

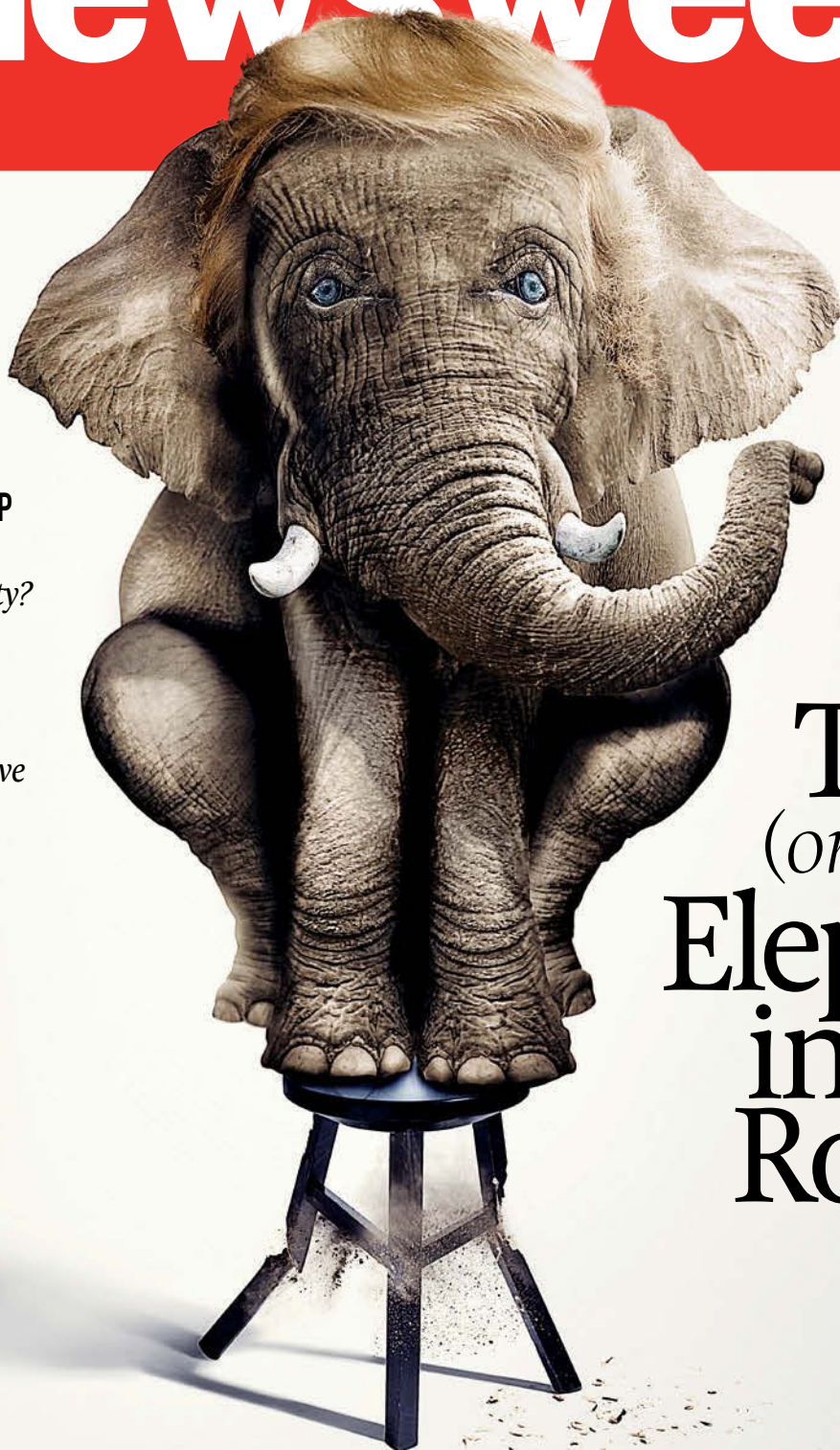
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03.02.2018

*Can*  
**DONALD TRUMP**  
*save the*  
*Republican Party?*  
*Or will his*  
*controversial*  
*presidency*  
*lead to a massive*  
**GOP DEFEAT**  
*in 2018?*



The  
*(orange)*  
Elephant  
in the  
Room

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FEATURES

**RIGHT BRIGADE**

Trump delivers the 2018 State of the Union address, above. He is presiding over a Republican Party that is divided regarding his presidency and the issues that led to his victory in 2016.

**COVER CREDIT**

Photo illustration by C.J. Burton for *Newsweek*



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# The Orange Elephant in the Room

Can Donald Trump save the Republican Party? Or will his controversial presidency lead to a massive GOP defeat in 2018?

BY ALEXANDER NAZARYAN



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**PARTY LINE**

Austria's Sebastian Kurz, below, became the world's youngest prime minister after sealing a pact with a party accused of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.



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LEFT: KENNETH WILLARDY/TRUNK ARCHIVE; KURZ: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY PICTUREBOX CREATIVE; SEAN GALLUP/GETTY; RIGHT: ILLUSTRATION BY BRITT SPENCER





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▲ PYEONGCHANG, SOUTH KOREA

# All Together Now

North Korean cheerleaders hold up unification flags on February 15 while attending an ice skating event at the 2018 Winter Olympic Games.

📷 ARIS MESSINIS







## In Focus



PARKLAND, FLORIDA

### Chain Reaction

People are led to safety after a gunman killed 17 and wounded 14 others at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on February 14. The suspect, Nikolas Cruz, 19, who had been expelled from the school, posted on YouTube his desire to be a "professional school shooter."

📷 → JOE RAEDLE



IVREA, ITALY

### Beyond the Peel

A person picks up fruit during the "Battle of the Oranges" festival on February 11. Every year, thousands of revelers dress up in brightly colored costumes and throw fruit at one another as part of a tradition dating back to the 12th century.

📷 → ALESSANDRO BIANCHI

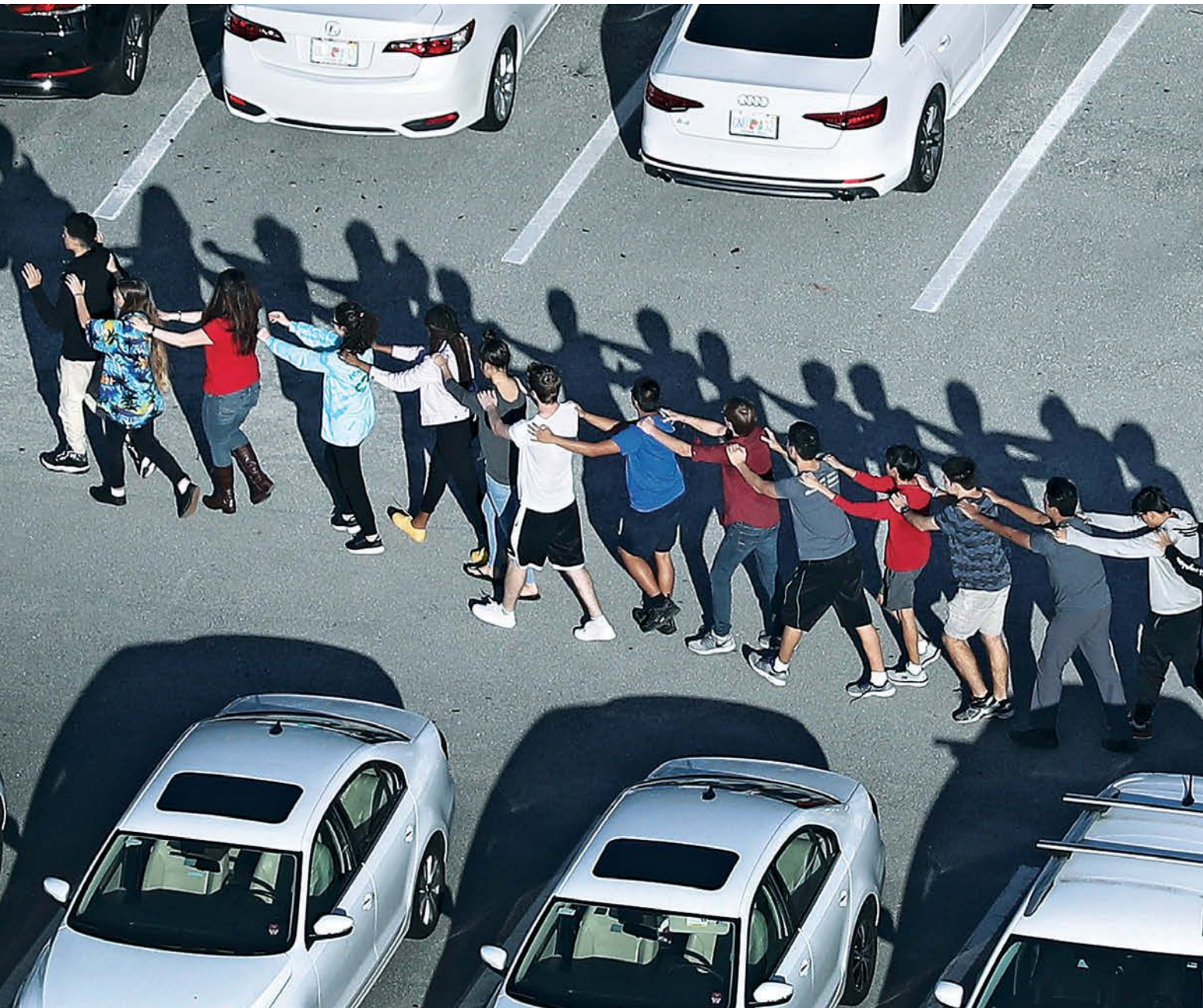


KAOUKABA, SYRIA

### Shell's Kitchen

A man inspects the remains of a missile stuck in the ground in this southern Lebanese village on February 10. Earlier that day, cross-border clashes erupted between Israel and Syria and Iran. Observers worry the violence could spiral and intensify the Syrian civil war.

📷 → ALI DIA







CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: THE RAEDLE/GETTY; ALESSANDRO BIAACHI/REUTERS; ALI DINA/APP/GETTY







**HATCHET JOB?**  
Critics say Nunes has transformed a once-bipartisan national security panel into a GOP platform to attack Democrats.



"Those who try to enter illegally should be rescued at sea and sent back where they came from." » P.14



SPYTALK

# Darkness at Nunes

Devin Nunes, Memogate and the ghost of Michael Flynn

**▶** WATCHING THE DEVIN NUNES MEMO BLOW up like a trick cigar in early February, Andrew Janz calls himself "probably the happiest man in the country."

An assistant district attorney vying to oust Nunes from his California congressional seat, Janz says his campaign war chest has more than tripled since Nunes announced he was releasing highly edited, top-secret information to discredit the FBI and Justice Department's investigation into "Russiagate." That's not saying much: The Democrat's \$240,000 purse would hardly cover the cost of robocalls in today's congressional elections, where winning candidates spend an average of \$1.3 million—and Nunes already has three times that figure. And while there have been some signs that the incumbent's grip is slipping—a January poll commissioned by Janz showed Nunes leading a re-election bid by only 5 percent against a generic Democratic opponent—his release of the documents has proved popular among Republicans.

Still, Janz says, "I'm feeling great, man. You've seen the memo. I think there's going to be plenty for folks

on the Democratic side, and even some folks on the Senate Republican side, to poke holes in."

