DOUBLE ISSUE

DEC. 22 / DEC. 29, 2014

PERSON OF THE YEAR

TIME

THE
EBOLA FIGHTERS

Dr. Jerry Brown
The Liberian surgeon, 46, turned his hospital's chapel into an Ebola treatment center

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DOUBLE ISSUE

DEC. 22 / DEC. 29, 2014

PERSON OF THE YEAR

TIME

THE EBOLA FIGHTERS

Salome Karwah

An Ebola survivor, 26, she lost both her parents to the disease and now counsels patients in Liberia



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DOUBLE ISSUE

DEC. 22 / DEC. 29, 2014

PERSON OF THE YEAR

TIME

THE EBOLA FIGHTERS

Ella Watson-Stryker

The 34-year-old American health educator for Doctors Without Borders has been helping fight Ebola in West Africa since March

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PERSON OF THE YEAR

TIME

THE EBOLA FIGHTERS

Foday Gallah

Nicknamed the "Miracle Man" by his neighbors, the Ebola survivor, 37, supervises an ambulance team in Monrovia

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A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

DOUBLE ISSUE

DEC. 22 / DEC. 29, 2014

PERSON OF THE YEAR

THE



THE EBOLA FIGHTERS

Dr. Kent Brantly

The Texas physician, 33, was running an Ebola treatment center in Monrovia when he became the first American to be infected

WHY A BANK SHOULD CARE ABOUT SPAGHETTI AND MEATBALLS

Over 20 million kids in America lack access to healthy food. So, a company called Revolution Foods came up with a solution: affordable, nutritious, kid-inspired meals, available in schools and stores.

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2014
PERSON
OF THE
YEAR



Nurse-hygienist trainees at an Ebola treatment unit in Monrovia, Liberia.
Photograph by Jackie Nickerson for TIME

The Ebola Fighters

THE CHOICE By Nancy Gibbs

THE ONES WHO ANSWERED THE CALL
By David Von Drehle with Aryn Baker in Liberia



2014
PERSON
OF THE
YEAR

Editor's Desk
The Conversation

THE YEAR IN ...

Quotes
Memorable statements from the year's notables

Moments
Indelible images of powerful figures

Highs and Lows
The ups and downs for selfies, Kims and more

15 Minutes of Fame
A playback of 2014's human memes

Connections
The alliances and breakups that mattered

Things
Inanimate objects that drove the year's news

Hashtags
What went viral on social media

Make-Believe
The most influential onscreen characters

Firsts and Lasts
Some of the most talked-about milestones

The Short List

1
The Activists
Ferguson Protesters
By Alex Altman

2
The Imperialist
Vladimir Putin
By Simon Shuster

3
The Opportunist
Massoud Barzani
By Karl Vick

4
The Capitalist
Jack Ma
By Rana Foroohar

THE BEST OF CULTURE 2014

Movies
The top films and performances

Television
Ten unmissable shows, and the five most memorable episodes

Music
Must-hear songs and albums

Books
A roundup of the best novels, nonfiction and young-adult fiction

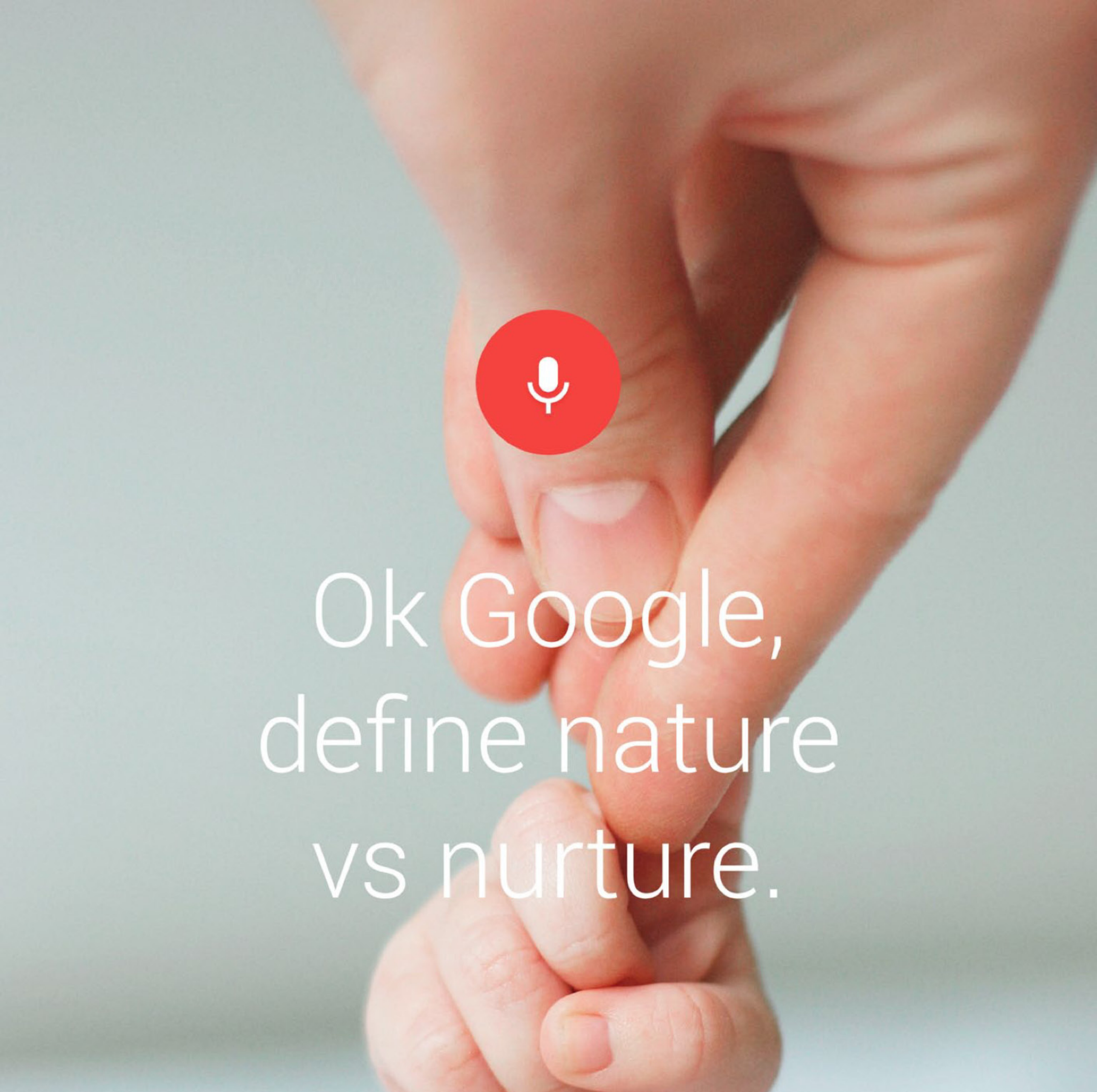
Theater
Highlights from the stage, including Audra McDonald's unforgettable Lady Day

The Awesome Column
Joel Stein selects the Coolest Person of the Year, with some help from academia

Endnote
The fight against Ebola continues

ON THE COVER: DR. JERRY BROWN ON NOV. 27 AT ELWA HOSPITAL IN MONROVIA, LIBERIA. PHOTOGRAPH BY JACKIE NICKERSON FOR TIME. ADDITIONAL COVER PHOTOGRAPHS: KARWAH, GALLAH, WATSON-STRYKER: JACKIE NICKERSON FOR TIME. BRANTLY: BRYAN SCHUTMAAT FOR TIME

PORTRAITS FOR TIME: FERGUSON BY TITUS KAPHAR; PUTIN BY PAVEL SOKOV; BARZANI BY JASON SEILER; MA BY TRACIE CHING


Ok Google,
define nature
vs nurture.

Ok Google,
what is the earliest a
person can remember?

Ok Google,
at what age is the
brain fully developed?

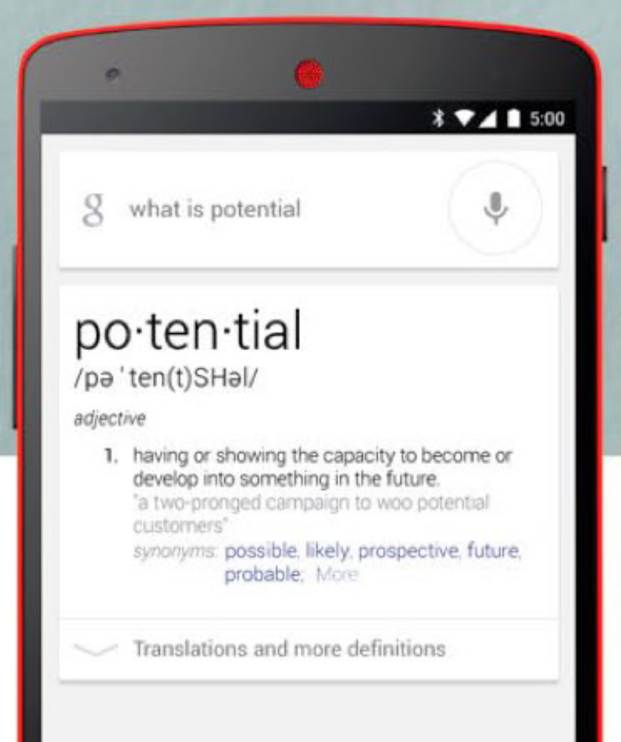
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do babies dream?

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THE CHOICE
By Nancy Gibbs — 6:38

DR. JERRY BROWN medical director and general surgeon at the Eternal Love Winning Africa Hospital, Monrovia — 1:17

KATIE MEYLER founder of More Than Me, a school for vulnerable girls from the West Point slum in Monrovia — 1:33

ELLA WATSON-STRYKER health promoter with Doctors Without Borders/Medécins Sans Frontières (MSF) — 1:28

SALOME KARWAH
nurse's assistant, MSF clinic, Monrovia — :48

FODAY GALLAH
ambulance supervisor, Monrovia — :42

DR. JOANNE LIU
international president of MSF — 1:33

MELVIN GIBSON
Liberian Red Cross dead-body-management team — :17

MORRIS KANNEH
Liberian Red Cross dead-body-management team — :20

ROBERT SNEH JR.
Liberian Red Cross dead-body-management team — :18

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Mobile

EDITOR'S DESK

Portraits of Life And Death



2014 HAS BEEN A year of bearing witness. So many of the stories that demanded our attention arrived unfiltered, unexplained, often by way of a camera lens: the grainy images of police confrontations on city streets, the debate over the privacy of public figures whose phones were hacked, the elevator video of Ray Rice. Even the jihadists of the Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria, tweeting their way back to the 13th century while committing acts so barbaric that al-Qaeda denounced them, made sure the whole world saw their bloody handiwork by posting the videos of beheadings online.

But showing the frontline fighters in the battle against Ebola poses a particular challenge. Because the risks these men and women are taking are so great, reporting on their work involves some risk as well. After the outbreak was declared, our Africa bureau chief, Aryn Baker, visited Liberia, where she saw the devastating toll Ebola had taken on the country. Several weeks ago, when we began planning our Person of the Year coverage, we sent her back to catch up with the people she had encountered on her first trip. In late November she was joined by photographer Jackie Nickerson and deputy photo director Paul Moakley. Aryn met them at the airport in Monrovia. "I would hug you," she said, "but that's not something we do in public here." In this usually affectionate culture, touch has been replaced by temperature taking.







Clockwise from top, Baker helps Nickerson photograph MSF nurse's assistant Salome Karwah for one of TIME*'s five cover images; Moakley atop Monrovia's Ducor hotel; Baker with Dr. Jerry Brown outside ELWA, the hospital he runs*

Our team kept a relentless schedule, following body-disposal teams who play a critical role in preventing the spread of the disease and tracking down doctors and nurses to interview and photograph during the rare breaks in their 12-hour days. They watched men in Tyvek suits load body bags in the hard, white afternoon light. "All I could think about was how no family members were present to witness this final moment," Paul recalls, "and all I could do was hold my head down in respect."

Dr. Jerry Brown, the Liberian surgeon on the cover, runs both a hospital and an Ebola unit; he lives in a continuous loop of life and death, breaking away to celebrate when Ebola patients survive the disease and can be released with a clean bill of health. He grew up in the slums of Monrovia and dreamed of becoming a politician. But a rich uncle convinced him that he might have better luck as a doctor and paid for his medical

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: PAUL MOAKLEY; JACKIE NICKERSON FOR TIME (2)

school. "It's something out of Dickens," Aryn observes. "Without that wealthy uncle, I'm not sure where Liberia would be today. Perhaps 'erased from the map of Africa,' as Brown worried would happen if he didn't do anything to stop the epidemic."

Aryn was struck on this journey by the progress she saw. While Sierra Leone remains under terrible siege, with new infections reported every day, Liberia shows signs of getting the outbreak under control. The treatment wards are no longer filled to overflowing. People are returning to restaurants and marketplaces. "I think people had just gotten tired of living in fear," she says. "You don't realize what a toll fear takes on the body until you are relieved of it." And yet even progress brings its own challenges, and not just the risk of complacency that could unleash the infection all over again. "Doctors and nurses told me that now that they could afford to memorize the names of their patients, they felt it more acutely when they died."

The pain, frustration, joy and determination that drive the Ebola fighters are evident in the portraits that follow. Nickerson's fine-art work has taken her all over Africa, from Congo and Malawi to Mozambique and Zimbabwe, where she lived for many years on a farm. "In her portraiture, Jackie always maintains a gentle distance with her subjects that allows her to capture something intimate, heroic and modern," Paul observes.

For the fifth year in a row, our Person of the Year issue was overseen by deputy managing editor Radhika Jones. "When you look at the history of TIME's Person of the Year covers," she notes, "there are a lot of Presidents and heads of state." Showing individuals on the covers whom few people will recognize represents a departure. "Many of the people in our cover story are unknown not only to readers but to each other," she says. "But their mission unites them, and so does our story."

Nancy Gibbs, EDITOR

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THE CONVERSATION

The Year in Covers

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1



3



5



2



4



6

Write to us

‘If you’re going to San Francisco, be sure to wear some dollars in your hair.’

ROBERTO CHAVEZ of Arvada, Colo., suggesting that the “flowers” line in the famous Scott McKenzie song “San Francisco” be updated to reflect the Bay Area’s tech-wealth-driven transformation, as explored in “Disrupted” (Feb. 10)



‘Raise the minimum wage and everything else will increase accordingly.’

Retired teacher **MARGE DEIBEL** of Mount Pleasant, Mich., on TIME’s profile of brash wage-hike opponent and former lobbyist Richard Berman (March 10)

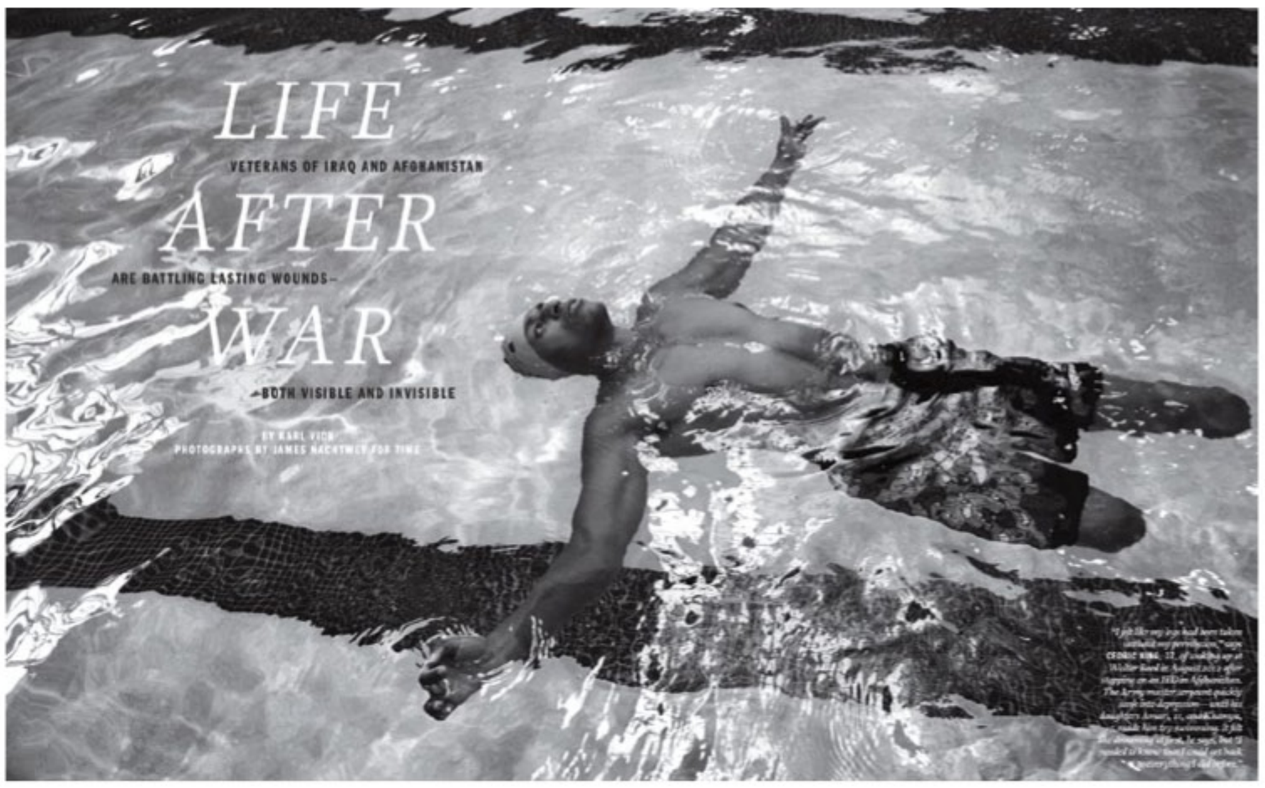
‘Glad someone of his distinction is speaking out.’

DINA SCHMIDT, teacher from Chester Springs, Pa., on an essay by Bard College president Leon Botstein criticizing the SAT as “part hoax, part fraud” (March 24)

‘People used to go bankrupt when they had a major medical emergency. Now they’ll spend up to 27% of their income. To me, that sounds quite a bit more … affordable.’

R. PHILIP GRIZZARD of Normal, Ill., defending the Affordable Care Act in response to Steven Brill’s “The Hidden Cliffs in Obamacare” (June 9), which highlighted little-known inequities in the ACA





‘Where are the mass demonstrations? Where is the outrage?’

PETER PAUL of Surry, Va., on “Life After War” (Nov. 17), which profiles Iraq and Afghanistan veterans at home and during their recovery at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center

‘They are designed to teach critical-thinking skills based in logic and fact.’

LINDA ARADON, third-grade teacher in Santa Cruz, Calif., defending the need for core-curriculum standards, as explored in “Core Crash” (Aug. 25)

‘Finally, Harley-Davidson got its corporate head out of its tailpipe.’



ALLEN STANKO of San Diego, on TIME’s June 30 feature on the motorcycle giant’s new electric bike

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2014

THE YEAR IN Quotes

JANUARY

▸ **“I don’t think it is more dangerous than alcohol.”**

BARACK OBAMA, *on marijuana use*

▸ **“In 10 minutes, you could be dead without the proper clothes.”**

GREG BALLARD, *Indianapolis mayor, warning about the polar vortex*

FEBRUARY

▸ **“People looked and saw that there is nothing to fear.”**

VLADIMIR PUTIN, *suggesting the violence-free Sochi Olympics should improve perceptions of Russia*

MARCH

‘Good night, Malaysian three-seven-zero.’

THE LAST RECORDED TRANSMISSION *to the cockpit of Flight 370, which remains missing*

By Justin Worland

‘We will hold ourselves fully accountable.’

MARY BARRA, *General Motors CEO, apologizing for a fatal ignition-switch defect*

APRIL

▸ **“Those are some huge shoes to fill. And some really big pants.”**

STEPHEN COLBERT, *on taking over the* Late Show *from David Letterman*

MAY

▸ **“North Korea isn’t a real country, is it?”**

KIM MIN-SEOK, *South Korean official, blasting Pyongyang for sexist comments about South Korean President Park Geun-hye*

▸ **“I don’t know why you girls aren’t attracted to me. But I will punish you all for it.”**

ELLIOT RODGER, *22, before killing seven people—including himself—in Isla Vista, Calif.*

JUNE

▸ **“I don’t want revenge … I want peace.”**

PETRO POROSHENKO, *Ukrainian President, vowing to end fighting with pro-Russian separatists*

JULY

▸ **“Music should not be free.”**

TAYLOR SWIFT, *months before pulling her catalog from Spotify*

‘I consider those girls as my sisters … and I’m going to speak up for them until they are released.’

MALALA YOUSAFZAI, *on the 200-plus Nigerian girls kidnapped by the militant group Boko Haram*

▸ **“My phone is exploding with love!”**

LAVERNE COX, *after becoming the*

first transgender actress to receive an Emmy nomination

AUGUST

▸ **"He was the greatest friend you could ever imagine."**
BILLY CRYSTAL, *on Robin Williams*

'There are dead people lying in the streets.'

INGRID GERCAMA, *Dutch relief worker, speaking in August about Liberia's Ebola outbreak*

▸ **"Throwing 70 miles an hour. That's throwing like a girl."**
MO'NE DAVIS, *13, after she pitched a shutout in the Little League World Series*

▸ **"If they refuse to hear us, we will make them feel us."**
SYBRINA FULTON, *mother of Travyon Martin, after Michael Brown, 18, was fatally shot by a police officer*

SEPTEMBER

▸ **"They are not Muslims. They are murderers."**
DAVID CAMERON, *British Prime Minister, on the extremist group ISIS*

▸ **"I let myself down, I let everyone else down, and for that I'm sorry."**
ROGER GOODELL, *NFL commissioner, on the league's mishandling of domestic-abuse cases*

▸ **"Students should stand on the front line in every century."**
JOSHUA WONG, *17-year-old leader of the Hong Kong pro- democracy protests*

'Hello, Iowa. I'm baaaack.'

HILLARY CLINTON, *at a Democratic fundraiser*

OCTOBER

▸ **"Sometimes they act by inaction."**
TED OLSON, *gay-rights advocate*

and attorney, after the Supreme Court opted to keep gay marriage a state issue

'It is not a scandal. It is a sex crime.'

JENNIFER LAWRENCE, *after hackers leaked stolen nude photos of her and other celebrities*

▸ **"I want to be a much better President than I have been until now."**

DILMA ROUSSEFF, *after winning re-election in Brazil*

NOVEMBER

▸ **"Goodbye to all my dear friends and family that I love."**

BRITTANY MAYNARD, *before ending her life to avoid a painful death from brain cancer*

▸ **"We will make it our job to prove the skeptics wrong."**

MITCH MCCONNELL AND JOHN BOEHNER, *promising change after GOP midterm victories*

▸ **"No, no, we don't answer that."**

BILL COSBY, *declining to address mounting allegations of sexual assault*

▸ **"You can come out of the shadows."**

BARACK OBAMA, *to the millions of unauthorized workers who will benefit from immigration reform*

DECEMBER

'This is a fundamental issue for every American who cares about justice.'

BILL DE BLASIO, *New York City mayor, discussing police reforms in response to the Eric Garner case*

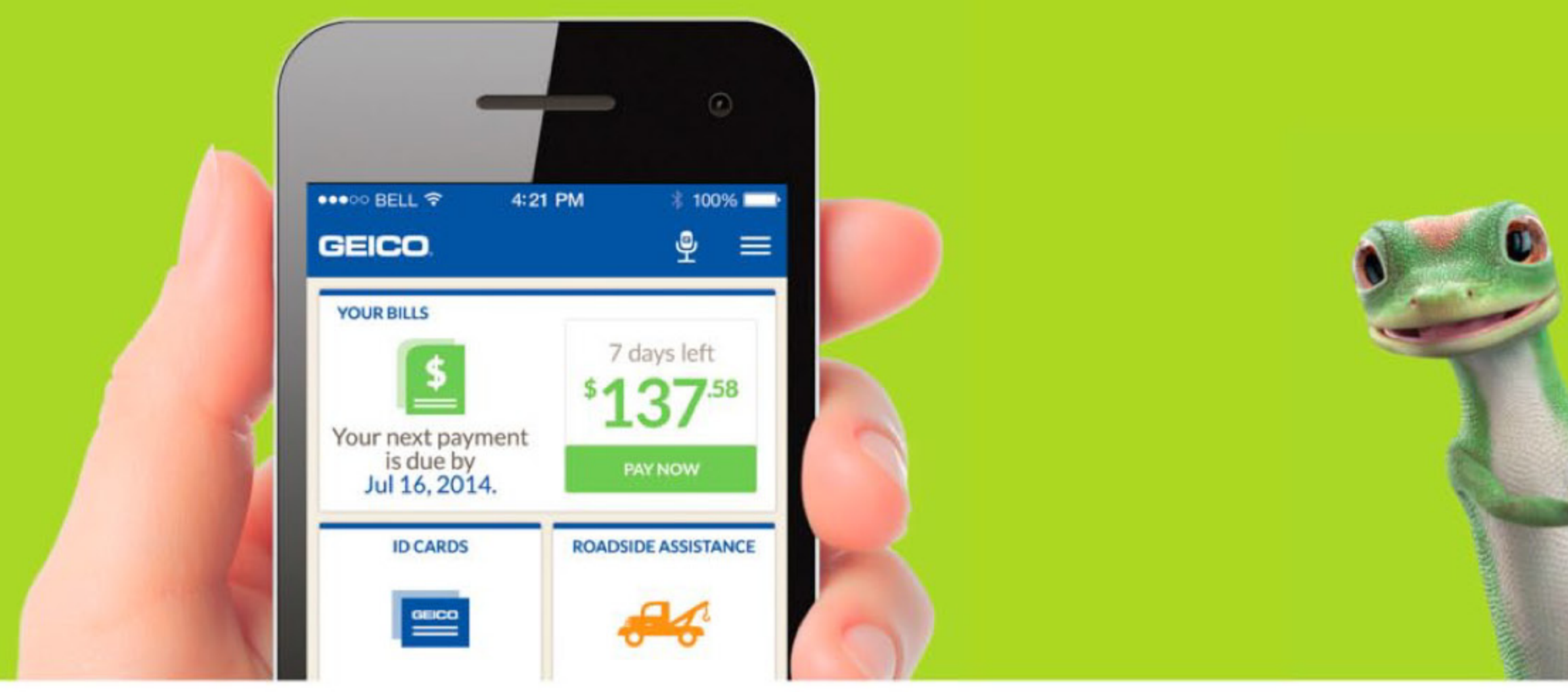
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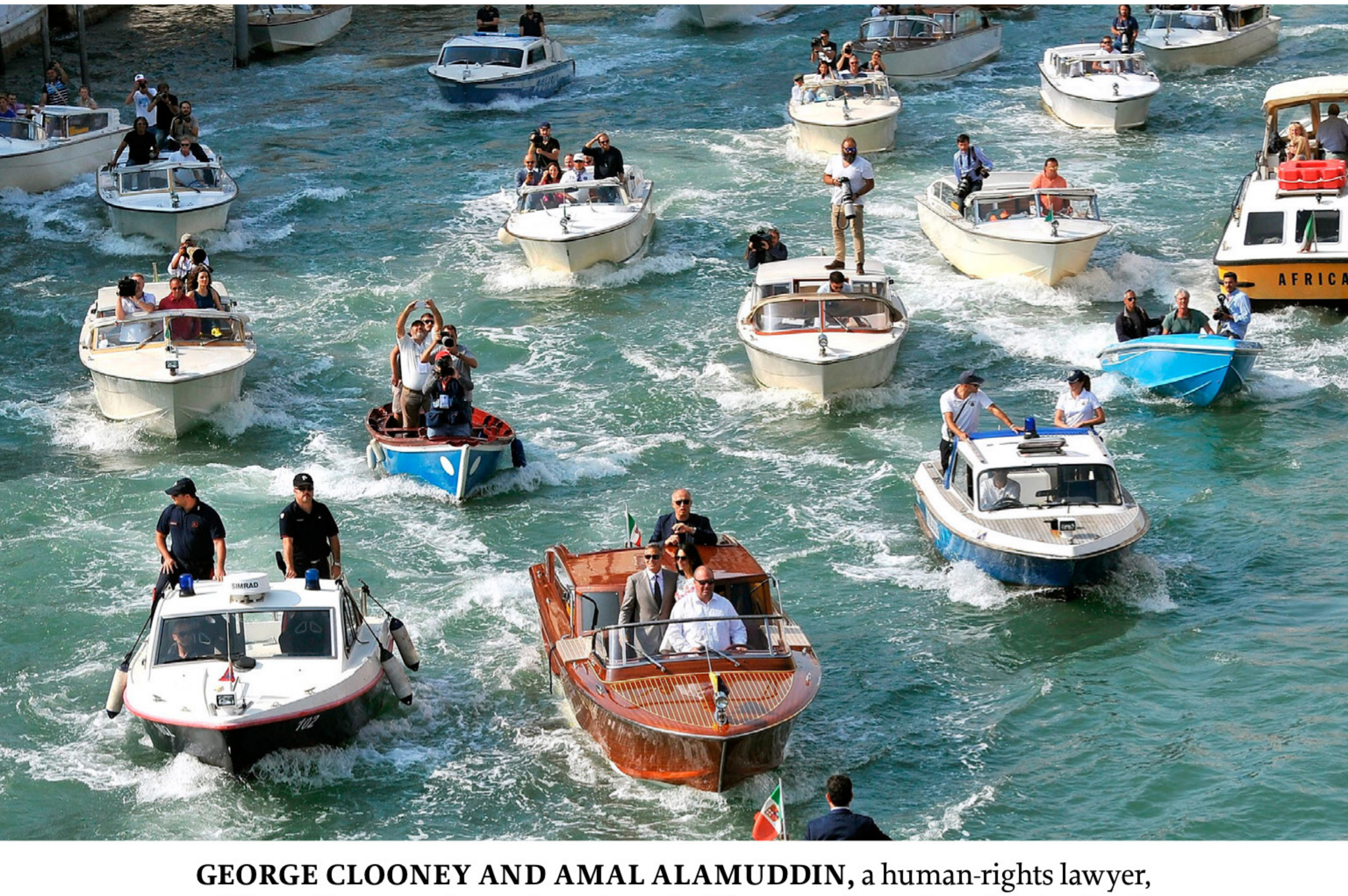
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2014

