to the escalating deaths of Black Americans at the hands of

police brutality with the world watching from many corners—amongst calls for justice that have been too long deferred. Now is the time for David M to revisit his call for civil and equal rights.

"We in Jamaica are proud of making music that addresses the need for social justice not only in our country but around the world. Despite all that has happened throughout history to help people of color make advancements towards equality and justice, we as a people are still struggling with obstacles that have pushed back much of this progress.

"I hope that my work in cre-

ating 'Lest We Forget' will inspire those fighting the good fight to push forward peacefully towards the goal of an equal and fair world. To bring awareness of those who've come before who've led the way from Dr. King to Bob Marley and encourage people, especially our youth, to come together and carry on the work," he said.

David M plans on making more music in the near future. He looks forward to those striving for fairness and equality to hear his message in "Lest We Forget" and heed its call. The video can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27lpjv2xu2k>

Flick chat

Da 5 Bloods has the potential to be timely

By Dwight Brown
Guest Scribe

They fought together in Vietnam decades ago. Now they're headed back to Nam to retrieve the body of their fallen Commanding Officer (Chadwick Boseman) and hunt for a pile of gold. The vets share a brotherly love: Paul (Delroy Lindo) is high-strung, temperamental and fighting a losing battle with PTSD. Otis (Clarke Peters) has a big secret, a lover (Lê Y Lan) he left behind in Saigon.

Wealthy Eddie (Norm Lewis) lords over them brandishing his AMEX Black Card like a sword. Then there's Melvin (Isiah Whitlock, Jr.). And to everyone's surprise Paul's son David (Jonathan Majors) shows up out of nowhere.

It's easy to imagine these guys sitting in a barbershop in Harlem, Oakland, Chicago or Atlanta recollecting old times, rehashing old rivalries, sharing anecdotes, talking politics and spouting views on racism, wars and other social issues. Between the lines of their jovial banter are truths about injustice, bigotry, oppression and survival that are illuminating—especially for those who are not African American and don't know the experience firsthand.

As the film follows the gents to Vietnam and they continue their heated conversations on foreign soil, their perceptions become even more intriguing. Who dreamed this up? The original script for *Da 5 Bloods* was written in 2013 by Danny Bilson and Paul De Meo.

Screenwriter Kevin Willmott and Director Spike Lee adapted their script, putting African Americans in the leads and their stamp on the return to duty plotline. Themes of greed versus human



The cast of *Da 5 Bloods*

needs and an obvious homage to John Houston's classic *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* give the premise a strong foundation.

Muhammad Ali famously refused to fight in Vietnam, and incisively expressed his conscientious objections: "No, I'm not going 10,000 miles from home to help murder and burn another poor nation simply to continue the domination of white slave masters of the darker people the world over."

In this film, the characters went to Nam and the repercussions of their involvement haunts them. Especially as they are confronted by the victims of the war and its atrocities. Says a Vietnamese man who is trying to sell live chickens to Paul: "You killed my father and mother."

That kind of confrontational, consciousness-raising moment is where the film excels. Belaboring points like that is where it feels strained. One or two of these

clashes regarding blame and responsibilities would suffice. When this becomes an overused plot device, those precious moments become redundant and hollow. Overstating is a miscalculation that too often robs this well-intentioned film of more effectively realizing its vision.

For example, classic photos (e.g. Pulitzer-Prize-winning shot of a naked young girl Kim Phuc running from a napalm bomb), graphic archival footage (the execution of Ngyuen Van Lem) and other visual aids are edited into narrative scenes to add a non-fiction effect and educate the viewer.

When well placed, these indelible images that changed the perception of the Vietnam War, are both revealing and enlightening. Much like the footage and photos of George Floyd's death, the power of their significance can't be overstated.

In thoughtful, measured

amounts, this visual gimmick works. When misplaced, this effect can be a distraction. e.g.: A victim steps on a land mine, faces death and is being cajoled by someone attempting a rescue. In the course of conversation, a photo of Olympic medalist Edwin Moses jumping over hurdles appears. It's disruptive.

Travelogue-like sequences help the film get over its rough patches. Shot in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon), Vietnam and Bangkok and Chiang Mai, Thailand, the locations are enticing enough to make you want to book a trip to Asia. Credit Newton Thomas Sigel for the evocative cinematography and lighting brown and Black skin perfectly. Shots in hotels, rice fields and forests are also illustrious.