Which is what they did. "The Nunes Memo fizzled and failed," tweeted former Nixon White House counsel and Watergate witness John Dean, in a representative view. "The only thing it established is that Nunes is a nut job, and he has released anew the putrid stench of neo-McCarthyism."

"Nut job" has clung to Nunes's reputation as long as he's been chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI, in Washington-speak). Or at least among Democrats (and some Republicans), who have decried Nunes's transformation of a once-bipartisan national security panel into a GOP platform to attack Democrats.

Janz thinks he knows why: Nunes's mentorship by Lieutenant General Michael Flynn, the now-disgraced former Trump national security adviser. "I know that they had a pretty close relationship," he says. Nunes served

on the executive committee of the Trump transition team with Flynn, he notes, which Vice President Mike Pence headed, "and it seems to me like he never left."

BY

JEFF STEIN

🐦 @SpyTalker

LEFT: BILL CLARK/CORBIS OUTLINE; TOP RIGHT: GEORG HOCHMUTH/AFP/GETTY



A descendent of Portuguese Azorean immigrants, Nunes grew up on a Central Valley, California, farm and concentrated on water issues when he came to Congress in 2003. But his fundraising prowess for fellow Republicans endeared him to Representative Paul Ryan and House Speaker John Boehner, who in 2013 anointed him chairman of the intelligence panel.

Like many hawks back then, Nunes was in awe of Flynn, who had won praise for revolutionizing the hunt for terrorists in Iraq and Afghanistan. “This guy was one of the best intelligence officers in several generations,” Nunes told me in December 2016. “I don’t know if you’ve ever met him, but Flynn is extremely smart. He really is top-notch.”

Nunes was speaking on December 23, 2016, five months after Flynn had startled many former military officers by leading “Lock her up” chants against Hillary Clinton at the Republican National Convention. It was also two years after the Obama White House forced Flynn’s resignation as director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). “What happened,” Nunes says, “is...he went out and said a lot of things that Obama didn’t like.”

But that’s not close to the full story on Flynn, whose battlefield talents didn’t transfer well to running the DIA from 2012 to 2014. Not only were his executive skills lacking, according to many observers, including former Secretary of State Colin Powell, but he also quickly developed a reputation for indulging in conspiracy theories—or “Flynn facts,” as his aides derisively called them.

But Nunes embraced them. During Flynn’s tenure at the DIA, the intelligence panel chairman and the general came to share a number of beliefs. One was that the

CIA was suppressing the release of documents captured from Osama bin Laden’s lair that supposedly showed a closer relationship between Al-Qaeda and Iran than the Obama White House, then conducting back-channel talks with Tehran on halting its nuclear weapons program, wanted known. Nunes, according to a then-close observer, demanded the CIA open up its files for him and Flynn one Saturday. “He was going to sneak up on them” on a weekend, the source snorts, speaking anonymously to discuss the sensitive incident. Nunes denies that excursion, but says he did go down to Central Command headquarters in Tampa, Florida, “to meet with the team that was doing exploitation of the documents in 2013.”

He and Flynn seemed to share an obsession with Iran. Nunes concurred with Flynn’s insistence that Tehran was involved with the 2012 attacks on the U.S. consulate and annex in Benghazi, Libya, and he oversaw a two-year investigation into the incident, focusing on what Republicans had portrayed as the Obama administration’s inept responses. But the committee’s final report, signed by its then-chairman, Mike Rogers, “debunk[ed] a series of persistent allegations hinting at dark conspiracies” and concluded that “there was no intelligence failure, no

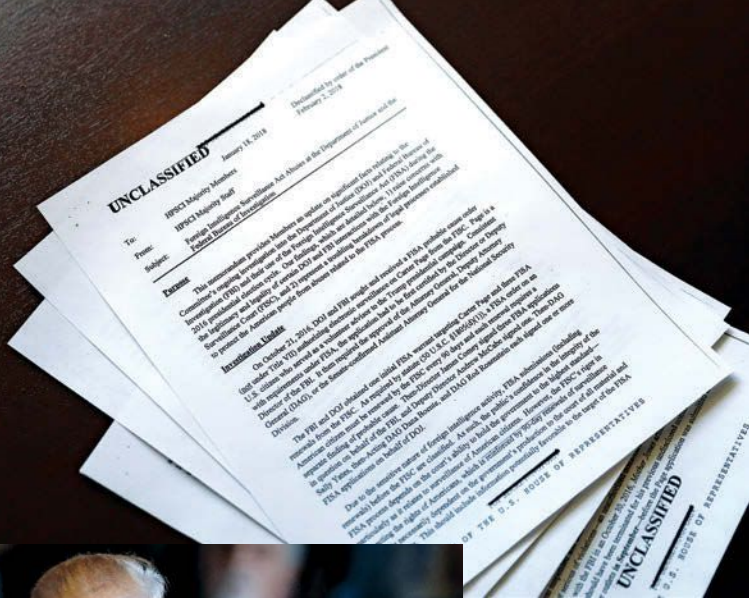
**“Nunes is a nut job, and he has released anew the putrid stench of neo-McCarthyism.”**

delay in sending a CIA rescue team, no missed opportunity for a military rescue, and no evidence the CIA was covertly shipping arms from Libya to Syria,” according to the Associated Press’s account. The report also found no evidence tying Benghazi to Iran. Nunes called it a “whitewash.”

The congressman’s nutty reputation was enhanced in 2013 when he insisted on moving a joint U.S.-U.K. intelligence base from England to the Azores, his ancestral home. The \$1.2 billion price tag and national security concerns about relocating to such an obscure spot in the mid-Atlantic doomed the effort, according to an investigation by the *National Review*. But in an early preview of allegations that Nunes cherry-picked items for his Russiagate memo to undermine the FBI and Justice Department, the Pentagon accused Nunes’s staff of manipulating the numbers on the Azores gambit.

No evidence has surfaced that then-DIA Director Flynn, a native of Rhode Island, home to thousands of Azorean immigrants, had anything to do with the relocation affair. But he and Nunes paired up to champion another issue, one that they were right about: whistleblower accusations that U.S. Central Command leaders were manipulating intelligence reports to bur-nish the Obama administration’s record against the Islamic State group (ISIS). Flynn, according to *The Weekly Standard*, was annoying the White House with “assessments that Al-Qaeda had doubled in strength over the preceding two years.” Nunes was helping lead a Republican-led joint congressional task force on the issue. At one point, he flew down to Centcom headquarters again, demanding to see documents, according to





**PAPIER-MÂCHÉ**  
The Nunes memo, top left, is highly edited, top-secret information to discredit the Justice Department's probe into "Russiagate."  
Below: Rogers; Trump with Flynn.



reports, but “once in Tampa...was denied access to the analysts and their findings, creating further schisms between the parties.” The task force ultimately backed up the whistleblower complaints. So did the Pentagon’s inspector general.

Nunes and Flynn evidently maintained close ties through the 2016 presidential election and beyond, even as Flynn’s world was beginning to unravel with questions about his payments from Kremlin mouthpiece RT (formerly Russia Today), secret talks with former Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak and a confidential lob-

bying contract with a law firm tied to Turkish strongman Recep Tayyip Erdogan. “I talk to Flynn virtually every day, if not multiple times a day,” Nunes told me in December 2016. “Seldom there’s a day that goes by that I don’t talk to Flynn, and especially right after the campaign, directly.”

Despite the troubling revelations about Flynn’s Turkish dealings, Nunes accompanied him to a January 18 breakfast at the Trump hotel in Washington featuring Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, according to a report in the Istanbul newspaper *Daily Sabah*. Questioned

by U.S. reporters, Nunes spokesman Jack Langer called the meeting “a large breakfast event” attended by “20-30 ambassadors to the U.S. and about 10 other foreign dignitaries and officials.” But the *Daily Sabah*, which is considered close to the Erdogan regime, contradicted that statement, saying Cavusoglu was the “only foreign leader at the breakfast,” which was closed to the press and featured “topics on the U.S.-Turkish agenda.” Langer told the fact-checking site Snopes that “if [Nunes did speak to Cavusoglu], it would’ve been among all the other ambassadors and officials at the event. There was no separate, private meeting.”

Flynn’s ties to the Erdogan regime may have had a darker side. About six weeks before the 2016 election, the general and two business associates attended a secret New York meeting with Cavusoglu and Berat Albayrak, Erdogan’s son-in-law and the country’s energy minister. Also present: former CIA Director and then-Trump senior adviser James Woolsey. The topic: plans to kidnap the prominent exiled anti-Erdogan cleric Fethullah Gulen in Pennsylvania and return him to Turkey. The meeting stayed secret until late March 2017, when *The Wall Street Journal* exposed it. In that account, Woolsey said he had cautioned Flynn and the others not to carry out any illegal operations and reported the discussion to a mutual friend of Vice President Joe Biden. Special counsel Robert Mueller opened an investigation into Flynn’s Turkey ties last November, according to multiple reports. Asked whether Flynn ever discussed the plot with Nunes, his spokesman Langer says only, “And with this question, *Newsweek* has completed its transformation into the *National Enquirer*.”



Nunes, meanwhile, was defending Flynn and Trump on another matter: the national security adviser's secret conversations with Kislyak. Had the president-elect approved those talks, and did they include promises to reverse the Obama administration's punishment of the Kremlin for its interference in the 2016 election? In an unusually partisan step, the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, who was supposed to be leading an investigation into Russian subversion and Team Trump, anointed himself one of the administration's leading defenders. Trump and Flynn, he opined, were "so busy" that they wouldn't have had time to discuss talking to Kislyak.

A *Washington Post* headline called Nunes's explanation "strange," and the paper printed it in full: "No, look, I think this whole issue with

General Flynn—General Flynn is an American war hero, one of the—put together one of the greatest military machines in our history providing the intelligence to basically eliminate al-Qaeda from Iraq. And he was the national security adviser designee, he was taking multiple calls a day from ambassadors, from foreign leaders, and look, I know this because the foreign leaders were contacting me trying to get in touch with the transition team and folks

**The Democrat's \$240,000 purse would hardly cover the cost of robocalls in today's congressional elections.**

that wanted to meet with President Trump or—President-elect Trump and Vice President-elect Pence."

Nunes could not rescue Flynn from disgrace—or, later, from Mueller, with whom the former national security adviser negotiated a guilty plea on a charge of lying to the FBI.

But Nunes's efforts to distract attention from Russiagate didn't cease with Flynn's departure from the administration a year ago. And even his now-famous "midnight run" to the White House weeks later indirectly involved Flynn. According to multiple reports, Ezra Cohen-Watnick, whom Flynn put in charge of intelligence matters on the White House National Security Council despite his scant, low-level experience at the DIA, helped provide Nunes with classified documents that the congressman claimed to show—falsely, as it turned out—that Obama had "wiretapped Trump Tower." That stunt prompted complaints from good-government groups that Nunes had improperly obtained and publicized classified information.