THE YEAR IN

Moments

MEMORABLE IMAGES OF INFLUENTIAL FIGURES



GEORGE CLOONEY AND AMAL ALAMUDDIN, a human-rights lawyer, are followed by more than a dozen boats holding security and media after leaving a hotel in Venice on Sept. 28; they got married the day before

SWIPE FOR MORE

By Andrew Katz

CLOONEY: AP; PUTIN: REUTERS; OBAMA: POOL/GETTY IMAGES; YOUSAFZAI: AFP/GETTY IMAGES; CLINTON: OFFICE OF PRESIDENT CLINTON/GETTY IMAGES; JETER: AP; JOLIE: POOL/AFP/GETTY IMAGES; POPE: L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO/REUTERS; KIM: KCNA/REUTERS

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2014

THE YEAR IN

Highs and Lows

SIMILAR THEMES, OPPOSITE FATES

SCROLL

Ellen DeGeneres' Oscars selfie was the most retweeted photo of all time

SELFIES

ABC's *Selfie* was one of the first fall TV shows to get canceled

Honey M
was praise
ads featu
diverse fa

HONE

Here Comes Hon
was axed ove
of Mama J
dating a
offend

Chris Pratt emerged as a silver-screen It boy

CHRISES

Chris Christie faced fallout from #Bridgegate

Interstellar made wormholes cool, if no less confusing

HOLES

The mystery holes appearing in Siberia were terrifying, also confusing

Guardians of the Galaxy rescued the summer box office

PROTECTORS

The U.S. Secret Service let an interloper into the White House

Pitbull an
Kesha's "Tim
topped the *Bil*
Hot 100

THINGS YOU

Yo, an app that l
send "yo" to
other, was w
mocked

GOOD YEAR

BAD YEAR

By Lily Rothman





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2014

THE YEAR IN

15 Minutes of Fame

THE HEROES, VILLAINS AND PHENOMENA THAT ROSE, BRIEFLY, TO THE TOP

BY JOEL STEIN



1 ▸ ALEX FROM TARGET

The Internet is constantly improving efficiency. In the past, tween girls had to discover their burgeoning sexuality by having a crush on some non-threatening, mop-headed, baby-faced singer or actor even though they didn't care about singing or acting. Now they have Alex Lee, a nonthreatening, mop-headed, baby-faced checkout kid in Texas that some girl took a photo of and posted on Twitter. A day later, he had 300,000 followers, a spot on CNN and a bunch of old people confused.

ALEX FROM TARGET: BEAUTIFULZAC/TWITTER; HELLO KITTY: SANRIO; COSTAS: NBC/YOUTUBE; MUG SHOT: AP; HELT, STIVIANO, CALIFORNIA CHROME: GETTY IMAGES; SMARF: ADULTSWIM/CARTOON NETWORK; NYONG'O, SUAREZ: AP; FLAPPY BIRD: FLAPPYBIRD.IO; SCUCCIA: GETTY IMAGES; PIKETTY: HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS; RITTER: WNEP/YOUTUBE; GREENE: KTVA/YOUTUBE

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2014

THE YEAR IN

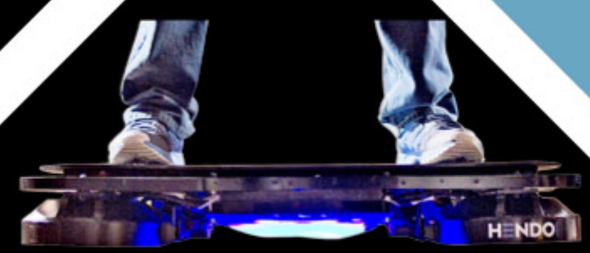
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2014

THE YEAR IN

Hashtags

NEWS STORIES AMPLIFIED BY SOCIAL MEDIA

APRIL
#BringBackOurGirls

The kidnapping of more than **200 schoolgirls** *by extremist group Boko Haram grabbed international headlines after Nigerians used Twitter to raise awareness.*

MAY
#Elevatorgate

MAY
#YesAllWomen

JUNE
#IceBucketChallenge

JULY
#GazaUnderAttack vs. #IsraelUnderFire

AUGUST
#IfTheyGunnedMeDown

SEPTEMBER
#WhyIStayed

SEPTEMBER
#OccupyCentral

NOVEMBER
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DECEMBER
#ICantBreathe

by Megan Gibson

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2014

THE YEAR IN

Make-Believe

THE MOST INFLUENTIAL ONSCREEN CHARACTERS

1 ▸ ELSA

Hollywood's reigning ice royal (voiced by Idina Menzel) first charmed audiences in 2013. But this year she became a bona fide icon—**dominating the *Billboard* Hot 100** with her Oscar-winning anthem, "Let It Go"; boosting ratings 31% with her debut on ABC's *Once Upon a Time* (played by Georgina Haig); and **outpacing Barbie as the best-selling toy in America** (with her singing figurine). Next up: a *Frozen* attraction at Epcot and a likely *Frozen* sequel.

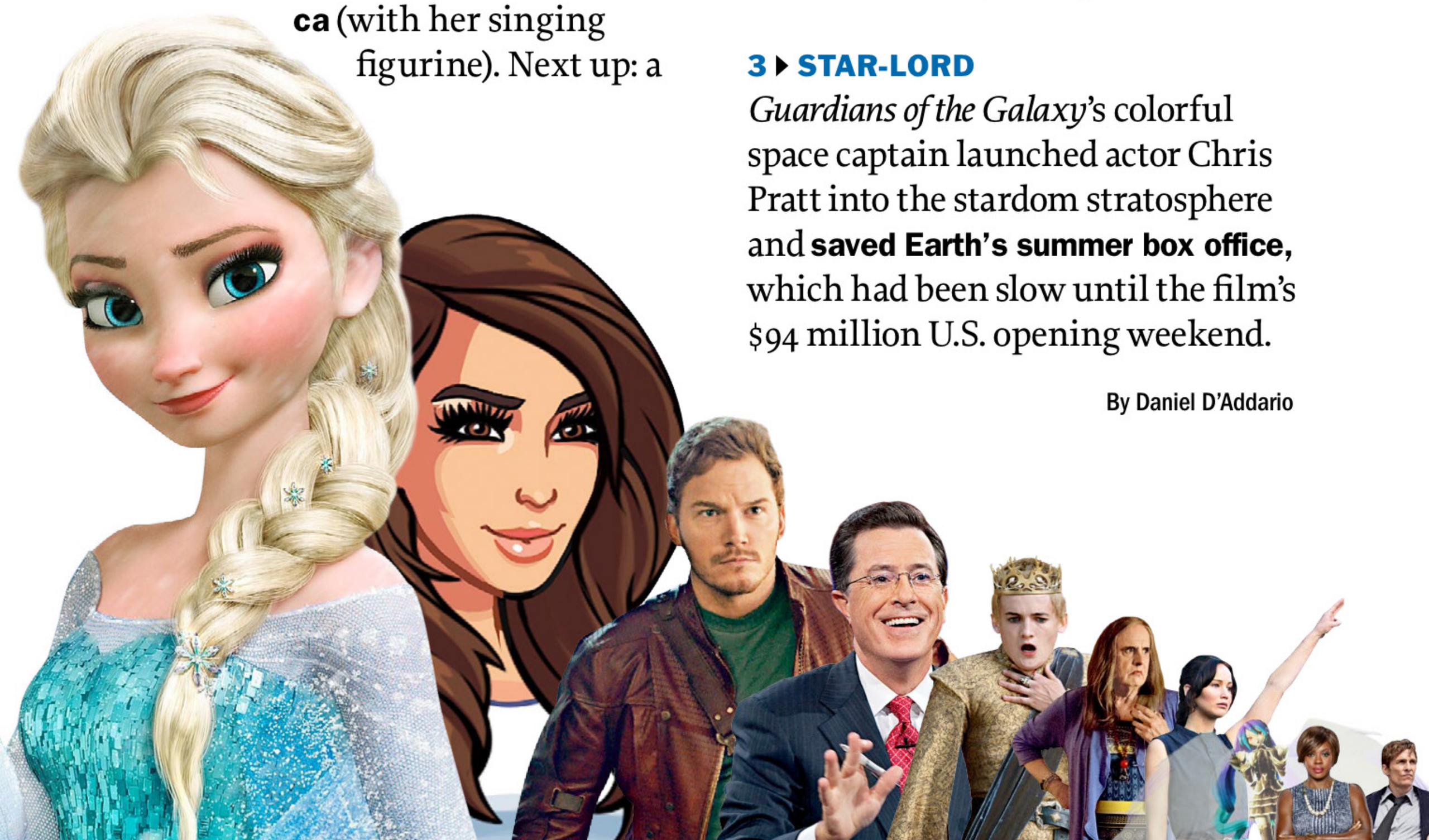
2 ▸ KIM KARDASHIAN

Analysts estimate that the title avatar in the mobile game *Kim Kardashian: Hollywood*—who charms players with lines like "You're a natural in front of the camera. You should get a 'momager'"—**helped get users to spend at least $200 million** on virtual clothes, jewelry and more.

3 ▸ STAR-LORD

Guardians of the Galaxy's colorful space captain launched actor Chris Pratt into the stardom stratosphere and **saved Earth's summer box office,** which had been slow until the film's $94 million U.S. opening weekend.

By Daniel D'Addario



4 ▸ STEPHEN COLBERT

In March the fictional conservative blowhard (created by comic Stephen Colbert) sparked a national conversation about prejudice with a joke about the Washington Redskins' team name; weeks later, he **got his real-life counterpart hired to replace David Letterman** as host of *The Late Show* on CBS.

5 ▸ KING JOFFREY

The mad boy-king (played by Jack Gleeson) was the defining character on *Game of Thrones* this season, **launching countless memes and cementing his show's status** as HBO's biggest hit ever; some 18.4 million viewers watched each week.

6 ▸ MAURA PFEFFERMAN

The *Transparent* matriarch (played by Jeffrey Tambor) not only established Amazon as a legitimate TV player—she was also the **first transgender lead character in a major show,** capping a landmark year for trans visibility.

7 ▸ KATNISS EVERDEEN

After the *Hunger Games* heroine (played by Jennifer Lawrence) made a three-fingered salute while rebelling against the nefarious Capitol, it **became a rallying symbol among pro-democracy protesters** in Thailand and Hong Kong.

8 ▸ HATSUNE MIKU

The computer-generated Japanese artist, whose "singing" is synthesized from many short samples of actual human voices, **performed in 3-D on Lady Gaga's tour** and *The Late Show With David Letterman*—all without having a body.

9 ▸ ANNALISE KEATING

How to Get Away With Murder's no-nonsense defense attorney and law professor (played by Viola Davis) **kick-started a debate about race and television** after a New York *Times* TV critic likened her—alongside Shonda Rhimes, the show's executive producer—to "an angry black woman."

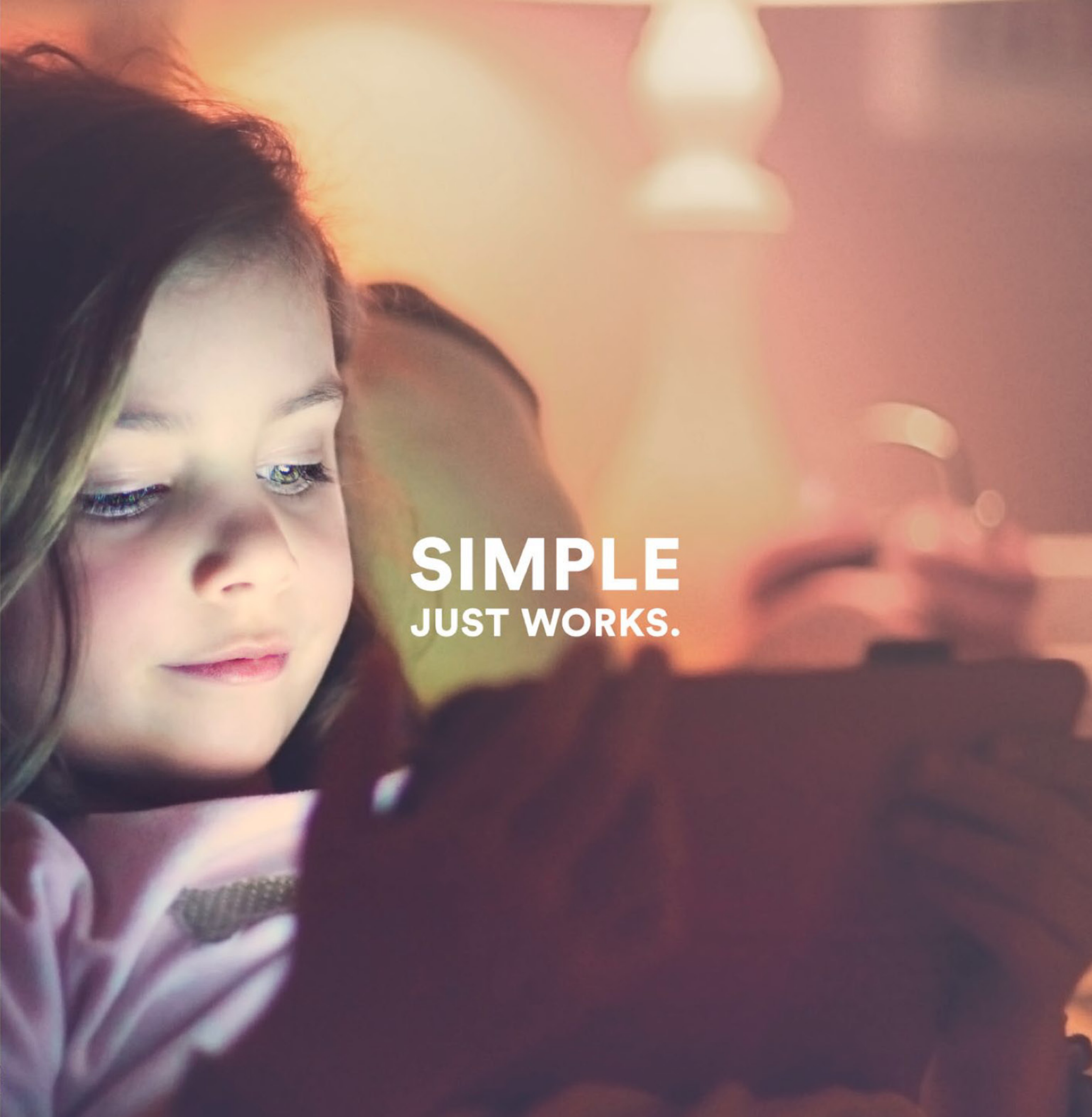
10 ▸ RUST COHLE

The *True Detective* lead (played by Matthew McConaughey) **delivered some of the Internet's most quoted bons mots** (see "Time is a flat circle"), and his philosophizing sent obscure books, like *The King in Yellow*, rocketing up Amazon charts.

PREVIOUS PAGE: EVERETT (2); HBO (2); AMAZON; GLU MOBILE INC.; DISNEY; REUTERS; COMEDY CENTRAL; ABC

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2014

Person of the Year

The Ebola Fighters



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ARPQGMMF

The Choice

By Nancy Gibbs

Not the glittering weapon fights the fight, says the proverb, *but rather the hero's heart.*

Maybe this is true in any battle; it is surely true of a war that is waged with bleach and a prayer.

For decades, Ebola haunted rural African villages like some mythic monster that every few years rose to demand a human sacrifice and then returned to its cave. It reached the West only in nightmare form, a Hollywood horror that makes eyes bleed and organs dissolve and doctors despair because they have no cure.

But 2014 is the year an outbreak turned into an epidemic, powered by the very progress that has paved roads and raised cities and lifted millions out of poverty. This time it reached crowded slums in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone; it traveled to Nigeria and Mali, to Spain, Germany and the U.S. It struck doctors and nurses in unprecedented numbers, wiping out a public-health infrastructure that was weak in the first place. One August day in Liberia, six pregnant women lost their babies when hospitals couldn't admit them for complications. Anyone willing to treat Ebola victims ran the risk of becoming one.

Which brings us to the hero's heart. There was little to stop the disease from spreading further. Governments weren't equipped to respond; the World Health Organization

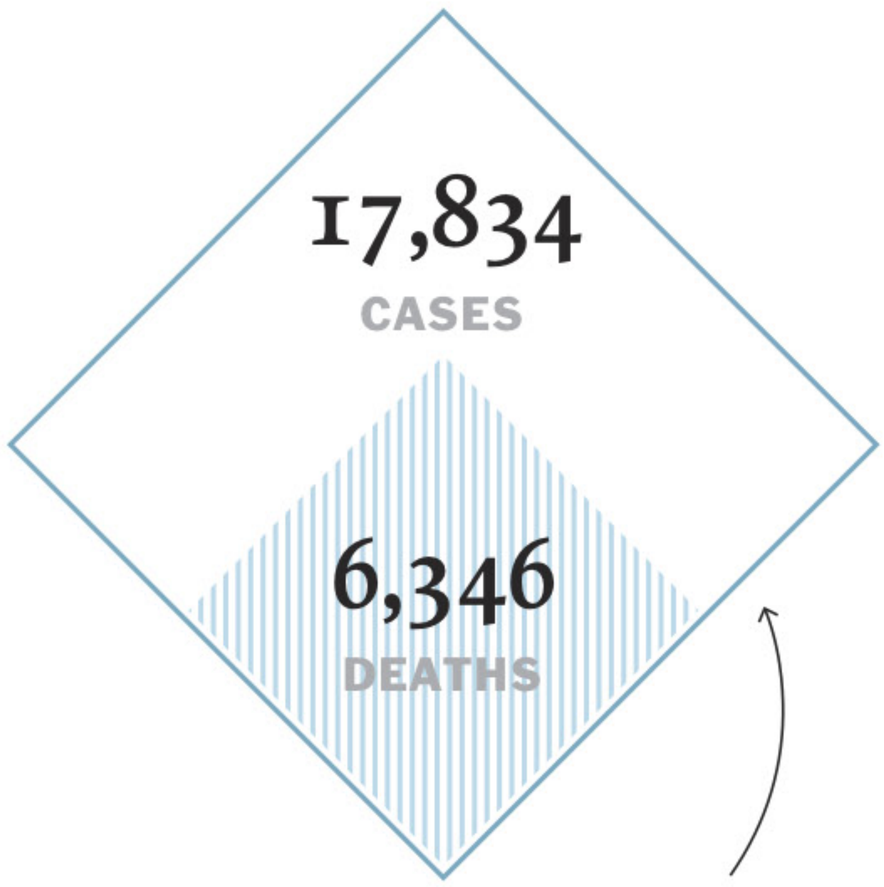
was in denial and snarled in red tape. First responders were accused of crying wolf, even as the danger grew. But the people in the field, the special forces of Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), the Christian medical-relief workers of Samaritan's Purse and many others from all over the world fought side by side with local doctors and nurses, ambulance drivers and burial teams.

Ask what drove them and some talk about God; some about country; some about the instinct to run into the fire, not away. "If someone from America comes to help my people, and someone from Uganda," says Iris Martor, a Liberian nurse, "then why can't I?" Foday Gallah, an ambulance driver who survived infection, calls his immunity a holy gift. "I want to give my blood so a lot of people can be saved," he says. "I am going to fight Ebola with all of my might."

MSF nurse's assistant Salome Karwah stayed at the bedsides of patients, bathing and feeding them, even after losing both her parents—who ran a medical clinic—in a single week and surviving Ebola herself. "It looked like God gave me a second chance to help others," she says. Tiny children watched their families die, and no one could so much as hug them, because hugs could kill. "You see people facing death without their loved ones, only with people in space suits," says MSF president Dr. Joanne

THE TOLL

Number of reported cases and deaths in the current Ebola outbreak



More than 99% of infections have originated in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone

DATA THROUGH DEC. 8. SOURCE: WHO

Liu. "You should not die alone with space-suit men."

Those who contracted the disease encountered pain like they had never known. "It hurts like they are busting your head with an ax," Karwah says. One doctor overheard his funeral being planned. Asked if surviving Ebola changed him, Dr. Kent Brantly turns the question around. "I still have the same flaws that I did before," he says. "But whenever we go through a devastating experience like what I've been through, it is an incredible opportunity for redemption of something. We can say, How can I be better now because of what I've been through? To not do that is kind of a shame."

So that is the next challenge: What will we do with what we've learned? This was a test of the world's ability to respond to potential pandemics, and it did not go well. It exposed corruption in African governments along with complacency in Western capitals and jealousy among competing bureaucrats. It triggered mistrust from Monrovia to Manhattan. Each week brought new puzzles. How do you secure a country, beyond taking passengers' temperatures at the airport? Who has the power to order citizens to stay home, to post a guard outside their door? What will it take to develop treatments for diseases largely confined to poor nations, even as this Ebola outbreak had

THE CHASE

Nearly 30,000 registered contacts of infected patients are being monitored for 21 days in an effort to contain the epidemic. Many other contacts are not registered. Here's what is required to reach them all.



PHONE AND VEHICLE FIGURES FROM SEPTEMBER, BASED ON CONTACT-TRACING EFFORTS IN WEST AFRICA PROJECTED TO MARCH 2015.

SOURCES: WHO; UNMEER

taken far more lives by mid-October than all the earlier ones combined?

The death in Dallas of Thomas Eric Duncan, the first Ebola patient diagnosed on U.S. soil, and the infection of two nurses who treated him, shook our faith in the ability of U.S. hospitals to handle this kind of disease. From there the road to full freak-out was a short one. An Ohio middle school closed because an employee had flown on the same plane as one of Duncan's nurses. Not the same flight, just the same plane. A Texas college rejected applicants from Nigeria, since that country had some "confirmed Ebola cases." A Maine schoolteacher had to take a three-week leave because she went to a teachers' conference in Dallas. Fear, too, was global. When a nurse in Spain contracted Ebola from a priest, Spanish authorities killed her dog as a precaution, while #VamosAMorirTodos (We're all going to die) trended on Twitter. Guests at a hotel in Macedonia were trapped in their rooms for days after a British guest got sick and died. Turned out to have nothing to do with Ebola.

The problem with irrational responses is that they can cloud the need for rational ones. Just when the world needed more medical volunteers, the price of serving soared. When nurse Kaci Hickox, returning from a stint with MSF in Sierra Leone with no symptoms and a negative blood test, was quarantined in a tent in Newark, N.J., by a combustible governor, it forced a reckoning. "It is crazy we are spending so much time having this debate about how to safely monitor people coming back from Ebola-endemic countries," says Hickox, "when the one thing we can do to protect the population is to stop the outbreak in West Africa."

Ebola is a war, and a warning. The global health system is nowhere close to strong enough to keep us safe from infectious disease, and "us" means everyone, not just those in faraway places where this is one threat among many that claim lives every day. The rest of the world can sleep at night because a group of men and women are willing to stand and fight. For tireless acts of courage and mercy, for buying the world time to boost its defenses, for risking, for persisting, for sacrificing and saving, the Ebola fighters are TIME's 2014 Person of the Year. ■

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TOYOTA | *Let's Go Places*

2014
PERSON
OF THE
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The Ones Who Answered The Call

By David Von Drehle

WITH ARYN BAKER
IN LIBERIA


USAID

AUDIO

On the outskirts of Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, on grassy land among palm trees and tropical hardwoods, stands a cluster of one-story bungalows painted cheerful yellow with blue trim. This is the campus of Eternal Love Winning Africa, a nondenominational

Christian mission, comprising a school, a radio station and a hospital. It was here that Dr. Jerry Brown, the hospital's medical director, first heard in March that the fearsome Ebola virus had gained a toehold in his country. Patients with the rare and deadly disease were turning up at a clinic in Lofa County—part of the West African borderlands where Liberia meets Guinea and Sierra Leone. "It was then that we really started panicking," says Brown.

Even in ordinary circumstances, the doctor's workday was a constant buzz of people seeking answers: Can you help with this diagnosis? Would you have a look at this X-ray? What do you make of this rash? Inevitably, Brown would raise his eyebrows and

crease his forehead as if surprised that anyone would think he might know the answer. Just as inevitably, he would have one.

Ebola was different. On this subject, Brown had more questions than answers. He knew the virus was contagious and highly lethal—fatal in up to 90% of cases. But why was it in Liberia? Previous Ebola outbreaks had been primarily in remote Central Africa. Could the disease be contained in the rural north? The membrane between countryside and city in Liberia was highly porous; people flowed into Monrovia in pursuit of jobs or trade and flowed back to their villages, families and friends. "Sooner or later," Brown remembers thinking, "it might reach us." And what then? A poor nation still shaky after years of civil war, Liberia—population 4 million-plus—had just a handful of ambulances in operation. How could Liberia possibly deal with Ebola?

Because he couldn't answer these imponderables, Brown focused on what he could do. At a staff meeting, he assigned Dr. Debbie Eisenhut, an American with Serving in Mission (SIM), to research the disease. By combing the Internet, Eisenhut found what little there was to know about Ebola virus—symptoms, modes of transmission, treatment options. In its early stages, Ebola looked like any number of human infections common in that part of the world, including malaria: fever, achiness, a general sense of malaise. By the time it produced more shocking symptoms—uncontrollable vomiting, torrential diarrhea, organ failure and sometimes bleeding—the patient's chance of survival was small.

The best news Eisenhut found was that Ebola virus does not pass through the air; transmission requires direct contact with the body fluids of symptomatic patients. As for treatments, her findings were meager: fluids to stave off dehydration and Tylenol for pain. And to prevent its spread, chlorine bleach solution to disinfect skin, clothes, bedding and floors. There was no known cure.

Eisenhut's findings made it clear that Ebola patients must be separated from the rest of the hospital population and treated by staff wearing protective gear. And this posed further questions for Brown. The Eternal Love Winning Africa (ELWA) hospital didn't have an isolation ward, nor was there time



Dr. Jerry Brown

46, MEDICAL DIRECTOR AND GENERAL SURGEON AT THE ETERNAL LOVE WINNING AFRICA HOSPITAL, MONROVIA

When it all started and we had a treatment unit set up, my wife did warn me not to enter the unit. So I didn't tell her. I had been in the unit two weeks without her knowing. I went home one evening and started discussing a few things about Dr. Abraham Borbor, my role model, especially when I was in medical school—how he was now ill, and how I was feeling so sorry for him, and how his condition was not improving despite what we were doing. And she paused and asked, "You are not working in the unit. How do you know these things?" and I caught myself.