The moody musical score by Terence Blanchard seems like it belongs in another movie. Especially in the action scenes, and particularly during a helicopter

crash. Something is askew. A far better fit for the movie is the constant stream of Marvin Gaye's toe-thumping and socially aware music, with a big nod to his classic *What's Going On* album and songs like "What's Happening Brother." Gaye was the voice of a generation and his concept record is arguably the most enduring R&B album ever made.

Overall, the film's tactic for getting its political/social points across tends to border on being preachy and pedantic. Like a zealous professor who doesn't trust that his students can listen and learn and prefers to throw knowledge at 'em with a cannon.

If audiences can get past the script's weak points and unobtrusive approach there are aspects about Black life revealed in this parable that should resonate. Visit NNPA News Wire Film Critic Dwight Brown at DwightBrownInk.com and BlackPressUSA.com.

Short film based on social climate

Posted By Don Thomas

P.O.V: Perception Of Violence is a short film based on our current

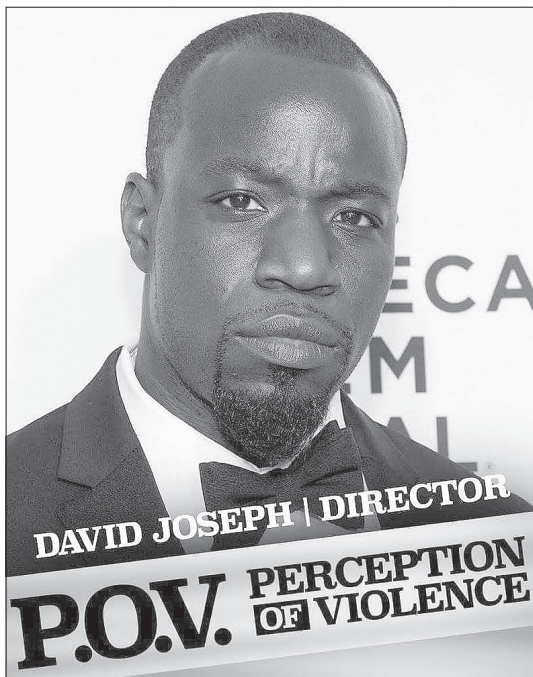
social climate, where the viewer sees through the lens of one instance, the history of racial injustice towards the African-American community by those appointed to protect and serve. Through three individual perspectives, the victim, the assailant and the observer, the audience will discover the effects of these fatal interactions between officers and people of color.

The grim issue of this nation's historical pattern of killing African-American men and women by law enforcement across the country is addressed as well as its affect on everyone involved. The film is meant to highlight several systemic issues within the procedures, guidelines, rules and regulations of local and state police departments.

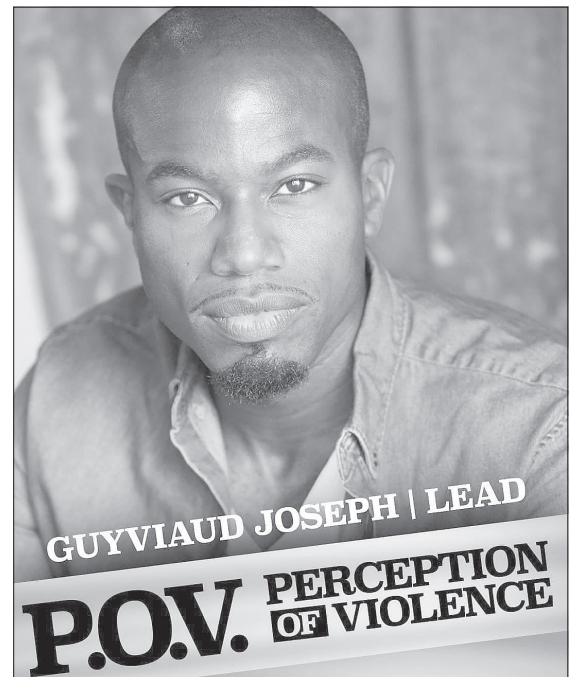
Some of the major outlined issues addressed include: proper background checks and mental assessment for officers to ensure they are empathic to minorities, proper training to deescalate rather than the traditional shoot first tactic, and the code of blue wall of silence that suppresses the light on police misconduct and corruption.

The film is narrated by radio personality Charlemagne the god, directed by veteran director/producer brother team David Joseph and starring award winning actor/producer Guyviaud Joseph.