When the House Ethics Committee opened an investigation, Nunes stepped down from his panel's slow-moving investigation into Kremlin election interference. Temporarily. And on the sidelines, critics noted, Nunes was continuing his campaign to deflect questions about Team Trump's contacts with the Russians, which climaxed with the memo to discredit the Justice Department's probe. That was just Nunes's first step, *Axios* reported. The chairman is preparing as many as five more reports on politically motivated "wrongdoing" at those



#### THE GENERAL IN HIS LABYRINTH

The Trump administration's reported ties to Russia continue to dog the White House, well after Flynn, right, was fired for lying about his meeting with Kislyak.





FROM LEFT: EDUARDO MUNOZ ALVAREZ/GETTY; BEOWULF SHEEHAN/ZUMA WIRE/ALAMY

agencies, as well as the State Department. In the meantime, his campaign was unmasked as the force behind *The California Republican*, which purports to be a general news site but has featured headlines such as “CNN busted for peddling fake news AGAIN!”

Longtime observers of congressional oversight called such activism on behalf of an administration unprecedented. Partisanship has waxed and waned over the years at HPSCI, depending on who held the gavel, says former senior CIA official Larry Pfeiffer, but “we saw nothing compared with what we are seeing with Chairman Nunes,” he says. “I don’t envy our successors at Langley. We didn’t call HPSCI ‘the Island of Misfit Toys’ for nothing!”

Nunes, says David Barrett, an authority on Congress and the spy agencies, has added to the partisan rancor on the Hill instead of isolat-

**“I talk to Flynn virtually every day, if not multiple times a day.”**

ing the committee from it. HPSCI needs to gain the trust of the CIA and other intelligence agencies to admit their mistakes. When the intelligence committees become political, he told *The New York Times*, oversight of the intelligence agencies becomes “just about impossible.”

“None has ever been so partisan as the current HPSCI chair,” Loch Johnson, a leading intelligence historian at the University of Georgia, says. “Worst yet, Mr. Nunes has become Capitol Hill’s cheerleader in chief for the Trump administration on anything dealing with intelligence.”

But is there a point when such par-

tisanship moves beyond cheerleading into obstruction of justice, as some anti-Trump experts have argued? Nothing prevents the feds from looking into it, says Edward Loya, a former prosecutor in the Justice Department’s public integrity section. “The DOJ and FBI can initiate an obstruction of justice charge against anyone, including Congressman Nunes,” he says. But “it would be highly inappropriate for special counsel Mueller to conduct an obstruction investigation about whether Nunes is obstructing Mueller’s own investigation.

The more appropriate course,” says Loya, now in private practice with Epstein Becker Green in Washington, “would be for the DOJ to appoint a different special counsel to review this matter.”

Nunes would no doubt denounce such a move as “political.” And he might get some traction with the charge, considering that more than seven out of 10 Republicans polled after his memo’s release said they believed “members of the FBI and Department of Justice are working to delegitimize Trump through politically motivated investigations.”

Back in the Central Valley, Janz says he’s ready to combat Nunes on Russiagate if he gets the nomination. After all, he says, some of the Trump administration’s own officials have been saying that the Russians are already meddling in this fall’s midterm elections. He plans to criticize Nunes on why he’s not focusing on that instead of undermining the federal probe into Kremlin subversion.

“The best we can do is speak factually about what is going on,” he says. “All Americans should be alarmed. People in this district are asking why Nunes is going to such great lengths to cover for Trump. There must be some motivation behind what he is doing.” **N**





WORLD

# Not So Old Europe

Austria's Sebastian Kurz is the world's youngest prime minister. But the problems he's facing are as old as they are intractable



**▶** AT JUST 31 YEARS OLD, AUSTRIA'S CHANCELLOR SEBASTIAN KURZ IS THE world's youngest prime minister. In his previous job as foreign minister, he brokered a deal with his country's Balkan neighbors to stem the flow of refugees by sealing off Europe's southern borders, and he ordered stringent controls on "political Islam" funded from abroad. Though he calls himself a passionate pro-European, Kurz was appointed chancellor in December after sealing a controversial electoral pact with the far-right Austrian Freedom Party, which has been accused of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. He spoke to *Newsweek* about immigration, Islam and the future of Europe.

### **What do you think needs to be reformed in the European Union?**

The Europe Union should stay focused on the big questions instead of losing itself in smaller issues which can be much better solved by nation-states or regions. The EU should above all focus on a strong cooperation on foreign affairs, defense and in securing its external borders.

### **Is the migrant crisis over?**

No, it isn't over, only the numbers have decreased, and this is positive. But we still have to work hard to forge a new asylum system and secure our external borders. We, not the smugglers, have to decide who is allowed to come to Europe. It should be clear: Those who try to enter illegally in the EU should be rescued at sea and sent back where they came from and not get a ticket to the EU.

### **Do you think that the refugee crisis was one of the main causes of Brexit?**

Of course. The pictures which came out of Austria and Europe during the crisis showed an EU incapable of controlling its external borders. This scared many British citizens who voted for Brexit.

### **You are leading a Christian**

### **Democratic party, but your views on migration appear a long way from those expressed by the present pope.**

I think that in the past two years many who were in favor of an open-door policy have now changed their mind. Because they had realized that this policy is not working. If we really want to help people, then we have to invest more in development in the countries of origin.

### **Austria currently has an 8 percent Muslim population. Is that a problem?**

The most important question is how to integrate [them] into our society. To be honest with you, the success of integration always depends on the numbers. The higher the number of people to integrate, the more difficult it is for a country. Unfortunately, the number which arrived to Austria in the last few years has been much too high.

BY  
MANFRED MANERA

**“We, not the smugglers, have to decide who is allowed to come to Europe.”**

### **You are in a coalition with the Austrian Freedom Party [Fpö], which has a friendly relationship with Vladimir Putin's party in Russia. How will that affect policy?**

We are sure that peace in Europe will always be possible with Russia and not against Russia. We want to be helpful in finding solutions for the Ukraine crisis. But we also have a clear position on the sanctions. These will continue as long as there will not be progress on the ground in eastern Ukraine.

### **Your party has a pact with the extreme right. Why is such a coalition possible in Austria but remains a kind of taboo in Germany and France?**

The Fpö has already been twice part of the federal government, and it is in coalition governments in two federal states of Austria...with the socialist left. I hope that our government will be judged only by its actions. Obviously, we have a special historical responsibility to fight anti-Semitism in Austria and Europe. We have also to fight newly imported anti-Semitism coming from the Middle East.

### **What do you think about relations between Europe and Turkey?**

We do not see Turkey as a member state of the European Union, neither now nor in the future. We need to find other ways to cooperate with Turkey as our neighbor. I think that recent developments in Turkey are quite negative and the EU should not look the other way when human rights are violated.

### **How does it feel to be so young and have such a responsibility?**

I hope that people will judge my government more by its actions than by the age of the prime minister. **■**





SECURITY

# Kim's Ransom

The White House is still considering a limited strike against North Korea, but insiders worry it could spiral into a wider war

**AS THE 2018 WINTER OLYMPICS** opened in South Korea, 22 North Korean athletes joined the team from Seoul and paraded into the stadium together under a blue and white “unification” flag. South Korean President Moon Jae-in shook hands with Kim Yo Jong, the sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. And sitting awkwardly nearby was U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, who studiously avoided the guests from Pyongyang.

And no wonder. The brief, polite spectacle masks an intensifying debate in Washington: What should America do about North Korea’s nukes? The Trump administration’s

stated policy remains the same: Pyongyang must get rid of the weapons it already has, which some analysts say could soon be able to hit the U.S.

How to achieve that result—or whether it’s even possible—remains unclear. One option is what’s called the “bloody nose” strategy. It involves a “limited” strike against a missile or nuclear site in the North, and it’s intended to send an unmistakable message to Kim—that this administration won’t acquiesce.

The goal of the strike wouldn’t be to wipe out all of the North’s nuclear site, but to persuade

**DIVIDES THAT BIND** Moon, right, shakes hands with Kim Yo Jong in Seoul. He will likely come under domestic pressure to attend a summit in Pyongyang soon.

Pyongyang to rethink its strategy. The option is predicated on Kim’s rationality; that once hit, he would not retaliate in a serious way because doing so would lead to full-scale war with the U.S. and ensure the destruction of his regime.

Trump’s National Security Council (NSC) first raised this option as a possibility last year, and it has not gone away. The argument in favor of this strategy is that living with a nuclear North is simply untenable. It creates nightmarish proliferation concerns—everything from Japan and South Korea deciding to go nuclear themselves to the sale of North Korean weapons of mass destruction to rogue regimes.

No one in the administration downplays the risks of a nuclear North—and they’re all withering in their critique of the Obama administration’s policy of “strategic neglect,” which contributed to “this mess,” says a White House official, who asked for anonymity because he wasn’t authorized to speak on the record. But many Trump administration officials don’t believe a limited, unprovoked strike makes any sense. Defense Secretary James Mattis and General Joe Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—along with Secretary of State Rex Tillerson—all oppose it. At a meeting of allied foreign ministers dealing with North Korea in mid-January, Mattis emphasized “that this effort right now is firmly in the diplomatic realm. That is where we are working it.”

The other foreign ministers needed to hear that, says a Japanese diplomat present at the meeting, “because there seems to be a pretty consistent, serious

BY

BILL POWELL

SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENTIAL BLUE HOUSE/GETTY



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**SILENT TREATMENT** Pence studiously avoided his North Korean counterparts at the Olympics. But the U.S. may soon have to support direct talks with Kim.

undercurrent in this administration that war is an actual possibility, and that's spooking some people."

The jitters among allies increased recently when the administration withdrew the nomination of Victor Cha for U.S. ambassador to Seoul. A former NSC staffer under George W. Bush, he had worked the North Korea issue for years. Cha advocated a tougher policy toward Pyongyang than the one carried out during the Barack Obama years, but he does not support the "bloody nose" strike.

Some saw the withdrawal of his nomination as a result of policy differences. But it turned out to be more complicated than that. One of Cha's family members apparently has business interests in South Korea that may have presented at least the appearance of a conflict of interest. "That was the 'red flag' that derailed him," says an administration source. Cha could not be reached for comment.

Yet to the consternation of many insiders, the White House is still considering the "bloody nose" strike. Critics are most alarmed by the assumption that "we know how Kim Jong Un would respond to a limited strike," says Sue Mi Terry, a former North Korea analyst at the CIA, now at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington, D.C., think tank. "We don't necessarily know, and why would we test that?"

Within the administration, advocates for a tougher "contain and deter" strategy, as Terry calls it, are now putting together a series of options for the White House. They include a more comprehensive package of sanctions; more aggressive interdiction



of container ships carrying items the North sells abroad for hard currency; and an aggressively ramped-up system of missile defense in the United States, Japan and South Korea.

Yet this strategy may be ill-timed. Washington worries that in the aftermath of the "unification" Olympics, Seoul will be reluctant to take a tougher stance on Pyongyang. At a lunch that Moon hosted in early February for the North Korean

delegation, Kim Jong Un's sister invited the South Korean leader to Pyongyang after the Olympics for talks. The Trump administration was worried that Moon, who comes from the more dovish of South Korea's two main political parties, would immediately agree, given the feel-good aftermath of the opening ceremony.

Washington was relieved when Moon handled the invitation deftly, saying he'd be happy to go when the "conditions are right." But that won't be the end of the matter, given that Moon will likely come under domestic political pressure to attend a summit in Pyongyang soon.