A few days later she noticed changes in the color of my boxers from the chlorine solution used for disinfection when leaving the unit. She said, "Ah, what is this?" I had no option but to confess. We talked about it for some time, and then she accepted it. What she said was, "I can't stop you. I realize this is something you like, so I am not going to stop you. But just be careful." —AS TOLD TO ARYN BAKER

Photograph by Jackie Nickerson for TIME

or money enough to build one. No hospital in Liberia had one. Looking around the compound for a solution, Brown's eye settled on the modest chapel, bare but for a few battered wooden pews and a lectern that served as a pulpit.

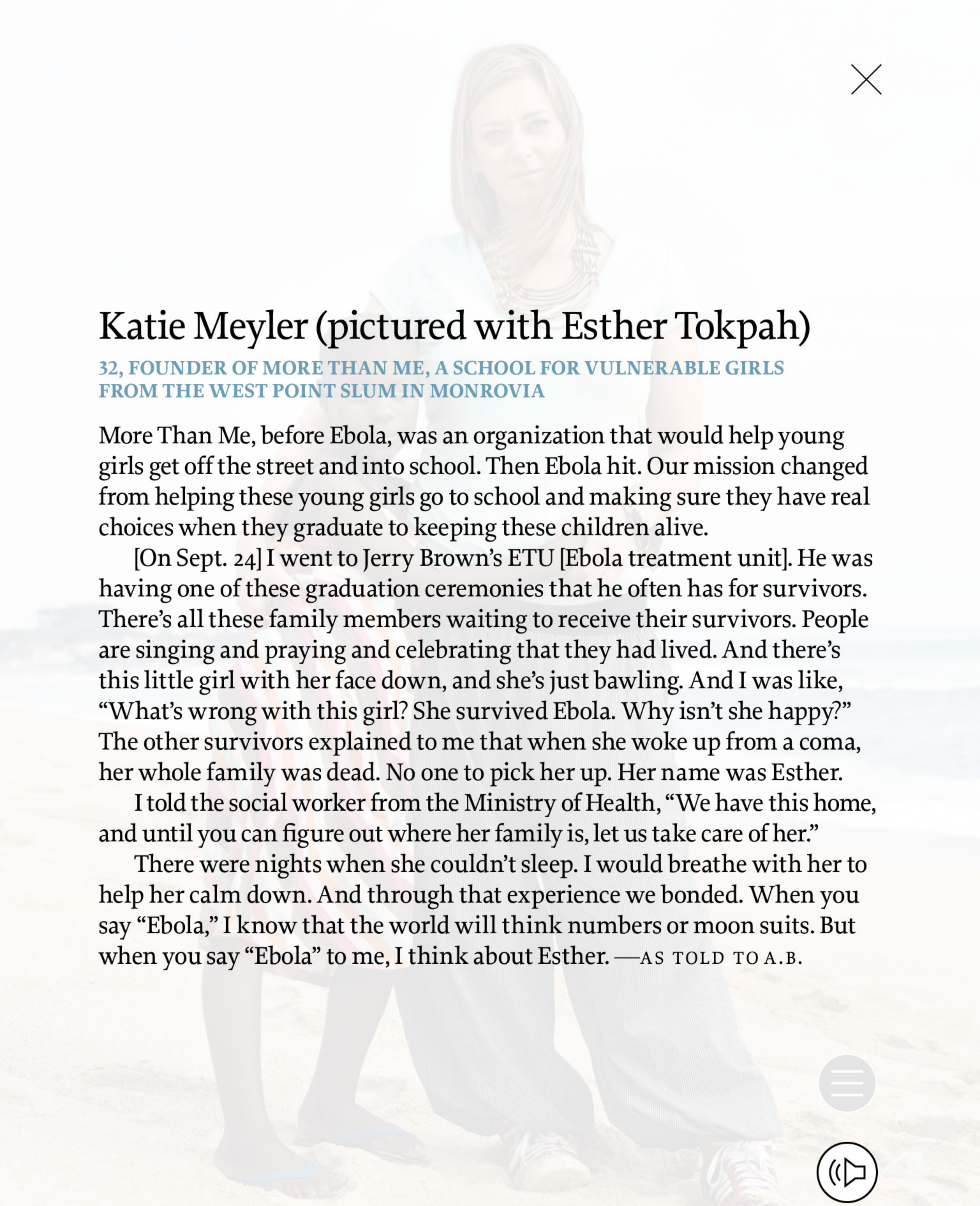
"Well, of course, turning the chapel into an Ebola unit was not welcomed by the staff of the institution. The bulk of them said, 'Why should we turn the house of God into a place where we put people with such a deadly disease?' And some said, 'Where will you provide for us to worship in the morning?'" Brown recalls. (His story, like all the accounts quoted here, was shared in an interview with TIME.)

Dr. John Fankhauser, another volunteer, a family physician from Ventura, Calif., had a ready answer to those objections. Jesus himself treated patients in the house of God, Fankhauser noted. Still, the idea remained unpopular, so Brown tried a more personal brand of persuasion. One by one, or in small groups, he asked the upset hospital workers, "What if you get sick with Ebola, or a member of your family? If the ELWA facility is not prepared to treat patients, where will you go?" Eventually, as Brown recalls, "a couple of them saw reason."

Brown arranged for staff training and stockpiled bleach. Eisenhut took charge of the chapel conversion, assisted by Dr. Kent Brantly, a physician from Texas who had moved to Liberia with his family as part of the Christian relief group Samaritan's Purse. The doctors found room for six beds, which seemed like plenty, because they assumed that Liberia's Ministry of Health would eventually create a proper Ebola treatment facility. The chapel would be needed only as a safe place to hold infected patients while they awaited test results and transfers.

Vast and tragic questions lie behind that mistaken assumption. The Ministry of Health did virtually nothing. Why did it fail to take timely action? And why was the failure replayed in Guinea and Sierra Leone? Why weren't these governments encouraged and supported by international watchdogs like the World Health Organization (WHO)? Why were so many officials from Washington to Geneva to Beijing unable to see what Brown could see, unable to prepare as he prepared? Why didn't the news from the borderlands produce immediate official action in March,





Katie Meyler (pictured with Esther Tokpah)

32, FOUNDER OF MORE THAN ME, A SCHOOL FOR VULNERABLE GIRLS FROM THE WEST POINT SLUM IN MONROVIA

More Than Me, before Ebola, was an organization that would help young girls get off the street and into school. Then Ebola hit. Our mission changed from helping these young girls go to school and making sure they have real choices when they graduate to keeping these children alive.

[On Sept. 24] I went to Jerry Brown's ETU [Ebola treatment unit]. He was having one of these graduation ceremonies that he often has for survivors. There's all these family members waiting to receive their survivors. People are singing and praying and celebrating that they had lived. And there's this little girl with her face down, and she's just bawling. And I was like, "What's wrong with this girl? She survived Ebola. Why isn't she happy?" The other survivors explained to me that when she woke up from a coma, her whole family was dead. No one to pick her up. Her name was Esther.

I told the social worker from the Ministry of Health, "We have this home, and until you can figure out where her family is, let us take care of her."

There were nights when she couldn't sleep. I would breathe with her to help her calm down. And through that experience we bonded. When you say "Ebola," I know that the world will think numbers or moon suits. But when you say "Ebola" to me, I think about Esther. —AS TOLD TO A.B.

Photograph by Jackie Nickerson for TIME

when the worst Ebola epidemic in history—by far—might have been contained and snuffed out?

Why, in short, was the battle against Ebola left for month after crucial month to a ragged army of volunteers and near volunteers: doctors who wouldn't quit even as their colleagues fell ill and died; nurses comforting patients while standing in slurries of mud, vomit and feces; ambulance drivers facing down hostile crowds to transport passengers teeming with the virus; investigators tracing chains of infection through slums hot with disease; workers stoically zipping contagious corpses into body bags in the sun; patients meeting death in lonely isolation to protect others from infection?

According to official counts, more than 17,800 people have been infected with Ebola virus in this epidemic and more than 6,300 have died since this outbreak's first known case in rural Guinea in December 2013. Many on the front lines believe the actual numbers are much higher—and in any event, they continue to rise steeply. The virus has traveled to Europe and North America, where the resulting fear exceeded any actual threat to public health. In West Africa, however, the impact has been catastrophic. The number of Liberians with jobs fell by nearly half as businesses and markets closed in fear of Ebola. Sierra Leone's meager health care network simply collapsed: Ebola patients were told by the government to stay home rather than look for a hospital bed. In Guinea, the epidemic stoked distrust of government and aid workers. Medical missionaries were driven from villages by violence and threats.

Ebola should not have been a surprise. The steady expansion of human habitat brings people into contact with remote reservoirs of poorly understood diseases, and mobile populations allow pathogens to infect large numbers in a short time. The story of Ebola is the story of SARS, of MERS—and most of all, it is the story of HIV and its nearly 80 million victims, roughly half of whom have died. All are animal-borne viruses that crossed to humans; HIV and Ebola even come from the same region of Central Africa.

But lessons are easily forgotten, it seems, in the face of feckless African governments and complacent Western powers, rival healers and turf-guarding bureaucrats. National and global health authorities


MEDECINS
SANS FRONTIERES

Ella Watson-Stryker

34, HEALTH PROMOTER WITH DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS/ MEDÉCINS SANS FRONTIÈRES (MSF)

Guinea broke my heart. I was not prepared for the level of mortality. I wasn't prepared to watch entire families die. I wasn't prepared to watch entire villages die. There was a village in Guinea where the entire left side of the road, the houses were empty. It was an entire extended family. And there was a graveyard in the village, and I knew all of the graves.

The darkest day [was] probably in Guinea. The beginning of May. An important person had come back to the village. He had been at a funeral. And because he was very respected in the village, when he died everyone came to the funeral. I think it's very normal for humans that we don't want to bury someone covered in vomit and feces. We want to wash the body.

So the first week, all of his male relatives came in, and all of them died. Then all of his female members of the family came in, and all of them died. And then the children came in. We had three young children in the treatment center, completely alone. The 12-year-old, she turned her face to the wall and she wouldn't speak and she wouldn't eat. She was so devastated by the loss of her entire family that the only thing she would say to us was "Just let me go join my mother." —AS TOLD TO A.B.

Photograph by Jackie Nickerson for TIME

would wait five months beyond March to acknowledge the unfolding disaster. Health ministries would ignore the warnings of doctors who were seeing the hot zone firsthand. WHO would initially rebuff efforts by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help. By the time the authorities woke up, the epidemic was galloping away from them.

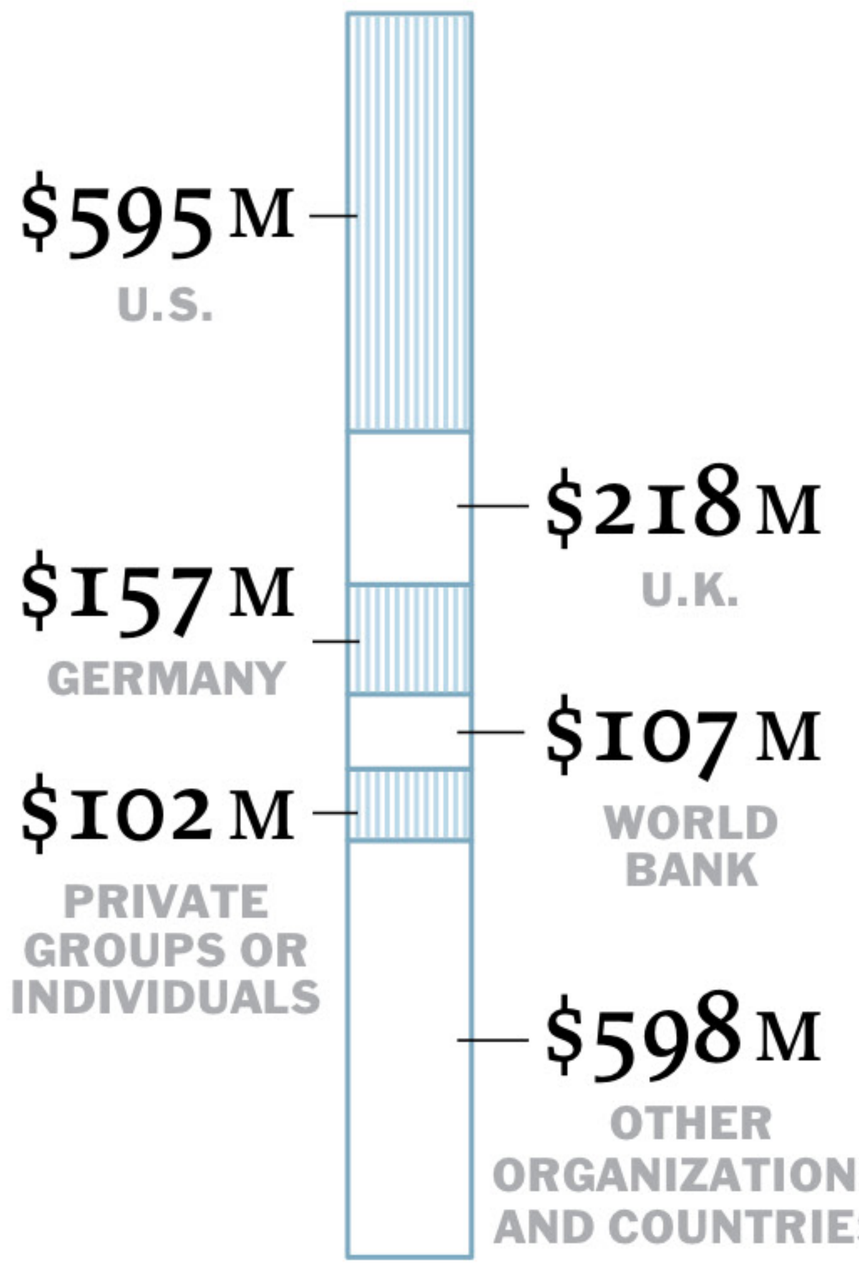
There will be time, when the still raging epidemic is finally conquered, to dissect the failures. For now, consider the stories of individuals who stood up to Ebola and, by doing so, raised hopes that victory is possible. In the memorable words of an essay by one volunteer, Ella Watson-Stryker, they found themselves "fighting a forest fire with spray bottles." They did not give up.

A HOSTILE WELCOME

WHILE ELWA WAS GEARING UP IN March, across the border in Guinea the Ebola crisis had galvanized the group Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). The nearest modern medical facility to the original outbreak was an MSF clinic in Gueckedou intended primarily to treat malaria. In

GLOBAL EFFORT

Sixty-three countries and organizations have contributed $1.8 billion to battle the outbreak



FIGURES ARE THROUGH DEC. 9
AND INCLUDE CONTRIBUTIONS AND COMMITMENTS.

SOURCE: U.N. FINANCIAL TRACKING SERVICE



Salome Karwah

26, NURSE'S ASSISTANT, MSF CLINIC, MONROVIA

When I got sick, I was breast-feeding my 10-month-old baby. My brother took her blood to do her tests. She was negative. [Then my fiancé] got sick. The girl he left my baby with, she used to bring her to the ETU, and I saw her every two days. The girl would stand across the fence, and I would sing for my baby. I made a song for her on the day she was born. I used to sing it before she went to sleep. It goes like this: "Go to sleep, baby, go to sleep. Go to sleep, baby." She would be laughing, playing, and then they would carry her back. —AS TOLD TO A.B.

Photograph by Jackie Nickerson for TIME


3M 1860S
HEALTH CARE PARTICULATE RESPIRATOR
AND SURGICAL MASK

Foday Gallah

37, AMBULANCE SUPERVISOR, MONROVIA

I am going to go back in full swing. I am not going to be afraid. I am going to walk in to fight Ebola with all of my might. A lot of people die. But I was cured, and that is the work of God. I have built immunity to it, so that is a gift.

I am going to get on that ambulance. I am going to every nook and cranny of the capital city, pick up whatsoever Ebola patient and take them to the treatment unit, and give them words of hope, of encouragement. And try to educate people about Ebola. —AS TOLD TO A.B.

Photograph by Jackie Nickerson for TIME

February patients began arriving at the clinic with high fevers.

Clinic doctors flashed word to MSF headquarters in Geneva. Alarmed, the higher-ups dispatched a small team of investigators to bring back blood samples for testing. "We thought it could be Lassa fever," the organization's president, Dr. Joanne Liu, recalls. Like Ebola, Lassa can cause pain and bleeding. Unlike Ebola, Lassa was known to be common in West Africa. Though somewhat less deadly, Lassa is still a matter of grave concern. Even before the test results were back, MSF assembled a sort of infectious-disease SWAT team to head off an epidemic. Watson-Stryker, a veteran public-health educator, got the call at her apartment in New York and within days was on a jet to Geneva for briefings.

While changing planes, she checked her phone and learned that the lab results were back and the samples contained Ebola. "Very briefly, I thought about getting back on the plane and going back to New York," she says, but she continued on to Geneva with her mind unspooling "the graphic movie version of Ebola, of people bleeding from their faces."

At headquarters, Watson-Stryker's fears were tempered by MSF doctors who had dealt with earlier Ebola outbreaks. She set off for the forest of Guinea as part of a team that would not only treat patients but also trace their contacts and educate their families and neighbors on the nature and prevention of the disease. The team would also try to get a picture of how widespread the problem might be.

Their two-car convoy jounced and slogged for two days over bad roads to reach the clinic in Gueckedou. "When we got there, the tiny crew of people who had been handling everything were very happy to see us," Watson-Stryker recalls. "One of the women—she was in charge of the project—I don't think anyone has looked that happy to see me ever in my life. They were really exhausted." Other aid organizations in the region were evacuating their staffs, according to Watson-Stryker; only MSF was expanding.

Arguably the most effective—and inarguably the cockiest—medical-relief organization in the world, MSF is a global movement pledged to deliver quality care to patients in remote and troubled places. The group, which was honored with the 1999 Nobel Peace Prize, is fiercely independent, with the vast



Dr. Joanne Liu

49, INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT OF MSF

I remember very well the WHO saying the outbreak was under control, and it took us a while to convince them that it was not. The wake-up call came when volunteers from Samaritan's Purse were infected in late July. Suddenly, Ebola wasn't such a distant reality for the Western world.

It's uncomfortable to have the pressure of being the key responder to a crisis as great as Ebola. The most appalling thing from this epidemic is that when there's a public-health emergency, no one feels responsible to tackle it or respond. Why don't we learn from one crisis to another?

One of my colleagues described fighting Ebola as like being on the front line of a war and having a machine gun fire at you all the time. In September, we would open our isolation units for only a few minutes, just to fill the beds where people had died overnight. After that we had to turn everyone away. It was a completely inhumane situation. You see people facing death without their loved ones, only with people in space suits. We've been very lucky. We've had a few infected staff, but not many.

The first time I heard that one of our members was infected, I got a phone call in the middle of the night. It's devastating, and you feel like the sky is breaking over you. We wish there was zero risk, but in everything we do, zero risk doesn't exist. —AS TOLD TO ALEXANDRA SIFFERLIN

Photograph by Bryan Schutmaat for TIME

majority of its budget coming from private donations. In 2013, MSF amassed more than $1 billion globally. Having a large and unrestricted revenue stream allows MSF to shun red tape and to speak honestly about conditions in the places where its medics venture. The organization is often among the first and loudest reporters of bad health news that local officials would prefer to keep quiet.

Being effective did not guarantee a warm welcome, however. The MSF team encountered a local population hostile to outsiders. After decades, even centuries, of strife and misrule, the civil fabric of Guinea was badly frayed, and now this mysterious disease fired all sorts of rumors. Guineans could not help noticing that the foreigners and the Ebola virus had entered their lives almost simultaneously. "You saw the fear in people's faces. They didn't understand what was going on," Watson-Stryker says.

And the scene around Gueckedou was indeed unsettling. On land near the clinic, construction crews were pouring concrete floors for tents to be filled with Ebola patients who had yet to materialize. Figures clad head-to-toe in waterproof protective suits, bug-eyed in goggles, went house to house with sprayers pumping who knows what onto the ground from tanks on their backs. It was chlorinated water to kill the virus, but some locals concluded that MSF workers were in Gueckedou to kill them. A young driver employed by MSF told Watson-Stryker that his father had stopped speaking to him because he was involved with the clinic. More than once, her car was stoned. As she approached one home, the man of the house emerged holding a knife that he tapped menacingly against his thigh.

Thwarted by rampant suspicion, Watson-Stryker hired local Guineans as her eyes and ears, sending them into villages to get a sense of the outbreak's impact on people so she could help prepare for local interventions. They would talk and listen with village leaders, often returning with alarming reports. "There's a lot of sick people in that village," one might say.

By this careful but urgent process, the MSF team determined that something new and dangerous was going on in the borderlands. Previous Ebola outbreaks had been isolated in a single area, but now the virus was widespread. As MSF's Liu puts it, "Already there were multiple locations of clusters" up to 100 miles


Kanne 45


Gibson, 29


Sneh, 25


Kpukuyou, 26

(160 km) apart. In raw numbers, the Ebola outbreak might have seemed small compared with the chronic contagions of cholera and malaria in West Africa. But an epidemic of Ebola, with its ghastly effects, could corrode civil society by spreading panic. The disease leaped to the top of MSF's priorities.

But few officials wanted to hear it. Liu recalls fruitless conversations in March with ministries of health in the region, "pushing them and telling them that this was going to be different." Again and again, health officials complained that the doctors—not the disease—would panic the populace. "We were quickly told by a variety of agencies that we were crying wolf," Liu says.

One skeptic—perhaps the most influential and thus the most disastrous—was WHO, the health arm of the U.N. Underfunded and overly bureaucratic, WHO is, in the eyes of its many critics, woefully inadequate in dealing with rapidly emerging threats like Ebola. Worse perhaps, the agency's local representatives are notoriously jealous of their turf and prerogatives. At this same critical moment, WHO offices in West Africa turned away a team of experts from the CDC working in Guinea, insisting that their help was not needed, says CDC director Dr. Thomas Frieden. The CDC, a large and very well-regarded public-health agency, is unsurpassed in its capacity for action, maintaining some 2,000 field workers in 60 countries around the world. Those workers in turn can often summon resources from the U.S. to smother epidemics in their infancy abroad.

Teamwork at this early moment might have saved thousands of lives and ultimately billions of dollars in direct and indirect costs stemming from the Ebola epidemic. Instead, WHO closed the door, says Frieden.

The CDC would be back in the summer, when Ebola was running wild, to train local volunteers in the crucial techniques of tracing and evaluating the contacts of Ebola patients. By then, however, the challenge would be incalculably greater.

Frieden says he intervened personally with WHO's top leadership. "I had to get directly involved," he explains, telling his counterparts, "Let our team in. This is ridiculous." (A spokesperson from WHO told TIME that "no one in Geneva knows of anything regarding CDC" being asked to leave Guinea in March.) The CDC specialists believed they had a



chance to control the epidemic if they worked with local health authorities and other groups in the region. But Frieden's protests changed nothing. "They wanted to do it themselves—there was resentment." Summing it up, he says, "WHO didn't want us there, so we left."

TRACING THE WEB

IN MONROVIA, JERRY BROWN FOUND himself wondering if he had converted the hospital chapel in vain. April turned to May, and still Ebola had not reached the capital. There was one close call: an infected traveler from Lofa County commuted through the city on her way to the town of Harbel, where she died. But Dr. Mosoka Fallah, a Harvard-educated Liberian epidemiologist, rushed to the home of the taxi driver who had picked up the traveler and persuaded him to accept a 21-day quarantine. The three weeks passed—the full incubation period

BONUS DIGITAL CONTENT

EBOLA FIGHTERS IN WEST AFRICA



Hundreds of doctors, nurses and health workers toil every day to treat and contain the outbreak in the hot zone

for Ebola—with no new signs of disease. Monrovia remained untouched.

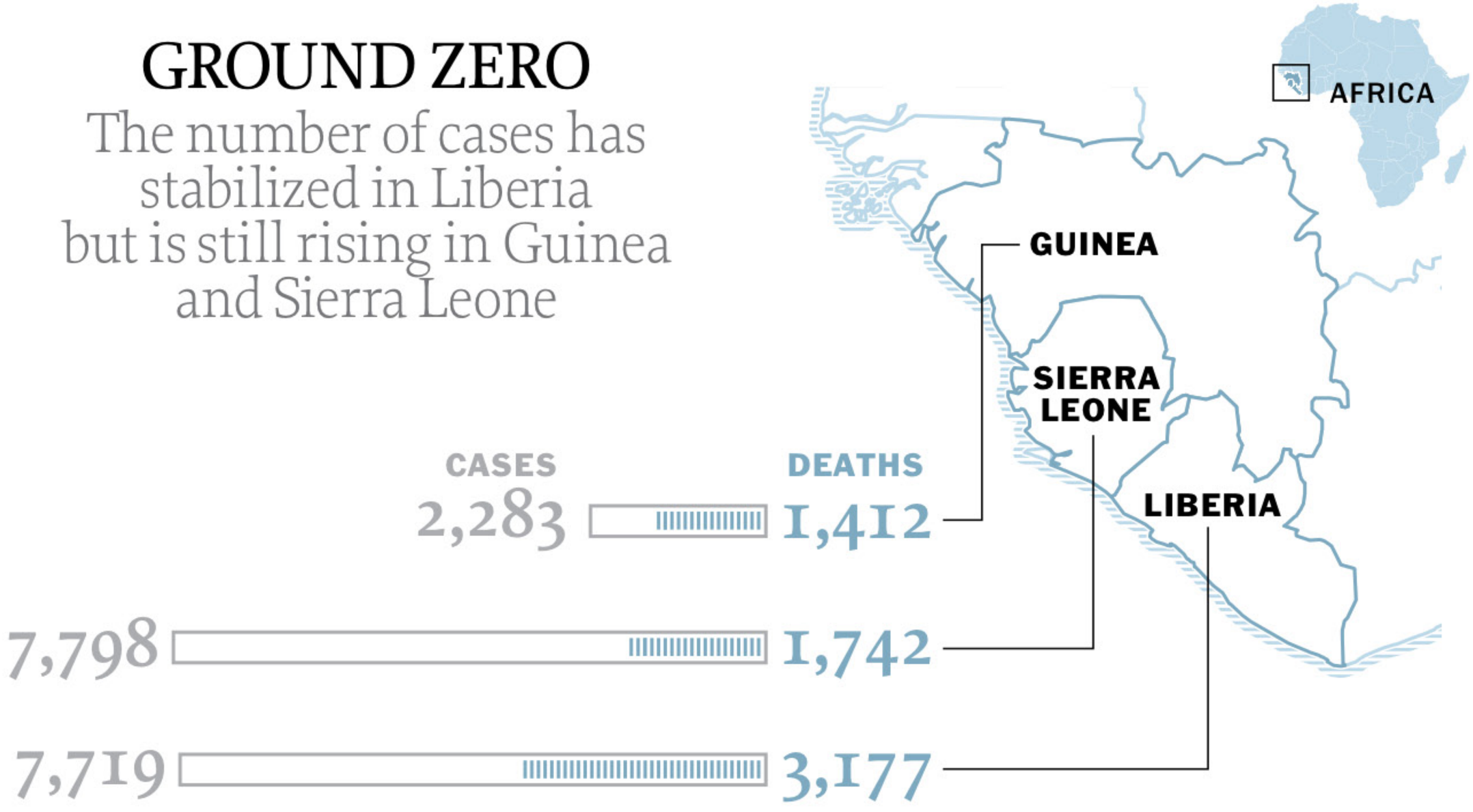
Brown contacted the Ministry of Health in early June to ask if he should dismantle ELWA's isolation unit. The official who took his call suggested waiting a few more days, just in case.

On June 12, after a late evening in surgery, Brown emerged from the operating room to find a string of missed calls on his cell phone. Ringing back, he reached the same official, who asked if the chapel facility was still ready. Two patients, visitors from Sierra Leone who were staying in New Kru Town, an area populated by immigrants, had turned up at the government-run Redemption Hospital in Monrovia with suspicious symptoms. Medical staff examined them without protective gear. "They most likely have Ebola," the ministry official said, according to Brown. "And the only place I thought about that we could keep them until we have an investigation done is at your center."