P.O.V won Best Short Film at Justice on Trial, NY Lift-Off and LA Lift-Off Film Festivals. The short has premiered to a standing ovation at Cannes Film Festival, Martha's Vineyard AAFF and Newark International FF. After a successful run through the film festival circuit it is now available for the public on YouTube



David Joseph



Guyviaud Joseph

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Bubba, NASCAR and the Noose

By Andrew Rosario

NASCAR, despite all of its popularity, has never been a sport attracting black and brown fans. Scan the crowd at any race, any location and it is hard to find folks of color. Heck, you can count on one hand the number of pit crew members of color. Behind the wheel, there is one African American driver Bubba Watson who took NASCAR to task asking them to remove the Confederate Flag from all NASCAR events. NASCAR didn't hesitate in the wake of the George Floyd murder at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer. NASCAR issued the following statement: "The presence of the confederate flag at NASCAR events runs contrary to our commitment to providing a welcoming and inclusive environment for all fans, our competitors and our industry."

Many of the drivers supported the move but one driver Ray Ciccarelli, a part time NASCAR driver quit the circuit citing, "if this is the direction NASCAR is headed we will not participate after 2020 season is over. I ain't spend the money we are to participate in any political BS!!"

All of this comes on the news that NASCAR driver Kyle Larson was suspended in April for dropping the N-word during a virtual race in which he lost communication. "I can't see it. You can't here me? Hey n——r." After the comment was made public, Larson issued the obligatory apology. "I made a mistake and said the word that should never, ever be said. And there's no excuse for that. I understand that the damage is probably unrepairable. I own up to that. I just wanted to let you all know how sorry I am."

Prior to participating at the



NASCAR Comes With Full Force Support
Photo: Special to Philadelphia Observer

Martinsville Speedway way in Virginia, Martin wore a "I can't Breathe" t-shirt driving a Black Lives Matter car. Said Martin, "I'm not doing this for sponsorship. I am doing this because it's what I believe in. If sponsors do come through, then they are showing

support and they believe in the message and they line up with the same core values that I have. That's important."

The support that Martin received from his fellow race car drivers was building as the flag was coming down on all NASCAR

events and properties. Then, the unimaginable happened.

This past Sunday, it was discovered that a noose was found in Wallace's garage stall. It happened the day the race at the Talladega Superspeedway was to take place but was postponed due to rain. The outrage was immediate from NASCAR officials, drivers and a legendary driver. "We are angry and outraged, and cannot state strongly enough how seriously we take this heinous act. We have launched an immediate investigation, and will do everything we can to identify the person(s) responsible and eliminate them from the sport." Kyle Busch said, "The act of what happened yesterday was horrible and has no place in this world."

The King, Richard Petty, at 82 years old, who sponsors Wallace 43 race car, through his Motorsports Group, did not mince his words when he found out what happened. "I'm enraged by the act of someone placing a noose in the garage stall of my race team. There is absolutely no place in our sport or our society for racism. This filthy act serves as a reminder of how far we still have to go to eradicate racial prejudice and it galvanizes my resolve to use the resources of Richard Petty Motorsports to create change. The sick person who perpetrated this act must be found, exposed, and swiftly and immediately expelled

from NASCAR. I believe in my heart this despicable act is not representative of the competitors I see each day in the NASCAR garage area. I stand shoulder to shoulder with Bubba, yesterday, today, tomorrow and every day forward."

Prior to the start of the race Monday, drivers and crew members followed Watson around the track with Busch pushing on one side and close friend Ryan Blaney pushing on the other side. Coming to a stop, Watson would get out of the car. The King greeting and consoling him.

Not everyone is getting the message though. Earlier in the day a plane flew over the course with a banner on the tail saying, "Defund NASCAR" connected with the confederate flag in tow.

First, Colin Kaepernick put his career on the line by kneeling during the National Anthem to bring attention to people of color being murdered by police without being held accountable. He is still looking/lobbying for a job. Bubba Wallace, the only African American driver in NASCAR, comes out and supports the Black Lives Matter movement. Although he never saw it, a noose was placed on his garage stall.

The message was sent and hit its mark. Fortunately, the powers that be in NASCAR, the drivers, and all of the crews heard it. Their response and support was overwhelming.



Bubba Stands Tall. Photo: Special to Philadelphia Observer