To reassure nervous allies, the U.S. may come to support such a plan—and perhaps hold direct talks of its own. Which means Kim's Olympic gambit could very well succeed. ■





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“Our vision is simple: to make Memphis the easiest, friendliest city to do business with in America,” says Richard W. Smith, the Chairman of the Greater Memphis Chamber and the President and CEO of FedEx Trade Networks.

“We don’t have all the amenities of better funded, bigger cities, so we have to push a little harder and incentivize companies more. We embrace that assertiveness in order to succeed.”

As a leading executive at logistics company FedEx, the largest single business in Memphis, Smith has a unique perspective on the competitive advantages of operating in what is Tennessee’s second largest metropolis behind the state capital Nashville. Foremost among the benefits of a base in Memphis are the so-called Four Rs of runway, river, rail and road: perhaps no other city in the country is as well located and as well connected as Memphis, standing at the heart of an integrated transport network consisting of airplanes, trains, ships and trucks. Add FedEx itself into the mix and the result is a logistical advantage that is proving irresistible not just to transport companies but to manufacturers, medical device specialists and any business looking for headquarters and back offices in the center of the country.

Combine these benefits with minimal taxes, a low cost of living, high quality of life and generous incentives to investors, and it is little surprise that increasing numbers of businesses are choosing Memphis with the city’s revitalized downtown area. In 2017, Memphis fought off competition from outside the state to bring the home and office cleaning giant ServiceMaster into the downtown area. “ServiceMaster’s choice of Memphis clearly illustrates our city’s momentum,” Mayor Jim Strickland says. “That ServiceMaster decided the best place to build its future is in downtown Memphis shows how the future of our city—particularly our core—is bright.

“We now have about \$11 billion invested in recently completed, ongoing or about to begin developments in the Memphis area.”

It is not only big businesses and established brands who are moving to Memphis. According to a survey from 2017, Memphis has the fourth fastest growing population of millennials in the country. Moreover, thanks to supportive policies from local authorities and the business community, it is a recognized center for black-owned businesses and minority enterprises, as well as a model city for equitable economic development.

Finally, the combined efforts of the state legislature, city hall and local business leaders to reform education have helped develop a large and talented labor pool. Educational institutions in the city are working closely with businesses to train Memphis’ young and dynamic residents in skills for blue-collar and white-collar jobs. For Memphians of all backgrounds and races, the prospects and opportunities of the future seem more promising than ever before.

**Top row:** Erik Robertson, President & CEO, CommunityLift; Joann Lewis-Massey, Director Business Diversity & Compliance, Finance Division, City of Memphis; Richard Shadyac Jr., President & CEO, American Lebanese Syrian Associated Charities (ALSAC); Bill Haslam, Governor, State of Tennessee; Reid Dulberger, President & CEO, Economic Development Growth Engine (EDGE); Scott Brockman, President & CEO, Memphis International Airport. **Middle row:** Jim Strickland, Mayor, City of Memphis; Terri Lee Freeman, President, National Civil Rights Museum. **Bottom row:** Phil Trenary, President & CEO, Greater Memphis Chamber; Dr. James Downing, President & CEO, St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital; Joe DiPietro, President & CEO, University of Tennessee; Meri Armour, President, Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital; Richard W. Smith, President & CEO, FedEx Trade Networks/Chairman, Greater Memphis Chamber.



## BUSINESS AT THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

Memphis has long been a major player in the culture of the American south and in the civil rights movement. As it approaches its bicentenary year, residents and businesses are honoring that inspiring legacy by working together to increase social inclusion and raise wellbeing for all citizens of the city, whatever their background.

“What makes Memphis unique is that we are an extraordinarily authentic city with a real tangible soul,” says Jim Strickland, the Mayor of Memphis. “It’s in our people, it’s in our architecture, in our music, in our history and it’s unlike any city in the world. That’s what makes Memphis so great.”

Working closely with the city authorities, companies in Memphis are prioritizing inclusive and equitable development that benefits all sections of the city’s population, in particular minority and women-owned business enterprises (MWBE). Strickland won the mayoral election of 2015 on a platform of equity, diversity and inclusion, and since taking office has increased the proportion of city contracting with MWBEs from about 12% to nearly 22%.

“Equitable economic development is something we are all committed to across the city,” says Joann Lewis-Massey of the Mayor’s Office of Business Diversity and Compliance, “Equitable economic development affects us all, rich, poor, black, white, yellow, whatever color, whatever age. Mayor Strickland has created hope which is seeping into every part of the community. He has turned economic development into something that concerns everybody, not just the few.”

In tandem with the Mayor’s initiatives, businesses and organizations of all sizes in Memphis are making a major contribution to the city’s drive to increase economic inclusion and create opportunities to all Memphians. Leading by example, the chamber of commerce has set its own goal for members to increase their business with MWBEs and with locally owned small enterprises.

“In 2017, the growth of local, small, minority & women-owned businesses became such a priority for our organization, that we made it part of our goals and objectives,” says Phil Trenary, President and CEO of the Greater Memphis

Chamber. “The Chamber wants to ensure that it is easy and accessible for any business to succeed in Memphis.”

At Memphis Airport, President and CEO Scott Brockman has set ambitious targets for purchasing goods and services from minorities. The airport authority also provides extensive technical and development assistance to MWBEs, such as certification, education, training and outreach services. “We don’t just throw a few dollars at some minority company,” Brockman says. “In our case, we look at it as an obligation to try to develop minority companies.”

For its part, as well as making it easier for minority vendors to achieve official certification and access procurement opportunities, the Chamber has also implemented a wide-reaching mentoring initiative, the Ascend Business Development Program. Each year, the Chamber partners 50 small companies in the region with 50 large organizations, so that they can receive invaluable business development assistance at no cost at all.

“The results are transformative,” Trenary says. “The Ascend Program is about building the foundations, providing the opportunities and letting entrepreneurs grow their businesses.”

The commitment of Memphis-based authorities and businesses to civic responsibility and economic and social inclusion extends well beyond procurement and mentoring. The Community LIFT organization (Leveraging Investments For Transformation) was developed by The Greater Memphis Partnership as a way to revitalize impoverished neighborhoods in the city and create sustainable, thriving communities. Supported by funding partners including FedEx, Community LIFT awards funds and loans to projects in some of Memphis’ most historic regions. The generosity of individual residents in Memphis, and their support for social inclusion and civic projects, represent the foundations for the city’s regeneration. In 2017, a study by the Chronicle of Philanthropy concluded that Memphis was the most charitable city in the US, with individual residents donating an average 5.7% of their annual income to charitable causes – the highest level anywhere in the country.

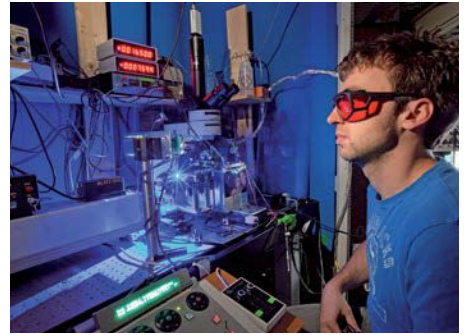
## One of the nation’s best places for kids is here in Tennessee.

When it comes to your child’s health care, expertise and experience matter most. Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital in Memphis has been named a “**Best Children’s Hospital**” by *U.S. News & World Report* for seven straight years.

Le Bonheur  
Children’s Hospital  
lebonheur.org







Photos courtesy of UT Health Science Center

## Powered by philanthropy, children's hospitals send out a message of hope from Memphis to the world

It is perhaps in the healthcare sector where the civic spirit of Memphian people and businesses is most prominent. Two facilities in particular, both established by charitable donations, have positioned Memphis as one of the world's foremost centers for pediatric treatment and research. Both of the two hospitals—Le Bonheur Children's Hospital and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital—are continuing to invest and expand, ensuring that children and families in Memphis and beyond will continue to benefit from world-class healthcare.

The older of the two hospitals, Le Bonheur, has been named as a Best Children's Hospital by *US News & World Report* for seven consecutive years. Located since 2010 in a new facility in the heart of the Memphis Medical District, Le Bonheur has grown into one of the leading children's hospitals in the country, employing some of the world's foremost pediatric specialists. In the last seven years, Le Bonheur has recruited more than 150 physicians and scientists to Memphis. Outside the hospital walls, Le Bonheur also runs extensive community outreach engagement programs with young mothers and families, funded largely by donations.

"We have a lot of support from the community and the business world and that's what makes the difference," Le Bonheur President Meri Armour says. "It is true that when you work together, you do better."

Le Bonheur works closely with Memphis' other major children's hospital, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. St. Jude is a partner with Le Bonheur in a pediatric surgical brain tumor program at the city's leading Neuroscience Institute, and both institutions are affiliated with the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC).

Like Le Bonheur, St. Jude owes its existence to charitable donations and fund-raising, in its case led by the Lebanese American entertainer Danny

Thomas. In 1962, Thomas opened St. Jude Children's Research Hospital to all children from all backgrounds, free of charge, regardless of race or background. Since then, the institution has gone from strength to strength and last year was named as the country's no.1 pediatric cancer hospital. Even more importantly, the work carried out by St. Jude has helped raise the survival rate for childhood cancer from less than 20% in 1962 to more than 80% today.

"We are working to get it to 90% and we're not going to stop until no child dies from cancer," says Richard Shadyac Jr., President and CEO of the American Lebanese Syrian Associated Charities (ALSAC), the fundraising organization of St. Jude.

The hospital relies on donations from over 10 million donors for 75% of its budget, which it uses to cover not only medical expenses but also the continuing education of its child patients and housing costs for their families. "Our operating model, coupled with the fact that St. Jude is a research hospital, has enabled the pioneering research and lifesaving care that makes it possible for more kids to survive cancer," Shadyac says.

The hospital is investing heavily in expanding its capacity and acquiring state-of-the-art research technologies. "Over the next six years we will invest \$1 billion in new construction and add over 1,000 new employees and faculty on the St. Jude campus," President and CEO Dr. James Downing says. With new inpatient and outpatient facilities, as well as housing for patients and their families, the hospital will be able to treat 20% more pediatric patients each year.

"It is a massive expansion project that will bring lots of economic benefit to the city of Memphis," Downing says. "But it's not enough just to cure children on our campus. We are Memphis-based, but we see ourselves as a global resource and we share our discoveries freely across the United States and around the world."

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# LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORT SECTOR FLIES HIGH

**Home to FedEx and the country's busiest cargo airport, Memphis is the logistics hub of North America**

In the early 1970s, when a young Yale University graduate and Vietnam veteran named Frederick W. Smith was looking for the perfect place to try out his revolutionary hub-and-spoke concept for express logistics, it did not take him long to identify Memphis as the ideal candidate.

Not only was the city positioned right in the heart of the continental US, but its airport was rarely closed by fog or other poor weather conditions, enabling overnight, just-in-time, year-round deliveries. Airport authorities were quick to support Smith's proposal and on the night of 17 April 1973 history was made when 14 small aircraft took off from the site to make priority deliveries to destinations all over the US.

Four decades later, the company Smith founded—FedEx—has grown into a global transportation giant with annual revenues of some \$60 billion and 400,000 employees, while Memphis International Airport has become the world's second busiest cargo airport.

At the same time, companies and organizations in sectors where express logistics is of high importance have flocked to the city to be as close as possible to FedEx.