Brown dreaded the impact of

GROUND ZERO

The number of cases has stabilized in Liberia but is still rising in Guinea and Sierra Leone



Other cases (and deaths): Nigeria, 20 (8); Mali, 8 (6); U.S., 4 (1); Senegal, 1 (0); Spain, 1 (0)

DATA THROUGH DEC. 8. SOURCE: WHO

welcoming Ebola into his hospital, but he felt he had no moral choice but to absorb it. He knew his fellow doctors would stand with him, but the nurses were another matter. They initially refused to mix disinfectant and don protective gear for the work unit. "If you want my resignation, I will give it to you," one told Brown. "I would rather leave than attend to an Ebola patient." Another nurse said she felt too sick to stay at work. "I developed a headache a couple of minutes ago," she said.

With all their work thus far at stake, the doctors tried personal appeals to their favorite nurses. Brantly circled around to the nurse with the headache, and after a little cajoling, she agreed to work in the isolation unit—but not alone. The doctors continued to plead with staff until they found a nurse's aide and an operating-room technician willing to suit up.

Covered head to toe in Tyvek gear, goggles and masks, this cobbled-together team was ready when the ambulance from Redemption pulled into the ELWA compound two hours after the official's call. Brown was shocked to see the ambulance crew dressed in ordinary scrubs.

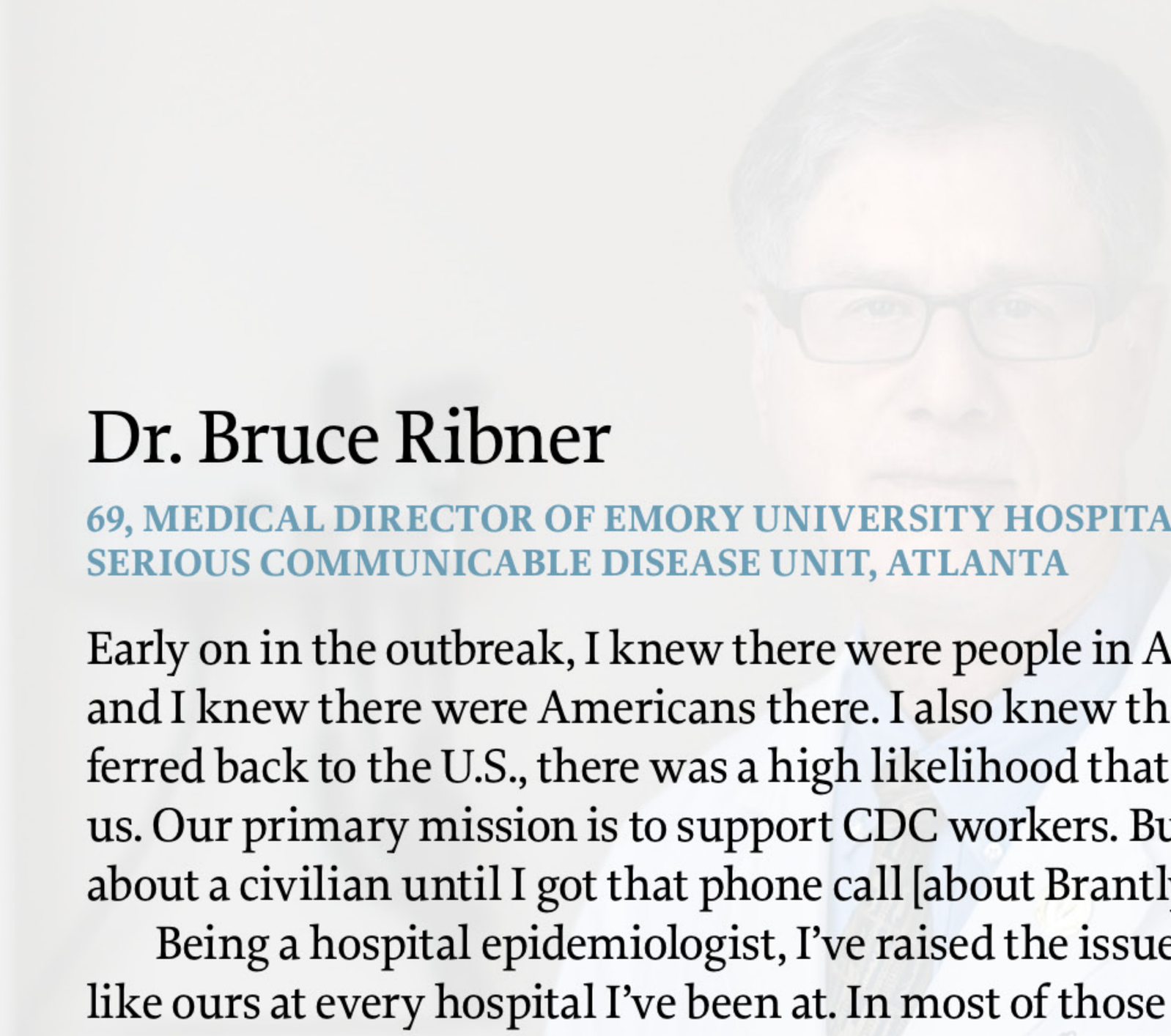
One of the patients lay dead inside the vehicle. Brantly rushed the other patient into the chapel; that patient died a couple of days later, according to Brown. A nurse from the ambulance was likewise doomed, along with a doctor who did the initial screening at Redemption. Ebola had reached the city.

But it was even worse than that, as the Liberian epidemiologist Fallah quickly came to understand. He knew that an epidemic is not a simple matter of the sick people you can see. Even more important is the web of individuals who touch the sick or are touched by them. To control a contagion, it's not enough to treat the visible patients; you must find and contain every strand and tendril of the web.

Fallah retraced the steps of the patient who died in ELWA's chapel to a house in the Monrovia slum of New Kru Town, home to many Sierra Leonean immigrants, where he encountered "a strong feeling of denial" about the virus. One woman he approached gave a typical reply: "If anyone says they have Ebola in this house, I will give you a slap." To acknowledge the disease was to invite social stigma and financial ruin.

"This was a six-bedroom house,


Bruce Ribner, MD
Infectious Diseases



Dr. Bruce Ribner

69, MEDICAL DIRECTOR OF EMORY UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL'S SERIOUS COMMUNICABLE DISEASE UNIT, ATLANTA

Early on in the outbreak, I knew there were people in Africa who had Ebola, and I knew there were Americans there. I also knew that if they were transferred back to the U.S., there was a high likelihood that they would look at us. Our primary mission is to support CDC workers. But I was not thinking about a civilian until I got that phone call [about Brantly and Writebol].

Being a hospital epidemiologist, I've raised the issue of building a unit like ours at every hospital I've been at. In most of those places, no one did too much about it, because, what the heck, that's not really going to happen here. Our own protocols from Day One haven't changed much. We came up with procedures and protocols that have really stood the test of time.

It's always the one you don't anticipate. Who knew MERS was going to come up? Who knew SARS was going to come up? And who knew that Ebola was going to spread to West Africa and become this hideous outbreak for almost a year? We really take an all-cause, all-infections approach, because we know that whatever comes is likely going to be something we didn't plan for. —AS TOLD TO A.S.

Photograph by Bryan Schutmaat for TIME

but in New Kru Town, typically every room is a household," Fallah says. "And we were counting between five to 10 or so in a room. So we're looking at between 30 to 60 persons."

Through dogged investigation, Fallah soon learned the identity of the person who drove the patients to Redemption Hospital and confirmed that the driver's sister was dead of the disease. He learned that the driver had disappeared. And he determined that those contacts had other contacts—the strands of a web that Fallah followed until he discovered the identity of a contact who had been vomiting in the street. Yet other contacts (his heart fell when he realized this) had visited "a communal bathroom that all the houses use."

This is a classic example of contact tracing, and it's critical to fighting infectious disease. Watson-Stryker and others were doing much the same thing in Guinea and Sierra Leone. The network of contacts that Fallah unearthed revealed that Ebola had been simmering in Monrovia for some time. "Things were going on that we didn't know about," he says. "People visiting clinics. Some of them went to the church." But none of it had been reported. Fear, shame and ignorance combined to keep Ebola shrouded. This was a terrible revelation, says Fallah. "It blew our minds."

A CHAIN REACTION

EBOLA'S LURKING PRESENCE IN THE

capital gave it a head start once it revealed itself in mid-June, and Monrovia's fragile patchwork of health care providers was quickly overwhelmed.

The meltdown began in early July at Redemption, a single-story structure painted swimming-pool green and blazoned with murals that explain the importance of personal hygiene and antimalarial mosquito nets. Redemption Hospital's lack of preparation ignited a chain reaction of infection and death: a nurse, a doctor, a medical aide. Frightened staff members vanished from their posts, forcing the hospital to close temporarily at a time of desperate need.

Other health workers at other clinics quickly followed. (Brown and his colleagues somehow managed to keep ELWA functioning.) Institutions that might have taken up some slack as clearinghouses for information to fight the epidemic—schools and government offices—also began shutting down, and many senior bureaucrats fled the country. President Ellen Johnson

Dr. Peter Piot

65, VIROLOGIST AND PHYSICIAN WHO CO-DISCOVERED EBOLA

In our lab in Antwerp we saw the Ebola virus for the first time on the 10th of October in 1976. We received one of those shiny blue thermoses you use for coffee. This [contained] blood from a Catholic nun who had died of bleeding symptoms, which should have triggered alarm bells. We just wore latex gloves and opened it under negative pressure, so the air is sucked up and doesn't blow into your face. What we saw was one intact vial swimming in half-water, half-ice. Another vial had broken. There was blood, and therefore virus, swimming in that thermos. We had no clue this was so dangerous. On the electron microscope, we saw a wormlike structure, which we really had never seen. This was pre-Google, so we had to go to the library to look at an atlas of viruses and confirm that there was only one known virus that had that kind of structure: Marburg. That was the aha moment. We said, "Wow, this is new, or this is Marburg"—which had never been shown to cause an epidemic before. —AS TOLD TO ALICE PARK

Photograph by Bryan Schutmaat for TIME



Dr. Pardis Sabeti

38, GENETICIST WHO SEQUENCED THE EBOLA GENOME FROM THE OUTBREAK

We saw the alert declaring the outbreak in Guinea in March. We had set up research collaborations at a hospital in Sierra Leone. The outbreak was on the border of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, so we knew it was possible the hospital would see cases. Our colleagues [at the hospital] and at the Ministry of Health in Sierra Leone said, "We need to do surveillance and diagnosis." We said, "Absolutely. We'll help."

The diagnostic that is needed to confirm Ebola is only possible because we know the genome sequence of the virus. Therapies like ZMapp are also based on attacking the protein sequences of the virus. If the genome changes, the proteins change, and the antibodies may no longer work. So the genome sequence is the fundamental first piece. In this case, it also suggested that the epidemic started with a single transmission into humans and wasn't spread widely by animals or contact with animals. So the important thing is to watch contact between individuals. —AS TOLD TO A.P.

Photograph by Bryan Schutmaat for TIME


TOM G.
PROTECTION

Thomas Geisbert

52, VIROLOGIST WHO CONDUCTED THE FIRST TRIALS OF THE DRUG TKM-EBOLA

I just looked at Ebola as a challenge. When I started doing some of the first studies in the 1990s, I would get excited because something I tried had worked in guinea pigs or mice or something. But there's a quantum leap from rodents to nonhuman primates like monkeys. All of a sudden you do it in monkeys and all of the monkeys die. We had so many failures in the '90s. Only two worked in nonhuman primates, out of all the studies done in the Biosafety Level 4 lab—and those are ZMapp and TKM-Ebola, which I worked on with the biotech company Tekmira. I remember walking into that room where I was used to seeing dead monkeys, and five, six, seven, eight, 12—all the monkeys were healthy, no signs of disease. In my field, that's the greatest feeling you can imagine. It's a great feeling knowing I helped to develop something that hopefully saved somebody. And if it saved one person, it matters. —AS TOLD TO A.P.

Photograph by Bryan Schutmaat for TIME

Sirleaf appeared stunned, frozen in place, unable to declare an emergency until seven weeks after the Redemption disaster. It was alarming how rapidly the yoked contagions of virus and fear unhinged Monrovia.

Within days of the June 12 call, ELWA's six-bed chapel was overwhelmed. The Ministry of Health scrambled to create a rudimentary 20-bed Ebola treatment unit (ETU) at the state-run John F. Kennedy Hospital, and the new facility was beyond capacity almost as soon as it opened. At least two dozen people died in Monrovia in the early days after Ebola's arrival.

More beds were needed. Brown decided to convert the brand-new kitchen and laundry building donated by Samaritan's Purse. An emergency check from the organization, which was founded by the Rev. Franklin Graham—son of the evangelist Billy Graham—provided for building materials and more protective gear. Samaritan's Purse also sent its director of disaster response, Dr. Lance Plyler, to join the battle. Hastily completed in July, ELWA 2, as the facility became known, had room for an additional 20 beds.

Still, it wasn't enough. "Within a week it was filled," Brown says. "People were now in the corridors, under the eaves of the building. Patients were just pouring in on a daily basis."

Brown and Brantly had agreed early on that Brantly would handle the Ebola cases while Brown kept the rest of the hospital going. As July crept along one wretched day after another, matters became so chaotic at ELWA that Brown didn't immediately notice when Brantly went missing from the treatment unit. When, late in the month, he noticed and asked for an explanation, Dr. Fankhauser broke the news that their colleague was feverish and had put himself in quarantine at home.

Evidently, Brantly had been exposed to the virus while performing triage in ELWA's emergency room. During an overnight shift, a woman brought her suffering mother into the ER for help. Brantly wore a gown, gloves and face mask but not the full protective suit, because the suit "scares people, and they won't necessarily tell you the truth," he explains.

During the examination, the woman's mother needed help from her daughter in making an urgent trip to the bathroom. Brantly suspected Ebola. He took the woman aside to explain why her mother





Dr. Philip Ireland

44, LIBERIAN DOCTOR AT JOHN F. KENNEDY MEDICAL CENTER, MONROVIA

We got to the hospital, to the Ebola treatment unit. I collapsed on the bed and passed out.

That night was the worst night. I had 46 episodes of diarrhea and 26 episodes of vomiting. I was in a sea of mess. The next day there was this physician's assistant—I will never forget him. His act of love toward me, to wash me, was so much that I will never forget it in my entire life. He cleaned me totally. He dressed me, put me in a clean bed. And I felt that was so, so, so nice.

By the morning of Day Three I started to do some terrible, terrible hiccups [a symptom of advanced Ebola]. That was when the clinicians taking care of me thought I was going to die. They were even discussing whether I would be cremated or buried. And the news circulated that day that I had passed. But after that day, Day Four in the ETU, I started to get better. So when they came in to check on me the next morning, they met me standing. And they were very surprised.

I stayed there getting better, getting better. —AS TOLD TO A.B.

Photograph by Jackie Nickerson for TIME

needed to go to the ETU. "I had to counsel her extensively to reassure her that we were trying to do what was best for her mother—we were not abandoning her," the doctor says. "I took off my mask, gloves and apron when I talked to her, and I probably held her hands or put my arm around her shoulder, as I often do." Brantly doesn't think he was infected by the mother. But the daughter had taken her to the toilet, and there's a chance she hadn't washed her hands afterward.

There was more bad news for Brown. On July 26, ELWA's personnel coordinator, Nancy Writebol—a medical aide from North Carolina who worked with Serving in Mission—tested positive for Ebola. Within a few days, two other employees had been infected. Once again, Brown had to talk his way through a possible staff walkout.

It was late July now, and Ebola had pushed Jerry Brown and his hospital to its breaking point. On a personal level, he was now forced to do something he had promised his wife he would not do: suit up in Tyvek and go to work in the ETU. Every willing hand was needed, and the fearful staff must see that the boss had enough courage to do as much as he asked of them, he says.

Brown also made a painful decision to close the main hospital for a few days and limit some services after that. Though malaria season was coming on and expectant mothers counted on ELWA for childbirth, Brown felt he had no choice. Not after one of his own nurses, down with Ebola, was turned away for want of a bed.

ANATOMY OF A VIRUS

IN HIS WHITE LAB COAT AND EYEglasses, Dr. Bruce Ribner looks nothing like a biblical patriarch, but for many years he felt like Noah building his ark. As medical director of the Serious Communicable Disease Unit at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, Ribner began work in 2001 on a meticulously safe and secure facility where patients suffering from lethal contagious diseases—like Ebola—could be treated with minimal risk. At the time, the only remotely comparable unit in the U.S. was a locked room, nicknamed the Slammer, at an Army research lab in Maryland.

Ribner built his safety pod at a time when few others could see a need for it. "The unit was open for 12 years, and we had all of two activations—


Dr. Kent Brantly
WORLD
MEDICAL
MISSION

Dr. Kent Brantly

33, PHYSICIAN WITH SAMARITAN'S PURSE

The team leader came to my bedroom window with news. "Kent, buddy, we have your results. It's positive for Ebola." I didn't know what to think. I just asked, "So what's our plan?"

Shortly after I arrived at Emory, [my wife] Amber called from a phone outside my room. I don't remember that conversation, I was so delirious, but she said to me, "We watched you walk off that ambulance." I said, "You were watching me?" And she said, "Oh, Kent. The whole world was watching you."

Am I the same person I was before Ebola? In a lot of ways, yes. I don't live every moment with a conscious awareness of what I've been through. But I think whenever we go through a devastating experience, it's not about there being some inherent redemptive narrative, but it is an incredible opportunity for the redemption of something. We can say, How can I be better now because of what I've been through?

When I thank God for saving my life, I am not unique in that. If you watch videos of survivors in Liberia, so many of them thank God for saving their lives. I chose a career in medicine because I wanted a tangible skill with which to serve people. Deep in the core of my heart, I still think that's my calling. I don't want to go on with life and forget this. —AS TOLD TO A.S.

Photograph by Bryan Schutmaat for TIME

which both turned out to be negative," he recalls. His critics asked whether the money spent to maintain the unit and train and drill the staff was being wasted. Even Ribner came to think of his creation less as a vital part of a working hospital than as "an insurance policy."

Then, on Tuesday morning, July 29, his unit received a visit from "some government people" who took a look around but said little. The next day, Ribner's telephone rang. The government people wanted to know if Emory could receive an American Ebola patient from Liberia.

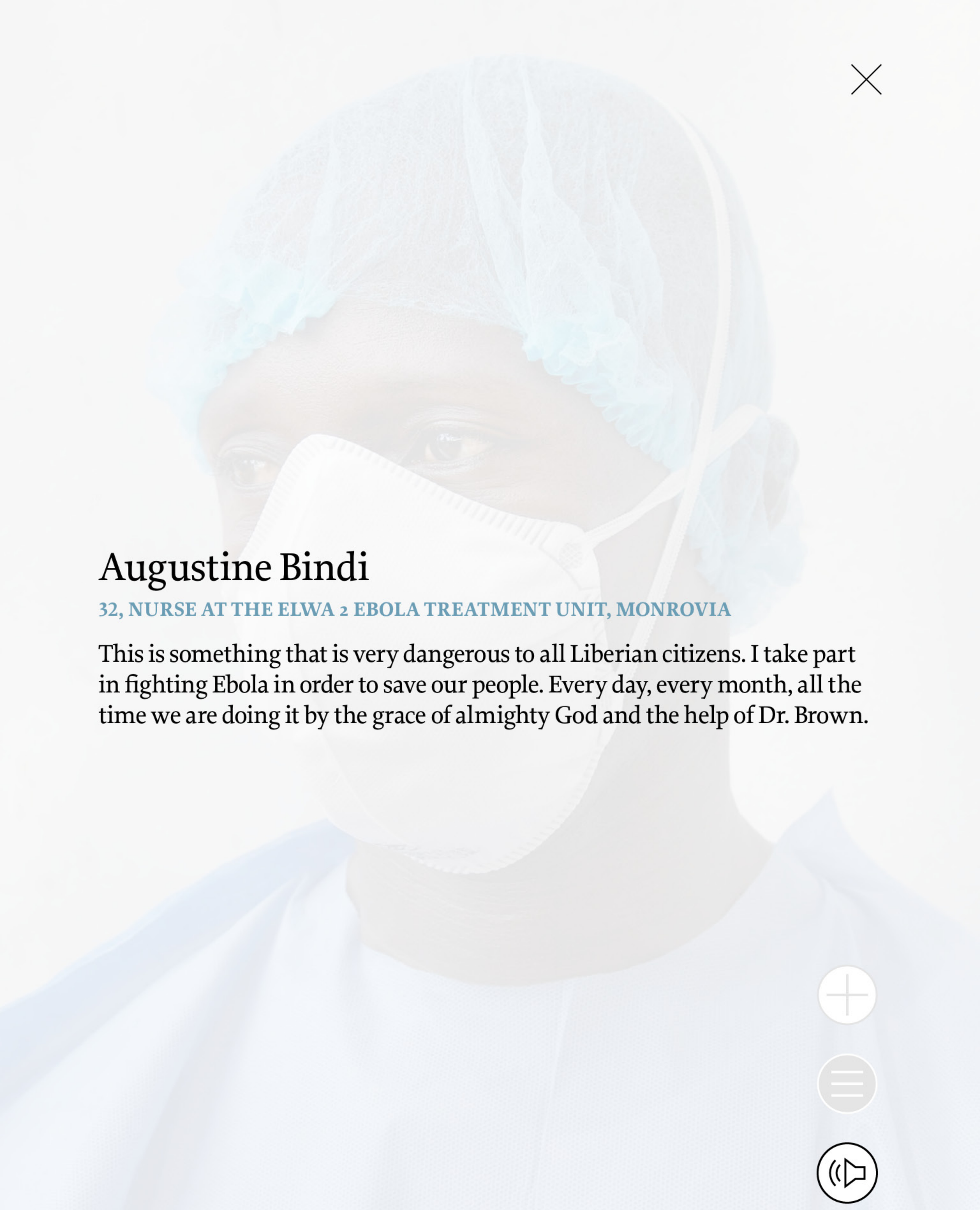
"Of course!" the doctor replied. "That's what we're in business for. If you get them here, we'll take care of them." After hanging up, Ribner realized that he should let hospital management know that Ebola was on its way to North America.

The Ebola virus (Zaire strain) was discovered in 1976 by Belgian microbiologist Dr. Peter Piot, but it entered the broader American consciousness only in 1995, through the runaway success of Richard Preston's *The Hot Zone*. Preston's book told the somewhat hyperbolic story of a mysterious disease (and its cousin virus, Marburg) among lab monkeys at a facility in Reston, Va. The cause proved to be a new strain of Ebola that, thankfully, was harmless to humans. Though the Reston crisis faded, no one who read Preston's descriptions of viruses spreading invisibly through passenger jets or terminal patients bleeding from every orifice ever entirely lost their dread of Ebola.

By coincidence, the virus caught the attention of America's national-security apparatus at about the same time. In the early '90s, a defector from the former Soviet bioweapons program testified before Congress that his government had been studying Ebola as a possible weapon.

Chastened, the Department of Defense accelerated its own research. For Thomas Geisbert, a scientist at the U.S. Army's high-security USAMRIID infectious-disease lab in Maryland, this was a career-making development. Having made Ebola his virus of choice, he became a point man on a very important pathogen almost overnight. And when 9/11 brought home the potential danger of Ebola in the hands of terrorists, Geisbert's research budgets grew again. He focused on developing drugs to attack the virus, one of which eventually became something called TKM-Ebola, as well as





Augustine Bindi

32, NURSE AT THE ELWA 2 EBOLA TREATMENT UNIT, MONROVIA

This is something that is very dangerous to all Liberian citizens. I take part in fighting Ebola in order to save our people. Every day, every month, all the time we are doing it by the grace of almighty God and the help of Dr. Brown.

Photograph by Jackie Nickerson for TIME



Princess Ideko

26, NURSE AT THE ELWA 2 EBOLA TREATMENT UNIT, MONROVIA

I do this job because many lives were taken away from this country. The only way we can try to get rid of this sickness, this disease, is by helping each other to fight this virus.

Photograph by Jackie Nickerson for TIME

a vaccine. Still, despite remarkable results in monkeys, "that's where it stopped," Geisbert says. There wasn't money or interest from drug companies to "take those products across the finish line."

Over the years, he and other Ebola scientists made progress in understanding the roles played by each of the virus's seven structural proteins in capturing certain human cells and converting them into Ebola-replication factories. Why does Ebola do this? It has no reason: a virus is not even a life form. It's like a gear that by itself can't accomplish anything. But when it drops just so into a larger machine, the machine becomes an accomplice and begins cranking out copies of the gear.

The sole purpose of one of Ebola's proteins, the glycoprotein (GP), is to distort the immune response in primates. The Ebola GP can take two forms, one of which is good at binding to and disintegrating so-called sentinel cells whose job is to raise the alarm about invading agents like Ebola. At the same time, another viral protein shuts down the immune system's ability to produce interferons, which normally act as potent virus killers. As Ebola continues to replicate and thwart the immune defenses, it launches into the blood to reach critical infection-fighting tissues like the lymph nodes. The result: sky-high fever, agonizing aches and pain, deluges of vomiting and diarrhea—all of which can send the body into shock. Dehydration, low blood pressure, electrolyte imbalances and organ failure all may contribute as causes of death. Basically, Ebola tricks your body into surrendering itself.

When Dr. Pardis Sabeti, an Iranian-American geneticist at Harvard, was 19, she read Preston's book and said, "Oh wow, I want to do that!" she recalls. Her chance came in March. After years of working with lab samples of Lassa and Ebola, she and her team were presented with boxes of blood in vials, fresh from patients in West Africa. By sequencing the genome of each virus sample, Sabeti and her team were able to track small mutations in the virus from one patient to the next.

This work proved highly valuable because it ruled out the possibility that the disease was being spread through repeated contact with infected animals. Instead, it was moving from person to person. Her conclusion gave an added boost to the strategy of tracing patient





Amber Vinson

29, NURSE AT TEXAS HEALTH PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL, DALLAS

I've been a nurse for five years, so I felt comfortable with the nursing part of the care [for Ebola patient Thomas Eric Duncan], but everything else was hard. We have a different perspective being in the room and taking care of him. It was hard to see a lot of the things they were saying in the news. It was emotionally taxing. The media was disappointing in some ways, because it promotes fear. I am very quiet and keep to myself, so this has been something I never could have prepared myself for. I still want to do my part to help. —AS TOLD TO A.S.

Nina Pham

26, NURSE AT TEXAS HEALTH PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL, DALLAS

The first time I heard the word *Ebola* in Dallas, it was a couple of hours before I was to get Mr. Duncan as my patient. I was obviously scared, but I chose to keep my assignment. It's part of who I am—nursing is a calling. I replay it over and over again in my head how I could have gotten infected. I did everything that was recommended. It was just a shock when my chief nursing officer and a CDC officer came to see me in their full protective equipment. I knew it was not good. —AS TOLD TO A.P.

Photograph by Bryan Schutmaat for TIME

contacts to corral the epidemic.

Unfortunately, the genome revealed no magic bullet to fire at the heart of Ebola, which ended up killing one of Sabeti's colleagues, Dr. Sheik Humarr Khan. Khan, a storied researcher and physician in Sierra Leone, died in July after getting infected while treating Ebola patients.

BRUSHES WITH DEATH

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO DIE OF EBOLA? Foday Gallah came close enough to know. A gregarious man with a level gaze, Gallah ran an ambulance in Monrovia, an exhausting and traumatizing service. Ebola has no power that he has not witnessed many times. His own infection came on the day that he saved a little boy's life.

Gallah's ambulance was summoned in early September to the home of a large family who had all been exposed to Ebola. He found the mother and two of her children wretchedly symptomatic. Gallah eased them into his vehicle but left the rest of the family behind. With beds in short supply, hospital staff would surely send away the ones without symptoms.

Soon, he was called back to that house. "When I got there, it was the grandmother, the father and the two sons. They were dehydrated. They were weak." All four would die, just like the first three family members he transported. This left one small child all alone.

Gallah urged the neighbors to call him the moment the child showed symptoms. He remembers the ringing of his phone. "When I got there, the boy was lying in a pool of vomit," he recalls. "He's a 4-, 5-year-old child, right? Very dehydrated and weak. He couldn't move."

In a rush, Gallah donned his protective gear and scooped up the boy, who immediately vomited all over him. "Maybe there was an opening somewhere that I didn't know," he suggests. Thanks to Gallah's efforts, the boy eventually recovered, but within days of the rescue, Gallah's temperature rose. Then the pain hit. "I had headaches before, but the headaches of Ebola, they don't break," he says. "You take some ibuprofen to cool it down and it escalates.

"I have never experienced anything like I experienced with Ebola," he continues. "Ebola pain, it don't stop. It makes you want to give up. I used to be a strong man, and this just broke me down."



Kaci Hickox

33, NURSE WITH MSF

When I stepped off the plane at Newark Airport, I knew I would be asked questions. I handed my immigration forms to the official and told him I had been in Sierra Leone treating Ebola patients. He said, "O.K., no worries. They'll ask you some questions." He walked me to the CDC quarantine office in the airport. They took my temperature, which didn't surprise me, and it was normal. What did surprise me was that no one seemed to be in charge.

I was in the airport for over six hours. The New Jersey director of infectious disease at the department of health called and said, "We are going to have to quarantine you." I said I didn't understand why. I didn't have any symptoms, and if you're not symptomatic, you can't transmit Ebola.

A few hours after I arrived, someone took my temperature again and said I had a fever. I disputed this—I was very frustrated and my face was flushed, which could result in a false-positive reading using a temporal scanner thermometer. I waited another hour before the ambulance arrived to take me to the hospital, where I was put in a tent. I tested negative for Ebola. Eventually, I was released to be quarantined at my home in Maine, something I contested again. A Maine judge overturned the quarantine.

I have witnessed the devastation Ebola causes and have personally experienced the stigma that fear of this disease brings. I do want to go back to West Africa, but for now, I'm taking things day by day. —AS TOLD TO A.S.

Photograph by Bryan Schutmaat for TIME

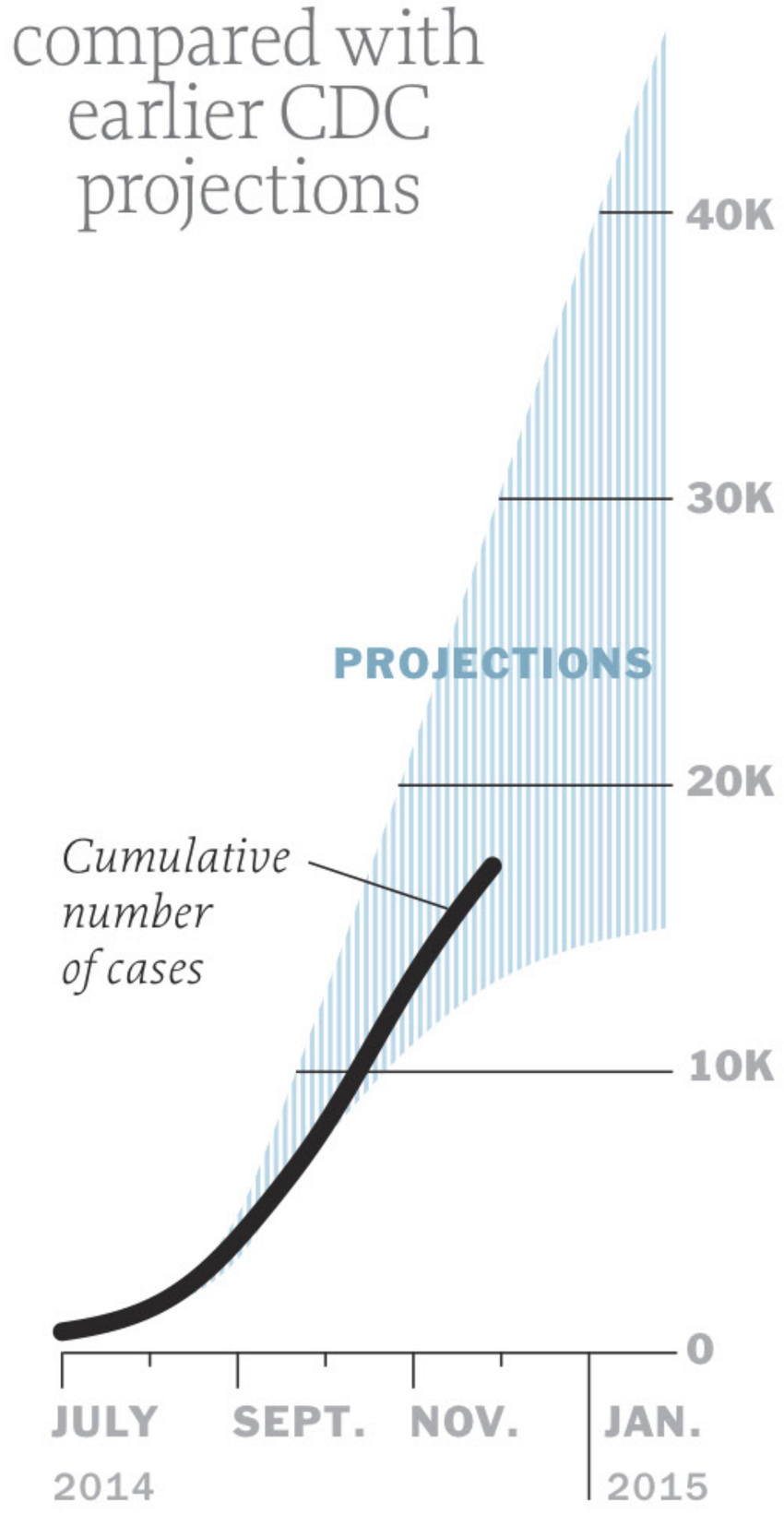
Salome Karwah, then a trainee nurse at her parents' modest medical clinic near Monrovia's airport, suffered the same excruciating headaches when her whole family came down with Ebola after an infected uncle sought her father's medical care in late August. But that was nothing compared with the agony of watching both parents die in front of her at the MSF-run Ebola treatment center. "I went out of my mind for about one week. I was going mad. I just felt that everything is over." Karwah and her sister survived.

Soon after, MSF was looking to employ Ebola survivors in the treatment center. Scientists stop short of saying for certain that Ebola renders a person "immune" if he or she survives—but that's their suspicion. There's not one known case in the decades since Ebola was discovered of a person contracting the disease more than once. So when MSF asked, Karwah was one of the first to step forward.

"The first day I came here for an interview, I saw people carrying bodies. I started crying. I told my friend, 'I can't make it.' But when I went the next day I said, 'Sitting and crying won't help me. So it's better I go and work. The more I interact

WHAT'S AHEAD

The rate of growth has slowed compared with earlier CDC projections



PROJECTIONS BASED ON DATA FROM JULY TO SEPTEMBER, MODELED ON TRANSMISSION RATES RANGING FROM ONE PERSON TO LESS THAN ONE PERSON.

SOURCE: MOBS LAB, NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

with people, the more I will forget about my sad story.' So I decided to make myself very much busy to help others survive."

For Kent Brantly, near death in late July, the worst part was the helplessness. "Ebola is a humiliating disease that strips you of your dignity," he says. "You are removed from family and put into isolation where you cannot even see the faces of those caring for you due to the protective suits—you can only see their eyes. You have uncontrollable diarrhea, which is just embarrassing."

With his temperature high, his heart racing and fluid collecting in his lungs, Brantly lay in his room at the ELWA compound, just "trying to rest and not die" while awaiting transfer to Ribner's unit in Atlanta. As his laptop played passages of Scripture set to music, words of the Apostle Paul settled on his ears: "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God." He clung to that hope like a lifeline.

As he was waiting, word came of an experimental drug called ZMapp, developed by Canadian scientist Dr. Gary Kobinger. Like Geisbert's TKM-Ebola, the drug showed promise in primates but had never been tested on humans and therefore hadn't been approved for widespread use.

Unfortunately, Dr. Plyler from Samaritan's Purse was able to get his hands on only enough ZMapp—three doses—to treat one patient. Aware that Nancy Writebol was in even worse condition than he, Brantly asked that the first injection be given to her. But then Brantly grew sicker, and Plyler worried that he wouldn't survive the transfer. He decided to split the doses: Brantly would receive one injection and travel first; Writebol would receive two and go on the next flight. The hope being, of course, that this would sustain them long enough to get them to Emory University Hospital in Atlanta.

THE PROBLEM TURNS VISIBLE

ON AUG. 2, NEAR NOON, A CHARtered jet with a specially designed biohazard unit inside began its final approach into Dobbins Air Reserve Base north of Atlanta. Inside was Brantly, so weak and febrile that he had barely been able to climb the



Dr. Tom Frieden

54, DIRECTOR OF THE CDC, ATLANTA

When Ebola first hit West Africa, we were deeply concerned. In March, I was told about the cases by my staff: "We have Ebola for the first time in West Africa. We need to get a team out there now to stop it." We send teams out a lot—but Ebola has a special place, because it requires meticulous attention to detail and it's so deadly, so scary.

So it's not like, Gee, should we send someone? It's, How soon can you get on a plane? How soon can we get a visa to the country? How many people can go? The bottom line is lives saved.

So when the cases first hit, we sent in a team, and our team felt that they could help control it. But there was some friction with WHO, which I had to get involved in. Essentially, people thought it was going to be controlled, and they didn't want us there. So I had to tell WHO, "Let our team in, this is ridiculous." They wanted to do it themselves. There was resentment. They didn't want to feel like they were dependent on the CDC. WHO didn't want us there, so we left. And then Ebola came roaring back.

In fact, WHO has great Ebola experts, but I think WHO is really three different organizations: Geneva, the regional office and the country office. Geneva was fine, but the regional and country offices were very difficult to deal with and very problematic. So we had challenges. But that's water under the bridge. WHO knows they didn't do what they should have, and we need to help them think about how to get more functional moving forward.

[In early August], when I activated the Emergency Operations Center here in Atlanta, it was immediately clear that we were overmatched by the epidemic. This was the same virus, but in a different environment. It was acting differently, and it was much harder to control. And it felt like however much we threw at it, it just kept growing. We were sending more and more staff, doing more and more work in the field, more lab work, working with MSF. But whatever we did, the cases just kept increasing. The frustration was unbearable.

Because I basically am a very impatient person by nature, I felt I had to go. By the time I got there in late August, the situation was horrific. I've seen

short stairs onto the plane in Liberia. (Writebol would follow him three days later, in equally miserable condition.) Television cameras on the ground in Georgia fed live images of the landing to satellite trucks, which bounced the pictures to viewers around the world.

Geisbert, the Ebola scientist, now at the University of Texas Medical Branch, watched the scene on a TV set in Galveston with colleagues. It reminded him of O.J. Simpson's white Ford Bronco—an otherwise mundane image packed with mystery and tension. A crisis that had been building for months was somehow encapsulated in that vehicle, for better or for worse.

Week by week through the summer, Geisbert had absorbed the enormity of the epidemic. Now signs of complete collapse were coming from West Africa. MSF saw them first. In June, the group issued a fresh warning that Ebola was "totally out of control." Normally wary of bigfoot interventions, MSF now pleaded for action on a scale that only the Pentagon can provide. The warning was soon validated. On July 25, the virus was found in Freetown, the crowded capital of Sierra Leone. A few days later, Liberian President Sirleaf at last took action, closing her country's borders and authorizing quarantines. On July 30, the Peace Corps pulled its volunteers out of infected West African countries.

Despite this litany of suffering, for many Americans it was the sight of that airplane floating downward, bearing their Ebola-stricken countryman, that finally brought home the pain. Walking to a waiting ambulance in his Halloween version of a space suit, Brantly carried the virus across the ocean—both real and psychic—that separates Fortress America from the sorrows of distant masses. Psychologists have shown that most humans feel the agony of an individual more intensely than the suffering of a large group. For many Americans, Brantly moved Ebola from abstraction to reality.

Even an American who has given nine years of her life to Liberia felt it, though she was disgusted with herself for the feeling. "I think definitely when an American got Ebola, now it's like, anybody can get it," says Katie Meyler, founder of the More Than Me Academy for the girls of West Point, a massively crowded Monrovia slum. "As messed up as that is and as frustrating as that is, I definitely was guilty

of a little bit of that too." But there was something good to be said for the reaction. "It became international news," Meyler says, "and I think that's when the fight was on."

Frozen pipelines of international action began to thaw. Dozing bureaucracies stirred. Within days after Brantly's evacuation, the World Bank pledged $200 million and the CDC jolted awake its emergency-operations unit, and on Aug. 8, WHO declared an emergency of international importance.

But as West Africans—and eventually the whole world—would learn, there was a lot of slack in the international response. The ringing of alarm bells in early August would produce in September a promise of U.S. troops to build treatment units and an unprecedented U.N. mission to attack the contagion. These steps would produce scouting trips several weeks later, followed by initial deployments. (The first U.S.-built ETU went online in early November.) A shocking projection by the CDC warned that without immediate and effective action, as many as 1.4 million people could be infected by January. And still the response moved as if through mud.

Joanne Liu of MSF grew so frustrated that she delivered a scathing attack at U.N. headquarters in early September, decrying the "coalition of inaction" that was permitting people to die by the hundreds in the streets of Sierra Leone. In response, Anthony Banbury was summoned to his boss's office at the U.N. and ordered to lead the international Ebola mission.

A veteran of some of the largest famine-relief efforts in recent history, Banbury has a knack for both the logistics and the diplomacy involved in getting massive amounts of help to people with everything stacked against them: natural disasters, government corruption, nonexistent infrastructure. But he now says that nothing prepared him for the complexity of fighting Ebola. This was the first all-out international mission to fight an outbreak of infectious disease. There was no precedent.

Consider all that is needed: scores of small ETUs spread across thousands of square miles; trained doctors, nurses and support staff to operate them; diagnostic laboratories and the power sources to feed them; supplies to keep them going; food to replace the crops untended by dying farmers and farmers unwilling

BONUS DIGITAL CONTENT

EBOLA FIGHTERS IN THE U.S.



Dr. Kent Brantly and other health care workers talk about surviving the disease

to work in groups to harvest; offices staffed by experienced diplomats to coordinate efforts among national governments, local governments, tribal leaders, NGOs and home-grown legions of Ebola fighters; and perhaps most of all, money—actual cash, not just pledges.

Fighting a virus is not the same as responding to an earthquake or a tsunami. Instead of a defined and visible problem, there is a mutating, invisible problem. Disaster relief deals with aftermath; this battle was ongoing. Eventually, the humanitarian efforts would begin to get traction, but never as quickly as the humanitarians hoped.

When Dec. 1 arrived—Banbury's target date for getting the upper hand on the epidemic—he would have to acknowledge that the target would not be met. There was progress, but the number of people infected and killed was inevitably going to grow further. The failures of the official institutions to deal with Ebola in a timely way had doomed the effort to a long slog. "I'm proud of what we've accomplished so far," Banbury ventures, "but in retrospect, the whole world wishes we had done more and we had done it earlier."

THOSE WHO STAND UP

IN THE KILLING HEAT OF AUGUST, with Ebola uncontrolled, with no sign of help on the way from local or national or international cavalry, the time came for choosing. Who would run away? Who would stand and fight? The choice was deeply personal, one heart at a time.

Katie Meyler made the choice, along with Iris Martor, the nurse at More Than Me academy. Meyler, a tornado of energy, is a New Jersey native who set out for Liberia on a two-month mission and now considers it home. Martor has a tranquil face and—as time would show—reservoirs of courage behind it.

Like others in Liberia, the school colleagues learned of the Ebola outbreak in March. Martor recalls overhearing a heated conversation on a bus crowded with commuters. If there were 200 people on that bus, Martor estimates, 198 of them believed that the government was lying about Ebola in hopes of squeezing money from international aid groups.

The two women had no such illusions. Knowing the basics of Ebola and the nature of slum life, they feared that, as Meyler puts it, "if this ever got to West Point, it



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would be the end of Liberian existence. So many people live on top of each other. If 100,000 people get Ebola and they go out and spread it, it's a threat to the existence of the Liberian people."

A low and crowded labyrinth on the west side of Monrovia, on a peninsula that juts into the Atlantic like a thumb, West Point is home to at least 80,000 people, maybe more. The slum has no running water and virtually no electricity; a U.N. agency study in 2009 found just four public toilets serving a then estimated 70,000 residents. Living seven or more to each tiny room in makeshift shanties of corrugated metal and concrete blocks, the people of West Point are so densely packed that asking them to avoid close contact with other humans is like asking fish to avoid touching the sea. Ebola arrived in West Point on Aug. 12.

Meyler was home in New Jersey for a round of fundraising and a family vacation when she noticed a story in the morning paper. It was mid-August and West Point residents, furious about the establishment of an Ebola holding center in their neighborhood, looted the building one night and made off with potentially contaminated bedding. Concerned that the virus might spread out of control, President Sirleaf ordered the entire West Point section cordoned off on Aug. 19. The next day, the quarantined residents rioted. Soldiers fired on the crowd, killing a teenage boy.

The photo alongside the article featured one of Meyler's students. She made her choice: "I took the next flight to Liberia." She arrived to find Liberia in chaos. Schools and government offices were shuttered. Senior officials had fled the country. Ebola was everywhere: in the scenes of dying patients in bogs of waste outside the over-full hospitals, in the stench of the rotting dead awaiting burial crews, in the dread that hung over the city like a pall.

Meyler and Martor became Ebola fighters because there was no one else to turn to. Overnight, they converted the school into an ad hoc disaster-response center, holding meetings, organizing food distribution and even setting up an ambulance service for West Point with funds from a wealthy donor. "It's like, we don't have an organization if we don't have students who are alive," Meyler says. While she established a temporary orphanage and

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quarantine program for children whose families were in treatment or wiped out, Martor organized a team from the More Than Me school to visit the homes of every student. "Praise be to God," she recalls, "none of them had gotten sick."

But Martor realized their health was fleeting if the virus infected their neighbors. She went to Meyler with the suggestion that More Than Me sponsor teams of locals who could canvass as much of West Point as they could, house by house. Wearing boots and rain gear provided by the school, the "case finders" slogged through the muddy, viral streets. Martor's team followed Meyler's in their wake, keeping an eye out for developing Ebola cases but tending to other health issues in the community too. It was dangerous work because no one knew which houses were contaminated. "Don't touch," Martor instructed her nurses. "Don't sit."

Late in August, Martor's infant daughter spiked a fever, followed by vomiting and diarrhea, and Martor was awash with fear that she had brought death into her own home. But it wasn't Ebola, and the child recovered, leaving Martor to reflect on the risks she was taking and why she would do such a thing.

"Initially, I was afraid. I should admit that," she says. "But then thinking and looking at it critically—if I don't help, I will still not be free." Ebola would pose a danger until it is stamped out, and why shouldn't she be part of the effort? "If someone from America comes to help my people, and someone from Uganda, then why can't I? This is my country. I should take the first step."

The same spirit sustains Ebola fighters throughout West Africa. It was in the international team of researchers who chased the virus to its source in Guinea—five of whom died in the epidemic before their findings could be published. It is in the personage of Nelson Sayon, who ran a motorbike taxi service in Monrovia until Ebola. Like Meyler and Martor, he could have said no when the world fell short and left Ebola untended. But he said yes. "I volunteered myself to help my country," he says, by joining a burial team run by the Liberian Red Cross.

His first day on the job, Aug. 2, Sayon collected more than 10 contagious corpses, some of them left for days in the heat. People threw rocks as his vehicle passed by. Everything and everyone associated



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with Ebola was being attacked; even Sayon's parents were worried about his work.

In Maine, Kaci Hickox, an American nurse, stood up to fight Ebola, answering a September plea for experienced volunteers from MSF. Hickox had been dashing toward fires with MSF for years, but Ebola was something different, she says. "It's one of those diseases that will infect an entire family and leave children as orphans and mothers without their children." And it will kill health care workers for the smallest slip with protective gear or an IV needle. (More than 600 doctors, nurses and other medics have been infected in the epidemic so far, while more than 300 have died.) During the time she was in training with MSF, Hickox recalls, a worker at one of the group's Ebola facilities was infected—a first for MSF—but not a single member of her class quit.

Deployed to Bo, Sierra Leone's second largest city, Hickox stepped into a grueling routine. "International staff typically works 12-to-14-hour shifts six days a week," she says. "It was in the high 90s when I was there and the suit is not breathable, because it's made to not be absorbent. You can only be in the suit for about an hour because of the heat—but on days when we had 35 patients in the unit and maybe nine health workers, you have a very limited time to meet the patients' needs."

How can you properly comfort and encourage a patient who is moaning in agony when you're peering through fogged-up goggles and shouting through a double mask? Fighting Ebola, in other words, means living with "such a terrible feeling," Hickox says, a sinking, haunted sensation that no matter how much you've done, you could have done more.

Foday Gallah, the ambulance supervisor who saved a little boy's life and nearly lost his own, recalled the fear he felt in choosing to stand up. But he says now that he really had no choice. "We have to do it. Nobody had come" to help, he says. "So we are the ones to pick up the cost. Fear was there, but it didn't overtake us."

VICTORY IN SIGHT

THE EBOLA FIGHTERS HAVE NOT yet won the battle. For every recorded infection, the CDC estimates that an additional 1.5 cases go unreported. And for every sign of progress against the epidemic, there is at least one sign that the crisis is not

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over. There are empty beds in ETUs around Monrovia today, with cases declining in Liberia as a whole. But Sierra Leone is failing to keep pace with its cases, and Guinea, scene of the original outbreak, isn't in the clear yet either. And now Mali is scrambling to prevent the virus from running away. "I'm not that optimistic yet," says Ella Watson-Stryker. "We still have cases coming in every day."

Nevertheless, something significant has been accomplished in the fight against Ebola. The same Liberian clinics that were turning patients away in October, dooming them to die in misery on filthy plastic tarps, now have beds standing empty, unneeded. Two possible vaccines are on a fast track for widespread trials in the African hot zone. The time needed to test for Ebola is shrinking from days to minutes. The prospect of mass contagion moving into the U.S. and Europe has paled. In other words, victory appears possible, at the end of a clear, if difficult, path.

There is hope. And hope has proved to be the most potent weapon yet discovered against Ebola. With so much gruesome practice, doctors have learned a great deal about treating the disease, and survival rates are going up. Instead of visiting traditional healers, who became unwitting vectors of infection, more Africans are now going voluntarily into ETUs because they have seen survivors coming out. "Instead of saying, 'If you get Ebola, you die,' it became 'If you report at the Ebola treatment unit early, you stand a chance,'" says Brown, the ELWA director. It is the faint light before dawn.

We are left with lessons to be learned, and the Ebola fighters can teach them. One has to do with readiness: there wasn't any. Some of the poorest governments on earth weren't ready for Ebola, and neither were the wealthiest. When a Liberian man named Thomas Eric Duncan arrived at a Dallas hospital with Ebola, he was sent home with antibiotics. When he returned, the hospital staff was inadequately protected. Infectious disease is a flash flood moving somewhere beyond the horizon. We must prepare while the sun is shining, because when the rain starts falling, it's too late.

Another lesson has to do with the importance of having promising medical interventions ready to attack a virus before it spreads. Scientists have been working on Ebola for more than 20 years, but none



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made it to the drug-approval process because there was no incentive for pharmaceutical companies to mass-produce therapies that we might only need "just in case."

For instance, Nancy Sullivan and Gary Nebel, virologists at the U.S. National Institutes of Health, have worked for more than a decade on an Ebola vaccine that was rushed into human trials in August. Two other vaccines aren't far behind. And the companies behind the drugs ZMapp and TKM-Ebola are scrambling to produce enough doses for further trials.

Yet another lesson has to do with fear and suspicion. Americans didn't throw stones at Ebola fighters or threaten them with machetes, as happened in West Africa, but New Jersey Governor Chris Christie did try to force Hickox into an unnecessary quarantine when she returned home. Dr. Craig Spencer, who volunteered with MSF in Guinea, was reduced to a political football on cable TV when he tested positive for Ebola upon his return. And Amber Vinson, a nurse who was infected while caring for Duncan in Dallas, was shocked to see her photograph on TV just hours after being diagnosed herself. She then endured the pain of reading hostile online comments while she suffered through her recovery from the disease.

And always, there is the lesson of gratitude for those who willingly, even eagerly, do the jobs no one wishes to do. Jobs that involve risking a horrible death on behalf of strangers who repay you with hatred. Jobs that involve exposing your heart to unfathomable grief. Jobs that involve giving your all while knowing that you will never feel it was enough.

Early in the epidemic, CDC director Frieden spoke of Ebola's "fog of war." Its shroud covers the battlefield. Eventually—though no one can say when—the Ebola fighters are going to be victorious. The fog will clear, leaving the hard truth in view: this won't be the last epidemic. And when the next one comes, the world must learn the lessons of this one: Be better prepared, less fearful, less reactive. Run toward the fire and put it out together. Even more important, though, when the next one comes, remember the Ebola fighters and hope that we see their like again. —WITH REPORTING BY ALEXANDRA SIFFERLIN/ATLANTA, ALICE PARK/NEW YORK CITY AND PAUL MOAKLEY/MONROVIA ■

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No. 2

The Activists Ferguson Protesters

THEIR REFUSAL TO LET A LIFE BE FORGOTTEN TURNED A LOCAL SHOOTING INTO A NATIONAL MOVEMENT

BY ALEX ALTMAN/ST. LOUIS



Painting by Titus Kaphar for TIME



At the beginning, they just wanted to pay tribute. Neighbors stood on cracked sidewalks behind yellow police tape, watching the dead teen's body bake for hours in the summer heat. They tried to scrub his blood from the pavement with soap. It was Johnetta Elzie's first protest.

She didn't expect the cops to show up to a candlelight vigil with canine units and riot gear. Crowds filled the streets that night. The next day they did it again. Elzie, 25, had been getting ready to return to college but kept coming back instead. She chanted and marched, dodged plumes of tear gas, took a rubber bullet to her left collarbone. And she tapped out tweets to tell the world what was happening in an obscure township in Middle America. "I was just hoping someone would care," she says.

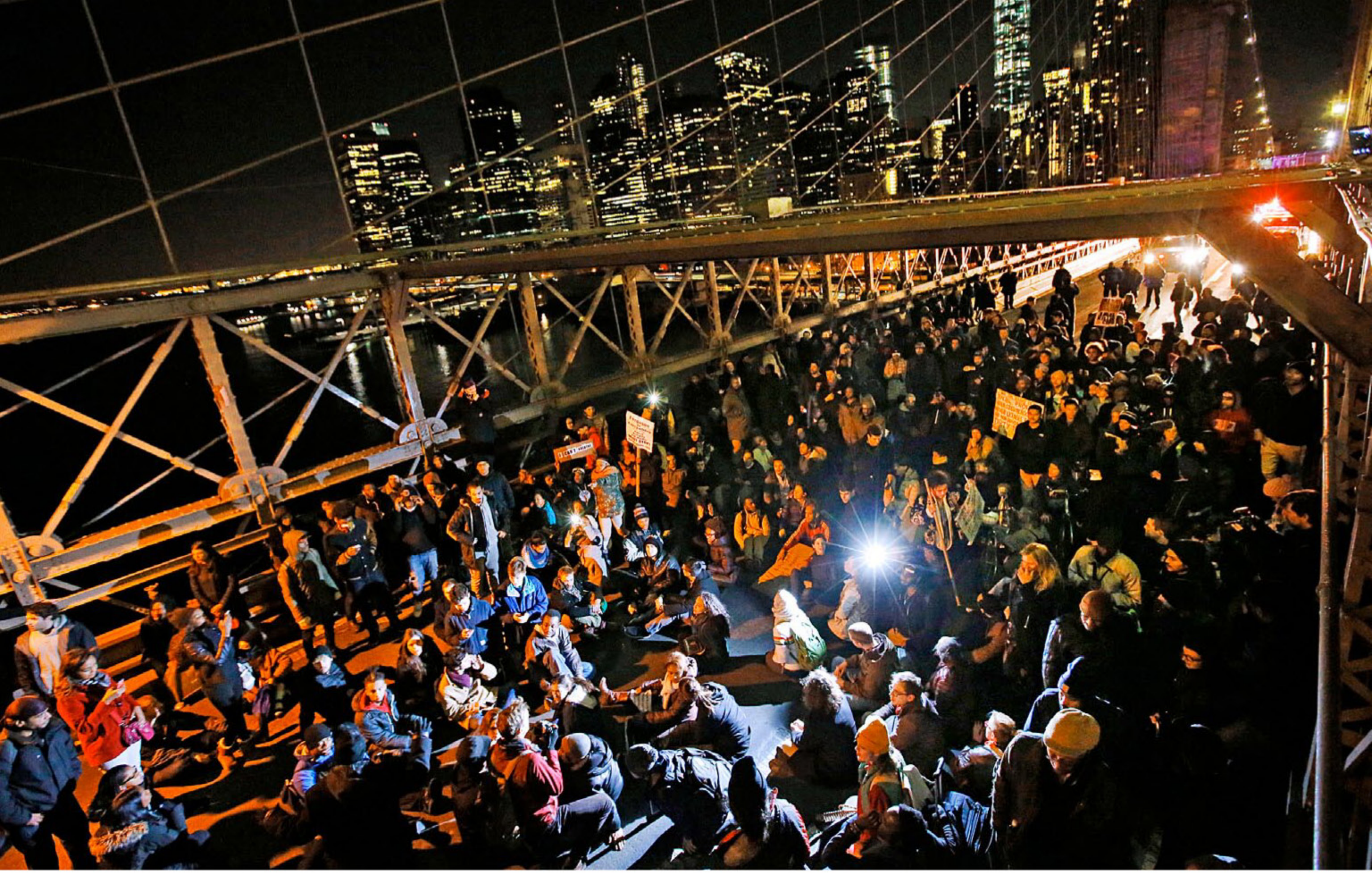
An unarmed black man shot

dead by a white cop is a tragedy, but a recurring one; the uproar can fizzle as fast as it flares. There was no reason to think Michael Brown's death on Aug. 9 was destined to be different. But Ferguson was the spark that started a fire. Demonstrators couldn't win the indictment of Darren Wilson, the police officer who fired the fatal shots. Yet they built a movement that revived a dormant national conversation about race and justice. "We made the world pay attention," Elzie says. That was a triumph all its own.