"We see a lot of lab and medical device companies coming here to be in close proximity to our FedEx Express Super Hub," says Richard W. Smith, President and CEO of FedEx Trade Networks, the company's international freight forwarding arm. "They obtain significant advantages for their inbound and outbound shipping operations by being in Memphis."

Since 1999, employment in the medical device industry in Memphis has surged by 50%, while Shelby County has become the second largest county in the US for orthopedic device manufacturing. The presence of FedEx has helped bring more than 40 life sciences companies to the area, including medical devices leader Smith & Nephew, which has chosen Memphis as the base for its global orthopedics business.

For manufacturers and multinationals distributing across the US, there are few rivals to the city when it comes to shipping goods efficiently. In January this year Amazon became the latest Fortune 500 company to expand its logistics operations in Memphis when it began construction of a \$72 million distribution center that will employ an estimated 600 people, and it is here where Nike operates its largest, global distribution center.

"We call it the FedEx advantage," says Reid Dulberger, the President and CEO of EDGE, the official Economic Development Growth Engine of the City of Memphis and Shelby County.

"FedEx is a huge benefit to this community. There are a number of companies that are here because they want to take advantage of being able to airfreight their products all over the globe."

FedEx's presence has also had a wide economic impact that extends well beyond logistics and distribution. Tens of thousands of FedEx employees have helped power the growth of sectors such as real estate, retail, leisure and education. At the same time, the creation of the FedEx Institute of Technology at the University of Memphis and the establishment of the EPIcenter Logistics Innovation Accelerator, which is sponsored by FedEx Express, have helped position the city as a hub for startups in the transportation sector and as a research and development powerhouse.

Meanwhile, FedEx is continuing to invest in its original site at the airport and has proposed a major construction project that would upgrade sorting facilities with new technologies, improve traffic flow



Memphis International Airport is home to the FedEx Express global hub

throughout the area, and enhance efficiency and productivity. The modernization project aims to secure the status of Memphis as the company's premier hub long into the future.

"I am very optimistic about the future of not only this airport, but also of what this community can and will be," says Scott Brockman, President and CEO of the Memphis-Shelby County Airport Authority.

"Our role as the Memphis International Airport is to make sure that business with us is as easy as possible and establish partnerships and win-win relationships with customers such as FedEx and the large manufacturers and distributors in this city."

It is not only cargo volumes that are driving increased traffic at the airport and powering the Memphis economy: in 2017, on the back of new routes and increased frequencies, 4.2 million passengers used the airport, an increase of 4.9% from the previous year. "We are completely focused on the relentless pursuit of frequent and affordable air service," Brockman says. "As the front door to Memphis, we want as many flights as we can get, and we want it to be affordable for everybody. It is critical not only to our own growth but to the city's growth."

Located on a bluff above the Mississippi River, Memphis, with the same modes of transport that first put it on the map, continues to play an important part in the economic fortunes of the city. In the age of the steamboat in the 19th century Memphis was one of the largest distribution centers in the country. To this day, the International Port of Memphis is the fifth largest inland port in the US, with a pivotal role in the nationwide transportation of commodities and manufactured products.

Furthermore, Memphis is one of only four American cities to be connected by no fewer than five Class 1 freight railroads that link the city to Canada in the North and Mexico in the South as well as to national destinations East and West. And with seven major highways reaching Memphis, more than any other city in the South East, and plans for new Interstate projects well advanced, manufacturers, shippers and distributors enjoy access to every corner of the national market by truck, train, river and air. For shippers transporting freight containers that arrive from Asia in Long Beach, the best way to reach the East Coast is to send the containers by rail to Memphis for customs clearance and then to use trucks from Tennessee to deliver the goods.

"All the grids cross here in Memphis and you can get to an unbelievable number of places within a few hours," Scott Brockman says. "In Memphis, the connectivity is the global currency, and it is that global currency which keeps Memphis in the best seat at the table."



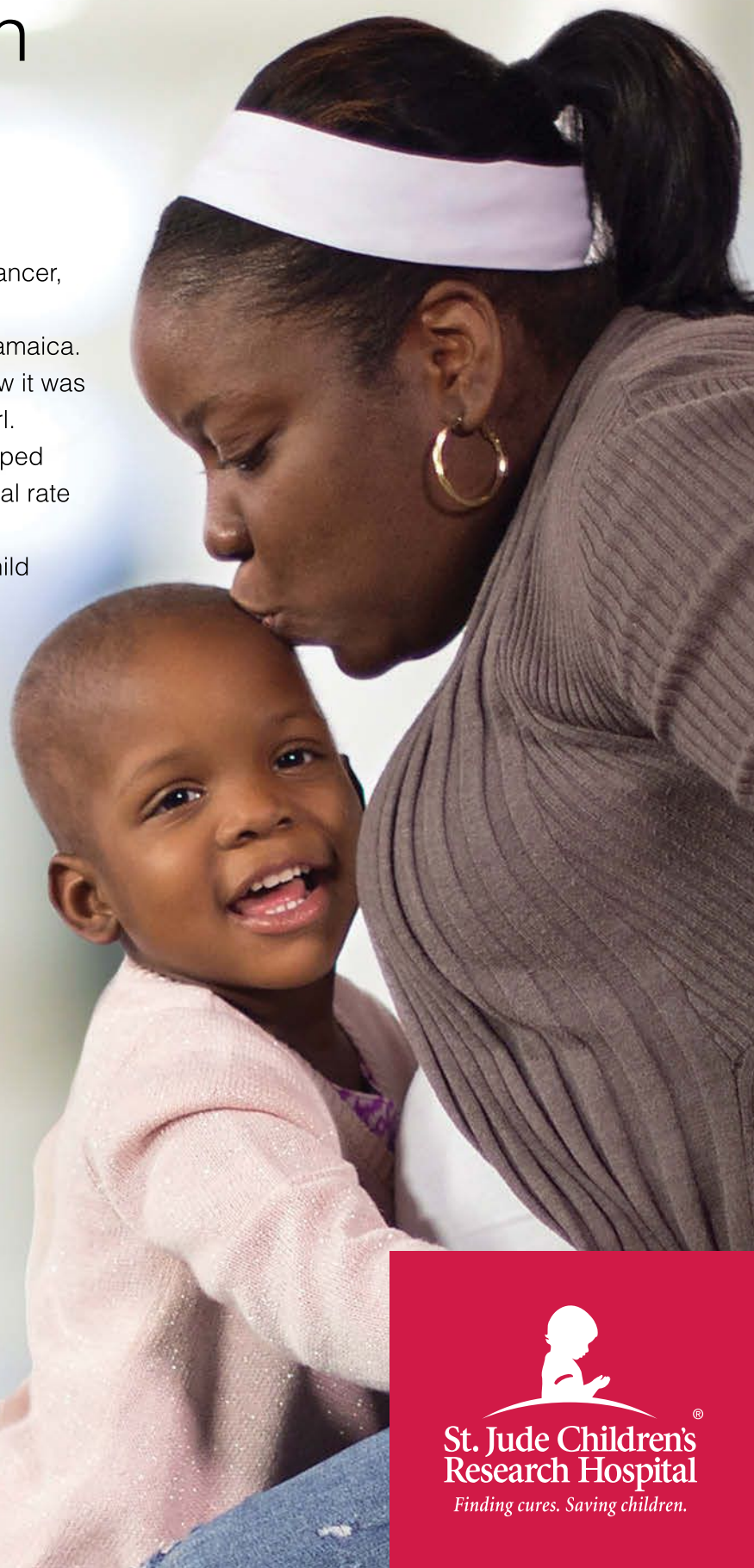
# Saving children from around the world

When Azalea's family learned she had cancer, they were referred to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital® from their home in Jamaica. They were familiar with St. Jude and knew it was the right place for their tenacious little girl. Treatments invented at St. Jude have helped push the overall childhood cancer survival rate from 20% when we opened to more than 80% today, and we won't stop until no child dies from cancer.

Donate now at [stjude.org](https://stjude.org)

*"We knew St. Jude was the best possible place for a child with cancer, and that's what we wanted for her."*

*—Simone, Azalea's mom*





Can **DONALD TRUMP** save the Republican Party? Or will his controversial presidency lead to a massive **GOP DEFEAT** in 2018?



THE  
ORANGE  
ELEPHANT  
IN THE  
ROOM



by **ALEXANDER NAZARYAN** ★ Photo illustration by **C.J. BURTON**





**ACE OF SHADE**

Some conservatives are convinced that only a singular figure like Trump can rescue them in 2018. But many are mortified by what his presidency means for them in the midterms.

“T

HE NEW DEAL HAS BEEN HALTED,” *The New York Times* decreed on November 10, 1938, two days after President Franklin Delano Roosevelt suffered a disastrous defeat in a midterm congressional election. “TAXPAYERS REVOLT,” the accompanying headline said.

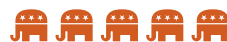
Roosevelt had campaigned vigorously for candidates who supported his progressive policies, which vastly expanded federal powers to lower unemployment. His message to voters: Obstructionists and “outspoken reactionaries” in Congress—in particular those from his own party—had to be expunged for the good of the Republic.

Voters’ message to Roosevelt was no more ambiguous than his to them. “This is a democracy and it is healthy to have a strong opposition,” a small-town minister from Indiana lectured the president in a letter. “No man is always right. You need criticism for your own good.” Democrats lost 72 seats in the House of Representatives and seven in the Senate, and though they kept control of both chambers, anti-New Deal legislators were ascendant, invigorated by victory. Roosevelt would remain president for seven more years, but most of that period would be occupied by World War II. As the *Times* predicted, the era of freewheeling liberalism was over.

Presidents dread midterm elections, which come two years into their term. A sitting president can expect to lose, on average, 32 seats in the House and two in the Senate. Some have lost much more: Frustrated with the corrupt administration of Ulysses S. Grant, a Republican, voters in 1874 handed 96 House seats to Democrats. Twenty years later, voters displeased with Grover Cleveland’s handling of the Panic of 1893 rewarded Republicans with 116 House seats. The scope of that differential has not been surpassed since.

Barack Obama’s first midterm, in 2010, was also a dark night for the Democratic soul. Although they managed to keep the Senate, Republicans, powered by the Tea Party movement, won 63 seats in the House of Representatives, in what Obama acknowledged was a “shellacking.”

Some believe that an Obama- or even Grant-sized loss awaits President Donald Trump when he faces his own midterm test in November. His average approval rating for the first year in office, 38.4 percent, is the lowest in American history. Whether



“The left is going to show up. They will crawl over **BROKEN GLASS** in November to vote.”







**TO THE LEFT, TO THE LEFT** Presidents Roosevelt, far left, and Obama, below, were crushed in the 1938 and 2010 midterms respectively. Now, Democrats such as Nancy Pelosi, left, want Trump to suffer a similar loss.



FROM LEFT: STOCK MONTAGE/GETTY; JIM BOURG/AFP/GETTY; ALEX WONG/GETTY; CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY

maligning the FBI for investigating his presidential campaign or threatening North Korea's Kim Jong Un on Twitter, defending a senior aide accused of hitting his wives or berating immigration from "shithole" countries, Trump has shattered every expectation of how a president should behave. Some people are thrilled, convinced that only a singular figure like Trump could rescue the moribund institutions of the federal government, in large part by breaking them. But judging by his popularity, or lack thereof, many more are mortified.