Events that might once have slipped by unnoticed coalesced into points on a troubling graph. In late November, protesters took to the streets in Cleveland after police killed Tamir Rice, a black 12-year-old, within seconds of encountering him with what turned out to be a toy pistol in his hand. Less than two weeks later, protests cascaded across the nation when a New York City grand jury declined to indict the white police officer who choked Eric Garner, leading to the death of the unarmed black father of six suspected of selling loose cigarettes. The street chants and hashtags that started in Ferguson knit these isolated tragedies into an inescapable story line. "This is not a black-and-white issue," said Garner's daughter Erica. "This is a national crisis."

Protest is a performance that can make the unseen visible. In this angry epic, thousands found a role. They clogged freeways in Miami and Chicago, carried coffins across the Brooklyn Bridge, clashed with cops in Berkeley, Calif., flooded streets in London and toted signs around Tokyo. At colleges from Boston to Baton Rouge, students staged "die-ins" to dramatize the social value of black life. Players for the St. Louis Rams took the field with their hands raised in solidarity—a gesture repeated on the floor of Congress.

A black President who so often seems reluctant to talk about race was forced into the fray. Barack Obama brought young Ferguson protest leaders into the Oval Office and announced measures meant to increase police accountability. Republican Senator Rand Paul criticized the disproportionate incarceration rate of African Americans and called for criminal-justice reform. "People need to know," said New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio after the Garner



Protesters march across the Brooklyn Bridge on Dec. 4, one day after a grand jury declined to charge a police officer in the death of Eric Garner

JASON DECROW—AP

grand jury decision, "that black lives and brown lives matter as much as white lives."

This outcry was better focused than Occupy, bigger than the one that followed the Trayvon Martin case. But like the reaction to Martin, it felt raw and real. The expressions of powerlessness that began on a Missouri sidewalk soon seeded the hopes of the powerful. "What happened in Ferguson," Attorney General Eric Holder tells TIME, "could be one of those seminal moments that transform the nation."

The Making of an Uprising

FERGUSON HAS A LEGACY OF RACIAL division. In the 1940s and '50s, it was practically an all-white "sundown town," where a chain blocked the main street from the adjacent black suburb. Two decades of white flight tipped the balance, and Ferguson is now about 70% black, with both rambling Victorian homes and low-income apartments like the dun-colored buildings that front the curving street where Brown was killed. Longtime white residents were largely oblivious to the tension bubbling

beneath the city's surface. "We're having trouble understanding what the protesters want," says former mayor Brian Fletcher. "They say they hate the police now, but I never heard about any racial problems, even from our African-American officials."

Yet statistics reveal a pattern of racial profiling that incensed residents long before local police killed an unarmed man and greeted his mourners with military-grade weaponry. "What made Ferguson was the police response," says St. Louis alderman Antonio French, a community leader who helped keep the peace. "Every opportunity in those first 48 hours to be compassionate, they escalated the situation instead."

The protesters had a role in that too. Some, like Dhoruba Shakur, a 24-year-old jazz drummer in a Black Souljahz hoodie, saw in Brown's death and the police reaction a justification for lawlessness. "It was kind of beautiful," he says of the looting. "These people are being failed by the U.S. government." The ambiguities of the case did little to ease the sense of injustice that fueled the clashes. Brown had stolen cigarillos and started a scuffle with a cop. Reams of grand jury testimony offered no definitive version of what went down in those two or three fateful minutes on Canfield Drive. None of that erased the fact that an unarmed black man had been killed by a white cop.

THE YEAR IN PROTESTS

Milestones of a movement

1 **A NAME AND A VIDEO** After six days of charged protests, Ferguson police chief Thomas Jackson finally disclosed officer Darren Wilson's identity on Aug. 15. But Jackson incensed demonstrators by also releasing photos of Michael Brown robbing a convenience store. That night Ferguson erupted again.

2 **A GRAND JURY DECISION** After weeks of anticipation, a St. Louis County grand jury announced on Nov. 24 that Wilson would not face charges. The decision triggered intense rioting.

3 **#ICANTBREATHE** On Dec. 3, a grand jury in New York City's Staten Island declined to bring charges against Daniel Pantaleo, the officer who choked Eric Garner, leading to his death. The incident, which was captured on video, touched off protests in cities across the U.S.

But to many, it was hard to square the anger with the Molotov cocktails whistling through the night, the small businesses destroyed, the images of torched cop cars. Police perform a service that is difficult and dangerous; now they were being asked to maintain order in a hostile community where any wrong move would instantly inflame. The demonstrations divided the country into warring camps: Did blame rest with the officers pumping tear gas into the streets or the protesters who provoked them?

When the chaos subsided and the television trucks scattered, the work of sustaining the struggle fell to activists like Elzie. They are poets and paralegals, college students and working professionals, some affluent, some unemployed, white as well as black. They launched crowdfunding campaigns, organized council meetings and held a mock trial for St. Louis County prosecutor Robert McCulloch at the courthouse where Dred Scott once sued for his freedom. They continue to preach morning and night on Twitter, the revolutionary's pocket pulpit.

Some of these leaders are from outside St. Louis, like DeRay Mckesson, 29, an educator from Minneapolis. In August, after watching the first wave of protests from afar, he decided to take a week's vacation and drive nine hours to join in. He knew no one when he arrived. Now he and Elzie run a movement newsletter devoured daily by 11,000 people. "We will not be silent anymore in the face of oppression," he says. "Silence can so easily look like comfort."

A handful of the protesters spoke with the President at the White House on Dec. 1. Obama mostly listened. Brittany Packnett, 30, told of the searing sight of Brown's body in the blood-soaked street. "That image is burned into people's minds,"

'What happened in Ferguson could be one of those seminal moments that transform the nation.'

—ERIC HOLDER, U.S. ATTORNEY GENERAL

she says. "It harkened back to days when lynchings were frequent." The President pledged $263 million toward police body cameras and better training for officers. He also ordered a review of federal programs that provide military equipment to local law enforcement and created a criminal-justice task force. "What made me concerned," Obama said after his meeting with the activists, "was the degree to which they feel as if they are not heard."

A New Civil Rights Movement

THE STREETS OF FERGUSON ARE mostly quiet now. The movement has migrated. #Blacklivesmatter has been joined by #icantbreathe—Garner's final words before he died on that Staten Island street. Protesters chant both while marching through Times Square in New York City and Public Square in Cleveland. These are the sounds, activists say, of a new civil rights movement—a battle to reshape the relationship between the police and the people they are paid to protect. What started in a Missouri suburb may end with change that can be measured in lives saved.

That can happen only after the messy fight to make enemies into allies. The unruly protests have called a nation's attention to a problem some thought had been solved and others didn't want to acknowledge at all. But they have also alienated sympathizers. "It's not my job to convince them," Elzie says of those who used the looting to discredit the protests. "You're mad over a building? We're mad over a body."

Activists are putting some hope in Washington: the Department of Justice has opened separate civil rights probes into the Ferguson police force and Garner's death. In Ferguson, voter-registration drives are under way ahead of April's city council elections.

And the struggle has spread. On Dec. 3, after protesting the Garner grand jury decision at the federal courthouse in downtown St. Louis, Elzie glanced down at her phone. It was lighting up with tweets and texts tracking the night's arrests, as well as updates from the demonstrations in New York. Like many in Ferguson, she was heading there the next day to join them. —WITH REPORTING BY ZEKE J. MILLER/ATLANTA ■

BONUS DIGITAL CONTENT

FERGUSON PROTESTERS



The fatal shooting of an unarmed black teenager by a white police officer in Ferguson, Mo., spurred a national debate about race



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No. 3

The Imperialist Vladimir Putin

RUSSIA'S INCREASINGLY ISOLATED PRESIDENT IS ON A MISSION TO RESTORE HIS COUNTRY'S LOST EMPIRE

BY SIMON SHUSTER/MOSCOW

Portrait by
Pavel Sokov for TIME



Right off the throne room in the Grand Kremlin Palace, the official residence of Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow, is a long corridor known as the Malachite foyer, where the walls are adorned with the portraits of Russian kings and conquerors. Yuri the Long-Armed,

the warrior prince credited with founding Moscow in the 12th century, hangs across from Peter the Great, who had expanded the Russian empire to Europe's Baltic Sea by the time he died in 1725. What they all had in common was a thirst for expansion, which over the years has made Russia the largest country in the world. And at least by that measure, Putin in 2014 has already earned his own portrait.

His decision in March to invade and then annex the region of Crimea from Ukraine marked the first growth of Russia's dominions

since the fall of the Soviet Union. Though the West remembers that event as a victory for freedom, the Soviet collapse was a catastrophe to Putin and many of his compatriots. "Millions of Russians went to sleep in one country and awoke in another," Putin said in a speech at the Kremlin palace in March. Overnight, it seemed, Russia was transformed from a superpower into a corrupt petrostate, a fallen empire that Sergey Brin, the Russian émigré turned Google co-founder, once derided as "Nigeria with snow."

Even Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet leader who tried to reform his country only to dismantle it in 1991, still broods over the loss. "Russia was simply pushed aside, pushed out of politics, made to feel like some kind of backwater," he tells TIME in the Moscow office where he once received American dignitaries as equals if not exactly friends. "In everything it was America calling the shots!" But with the conquest of Crimea, a derelict peninsula about the size of Massachusetts, Putin at last restored a scrap of Russia's honor, says Gorbachev, by "acting on his own," unbound by the constraints of U.S. supremacy and the table manners of international law.

The vast majority of Russians would nod along. Putin's approval ratings have skyrocketed since the annexation of Crimea, reaching a peak of 88% in October. Not since 2008, when Putin last defied the West by sending Russian tanks into neighboring Georgia, has he enjoyed such popularity at home. Not during the oil-fueled boom of his first two terms as President, from 2000 to 2008, when the economy grew by an average of 7% per year, nor during the multibillion-dollar spectacle of the Winter Olympics in Sochi that Putin hosted at the start of this year. For the gift of Crimea—a depressed region expected to cost Russia more than $18 billion over the next six years to develop—Russians seemed ready to deify Putin. Local critics fell silent, while thousands of supporters waited hours in Red Square to buy Putin souvenirs, like a T-shirt of him lounging on a beach, the caption declaring, CRIMEA.

That name, redolent with the history of Europe's 19th century wars, has become a byword in Russia for national revival, a taste of the imperial glory that a generation of Russians have long hungered for. "It had



Putin prepares to give his annual address to Russia's Federal Assembly at the Kremlin in Moscow on Dec. 4

been extremely painful," says Lev Gudkov, a prominent Russian sociologist. "Only with the annexation of Crimea did people start to feel that our great-power status was restored." For the first time since the Soviet collapse, he says, "the sense of frustration and humiliation dissipated."

The Empire Strikes Back

THE 62-YEAR-OLD PUTIN HAS SAVORED that validation. The son of a factory worker and a former military man from the slums of St. Petersburg—then called Leningrad—he spent the last years of the Soviet Union as a KGB agent trying to preserve the agency's authority in the East German city of Dresden. The fall of the Berlin Wall came to him not as a liberation but as a threat—in 1989 a crowd of German protesters gathered outside his office to demand the ouster of the Soviet-backed regime. As the mob threatened to storm the building, Putin burned the KGB's files and sent frantic requests for orders from his bosses in the capital. "Moscow is silent," Putin later recalled in his official biography.

YURI KOZYREV—NOOR FOR TIME

By the time he rose through the post-Soviet wreckage to become President in 2000, Putin had dedicated himself to rebuilding Russia's lost authority. But his attempts this year to tighten Moscow's grip on Ukraine came at a heavy price for Russia and the world. A passenger plane flying over the war zone in eastern Ukraine was blasted out of the sky on July 17, almost certainly by the ill-trained militias that Russia has been using to fight its battles. Nearly 300 people were killed, dozens of them children, as Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 disintegrated over territory that Russia effectively controls through its proxies. Putin blamed the Ukrainian government for the disaster, but the callous treatment of the dead—most of them Europeans—cost him many of the few friends he had left.

Already expelled from the G-8 club of wealthy nations in March after the annexation of Crimea, Putin was further ostracized at the G-20 summit held in November in Australia, which lost 38 of its citizens on Flight MH17. Capturing the prevailing Western attitude at the international summit, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper

THE YEAR IN PUTIN

The Russian President's power moves

1. **HOSTING GAMES** The 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi were meant to be a showcase for Russia and for Putin. Prestige wasn't cheap—the Games are believed to have cost more than $50 billion.

2. **ANNEXING CRIMEA** Putin's seizure of the Ukrainian peninsula expanded Russia's borders by about 10,000 sq. mi. (26,000 sq km) and increased the country's population by about 2 million people.

3. **TURNING EASTWARD** Facing isolation from Europe and the U.S., Putin pivoted to Asia by striking a deal in May to supply China with $400 billion worth of Russian natural gas over a 30-year period.

4. **STOKING PRIDE** Putin's approval ratings, in steady decline for five years before Crimea's annexation, shot to a record 88% in October amid a surge of national pride.

said in greeting Putin, "I guess I'll shake your hand, but I have only one thing to say to you: You need to get out of Ukraine."

German Chancellor Angela Merkel seemed to be the only one willing to hear Putin out. She came on the first evening of the summit to the Hilton Brisbane, where the Kremlin entourage was staying, and spent the following six hours in closed-door talks with Putin over Ukraine. The next day, Putin left the conference early, before its final declaration was announced, while Merkel delivered a speech predicting a drawn-out confrontation with Moscow. "Russia flouted international law," she said. "After the horrors of two world wars and the end of the Cold War, this calls the entire European peaceful order into question."

The Germans, the centrist pragmatists of Europe, stood on principle, issuing a rebuke that helped seal Russia's political isolation just as a sharp drop in the price of oil weakened the country's most valuable asset. Inflation in Russia has spiked as a result. The ruble has lost 40% of its value against the dollar since the start of the year, forcing Russians to cut back on Western goods and foreign travel. Next year the government expects a recession to take hold.

The value of Russian government debt is approaching the level of junk bonds, and in early December, Putin was forced to cancel one of his legacy projects, the South Stream natural gas pipeline into Europe, whose construction contracts he had enjoyed negotiating personally. "If Europe doesn't want to do this, well, then it means this won't be done," Putin said, referring to pressure from E.U. regulators. "We will steer the flow of our energy resources to other regions of the world."

So, was Putin's taste of empire worth the cost to Russian prosperity? For those who carry the grudges of Russian history, it was. "After the fall of the Soviet Union, America became a monopoly," says Alexander

Russia now seeks to position itself as an alternative to the Western model of liberal democracy—and it's had some success

Voloshin, a Kremlin insider who served as Putin's chief of staff from 2000 to 2003. "They felt they had the right to punish and to praise, to give the carrot and smack with the stick," he tells TIME. "There was no competition."

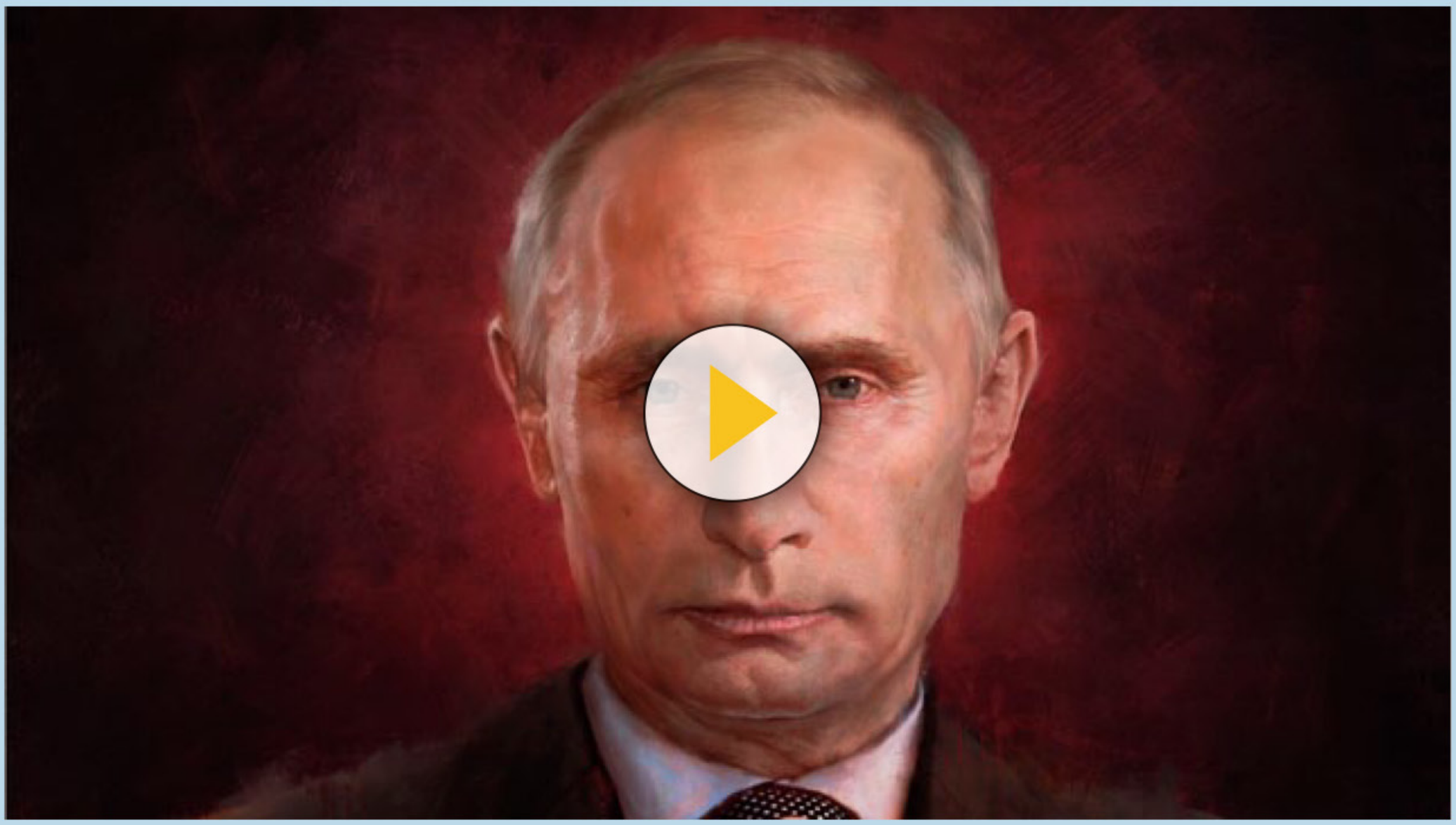
The Global Alternative

RUSSIA NOW SEEKS TO POSITION itself as an alternative to the Western model of liberal democracy—and it's had some success. Right-wing politicians in France and the U.K., not to mention Central and Eastern Europe, are not shy about declaring their admiration for Putin. The ultraconservative government of Hungary, a member of NATO and the European Union, has announced its intention to develop as an "illiberal state" modeled on Russia, cracking down harshly on civil society. It is a model that may seem old-fashioned—the Russian President claims not to use a cell phone and has called the Internet a "CIA project"—but his appeal is broad and growing for the many around the world who feel left out of the 21st century. "Putin doesn't want to play within the system anymore," says Michael McFaul, whose term as U.S. ambassador to Russia ended in February. "He wants to challenge it now. He wants to prod. He wants to build relationships with others against that system, with the Chinese, Turks, maybe India. That is a longer-term challenge."

Putin will face challenges of his own as the West begins to rally against his aggressiveness and Russia's economy falters. When TIME named Putin Person of the Year in 2007, we wrote that the President had offered his subjects a "grand bargain—of freedom for security." Russians sick of the chaos of the post-Soviet 1990s eagerly accepted Putin's bargain then, but they may feel differently as the chill of economic recession and international isolation sets in. Make no mistake, though: Russians also remember that their country once dominated a sixth of the earth's landmass and stood as a global player second to none. That is the role Putin seeks to regain—and he seems prepared for the consequences. "Let's not forget the lessons of history," he said in a speech at the end of October. "A change in the world order—and this is the magnitude of events we are witnessing today—usually comes with a global war, a global confrontation or at least a chain of intense local conflicts." ■

BONUS DIGITAL CONTENT

THE YEAR IN PUTIN



From hosting the Sochi Olympics to annexing Crimea and pivoting eastward to Asia, the Russian President made bold moves in 2014

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No. 4

The Opportunist

Massoud Barzani

WHEN ISIS THREW THE MIDDLE EAST JIGSAW PUZZLE INTO THE AIR, THE KURDISH LEADER REACHED FOR A PIECE

BY KARL VICK



Portrait by
Jason Seiler for TIME



What does it say that the most reliable U.S. ally in its campaign against ISIS is an imaginary country? Kurdistan—Land of the Kurds—exists only in two spheres. One is on maps sold in bazaars wherever the Kurdish language is spoken.

The other is on yellow-red-and-green flags Kurds sometimes wave in the countries where they actually reside (according to maps sold everywhere else in the world).

Yet in one of those countries, the Kurds have built themselves a state in all but name. Far to the north of Baghdad, where Iraq's deserts rise into stony foothills and then into mountains, the Kurdistan Regional Government holds sway. The young statelet has its own army, legislature, border checkpoints, foreign policy and, in Massoud Barzani, a powerful President whose

life encapsulates the history of a people whose time finally appears to have come.

The first time Barzani visited the White House, back in 2005, he was dressed, as usual, in a baggy jumpsuit gathered under a cummerbund just below the chest, epaulets and a red-and-white scarf whorled into a squarish turban. It's the traditional garb of Kurdish males, including Barzani's father Mustafa, the most famous Kurd since the 12th century general Saladin. A revolutionary who fought for 60 years to create a Kurdish state, Mustafa succeeded for only a year and change in 1946, just long enough for Massoud to be born within its confines. Then its land was reclaimed by Iran, and Mustafa's soldiers returned to their struggle for independence.

When the old warrior died, in a Washington hospital in 1979, his legacy of stubborn resistance and noble failure defined the Kurds as the region's hard-luck heroes, earnest and worthy but doomed to remain the world's largest ethnic group without a nation of its own.

The legacy of Massoud Barzani, now 68, is still being written. But as the hordes from the Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria (ISIS) swarmed north from Fallujah in the first days of June, conquering Iraq's second largest city in four days and then pivoting toward Kurdish lands, one thing was clear: Iraq's Kurds—and the perhaps 22 million other Kurds around the region—were at a turning point. In many ways, Iraqi Kurdistan was stronger than it had ever been before, with a functioning military and an economy that saw GDP per capita soar from $800 to $5,600 over the past 10 years. All that was suddenly at risk. Kurds are Muslims, and overwhelmingly Sunni at that, but of a tolerant tradition that draws the wrath of the fundamentalists who make up ISIS. On a front stretching 600 miles (965 km), the *peshmerga*, as the Kurds' fighters are known, at first were pushed back, outgunned by the well-armed extremists. Not until Aug. 6, when ISIS artillery was arrayed just 30 miles (48 km) from his capital of Erbil, did Barzani issue the order to "fight the terrorists to the last breath." By then,

the Pentagon had his back. U.S. air strikes began the next day, a month before President Barack Obama announced a strategy designed to defeat ISIS.

On the ground, the stakes are even higher. Barzani, the leader of a stateless people, now stands in a position to decide the future of Iraq and with it, perhaps, that of the Middle East. He has spent his entire life navigating its fault lines. He left school to take up arms at age 16 yet speaks Arabic and Farsi as well as Kurdish and understands English. His clothes reflect a traditional, even feudal approach to power that grates on reformists. The Kurdistan Regional Government's Prime Minister is a nephew, its intelligence chief is Barzani's son—a fact not lost on ordinary Kurds in Iraq, who in impromptu interviews decline to provide their last names even when praising their leader. "Barzani is criticized by his opponents as a tribal man, but that is the important thing: it guarantees survival," says Ayub Nuri, the Toronto-based editor of the Kurdish news site Rudaw. "The tribal man knows

THE YEAR IN BARZANI

How the Kurdish leader took the reins

1 **SEIZING KIRKUK** After Iraqi troops fled the lightning advance of ISIS forces, Barzani on June 10 dispatched fighters to capture Kirkuk, an oil-rich city claimed by both Kurds and Sunni Arabs.

2 **TAKING ON ISIS** Following a series of retreats that endangered the minority Yezidi sect and his own capital, Barzani on Aug. 6 ordered Kurdish forces to go on the offensive, backed by U.S. air strikes.

3 **REINFORCING KOBANI** The Syrian border town besieged by ISIS became a symbol of pan-Kurdish unity when its fighters, from a rival political faction, were joined by 150 Iraqi Kurds.

4 **DEALING WITH BAGHDAD** Under pressure from the U.S. and its own bankers, Barzani's Kurdish Regional Government moved to at least temporarily rejoin Iraq by signing a pact on Dec. 2 to send oil to Baghdad instead of abroad.

how to keep things together. Besides, it's a tribal society."

And in many ways things have been going well. Iraq's Kurds have enjoyed autonomy since 1991, when U.S. President George H.W. Bush ordered a no-fly zone over their land to keep out Saddam Hussein's forces, who had killed tens of thousands of people. In the decade of turmoil that followed the U.S.-led invasion of 2003, Barzani's government grew bolder as Baghdad grew weaker. And with this year's crisis, the Iraqi Kurds crossed a new threshold. When Iraq's uniformed forces beat a panicked retreat from ISIS, Barzani ordered his *peshmerga* to take Kirkuk, an oil-rich city that Kurds have long regarded as their own but have not been allowed to control, because it is also claimed by Iraq's Sunni Arabs. The takeover saved Kirkuk from ISIS—though Baghdad now faces the challenge of getting it back from the Kurds.

Under new Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi—and with the help of U.S. air strikes—Baghdad has managed to rally against ISIS. But it is still the Kurds who are doing much of the fighting against the jihadists, which is appropriate—their goals couldn't be more different. What ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi seeks to establish is a caliphate, a supranational body that claims dominion over all the world's Muslims. It's a system of governance that would sweep away borders and erase the nation-state—and a nation of their own is exactly what Barzani and his people ardently desire. Two days after al-Baghdadi proclaimed himself Caliph Ibrahim on June 29, Barzani announced that Iraqi Kurds would vote "within months" in a referendum on independence. "From

Barzani, the leader of a stateless people, now stands in a position to decide the future of Iraq and with it, perhaps, that of the Middle East

now on, we won't hide that that's our goal," he said.

The paradox is that a new Kurdish state could prove as destabilizing to the Middle East as an ISIS victory. Besides roiling Kurdish populations beyond Iraq, redrawing borders risks further undermining the shaky sovereignty of Syria, Libya and Yemen. For now, though, the Kurds seem willing to use their leverage to improve their position within a still existing Iraq, delaying once again the push for independence. On Dec. 2, Barzani approved a pact with the new Iraqi government that ties the Kurds more closely to Baghdad, papering over a rift that began when Barzani stopped sending oil south.