Democrats are accordingly preparing to make the midterm election such a devastating referendum that Trump's presidency never recovers. They believe they can not only win the House but even retake the Senate, where conditions are more challenging. Were they to fully seize control of Capitol Hill, Democrats could fulfill a dream liberals have yearned to realize since January 20, 2017: the impeachment of Trump and his subsequent removal from office. "The left is going to show up," warned Senator Ted Cruz, a Republican of Texas, in a recent speech. He is facing a resilient challenger in Beto O'Rourke, an energetic Democrat who has raised more money than Cruz. "They will crawl over broken glass in November to vote."

Whether the GOP can win in '18 remains a matter of vigorous debate, as does what message Republicans hope to win on. Trump, however, doesn't seem especially worried about the glass-crawlers. "I have a feeling that we're going to do incredibly well in '18," Trump said during a recent rally in Cincinnati.

His supporters in the Republican Party's base don't seem concerned either. On February 21, the Conservative Political Action Conference, or CPAC, convened outside Washington to celebrate Trump and his accomplishments. Conservatives know that Trump will fulfill their wishes only if bolstered by a compliant Congress. If even one of the chambers turns blue, the right's aspirations will be entirely nullified.

Just a few miles north of CPAC's convention halls, in the political consultancies of Washington, D.C., establishment Republicans fear they're approaching an autumn of political discontent. Democrats are reportedly planning a coordinated assault on as many as 101 Republican-controlled seats in the House, where they need only 24 to

take control. If the Democrats are not yet organized, they are certainly energized, less by specific policies than by their general loathing of Trump.

"The 2018 midterm election is going to be a forest fire of such a magnitude for the Republican Party," says John Weaver, a veteran Republican consultant who worked on the presidential campaigns of Senator John McCain of Arizona. "My only hope is that through fire comes the rejuvenation of life."

### 'Great Republican Hair'

TRUMP ADORES THE ROLE OF THE OUTCAST AND underdog, a figure shunned by the elites but embraced by the people. That was the pose he struck as a candidate with few endorsements and legions of detractors. It was also an attitude central to his courtship of the Republican base, an effort that began with his appearance at CPAC in 2011.

The centerpiece of the convention is its straw poll, in which conservatives select their ideal presidential candidate. In 2010, their choice was Representative Ron Paul, Republican of Texas. The following year, Trump decided it was his duty to inform conservatives what a poor choice that was. The 75-year-old libertarian, Trump said in his first conference address, "just has zero chance of getting elected." While he didn't announce a run for the presidency, the erstwhile Democrat made a pitch remarkably similar to the one he'd issue from the lobby of Trump Tower four years later. "If I run, and if I win, this country will be respected again," he said, concluding his speech with a vow: "Our country will be great again."

Paul easily won the 2011 CPAC straw poll, while Trump as a write-in candidate, earned infinitesimal support. *The Week* deemed Trump one of the conference's "losers."

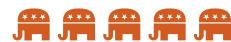
But like a persistent suitor determined to make his case, Trump kept returning to CPAC: in 2013 ("We have to take back our jobs from China"), 2014 ("With immigration, you better be smart, and you better be tough") and 2015 ("Our roads are crumbling; everything's crumbling"). He didn't go in 2016, canceling his appearance after reports of a planned walkout. Some cheered the news, which confirmed to them that Trump was, in the words of one attendee, not "a true conservative."

Last year, CPAC took place just a month after Trump's inauguration, with the president and his

allies eager to tamp down reports of dysfunction and discord. Everyone was getting along in the White House, and the White House was getting along with Capitol Hill. The right was united, the left in wounded disarray. “President Trump brought together the party and the conservative movement,” said then–chief of staff Reince Priebus. Sitting next to him was chief political strategist Steve Bannon, who agreed: “We understand that you can come together to win.”

Bannon and Priebus were ousted last summer; neither is scheduled to speak at CPAC 2018, which begins on February 21. An estimated 10,000 conservatives will gather in National Harbor, Maryland. Some will come in Make America Great Again hats, others in Brooks Brothers suits. Trump will be there, as will an appropriately eclectic array of luminaries, from British nationalist Nigel Farage to Fox News host Jeanine Pirro.

Overseeing the event will be Matt Schlapp, who became the head of the American Conservative Union in 2014. I met Schlapp in the organization’s headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. A cheerful 50-year-old, he resembles a suburban dad who



## Trump has **SHATTERED** every expectation of how a president should **BEHAVE**.

likes to end his evening with Fox News and a Bud Light. In fact, he is one of the most well-connected men in Washington. His wife, Mercedes, is a high-ranking communications official in the White House. And he prefers martinis.

Schlapp is not worried about Trump, and he is not worried about what Trump might do to Republican prospects in November. He evinces something approaching pity for those who think that “great Republican hair,” as he puts it, is all it takes to sell a candidate to the conservative base. During the Republican presidential primary, some of Trump’s 16 competitors weren’t especially eager to make their way to National Harbor in 2015, Schlapp recalls. “Some of those campaigns were just sweating bullets at the idea of even

stepping on that stage,” he says. “If you say you’re a conservative but are uncomfortable talking to conservatives, that’s weird.” Trump displayed no such hesitation. He couldn’t afford to.

Yet neither Schlapp nor anyone else I spoke to could articulate what Trumpism was, let alone how Trump accorded with conservatism, compassionate or otherwise. “There is no such thing as ‘Trumpism,’” the conservative editor Roger Kimball wrote last year. Instead, there are things that Trump has done and that conservatives happen to approve of: giving lifetime federal bench appointments to conservative jurists; passing a \$1.5 trillion tax cut; the systematic rollback of the federal regulatory infrastructure. All this, Schlapp says, has made the Republican base “ecstatic.” So has what

### RIGHT OR WRONG TURN?

Republicans such as Ayres, top left, think Trump’s victory was an anomaly. But Schlapp, bottom center at right, says the president represents the future of the GOP—a party that Bannon and Priebus, top center, once claimed was unified.





supporters see as the masterful trolling of liberals and the media.

But the ecstasy of the base is the agony of the mainstream. These Republicans believe they have handed their party to someone who is only a conservative of convenience, one whom party leaders frequently have to scold—on the treatment of women, race, nuclear gamesmanship—as if he were a wayward understudy. Some even welcome a Democratic wave, should it remind the GOP what it stands for. “It’s better for us to lose power for a generation than to continue this fraud,” says Bruce Bartlett, an adviser to Ronald Reagan who has become a member of the Never Trump brigade.

Schlapp dismisses the Never Trumpers as false prophets of political doom who have intellectualized their own irrelevance. “They just have gotten everything wrong,” he says. Trump’s victory is “an indictment of everything they’ve done—and they don’t like that. It’s uncomfortable.” For all the laments about Trump’s lack of genuine conservative convictions, the GOP has become the party of Trump. Nearly 75 percent of Republicans support

a border wall with Mexico; only 36 percent of Republicans support free trade.

Trump is an inimitable act, a set of flagrant contradictions that somehow hold together. Schlapp wants to reassure potential candidates that they don’t have to go the full Trump. They probably shouldn’t even try. “Take the parts you like,” he counsels. For example, run on the tax cuts, but maybe not on the *Access Hollywood* tape.

Back when Trump’s approval ratings were languishing in the 30s, there was little for Republicans to like, and even less to take. Now, the president has climbed back to the safer zone of the 40s. The generic ballot—which simply asks voters if they prefer Democrats or Republicans—saw a 13-point Democratic lead shrink in half (it has since risen to 6.9 points). Brian Walsh, a Republican consultant who runs a pro-Trump super PAC, says a generic battle that continued to favor Democrats by only 5 points would portend only a “bumpy night” for Republicans, whereas anything like a 12-point advantage on the generic would be “devastating.” Because redistricting (i.e., gerrymandering) conducted

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: MICHAEL BONFIGLI/THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR; GGETTY; SUSAN WALSH/AP PHOTO; CHIP SOMODEVILA/GGETTY (2)



in 2011 heavily favored Republicans, explains veteran University of Virginia pollster Larry Sabato, “Democrats must win a clear majority of the popular vote by 5 to 6 percent nationally to have a good chance to take the House.”

In 2016, Trump’s chances of becoming president looked devastating too. But by beating Clinton, he seemed to prove that he could transcend history, demography, even destiny. And if he did it then, why can’t he do it again?

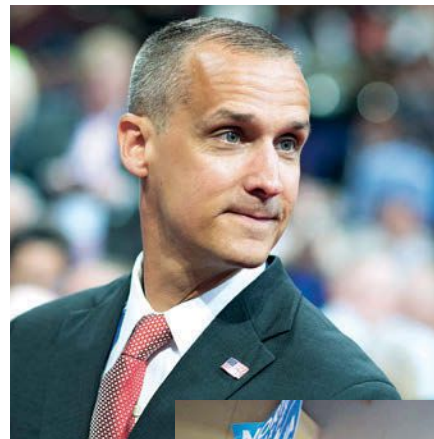
It is this promise of victory that unites the right behind Trump. It may be what defines Trumpism, this notion that he will somehow always elude defeat, especially when defeat seems certain—whether it is the November midterms or a CPAC straw poll, which he has still never won.

### An Artful Combover

WHIT AYRES IS ONE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT Republicans that Schlapp believes are fated to “misunderestimate” Trump, to borrow George W. Bush’s famous malapropism. A tall, courtly Southerner—on a business card, his name in full: Q. Whitfield Ayres—he carries himself with the bearing of a country judge. His consultancy, North Star Research, is based in a stately federalist row house in Alexandria, Virginia. Hanging on the foyer wall are photographs of Republican senators on whose campaigns Ayres has worked: Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, Marco Rubio of Florida, Bob Corker of Tennessee. Today, they happen to be among the GOP’s loudest Trump dissenters on Capitol Hill.

Ayres did not think Trump was going to be president. On September 23, 2016, with Hillary Clinton ahead by 6 points in national polls and Trump seemingly engaged in protracted self-immolation, he voiced his frustrations on a CNN podcast. “We need to adapt to the new America, not by changing our principles,” Ayres said, “but by applying those principles to a new kind of voter.”

In 2013, the Republican Party published an “autopsy report” on the 2012 presidential election. The report warned that Mitt Romney’s loss to Obama was the symptom of a deeper illness within the GOP. “Young voters are increasingly rolling their eyes at what the Party represents, and many minorities wrongly think that Republicans do not like them or want them in the country,” the authors wrote. “We sound increasingly out of touch.”



▲▲▲▲▲  
“Ronald Reagan  
couldn’t win  
a Republican  
**PRIMARY** today.”



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MAUREEN KEATING/CO ROLL CALL/GETTY; TOM WILLIAMS/CO ROLL CALL/GETTY; AARON P. BERNSTEIN/REUTERS; ANDREW HARRER/BOOMBERG/GETTY



**HOUSE OF CARDS?**

Clockwise from opposite left: Gingrich, Lewandowski, Northam supporters in Virginia; Trump speaks in front of the White House. Despite the booming economy, Trump's approval rating remains low.



Five years later, the autopsy remains a divisive issue on the right—either a prophetic truth or the gloomy product of malcontents. Trump's supporters say he has rendered the report irrelevant. “The autopsy talked about a lot of things,” Schlapp argues, “but it never talked about the left-behind Americans.” To him, Republicans have spent too much time running away from their own base, desperate to court constituencies that were never truly persuadable. The result was inevitable, embarrassing: Newt Gingrich cutting a television advertisement about global warming with Nancy Pelosi, Romney promising to open his “binders full of women.” As far as Schlapp is concerned, Trump reminded Republicans who they really were. Having tired of great Republican hair, they found salvation in an artful comb-over.

When I told Ayres about Schlapp's argument, his lips wavered with something between dismay and disgust. “He's whistling past the graveyard,” Ayres says. For him, data are destiny, and the destiny of a Republican Party that refuses to evolve is doom. In a sunlit conference room, he clicked through a PowerPoint presentation showing data from recent special elections and opinion polls. This had the distinct feel of a cardiologist examining the results of an inauspicious heart exam.

The most revealing slide was in a deck prepared by Republican analyst Adrian Gray. It looks like an alligator's widening mouth. The upper “jaw” is an orange line that shows how people felt about the economy. The line rises, indicating people believe the economy is in excellent shape. There is also some indication that the GOP tax cuts late last year are becoming more popular, or at least not quite as unpopular as cholera.

But there is another line, a dark green lower jaw, which sags. This is the president's approval rating, and the most troubling thing about it is how out of sync its gentle downward slope is with the growing economic optimism. Trump began his presidency with a 45 percent approval rating, according to Gallup. Only recently has it climbed back to that plateau, even as the nation approaches full employment, the economy grows at an impressive 2.3 percent pace, and the Dow Jones has seen 96 record closings under Trump. (More recently, there has been a sharp downward correction to the stock market, though economists do not believe this

portends a broader slowdown.) And while the president's approval rating has sometimes risen, it has not done so in a consistent manner.

“Virtually every president's job approval has been driven by the state of the economy,” Ayres points out, but Trump “has severed the traditional link between presidential job approval and economic well-being.” That lends some credence to the president's argument that he doesn't get sufficient credit for the economy, though he may be the one who prevents that credit from being tendered. Trump “keeps distracting people from all the good news with his various tweets and conflicts and battles,” Ayres says. “President Trump's job approval is being driven by his conduct and behavior in office.”

Economic renewal was the greater part of Trump's appeal. Those who voted for him have repeatedly indicated that they don't care about his behavior toward women, his troubling abrogation of norms, the ethical lapses of his Cabinet members. Now, however, they appear to have taken the economy largely for granted. “We really *are* about to learn if ‘It's the economy, stupid’ is still a rule or just a guideline,” says Rick Wilson, one of the Republican establishment's louder Trump critics.

Ayres believes he knows the answer, and it isn't the one the White House wants to hear. He points to the numbers behind Democratic Lieutenant Governor Ralph Northam's defeat of Republican candidate Ed Gillespie in the 2017 Virginia governor's race. That election was decided in the suburbs of northern Virginia, whose upper-middle-class residents have stood to gain significantly from Trump's economic approach. Unlike the laid-off steelworkers in Pennsylvania, they benefit when the Dow climbs. If they work for a transnational corporation, they could see profit from Trump's deregulatory push, as well as his tax reform.

Yet the state of the economy proved immaterial on election night. In Fairfax County, outside of Washington, D.C., 254,919 Democrats cast their ballot for Northam, nearly doubling their turnout from the 2009 Virginia governor's race, which Republican Bob McDonnell won. In Loudon County, Democratic tallies nearly tripled from the 2009 number to 69,788 in 2017. For many of these voters, a ballot for Northam was a ballot against Trump. According to exit polls, 34 percent of Virginians chose solely to oppose the president,



#### ELEPHANT WARS

Some such as Stepien, opposite bottom, don't see the GOP's recent defeats in local elections as a sign that Democrats will destroy them in November. Below, Republican Pennsylvania congressional candidate Rick Saccone.

not because they cared especially about the gubernatorial contest. Nearly the entirety of this resistance vote (97 percent) went to Northam.

Bannon likes to say that a nation is more than an economy. Voters who oppose Trump are coming to the same conclusion. Their retirement funds may be doing just fine, but their moral objections are too pressing to ignore. "I'm not convinced that voters are going to be so enamored of the economy that they are going overlook and forgive everything else that has turned them off for the last two years," says Michael Steele, the former chairman of the Republican National Committee.

Recalling Barry Goldwater's cataclysmic defeat in the 1964 presidential race, Steele is troubled by what he sees as the party's return to the intransigent extremism that marked the Arizona senator's appeal. "Ronald Reagan," he laments, "couldn't win a Republican primary today."

#### Tangled Up in Blue

CONSERVATIVES ARE STILL TRYING TO FIGURE OUT Trump. Liberals did so many months ago. For the left, Trump is a cancer to be excised from the

American body politic. Anger at the president has united the left like no policy proposal ever could. "Voters who are angry tend to vote in midterms," observes Stuart Rothenberg of the political news outlet Inside Elections.

Websites devoted to counting down the time to the 2020 presidential election have become surprisingly popular (as of this writing: 992 days, 9 hours, 10 minutes and 29 seconds). Until then, the easiest way for Democrats to punish Trump will be at the 2018 midterms, which take place in 264 days, 21 hours, 9 minutes and 13 seconds.

This anger should trouble Republicans. "There's almost nothing you can do to stop a wave," says pollster Sabato. "It's just beyond your control." Republicans intend to spend the next several months trying to slow, if not entirely halt, this predicted Democratic onslaught. Such efforts will only intensify as the spring primaries approach.

In January, the conservative billionaires Charles and David Koch invited top donors to their political



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: LUKE SHARRETT/BLOOMBERG/GETTY [2]; JOHN SHINKLE/POLITICO; PETE MAROVICH/GETTY





## CONSERVATISM

A good number, though, appear to have concluded that they aren't nimble enough to dance without tumbling between a furious Democratic electorate and an unpredictable president who could scuttle an election in rural Iowa with a single tweet. "They fear for their elections—or the job has just become so shitty," says former Reagan adviser Bartlett.

Democrats have reason to feel encouraged. Long derided for their lack of attention to down-ballot races, they have now won 36 state legislature special elections since 2016, including in districts that went for Trump. Republicans have won only four.

Those results are one reason why Corey Lewandowski is concerned. Having served as Trump's first campaign manager until his firing in the summer of 2016, Lewandowski retains enormous influence with the president, despite having no official White House role.

When he came to the White House in December for a political strategy session, the meeting devolved into a shouting match instigated by Lewandowski. "Look, my message to the president, his team, was that it has to be prepared for where



Virtually everyone I spoke to agreed that there was **ONE FACTOR** that could save Republicans in the midterm elections: **DEMOCRATS.**

groups, Americans for Prosperity and Freedom Partners, to Indian Wells, California, for an annual summit at which the midterms were a primary topic of discussion. The Kochs plan to spend \$400 million on the midterms, \$20 million of it to make the case for Trump's tax plan passed last year.

As Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign so aptly reminded, wealthy donors can't bolster a lackluster candidate. And the Republicans are facing a candidate problem. While the Democrats are eager to take the fight to Trump, many GOP incumbents are electing not to fight at all. More than 30 Republicans have decided to retire from the House. Several are doing so because they face allegations of sexual misconduct; others are prevented by term limits from keeping their committee chairmanships.

things have the potential to go in November," Lewandowski tells me with a downward thrust of his index finger. Lewandowski's target that day in December was Bill Stepien, the White House political director. "The White House is not currently structured to allow Bill to be successful," he says. "He doesn't have a 20-year relationship with the president, OK? He doesn't have enough clout."

Officials I spoke to at the Republican National Committee and the National Republican Senate Committee disagree with this assessment. As does Stepien. "There are reasons to be cautiously optimistic" in November, he says. He and his team of 12 met with 116 candidates last year, in a process he compared to dating; they have begun to make endorsement recommendations to

Trump. “Candidates matter,” he tells me over and over again, almost like a mantra.

The reference was obviously to Roy Moore, the former chief justice of Alabama who won the GOP primary in a 2017 special election for the Senate, only to lose in the general to Doug Jones. Many Republicans regard the race as aberrant because of allegations of sexual abuse against Moore—allegations so abhorrent that they allowed a Democrat to win in one of the nation’s reddest states.

### Resisting the Resistance

VIRTUALLY EVERYONE I SPOKE TO AGREED THAT there is one factor that could save Republicans in the midterm elections: Democrats. “Democrats are always holistically bad at elections outside safe seats, and tend to latch onto issues that only their base loves,” says Wilson, the Republican consultant with strong anti-Trump views. For many Democrats today, the main issue motivating them to vote is the possibility of impeaching Trump. California billionaire Tom Steyer has stoked that wish, ostensibly collecting money (and email addresses) for an impeachment push, even as many members of Congress have urged him to quit what they see as his quixotic, self-serving campaign.

“If you’re a liberal with any interest in serving in Congress, you may never have a better chance than now,” Alex Seitz-Wald of *NBC News* recently wrote. The resistance is energized, but that energy may be difficult for the Democratic establishment to meaningfully harness. A surge of liberal candidates could make for expensive, contentious primaries that pull the Democratic Party to the left, making it more difficult to attract voters in moderate-leaning “swing” districts. Those are the very districts Democrats need to win.

Nor is it clear how anger at Trump will translate into an electoral strategy. Writing for the progressive blog *Daily Kos*, Democratic activist Nate Lerner recently warned that the party lacks a message around which candidates could unite. “While it may seem obvious to state that Democrats need a defining vision and message,” he wrote, “all evidence thus far suggests one is not coming anytime soon. Too many key rising Democratic stars are focused on their own presidential aspirations, rather than the rebuilding of the party.”

It doesn’t help that Democrats will have trou-

ble breaching what NPR’s Mara Liasson calls “the mighty fortress of redistricting.” The 2010 midterms saw huge Republican gains in both state houses and governors’ mansions. They used these to redraw congressional districts in ways that over-represented Republicans and under-represented Democrats. In a state thus gerrymandered, Democrats can win the overall popular vote but still lose House seats, simply because their votes count less.

Democratic fundraising has been anemic too. The Republican National Committee raised \$132.5 million in 2017, versus the Democratic National Committee’s \$65.9 million. And the party is riven by conflicts between Obama centrists and Sanders progressives. “They have never recovered from their primary,” Stepien says. “They have no party leader.” DNC Chairman Thomas Perez has vowed a “50-state strategy” to retake legislative majorities across the nation. Some think the plan is “empty rhetoric,” as one Democrat said to the *Washington Examiner*, because it is predicated on grants to states, not direct DNC involvement in races.

Stepien, too, derides that effort. “I love that the Democrats are pursuing a 50-state strategy,” he says, adding that such a strategy would be inefficient. “There are some states that are not worthwhile investments for a political party to make.”