The deal was pushed strongly by the U.S., and it illustrates both the constraints facing Barzani's government and his talent for navigating them. Iraq's Kurdish leadership has a history as rough as its geography, with a people spread among four adjoining nations. They've been betrayed by the international community repeatedly in the past, but they now count among their allies not only the U.S. but also Israel and Iran. Barzani has even made a friend of Turkey, home to roughly half the world's perhaps 30 million Kurds—all of whom Ankara has long regarded as a threat to the country's sovereignty. But Turkey has gradually come to see Iraqi Kurdistan as a valuable market, doing roughly $8 billion in business there annually. In September 2012, Barzani cemented an alliance with Ankara by addressing the convention of Turkey's ruling party. (For that, he wore a suit and tie.) Two years later, he reached across factional lines to reinforce the Syrian Kurds defending Kobani, the border town that became the showcase for the U.S.-led campaign against ISIS.

"When I was a kid," says Nuri, the news-site editor, "it was forbidden in our house to say anything critical of his father. It's not a blind love. We need a leader."

Massoud Barzani inherited the title by birth, and by dint of his partnership with the U.S., he may end up filling the role for more than just his own people. ■

No. 5

The Capitalist Jack Ma

THE ALIBABA FOUNDER COMBINED AN ENTREPRENEUR'S AMBITION WITH POLITICAL SAVVY IN CHINA TO PULL OFF THE BIGGEST WALL STREET DEBUT IN HISTORY

BY RANA FOROOHAR



Portrait by
Tracie Ching for TIME



When the opening bell of the New York Stock Exchange rang out on Sept. 19, it marked the biggest IPO the world had ever seen—bigger than Facebook's or General Motors'. This new Wall Street juggernaut, based 7,000 miles away in Hangzhou, China, is Alibaba.

Its founder and chairman, 50-year-old Jack Ma, is now challenging some of the most powerful companies on the Internet, including Amazon, eBay and PayPal. And he is doing so by melding Western entrepreneurship with a canny—and sometimes controversial—sense of how to profit in the world's most populous nation.

As with so many Chinese enterprises, comprehending the enormity of Ma's creation requires thinking on a different scale. Alibaba is used by more than a third of China—some 500 million people—making it

easily one of the largest e-commerce companies in the world. Those customers come to Alibaba to shop in the electronic malls it operates, where some 8.5 million merchants, large and small, ply their goods.

Increasingly, Chinese pay for those goods—and conduct all kinds of other transactions—using Alipay, a PayPal-like service affiliated with Alibaba that is now one of China's most important financial entities. In fiscal year 2014, Alibaba generated $8.5 billion in revenue, nearly half of it profit. And Alibaba's $25 billion IPO made Ma one of the world's wealthiest individuals.

But even those figures obscure the significance of Alibaba's rise and the extent to which it has been propelled by Ma's deft understanding of how to do business in his homeland. Since it began in 1999 by linking Chinese manufacturers with foreign and domestic buyers, Alibaba has played a crucial role in China's digital opening to the West. Having previously worked in the Ministry of Trade, Ma was able to ensure support from the Communist Party government and take on bigger competitors in China's private sector. His innovations were not just technical but also diplomatic and strategic.

Like many Chinese, Ma comes from almost nothing: he is the son of traditional storytelling performers who taught himself English by tagging alongside tourists at a local hotel. Later he became a teacher and traveled to the U.S. Searching the World Wide Web for information on Chinese beer and coming up dry, he vowed to bring China online, at a time when only 1% of the population was on the web.

A few years later, Ma started Alibaba in his apartment with 17 friends. His first employee was his wife, who now looks after the couple's two children. Zhang Yin has claimed that she fell for Ma despite his unexceptional looks because he had the capacity to do things other men couldn't. Friends have also been drawn to that ambition. "Jack had the biggest dreams of anyone I've ever known," says Porter Erisman, an American adman who left his job at Ogilvy & Mather in Beijing to work for Ma early on. "You'd

come up with a goal, and he'd immediately ask you to triple it."

A consummate spinner of corporate narrative, Ma is full of Shaolin-monk-style sound bites. "eBay is a shark in the ocean. We are a crocodile in the Yangtze," he famously proclaimed. "If we fight in the ocean, we will lose. But if we fight in the river, we will win." Ma claims to base his management technique on Chinese martial-arts teachings, encouraging employees to adopt nicknames from kung fu novels. (His own, Feng Qingyang, is a nod to an aggressive master swordsman.)

Like the best martial artists, he is capable of turning weakness into strength. In the years before Alibaba went public, for instance, Ma leveraged his freedom from Wall Street pressure on quarterly earnings to keep his site free for a long time, building market share. Obliged to show shareholders progress on profit margins, eBay watched as Alibaba scooped up business.

Ma became more enmeshed with Silicon Valley in 2005. That's when Yahoo, run by founder Jerry Yang at the time, decided to buy a large stake in Alibaba for $1 billion. Yang, who first met Ma at the Trade Ministry, told TIME that he remembered him as "highly curious about the Internet industry and obviously very entrepreneurially minded." Yahoo wanted a piece of Alibaba because of its market position in China, but also because of Ma.

The marriage fell apart, though, as Ma tangled with Yahoo's new management. As Alibaba's market share took off, it became clear that he'd given away too much of his company for far too little. "If he had waited even a year, Jack would have gotten a lot more," says Gary Rieschel, a venture capitalist who ran the Japanese conglomerate SoftBank's investments in Asia outside of Japan, including Alibaba, from 2000 to 2009. He eventually gathered together a group including local princeling investors close to the party elite to buy out half of Yahoo's stake.

Those relationships are a reminder that Ma couldn't have produced his achievements without

Beijing's approval. His ties to the party apparatus are a key advantage over foreign rivals, which don't compete on the same playing field in China's closed Internet ecosystem. Alibaba operates not only in retail but also in heavily state-dominated and -protected areas like finance. (When Alibaba started offering money-market accounts, $90 billion poured in.)

That's good not only for Ma and Alibaba but also for the Communist Party. China has come under increasing criticism for its closed financial sector, which holds the private savings of citizens in state-owned banks at minuscule interest levels, then taps that money for state-run projects—many of which have floundered as China's growth has slowed. Allowing someone like Ma to offer even a slightly better interest rate without real reform helps placate ordinary citizens in a nation where the ruling elite is mindful of the potential for social unrest.

Yet Ma's skill in co-opting government support has exacted a price, particularly as he seeks both

THE YEAR IN ALIBABA

Mr. Ma goes shopping

1 **JANUARY–JULY** Ma spends billions of dollars in a string of deals with a wide range of Chinese firms, including department store Intime Retail, mobile-browser company UCWeb, mapping service AutoNavi and the Guangzhou Evergrande soccer team.

2 **SEPTEMBER** Ma takes Alibaba public on the New York Stock Exchange. It is the world's largest IPO, and by the end of trading, Ma's company has raised a staggering $25 billion.

3 **OCTOBER** On hints of a possible alliance between Alibaba's Alipay affiliate and the fledgling Apple Pay, both companies' shares surge, causing Alibaba's market cap to surpass Walmart's.

4 **NOVEMBER** Alibaba announces its quarterly earnings, reporting $500 million in profit on revenues of $2.74 billion. Later that month, investors order $55 billion worth of bonds from Alibaba.

capital and customers on a global stage. He came under media fire, for example, for a 2013 interview with the *South China Morning Post* in which he appeared to suggest that the government's actions in the 1989 Tiananmen massacre were justified. Ma's media representative says the reporting was incorrect and the journalist "misunderstood" his statement. Ma has also said he thought a controversial decision a decade ago by Yahoo to turn over personal information about a Chinese journalist to the Chinese government was justified because "local laws must be obeyed."

Those forays into seemingly authoritarian views—and a circumscribed approach to shareholder rights—set him apart from some of his counterparts in Silicon Valley. "The thing you have to remember about Jack Ma is that he is a proxy for a certain set of party interests. If the ruling cadres in Beijing didn't want Alibaba to exist, it wouldn't," says Anne Stevenson-Yang, a cofounder of J Capital Research, an independent financial-research firm specializing in China.

Apart from the issue of Alibaba's independence from Beijing, a more fundamental question looms: Can Ma replicate his Chinese success elsewhere? While it's unlikely that many Americans or Europeans will do their Christmas shopping on one of Alibaba's websites anytime soon, Ma is almost certain to use some of his cash hoard to start acquiring Western media and entertainment properties.

Alibaba will also try to grab the dominant market position in other emerging economies like Brazil, India and Russia. Back in China, Alibaba is planning to launch a Chinese version of Netflix and has announced expansions into consumer credit, insurance and mobile apps.

That puts Hangzhou's homegrown giant in competition with basically all the U.S. Internet heavyweights. Ma says he want to build not an empire but rather an ecosystem, which is less likely to be toppled. Either way, he isn't looking to bide his time or hide his brilliance, as an old Deng Xiaoping proverb recommends. ■

You can't predict what they'll
get into out there, but you can in here.

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THE BEST OF CULTURE

MOVIES / TELEVISION / MUSIC / BOOKS / THEATER

Photographs by JOHN SCARISBRICK for TIME

Fight and flight *Michael Keaton gives a superpowered performance in the dazzling* Birdman

THE BEST OF CULTURE 2014

Movies

By ***RICHARD CORLISS***

Movies

1
THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL

Monsieur Gustave H. (Ralph Fiennes) flawlessly executes his job as concierge at the Grand Budapest Hotel in the Republic of Zubrowka during the political upheavals of the 1930s. Amour and mortality, romance and horror, comedy and tragedy duel to a sumptuous draw in Wes Anderson's rich torte of a movie—perhaps the most seductively European film ever made by a kid from Houston. This dizzyingly complex machine has a wry smile for frailties, a watchful eye for tyranny and a heart that pulses in waltz time, with performances (from Fiennes, Adrien Brody, Jeff Goldblum, Harvey Keitel, Tilda Swinton, Bill Murray and many others) that are as alert and elegantly composed as the decor. *Grand* isn't good enough a word for this *Budapest Hotel.* Great is more like it.

2
BOYHOOD

Richard Linklater, another filmmaker born and raised in Houston, came up with what might have been a gimmick but was really a stroke of genius. He imagined a coming-of-age story that would span 12 years in a boy's life, from first grade to freshman year of college, by shooting a new segment for a few days each successive summer. Mason (Ellar Coltrane) lives with his mother Olivia (Patricia Arquette) and his elder sister Samantha (the director's daughter Lorelei), with frequent visits from father Mason Sr. (Ethan Hawke). A

Movies

home movie of fictional lives and an epic assembled from vignettes, *Boyhood* shimmers with unforced reality. To watch it is to page through a family album of folks you've just met yet feel you've known forever. (By the end, you'll know Coltrane, who aged from 7 to 19 over the shoot, better than most of your nephews.) This is life as most of us experience it and which few movies document with such understated acuity.

3 THE LEGO MOVIE

The challenge to directors and cowriters Phil Lord and Christopher Miller: transform the blocky Lego figures, with painted faces and no arm or leg mobility, into charming or rapacious characters a viewer can instantly accept and believe in. That they did. Worker drone Emmet (voiced by Chris Pratt) gets mistaken as the Special One, the Neo of the Lego matrix, by a cadre of underground rebels bent on overthrowing the evil President Business (Will Ferrell). Breitbart.com called this an "anti-capitalist" movie, somehow ignoring that it's also a feature-length commercial for the world's largest toy company. Politics aside, *The Lego Movie* is a hoot, and a beaut. Shot in a CGI format that mimics stop-motion animation, it has an aptly rough, faux-primitive look, as if some ingenious kid had made an elaborate video project that the whole world could love.

Movies

4
LUCY

Most summer movies are handsome, muscular and dumb—in a word, *Transformers*. Luc Besson's globe-trotting thriller, about a woman (Scarlett Johansson) who's empowered and imperiled by the infusion of a powerful new drug into her nervous system, is different: it kicks ass *and* takes brains. The French writer-director provides his usual fights and car crashes before swerving toward a climax of Mensa movie madness in the spirit of a berserk *2001*. By creating a heroine whose rapidly expanding abilities make her the world's most awesome weapon, he promotes Johansson from an indie-film icon and Marvel-universe sidekick to the movie superwoman she was destined to be. Taking place in less than a day while simultaneously synopsizing 3 million years of human evolution in a hurtling 89 min. of screen time, *Lucy* is the year's coolest, juiciest action movie.

5
GOODBYE TO LANGUAGE

Jean-Luc Godard, now 84, set movies on their modernist course with his 1960 *Breathless*. When most other directors stopped modernizing, Godard proved his unstoppable innovative verve by going farther out, into a film-essay form that lays his cantankerous ideas about life, love, politics and film history over the smidge of a story. *Goodbye to Language* has all that and 3-D too. Like a mad genius in a lab making the first 3-D movie experiment, the director gives viewers a dizzying

Movies

test of overlapping images: close one eye and see a man in the foreground, close the other and see the woman in the back. The real star is Godard's dog Roxy, a mournful observer and a great natural actor. *Goodbye to Language* isn't quite as lovable, but it probes, provokes and exhilarates in equal and unique measure.

6
JODOROWSKY'S DUNE

It was a fine year for 84-year-old nutsy-greatsy directors. Alejandro Jodorowsky, the Chilean-born Mexican auteur whose *El Topo* and *The Holy Mountain* were midnight-movie staples of the '70s, is still around, vital and charismatic as ever. In urgent gestures and broken English, he tells this doc's director Frank Pavich, "Movies have heart—*boom, boom, boom!* Have mind *[he mimes lightning bolts from his brain].* Have power *[he points to his genitals].* Have ambition! I want to do something like that. Why not?" He's talking about the hallucinogenic adaptation he prepared 40 years ago of Frank Herbert's science-fiction novel *Dune*, and he remains heartbroken that the project died when his producer couldn't raise the full $15 million budget. A few years later, George Lucas spent $11 million making *Star Wars*, and the fantasy-film genre went retro instead of luxuriously wacko. The message to take from this love letter to '70s cinematic madness: movies once had brains and balls, and lost them.

Movies

7
NIGHTCRAWLER

Lou Bloom, the news cameraman played by Jake Gyllenhaal with the smile of a deranged Boy Scout, shoots video of grieving widows, home-invasion casualties and human roadkill for L.A. TV stations. Imagine Travis Bickle from *Taxi Driver* worming his way into Paddy Chayefsky's *Network* and you have writer-director Dan Gilroy's '70s-going-on-right-now mix of psycho portraiture and media satire. Prowling an after-dark L.A. made gorgeous and menacing by ace cinematographer Robert Elswit, Gyllenhaal creates an ornate, cracked vessel for Lou's hollow charm, careering zeal and pestilential value system.

8
CITIZENFOUR

Calling himself Citizenfour, Edward Snowden sent documentary filmmaker Laura Poitras encrypted email messages that hinted at extraordinary revelations about the National Security Agency's database on U.S. citizens. In a Hong Kong hotel room in June 2013, Snowden, then a Booz Allen IT analyst, met Poitras and journalists Glenn Greenwald and Ewen MacAskill to spill his and his computer's guts. In this fascinating, edifying and creepy film, Snowden correctly anticipates what's in store for him—official pariah status in the U.S.—and, in the glare of Poitras' camera, has an almost ghostly pallor; he could be a specter reaching out from the other side to warn the living. A true-life spy thriller and horror movie, *Citizenfour* is also history in the

Movies

making: a snapshot of a man at the moment he chooses to darken Americans' understanding of what their government knows about them.

9
WILD TALES

Passengers board a flight for which they all received free tickets. Soon they realize that their mysterious benefactor is a man whom each of them had wronged in some way—and that he is in the cockpit about to crash the plane. A hijacking story with an effervescent tang, this is the first of six short fables in an omnibus comedy from Argentine writer-director Damián Szifron. Animosity simmers and boils over in episodes that play like a volume of short stories somehow co-authored by Ambrose Bierce and Roald Dahl. Produced by Pedro Almodóvar, *Wild Tales* builds everyday grudges into tales of apocalyptic revenge. It's also the year's most fearlessly funny farce.

10
BIRDMAN

Sixtyish actor Riggin Thomson (Michael Keaton) hates that he is remembered only for a comic-book movie hero, Birdman, that made him a star decades earlier. He figures that headlining and directing a Broadway play based on a Raymond Carver story will convince skeptics of his serioso chops. But when things go wrong in previews, Riggin realizes he can trust only the Birdman voice in his brain. Assembling a dynamite cast (Edward Norton, Naomi Watts, Zach Galifianakis, Emma Stone) and employing *Gravity* cinematographer

Movies

Emmanuel Lubezki to shoot the two-hour story as if it were one continuous take, director Alejandro González Iñárritu turns a familiar dramedy of backstage rivalries and panic into a spec-technical tour de farce. Keaton, who long ago played Batman in two movies, locates Riggin's frantic weariness, which could sag into suicidal defeat or ascend into mad apotheosis. Not to worry: the actor and the movie end up soaring.

THE BEST PERFORMANCES OF 2014

1

BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH

THE IMITATION GAME

As Alan Turing, who broke the Germans' Enigma code, he makes this brainy drama an adventure of the highest order.

2

JULIANNE MOORE

STILL ALICE

In this rich biopic of James Brown, Boseman plumbs the R&B star's drive, menace and spirit and makes it all sing.

4

MARION COTILLARD

THE IMMIGRANT *AND* TWO DAYS, ONE NIGHT

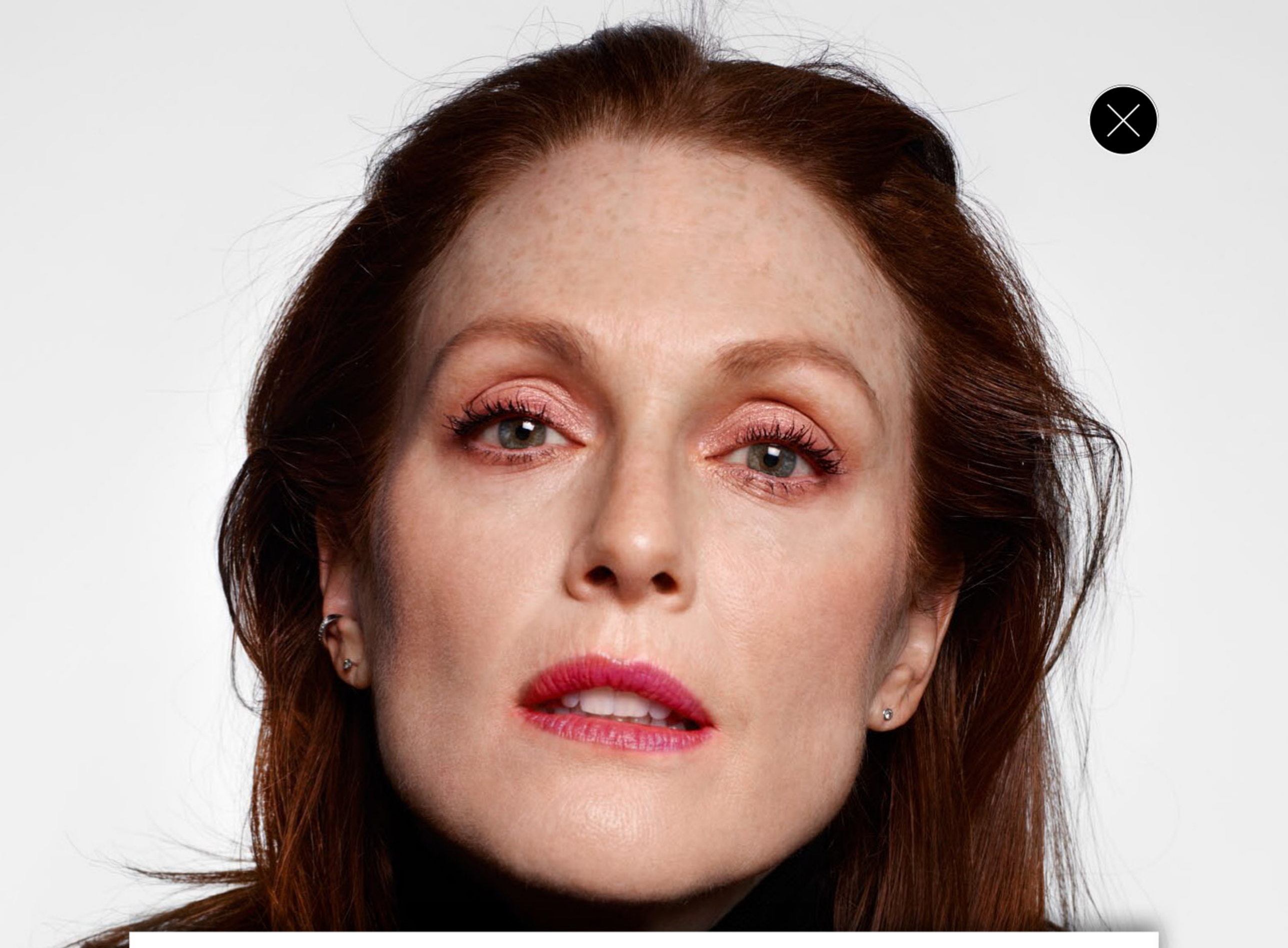
The regal French star goes downtrodden—first as a Polish immigrant, then as a fired Belgian factory worker—with illuminating results.

3

CHADWICK BOSEMAN

GET ON UP

In this rich biopic of James Brown,



SPOTLIGHT FILM PERFORMANCE

JULIANNE MOORE

STILL ALICE

What other star is so reliably fearless *and* pitch-perfect? In Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland's excellent adaptation of Lisa Genova's novel *Still Alice*, Moore is Alice Howland, a linguistics professor stricken at 50 with early-onset Alzheimer's. Quietly magnificent, Moore locates each poignant nuance as Alice tries valiantly if vainly to hold on to her memory, her loving but increasingly distant family, her old cunning, her self. Come Academy Award time, *Still Alice* may well bring this four-time Oscar nominee the honor she has so long and richly deserved.

Movies

5
EVA GREEN
SIN CITY: A DAME TO KILL FOR

The sexy Circe of R-rated action films is allure incarnate as the most *fatale* femme of neo-noir.

6
JACK O'CONNELL
UNBROKEN

Weeks spent near starvation on a raft, tortured in a Japanese prison camp—O'Connell shows not just the horror of Louis Zamperini's ordeal but his supernal will to survive it.

7
DAVID OYELOWO
SELMA

8
ESSIE DAVIS
THE BABADOOK

As a mom tormented by a children's book, the star of this acclaimed Australian horror film takes bold, brilliant steps on the road to hell.

9
JENNY SLATE
OBVIOUS CHILD

In this abortion romcom (it's nicer than it sounds), Slate embodies every extreme emotion: part Sarah Silverman, part Maria Callas.

10
TILDA SWINTON
ONLY LOVERS LEFT ALIVE

The icon of timeless beauty is ideal as the 2,000-year-old vampire (with Tom Hiddleston as her spouse) who proves that love and lust can last forever.

THE WORST MOVIES OF 2014

1
Blended
2
A Million Ways to Die in the West
3
Men, Women & Children
4
Walk of Shame
5
Let's Be Cops

—TIME *Staff*





SPOTLIGHT FILM PERFORMANCE

DAVID OYELOWO

SELMA

For years he had a dream: to play Martin Luther King Jr. The British actor got the job in Ava duVernay's intimate epic about King's 1965 mission to pass the Voting Rights Act by leading marches in Alabama. In an astute, dominant performance, Oyelowo highlights King's skills of political persuasion: even Lyndon Johnson (Tom Wilkinson) can feel the power of his argument, the singe of his charisma. *Selma* provides rare insight into King the man, not the saint, and the fulfillment of Oyelowo's dream.

THE BEST OF CULTURE 2014

Television

By JAMES PONIEWOZIK

Television

THE BEST TV SHOWS OF 2014

1
TRANSPARENT
AMAZON

Jeffrey Tambor gives the performance of the year as Maura Pfefferman, née Mort, a septuagenarian changing her identity from male to female and the "trans parent" of the title. (It took me a while to get the pun too.) But this richly observed family story from Jill Soloway is about much more than one transition; Maura's announcement ricochets across the lives of her adult children, each facing their own identity crisis. Gorgeous, melancholy and funny, *Transparent* reveals layer upon rich layer like a noodle kugel at a fractious family dinner.

3
THE GOOD WIFE
CBS

If degree of difficulty were the only measure, *The Good Wife* would be TV's best show hands down. It's made under broadcast content restrictions, it churns out 22 episodes a year, and it's in its sixth season—long after many dramas go on autopilot. But this drama keeps finding excitement late in life, shaking itself up (using the death of Will Gardner not as just a plot twist but an ongoing source of emotional drive) and finding new paths (including a run for state's attorney by Julianna Margulies' Alicia Florrick). Morally complex and a hoot to watch, the seasoned *Good Wife* keeps up with TV's hot new things, backward and in heels.

4
ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK
NETFLIX

If the first season of Netflix's lockup drama surprised viewers by finding the dark comedy in jail, the second





2

THE AMERICANS

FX

Someone must have cracked a code and stolen a top-secret propulsion system, because this ’80s drama about two Soviet spies paired as a suburban-D.C. couple was positively turbocharged. The already sexy and emotional drama gained greater emotional resonance as Philip and Elizabeth Jennings (Matthew Rhys and Keri Russell) found it harder to isolate their children from the repercussions and dangers of their work. The second season was thrilling and deftly plotted, a moody, elegantly crafted Shostakovich fugue of a show.

Television

mined its comic darkness. The season-long arc followed a power struggle within the alliances of Litchfield prison, introducing Lorraine Toussaint as a charismatic alpha inmate and forcing viewers to balance empathy for the cons with awareness of the bad things they've done—or still do. No longer reliant on jailhouse gentrifier Piper (Taylor Schilling) as viewers' guide to Litch, *Orange* matured into a diverse ensemble drama of state-run dysfunction that can tickle you or punch you in the gut.

5
FARGO
FX

The highest compliment I can pay Noah Hawley's miniseries is that it made me forget the Coen brothers' movie. Not that it's a competition; rather, this oddball drama took the raw elements of the 1996 film—murder, accents, snow—and became its own thing. Its scale was both intimate and biblical, with small-town cops (Allison Tolman and Colin Hanks) chasing a nebbish (Martin Freeman) abetted by a Mephistophelian hit man (Billy Bob Thornton), all in a glaring northern vista exposed to the eyes of God. In the end, it was less an answer to the movie than to other dark TV dramas: this was not one more dive into the mind of a fascinating antihero but a story of how the decency of a community can overcome the devilry of a few.

6
LAST WEEK TONIGHT WITH JOHN OLIVER
HBO

Last Week Tonight could have been one fauxcast too far. There was already plenty of fake-news comedy on TV and online. And on a weekly schedule—as

Television

the title cheekily admitted—the news would be well digested by the British ex–*Daily Show* correspondent's teatime. But Oliver turned that into a strength; instead of chasing the same news, he aimed his acid stare on news too wonky or worldly for the media's attention. He used the commercial-free format for long, viral takes on topics ranging from net neutrality to drone warfare, laced with genuine outrage and actual reporting. How do you revive the fake-news format? By making it real.

7
BROAD CITY
COMEDY CENTRAL

This stoner-slacker-striver buddy comedy, birthed from the viral videos of stars Ilana Glazer and Abbi Jacobson, didn't so much debut but on the TV scene as crash it, leaving weed ash stains on the rugs and hazy, hilarious memories in the morning. Starting from a simple premise—two underemployed friends in a Manhattan built from bricks of cash—it was addictively anarchic, powered by Glazer and Jacobson's alchemic buzz and the belief that life is never so bad that it can't suddenly turn into a rap video.

8
LOUIE
FX

Past seasons of Louis CK's comedy *Louie* have been hilarious, risk-taking, philosophical. Season 4 was … challenging. It seemed to be fighting against the TV format (one "episode" was 90 minutes long, another a feature-length six-parter), against our identification with its protagonist (whose season-long search for love made him at turns vulnerable and ugly) and even against intelligibility (one story involved two characters

Television

who literally did not speak the same language). But it was also moving, provocative and hard to shake, a haunting study from multiple angles of how the attempt to connect with another person is the banana peel on which we must all slip, fall and get up from to try again.

9
HIGH MAINTENANCE
VIMEO

This online anthology is a comedy about pot—specifically, a dealer known as the Guy (Ben Sinclair) and his clients—but it's not a pot comedy. Instead, it's a collection of scintillating character stories about his customers and why they seek escape. Written, directed and edited by Sinclair and wife Katja Blichfeld in artisanal batches—the series released only five jewel-crafted episodes in 2014—it's a slice of Brooklyn life that's worth deeply inhaling.

10
SILICON VALLEY
HBO

Why are there so many satires of politics and showbiz when the true center of influence and power in our society is on our smartphones? Mike Judge's sitcom takes a loaded can of spray paint to software culture—the hungry dreamers, the coddled zillionaires—but also appreciates the adrenaline charge of creating something new. It helps that Thomas Middleditch makes central geek Richard a beta-mogul with a conscience and that he's surrounded by one of TV's finest comedy casts (including the late Christopher Evan Welch). All this, plus a finale involving very likely the most elaborate and mathematically sophisticated penis joke in history, made this one of 2014's finest startups.

Television

THE BEST TV EPISODES OF 2014

1

MAD MEN

"THE STRATEGY"

AMC

Mad Men's final season stopped halfway through—see you in 2015!—but the second-to-last hour was one of the series' finest ever. The episode saw Don and Peggy hashing out a stubborn pitch, this time with her as the boss. It was a testament to the characters' rapport and history—and the last tableau of Peggy, Don and Pete at the Burger Chef table-as-communal-hearth? I'll have what they're having.

2

THE LEFTOVERS

"GUEST"

HBO

Tom Perrotta and Damon Lindelof's sorta-rapture story could be a riddle inside an enigma inside a white Old Navy jumpsuit. But when *The Leftovers* had a driving story, like this hour, focused on triple-left-behindee Nora Durst (*Gone Girl*'s Carrie Coon), it had an emotional wallop like the fist of God. A strange business-conference trip broke down Nora's stoic facade and made the series' often airy story of loss and endurance achingly real.

3

BOB'S BURGERS

"THE EQUESTRANAUTS"

FOX

The much-put-upon Bob Belcher (H. Jon Benjamin) goes undercover at a convention for grown fans of a kids' show (loosely based on "Bronies," adult fans of *My Little Pony*) to recover a lost toy for daughter Tina

Television

(Dan Mintz). "The Equestranauts" showcased how deft this comedy's character sketching and voice acting has become. And that, like a rainbow-hued pony, is magic.

4
TRUE DETECTIVE
"WHO GOES THERE"
HBO

I admired *True Detective*, Nic Pizzolatto's Camus-in-the-bayou mystery, but I didn't love it—there were too many flat supporting characters and dorm-room monologues. But it soared on Woody Harrelson's and Matthew McConaughey's committed performances and the direction of Cary Fukunaga, and never more than in this *Apocalypse Now* of an episode that ended with an extended single tracking shot of an undercover operation gone wrong.

5
GAME OF THRONES
"THE LION AND THE ROSE"
HBO

It's tempting to think of *Game of Thrones* in terms of events: The One Where That Guy Gets His Head Smashed, The One With the Red Wedding and so on. This—The One Where Joffrey Dies—was great less for the shocker ending than for how, at one of the most awkward royal weddings ever, it laid out the alliances and subterfuges among the guests. Then poor evil Joff had one cup of wine too many, and the game, and the throne, changed again.

THE BEST OF CULTURE 2014

Music

By SAM LANSKY, ISAAC GUZMÁN, NOLAN FEENEY and JAMIESON COX



1



1

LP1

FKA TWIGS

FKA twigs—the stage name of British performer Tahliah Barnett—began her career as a backup dancer for pop stars, but unlike those artists' music, her first album made for anything but easy listening. Equal parts delicate and disorienting, *LP1* stood out as the year's most impressive debut. Barnett pairs erotic, thought-provoking lyrics with mercurial, genre-agnostic instrumentation, moving between eerie high notes and distorted moans with a vocal delivery that's as intoxicating as her production. No wonder she starred in a Google Glass ad: *LP1* isn't just an album—it's a sensory experience.

Music

THE BEST ALBUMS OF 2014

2
ST. VINCENT
ST. VINCENT

With a knack for odd melodies and off-kilter lyrics, St. Vincent's Annie Clark had always been a master of delicate, understated songwriting. But with this self-titled leap forward, she shifted into overdrive, producing tracks with angular rhythms, edgy synthesizers and brittle guitar work. It's one of the year's most adventurous albums, melding robotic electronica and twisted rock with the romantic sweep of her nuanced, sweetly inviting voice.

3
THIS IS ALL YOURS
ALT-J

England's Alt-J won the coveted 2012 Mercury Prize for its debut album, *An Awesome Wave*. *This Is All Yours* follows that moody, mostly electronic collection with a harder-driving sound that loads gritty guitars and funk beats into the sonic arsenal. And yes, there's also that fantastic and utterly unexpected Miley Cyrus sample on "Hunger of the Pine," an evocative track that builds from a quiet digital pulse into a fully realized meditation on our visceral need to be in the company of those we love.

4
1989
TAYLOR SWIFT

Forget the record-shattering sales, relentless promotional appearances and squabbles with Spotify—it's all just background noise. Taylor Swift's *1989* is the best mainstream pop album of the year, packing more hooks and thrills note for note than anything else on the charts. A longtime master of heartbreaking lyrics, Swift proves on *1989* that she can be just

Music

as nimble with her sound, working with top-shelf collaborators to craft a bright, bold LP that's deliriously strange but still slick enough for Top 40. Country's premier princess is now pop's heir apparent.

5
TOO BRIGHT
PERFUME GENIUS

Mike Hadreas' third album under the name Perfume Genius is a devastating document of contemporary gay life, with its subliminal rage and isolation, relationship to femininity and moments of salvation. Hadreas strikes down gay panic by embracing the monster that strangers project onto him ("Queen"), lampoons the thinly veiled minstrelsy of the "gay best friend" ("Fool") and succumbs to the weight of every small daily defense ("Don't Let Them In"). When he transcends the pressure of the world in moments of reverie, the sense of catharsis is staggering.

6
ULTRAVIOLENCE
LANA DEL REY

After the success of her debut, *Born to Die*, it stood to reason that Lana Del Rey would court radio once more with her sophomore LP, *Ultraviolence*. Instead, she hit the studio with the Black Keys' Dan Auerbach for a dreamy, melancholic and unexpectedly lo-fi record that swaps out pummeling drums but doesn't sacrifice soaring melodies. Languorous and awash with gorgeous sadness, *Ultraviolence* proves again that nobody does bruised better than Lana.

Music

7
TRANSGENDER DYSPHORIA BLUES
AGAINST ME!

The sixth studio album from Florida punks Against Me!—and the band's first since front woman Laura Jane Grace came out as transgender—was a victory from the get-go. "By the time the ball dropped, it was already over/ No resolutions for the New Year beginning tomorrow," Grace sings on "Paralytic States," the heart-breaking penultimate track of an album that spends much of its lean half-hour running time contemplating suicide amid gender-identity struggles. But it wasn't over. In fact, when *Transgender Dysphoria Blues* arrived in January, it not only set a high and early bar for subsequent rock releases to clear but also kicked off a year that would see new rights and recognition for transgender people.

8
THE VOYAGER
JENNY LEWIS

If last year's 1970s rock renaissance belonged to Haim, nobody made use of those soft harmonies and spunky guitar riffs in 2014 better than former Rilo Kiley front woman Jenny Lewis, who nailed the retro vibe on *The Voyager*. On full display were her always fine qualities: a sweet, dewy voice and a knack for smartly observed, self-excavating lyrics, now with a newfound depth and maturity. On "Just One of the Guys," Lewis is singing not just about her ticking biological clock, she's also singing about aging out of a rock scene dominated by men. But here, she bests them all.

Music

9
RYAN ADAMS
RYAN ADAMS

This self-produced, self-titled collection finds Adams turning to a host of rock-oriented influences, most notably Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers (whose keyboardist, Benmont Tench, joins Adams' backing band). The result is his most accessible, muscular work since 2001's *Gold*, without watering down the challenging themes and emotional distress that have informed his music for the past decade. It's Adams at his most direct and least self-conscious, a refreshing shift from this chameleon of country-inflected rock.

10
BROKE WITH EXPENSIVE TASTE
AZEALIA BANKS

Tortuous is a good word to describe Harlem rapper Azealia Banks' ambitious debut album, both in terms of its arrival (the long-delayed record had a rocky route to an official release) and its sound (numerous twists and turns that span Latin rhythms, trance beats and even surf-rock). But when *Broke With Expensive Taste* unceremoniously hit iTunes in early November—nearly three years after Banks first broke through with the pop-friendly "212"—the rapper proved she wouldn't be defined by her past. Her Twitter personality can be unpalatable: at this point she's as well known for her high-profile feuds with other artists as she is for her prodigious rap skills. But Banks' chameleonic vocals and diverse influences make for pleasant surprises precisely because they're unconcerned with being easy to swallow.

Music

THE BEST SONGS OF 2014

1

"FLAWLESS"

BEYONCÉ FEAT. NICKI MINAJ

No song captures the 2014 zeitgeist quite like the "Flawless" remix. Like last year's original, the remix infiltrated our lexicon—find the American youth who hasn't posted an "I woke up like this!" selfie—and packed some choice words about celebrity (see Beyoncé's last laugh on the Solange–Jay Z elevator dustup). In a year that saw a number of high-profile female pop collaborations, "Flawless" never topped the charts, but what it lacked in radio domination it made up for with sheer star power.

2

"BLANK SPACE"

TAYLOR SWIFT

"Blank Space" hit No. 1 on the charts on the strength of its hook—a euphoric sing-along chorus so dulcet it could have been concocted only by Swedes (that would be Max Martin and Shellback)—but the song's true genius is its lyrics: "Blank Space" gives Swift a frame to riff on her man-eating public persona and simultaneously tell a story that feels intimate. Swift has never been so playful or self-aware.

3

"MOVE THAT DOPE"

FUTURE FEAT. PHARRELL, PUSHA T AND CASINO

Some of rap's most notable names cooked up a star-studded, six-minute collaboration, and they all shine. Pharrell's dexterous guest appearance is

Music

an olive branch for anyone sick of hearing "Happy," but the track's crown jewel isn't its slurred, repetitive hook or the tongue-twisting contributions from Future and Clipse alumnus Pusha T. Rather, it's Miley Cyrus' producer of choice, Mike WiLL Made-It, who was relatively quiet this year given his massive 2013. Here, his croaking beat can provoke a physical reaction in just about any listener.

4
"INSIDE OUT"
SPOON

Who says you can't teach an old band new tricks? On this stunner from *They Want My Soul*, their eighth studio album, the Texas veterans eschew their usual taut rhythms and snarling wit for gossamer synth patterns and swooning romanticism. When lead singer Britt Daniel asks the listener to "Break out of character for me," the tenderness is almost shocking. It's the perfect request from a band that's pursued the raw and real for almost two decades.

5
"2 ON"
TINASHE FEAT. SCHOOLBOY Q

Surely one of the year's more menacing hits, with that creeping DJ Mustard beat, a minxish vocal delivery from R&B singer-songwriter Tinashe and an outrageously nasty rap from ScHoolboy Q, "2 On" is an ode to intoxication—gluttonous and shameless. But whereas most party anthems are raucous, Tinashe's is slinky, an audaciously self-possessed empowerment anthem fueled by sybaritic desires.

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THE BEST OF CULTURE 2014

Books

By LEV GROSSMAN and RADHIKA JONES

Books

THE BEST FICTION OF 2014

1

THE SECRET PLACE

TANA FRENCH

After a young boy is murdered on the grounds of a posh boarding school for girls in Dublin, the case goes cold and stays that way—until a student takes a clue to the police. Detective Stephen Moran, in the market for a career boost, partners with Antoinette Conway, the only woman on the homicide squad, to burrow into the school's social fabric: the cliques, jealousies, boys, sex … *The Secret Place* is a fascinating little world, with dark truths at its heart.

2

THE BONE CLOCKS

DAVID MITCHELL

Mitchell's mind-bendingly ambitious novel begins with the story of Holly Sykes, an English teenager who hears strange voices. With Holly as guide and go-between, he takes readers on an epic journey of narrators and genres culminating in, no exaggeration, a battle between good and evil that pivots on a rolling pin. Mitchell's vision of the future may be bleak, but the force of his storytelling makes *The Bone Clocks* a joy.

3

THE ZONE OF INTEREST

MARTIN AMIS

Amis made his reputation as a darkly comic satirist in the 1980s and '90s, but in *The Zone of Interest* he goes to a place where laughter doesn't exist: the Holocaust. What would otherwise be light entertainment—incompetence, flirtation and petty slights among the officers running Amis' fictional concentration camp—becomes

Books

sinister and strange, warped by the enormous atrocities happening just offstage.

4
REDEPLOYMENT
PHIL KLAY

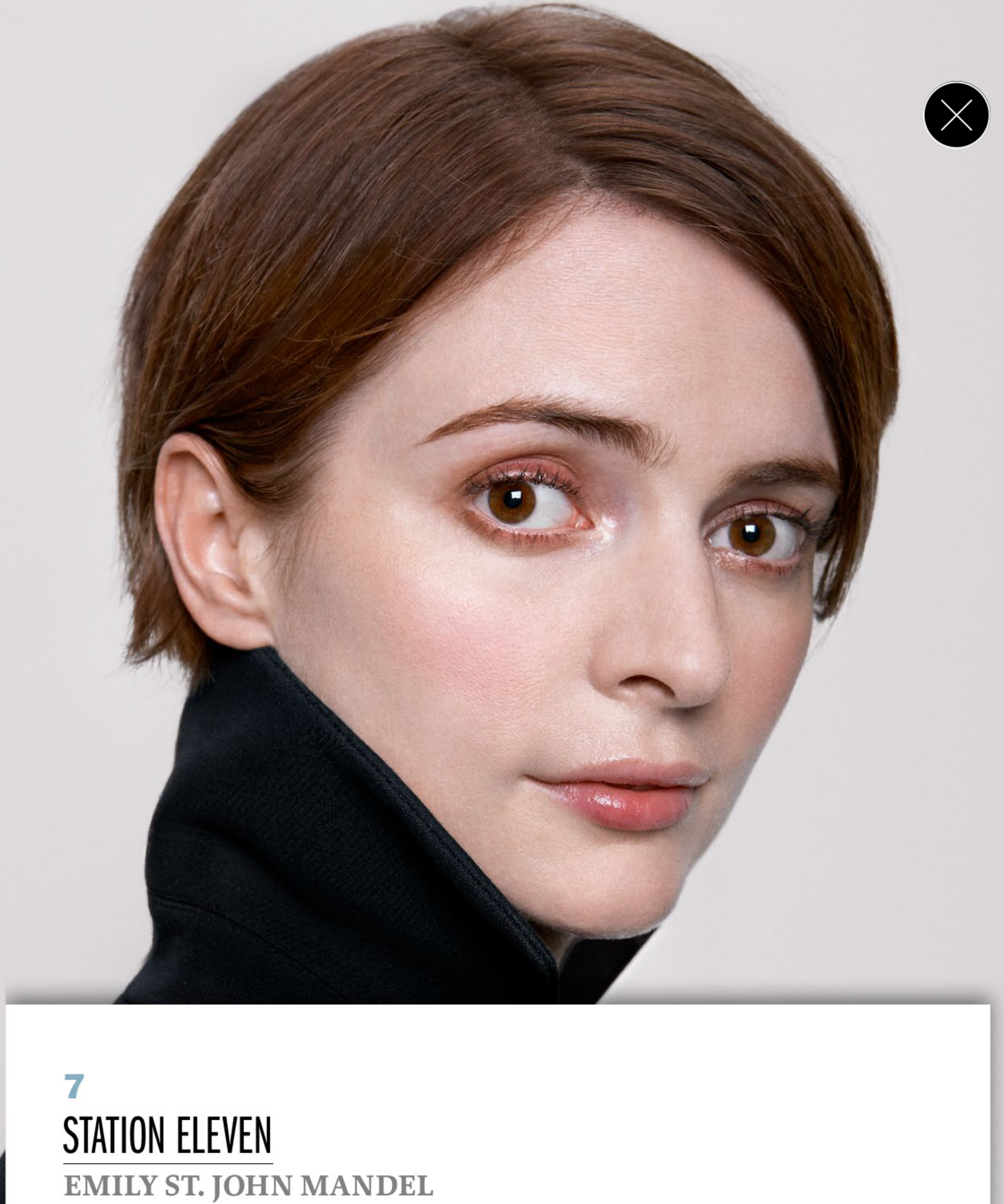
Every war finds its writers. The one in Iraq found Klay, who served there as a Marine. These stories, which won the National Book Award for fiction, render his experience with an unprecedented rawness: the moral and actual confusion of fighting in cities and towns where it's anybody's guess where the battlefield is and who the combatants are. Not only are the soldiers in *Redeployment* fighting in a country that's utterly foreign to them, they begin to feel that the country they're fighting for is increasingly alien too, which leaves them no firm ground to stand on. Klay doesn't try to force meaning; he just lets hell be hell.

5
WONDERLAND
STACEY D'ERASMO

At 44, Anna Brundage is a cultishly loved indie rocker who's had her moment of global fame and come out the other side. We tag along like disembodied roadies on her comeback tour—from gig to gig, greenroom to greenroom, one random sexual encounter to another—as she puts herself out there night after night. Sometimes everything clicks and she takes an audience into ecstasy; sometimes she doesn't. But D'Erasmo kills it every time.

6
WHISKEY TANGO FOXTROT
DAVID SHAFER

Some of the best prose writing this year can be found in what is, in essence, a techno-thriller. In *Whiskey Tango Foxtrot* an aid



7

STATION ELEVEN

EMILY ST. JOHN MANDEL

Mandel's novel weaves forward and back in time, centered on the moment when a global flu outbreak does in the lion's share of humanity, reducing the survivors to a more or less cave-person level. For a chronicle of disaster, it's wonderfully lyrical and even beautiful, if almost unbearably sad: some of the world's precious things endure, others are lost forever, and we try to understand why.

Books

worker in the jungles of Myanmar (Shafer remarks that it "sounded like a name cats would give their country") glimpses something she shouldn't, and right away her life goes off the rails. She starts to think she's the target of a conspiracy, by someone who has access to infinite amounts of data and power. And she's right. Snared in the same web are two former friends, both Harvard graduates: one who became a successful but self-loathing self-help writer, the other a dissipated stoner. The three of them have to figure out what's going on and how to fight it. The story of their struggle is moving, funny, utterly engrossing and blisteringly smart. *Whiskey Tango Foxtrot* is a *Snow Crash* for the post-Snowden era.

8
EUPHORIA
LILY KING

Only King's particular novelistic eye could have spotted the fictional riches that lay buried in this bit of actual history: in 1933 the anthropologist Margaret Mead was doing fieldwork in New Guinea with her then husband when they met and collaborated with another man, whom Mead would later marry. King pries into this bizarre triangle and finds a baroque pageant of despair and longing, towering intellectual ambition and steamy desire, lost to itself in the hot, damp alien Eden beside the Sepik River.

9
A BRIEF HISTORY OF SEVEN KILLINGS
MARLON JAMES

It's not brief: James' novel of the Jamaican criminal underworld runs 688 pages, spans three decades and deploys a dozen or so

Books

narrators, including an assortment of thugs, an American journalist and the ghost of a murdered politician, all rendered with virtuosic precision and deep empathy. The center around which the chaos whirls is the attempted murder of Bob Marley in 1976 by seven gunmen, but its real subject is Jamaica and the rich, complex mix of politics, poverty, violence, greed, love, longing and music that bubbled and festered there, and eventually boiled over.

10
THE LAUGHING MONSTERS
DENIS JOHNSON

The Africa of this slim but dense novel is a zone of permanent confusion, where weird bugs circle the lights by night and every human interaction is fraught with 1,000 kinds of ambiguity. Our hero, such as he is, is Roland Nair, a career intelligence man whose loyalties are so distributed and compromised that he's virtually stateless. Shifty and cautious, Nair hooks up with an old running mate, a loud, charming mercenary named Adriko who thrives on chaos and creates it with abandon. Together the two of them attempt to monetize the few small scraps of intelligence and matériel they can lay their hands on by scamming various security agencies into paying for them, but the players and the stakes keep changing, and the action turns into a nightmare buddy comedy as they chase an ever receding big score deeper and deeper into the African demimonde.

THE BEST NONFICTION OF 2014

1
SOLDIER GIRLS: THE BATTLES OF THREE WOMEN AT HOME AND AT WAR
HELEN THORPE

2
THROWN
KERRY HOWLEY

3
WHAT IF? SERIOUS SCIENTIFIC ANSWERS TO ABSURD HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS
RANDALL MUNROE

4
IN THE KINGDOM OF ICE: THE GRAND AND TERRIBLE POLAR VOYAGE OF THE U.S.S. *JEANNETTE*
HAMPTON SIDES

5
THE SIXTH EXTINCTION: AN UNNATURAL HISTORY
ELIZABETH KOLBERT

THE BEST YOUNG-ADULT BOOKS OF 2014

1
WE WERE LIARS
E. LOCKHART

2
BROWN GIRL DREAMING
JACQUELINE WOODSON

3
I'LL GIVE YOU THE SUN
JANDY NELSON

4
BELZHAR
MEG WOLITZER

5
HALF A KING
JOE ABERCROMBIE

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THE BEST OF CULTURE 2014

Theater

By ***RICHARD ZOGLIN***



1

2
FATHER COMES HOME FROM THE WARS

At a Southern plantation during the Civil War, a slave decides to follow his master into the Confederate army. Suzan-Lori Parks' original take on familiar history is a richly textured mix of Brechtian allegory and Homeric epic.

3
STICKS AND BONES

David Rabe's surrealistic black comedy from 1971, about a blinded, mind-blasted Vietnam veteran who returns home to his clueless family, might seem dated. But Scott Elliott's searing off-Broadway revival brings out all its power and boldness.

4
MACHINAL

Last season's British-born revival of Sophie Treadwell's expressionist 1928 drama, based on the murder trial of Ruth Snyder, was a bracing reminder of the days when avant-garde artists and left-wing politics combined to create potent theater.



SPOTLIGHT THEATER PERFORMANCE

AUDRA McDONALD

LADY DAY AT EMERSON'S BAR & GRILL

After winning five Tony Awards for shows ranging from *Ragtime* to *Porgy and Bess*, Broadway's most operatic musical star took a chance by playing jazz singer Billie Holiday in one of her last, drug-fueled performances. McDonald was astonishing, delivering an uncanny impersonation of Holiday's singing voice and a wrenching portrait of a wasted performer spinning out of control. Make that six Tonys.

Theater

5
ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

At a busy airport, an antiterrorism unit prepares an operation to nab an arriving terror suspect. British master Alan Ayckbourn again pushes theatrical boundaries while probing the sad comedy of ordinary lives.

6
THE CRIPPLE OF INISHMAAN

Second time was a charm for Martin McDonagh's 1996 comedy, staged once before in New York City but not nearly as well as in Michael Grandage's crackerjack revival, starring Daniel Radcliffe.

7
ROCKY

The musical version of Sylvester Stallone's famed movie pleased few critics and died quickly on Broadway. But in a bad year for musicals, it had a tuneful score and a book that skillfully made the film-to-stage transfer.

8
THE OPEN HOUSE

Downtown playwright Will Eno's sardonic, willfully misdirected dialogue turned this bitterly dark comedy into a resonant allegory of family disconnection.

9
GROWNUP SONGS

John Pizzarelli, the slick jazz guitarist, and Jessica Molaskey, with her warm, quavery vocals, shine in their new cabaret show. Sophisticated, jazzy, witty and engaging, the Astaire-Rogers of the cabaret world are in top form.

10
THIS IS OUR YOUTH

Michael Cera is ideally cast as a slacker rich kid thrown out of the house by his dad, and Kieran Culkin is superb as the drug-dealing friend he shacks up with, in the new Broadway revival of Kenneth Lonergan's comedy.

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2014

THE AWESOME COLUMN

The Coolest Person of the Year

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THIS COLUMN'S FIVE-YEAR HISTORY, WE ACTUALLY CONSULT AN EXPERT

BY JOEL STEIN



IT IS A GREAT EMbarrassment that we here at TIME's Coolest Person of the Year committee had never heard of Tulane associate professor Joel Dinerstein, who says he has taught a course for 17 years called the History of Cool and curated an exhibit of the 100 coolest Americans in history at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery this year. Considering how often the committee Googles itself and how similar the committee's name is to Dinerstein's, we really should have noticed.

But we are far more concerned that Dinerstein has never heard of TIME's Coolest Person of the Year. Which means that while CPOY has become the definitive award of its kind—cited by Perez Hilton, the Huffington Post, *Teen Vogue* and the Google+ account we completely forgot we had—it hasn't penetrated academia, which could be a pretty good gig for the committee when this journalism thing totally dries up.

So this year, we spent a lot of time kissing up to Dinerstein. We pretended to take notes when he told us that a cool person has to have at least three of four qualities: a signature artistic vision, rebellion, far-reaching fame and a cultural legacy. For 2014, Dinerstein suggested Jennifer Lawrence. In addition to starring in *The Hunger Games*, Lawrence gave an impressive response to the hack of her nude photos, placing the blame solely on those who looked

at them. The committee wanted to ask Dinerstein if perhaps guilt was fueling his suggestion because he was one of those people, but it decided that was not the kind of question that lands a gig with summers off.

The committee ultimately decided that Lawrence has a bit too much enthusiasm to be the Coolest Person of the Year. We also considered the Pope and astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson. We were impressed by the Pope, who likes exorcisms (cool), Patti Smith (one of the 100 coolest Americans of all time), talking about his days as a bar bouncer (crazy-cool), the Big Bang theory (cool until the CBS show) and living like a pauper (cool, we guess). And at a time when nerdiness is very cool, Tyson wears his effortlessly, sporting celestial-patterned vests. But there were no Popes or scientists on Dinerstein's 100 coolest Americans list, so we vetoed them. It was only later that we discovered that no Americans have ever been Pope. The committee looks forward to getting tenure and having grad students do its research in the future.

So the 2014 Coolest Person of the Year is a man who went from uncool to cool simply by deciding to. A Texan who is both a football-loving frat boy and hippie-dippie spaceman. A man with a clothing line who doesn't seem to own any shirts. A man with a brother named Rooster and a nephew named Miller Lyte. A man who wouldn't stop talking even if he were talking about religion with the Pope or celestial-patterned vests with Tyson.



Yes, as Dinerstein pointed out, "he loses a lot of points for his Lincoln car ads," in which he pontificates deeply about nothing. Sure, it's dorky to quote yourself in your own movies,

ILLUSTRATION BY TOMASZ WALENTA FOR TIME; GETTY IMAGES (4)

Dinerstein told us that a cool person has to have at least three of four qualities: a signature artistic vision, rebellion, far-reaching fame and a cultural legacy

and O.K., he tries harder than a 1980s sitcom character to create catchphrases out of "All right all right all right" and "Just keep livin'." And yes, that is kind of a windblown mullet.

But that's also what makes Matthew McConaughey so cool. Whereas others turn on their old uncool selves, mocking their dumb hair, dumb movies and dumb getting-arrested-for-playing-naked-bongos-too-loud-while-they're-stoned, McConaughey defends his work as Kate Hudson's rom-com co-star and says he still bongos pantless. The only thing that has changed is his transition from actor to *ack*-tor. This amalgam of mystic nihilist genius, self-help idiot, sensitive artist and cocky bro is authentic—and apparently makes the elderly want to buy crossover SUVs.

I verified our decision with a hardcore theater geek who sees cool actors saunter through her singing-and-dancing world all the time. "Matthew is a top-quality human being—exactly who you'd want to be lost in space with," says his extremely talented *Interstellar* co-star Anne Hathaway. "He is as down to duke it out in a tough scene as he is to mix the margaritas for the after-party. And you know he is going to do both brilliantly." Nevertheless, I suspect that Hathaway would be pleased if McConaughey did some more enunciation exercises.

Dinerstein approved of our decision, even though the real coolest person, he decided, was tuxedo-wearing psychedelic soul singer Janelle Monáe. At the risk of jeopardizing our future, the committee thinks Dinerstein is trying way too hard to be cool. He could take a lesson from McConaughey. ■

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2014

PERSON OF THE YEAR



INTO THE HOT ZONE

Nurse-hygienist trainees enter the Liberian Ministry of Health's Ebola treatment unit in Monrovia. More than 300 health care workers in West Africa have died of Ebola since the outbreak began, but others are still putting themselves in harm's way.

Photograph by Jackie Nickerson for TIME