### ‘One-Man Rule’

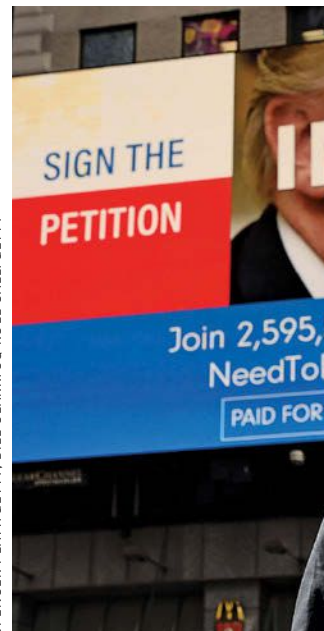
AS ROOSEVELT DISCOVERED, A PRESIDENT ALMOST always loses in the midterms because voters want to remind him of their power to check his own. That is especially true when his party controls both chambers of Congress. “I am not willing, in the search for efficient management, to establish one-man rule in this country,” Senator Edward Burke said ahead of the 1938 midterms.

At the Cincinnati rally early in February, Trump said there would be no “complacency” in his approach to the midterms. It is not clear what he means, though it could have been a reference to his previously stated desire to campaign for candidates as many as five days a week.

And there is still the business of governing, however less glamorous it may be compared with the thrill of campaigning. Most candidates do not want the race to be about Trump because they can’t imitate him. Sometimes, they can’t



**SORE THUMB**  
Democrats are unlikely to help Trump, even on issues they nominally agree. Above, Trump and advisers; opposite from right, Pennsylvania Republican Representative Lou Barletta Short; below, Steyer.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: MANDEL NGAN/AFP/GETTY; CHERISS MAY/NURPHOTO/GETTY; SPENCER PLATT/GETTY; BILL CLARK/CO ROLL CALL/GETTY






explain him either. The president can help by giving them something else to campaign on.

The “policy” part of the equation in the White House today belongs to Marc Short, its director of legislative affairs. A longtime adviser to Vice President Mike Pence, he wants to corral Republicans behind Trump’s message, so that they in turn have more than just last year’s tax changes to run on.

The president’s biggest priorities are immigration, the centerpiece of which is a border wall with Mexico estimated to cost at least \$25 billion, and an infrastructure plan that could cost \$1.5 trillion, with much of that cost absorbed by state governments. But Trump will need the support of Democrats in both cases. If he doesn’t get it, he could face a second year without any significant legislative accomplishments.

Short acknowledges that Democrats are unlikely to help Trump, even on issues they nominally agree on, like infrastructure spending. “They are entrenched in their opposition to this president,” he says. “They want to be more of a resist movement to stop anything that this president can do.” This was the posture of Republicans when they tried to make Obama a one-term president. They decided that no policy compromise was worth ceding a political victory. Democrats are now making the same calculation, waging that voters will reward combativeness more than compromise.

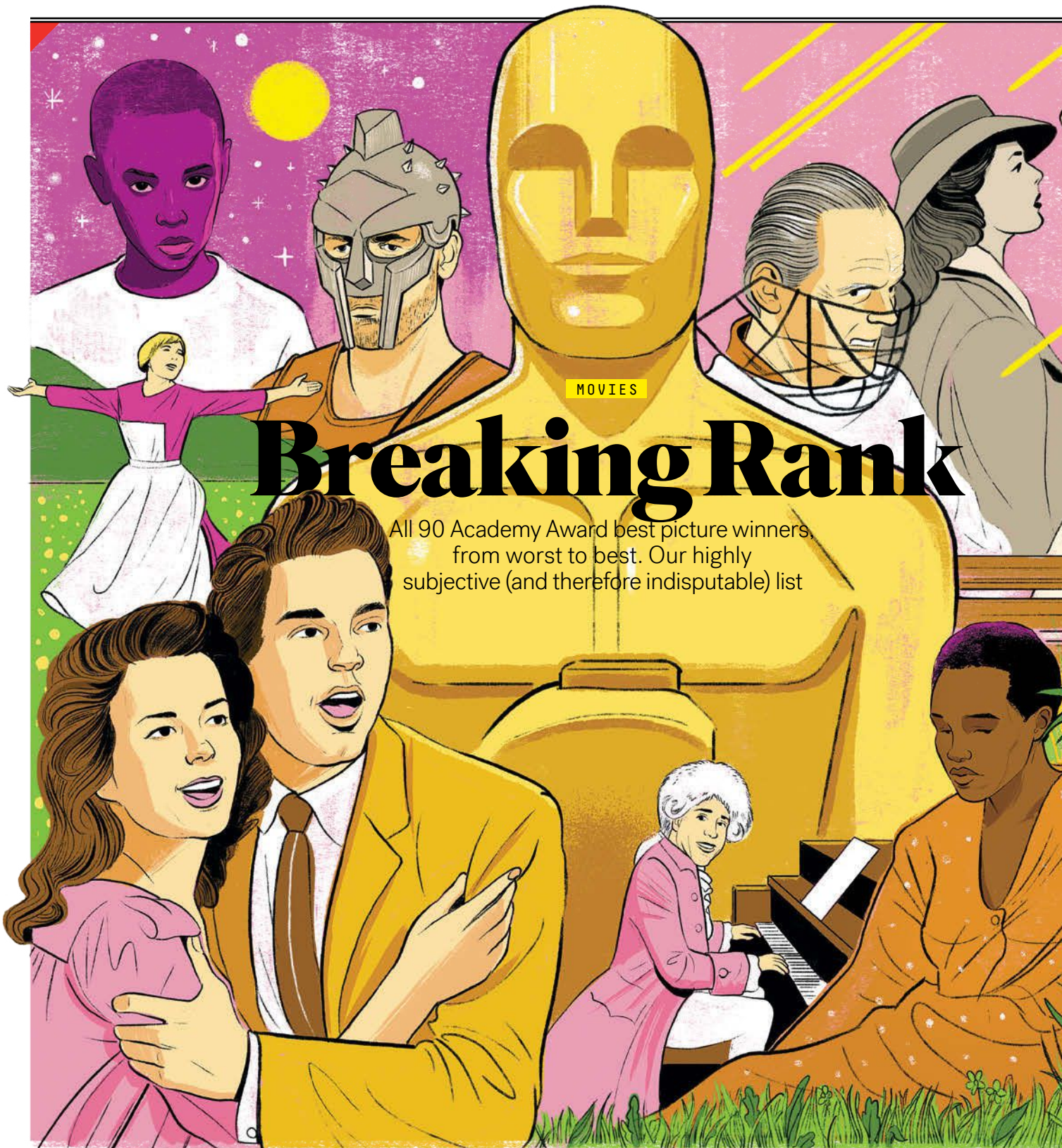
Meanwhile, each day brings a new poll and, with it, new suggestions about what the American people want and what politicians should expect. History is pretty clear about what we should expect. Then again, in politics as in all else, we want to believe ourselves superior to statistical trends. So we look for assurance in outliers, take comfort from the counterintuitive prognostications of pundits.

In the fall of 2009, exactly a year before Republicans stormed the House, Democrats lost gubernatorial special elections in New Jersey and Virginia. Some took these as the portent of a midterm rout. In *The New York Times*, Democratic strategist Ruy Teixeira assured that no such cataclysm was coming. “If any repudiation is going on, perhaps it is of the conservative wing of the Republican Party,” he wrote, just as the Tea Party movement was gathering strength across the land. And then there was the title of Teixeira’s op-ed, perhaps its most memorable feature: “Relax, Democrats.” 



“This is a  
**DEMOCRACY**  
and it is healthy  
to have a strong  
**OPPOSITION.**  
No man is  
always right.”





MOVIES

# Breaking Rank

All 90 Academy Award best picture winners, from worst to best. Our highly subjective (and therefore indisputable) list





**IF YOU WANT TO FEEL BAD ABOUT THE ACADEMY Awards**, rank every best picture winner since the statuettes made their debut in a 15-minute ceremony on May 16, 1929. There are some truly excellent films on the list, but too many are painfully mediocre.

We all know the dubious reasons dubious movies are crowned the year's best: the lowest of low-stakes politics, the academy making up for past snubs, Hollywood's aversion to risk, the industry deciding to solve a social ill, Harvey Weinstein. But understanding the forces at work on Oscar night doesn't help heal the heartbreak and frustration the awards can cause. The record will always show that stone-cold 1976 classics *Network* and *All the President's Men* were beaten by *Rocky*. And then there's the historic injustice of Hollywood's greatest musical, *Singin' in the Rain*, being ignored for a best picture nomination in 1952.

Don't get us wrong: *Rocky* is as enormously fun as it was more than 40 years ago. But the best picture Oscar was designed to award excellence, not just an ability to thrill the masses. Sometimes both are accomplished (just watch any of the films in our Top 10), and, occasionally, a film wins that is simply superb and not a blockbuster. (Yay, *Moonlight*!)

The rankings below are highly subjective: One person's *Terms of Endearment* is another's *Gladiator*. A lot of respectful debate occurred, and compromises were made. But at a certain point, we have to concede that comparisons become apples and oranges. How, for example, do you weigh the spectacle of *Ben-Hur* against a tough little war film like *The Hurt Locker*? So we created criteria for our decisions: Was there ambition? Did the film change the way movies were made? Is every part of it (casting, acting, cinematography, script, design, etc.) of high quality? Does it feel dated? Did it beat better films?

The best picture for 2017 will be revealed at the end of the 90th Academy Awards on March 4, the result of the combined votes of the academy's 7,258 members. In anticipation of the event, here is our ranked list of every best picture winner. Even if you disagree—and you will—enjoy this dip into Hollywood history.

BY

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**90 Crash 2005** Hollywood solves racism! *Crash*, an intelligence-insulting after-school special masquerading as a gritty film, is not only the lousiest best picture winner ever—it's American moviemaking at its worst: heavy-handed and without a shred of nuance. **WHAT IT BEAT** Ang Lee's heartbreaking *Brokeback Mountain* was the favorite and should have won. But every other nominee that year—*Good Night, and Good Luck*, *Munich* and *Capote*—was better than *Crash*.

**89 Cimarron 1930-31** Critically lauded for its "super filmmaking" when it opened, the pre-code, Depression-era epic is now rightfully considered one of Oscar's most undeserving, thanks to racist caricatures, lazy pacing and indiscriminate storytelling. **WHAT IT BEAT** The whip-smart comedy *The Front Page*, as well as *East Lynne*, *Skippy* and *The Trader Horn*. **TRIVIA** Five years into the awards, it was the first film to receive a nod in every eligible category (the only other to do so: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*); it won in three.

**88 Broadway Melody 1928-29** The top-grossing picture of 1929, and the first all-talking musical, was pure escapism (the Depression began later that year), but there's little about the melodramatic acting, directing or dialogue to recommend it today. The earliest example of the academy's abiding infatuation with big box-office hits. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Alibi*, *The Patriot*, *In Old Arizona*, *The Hollywood Revue of 1929*.

**87 Cavalcade 1932-33** Adapted from a 1931 play by Noël Coward, the pre-code epic, praised at the time for its elegance and restraint, now feels mawkish and trite. **WHAT IT BEAT** The best film nominees increased to 10 in 1931, and most here have aged better: *42nd Street*, *A Farewell to Arms*, *I Am a Fugitive From a Chain Gang*, *Lady for a Day*, *Little Women*, *She Done Him Wrong*, *Smilin' Through*, *State Fair*, *The Private Life of Henry VIII*.



86

**THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH 1952**

It's bad enough that Cecil B. DeMille's bloated ode to the circus beat *High Noon* and *The Quiet Man*. The more egregious slight is what the academy snubbed in the best picture category. **WHAT IT BEAT** Certified classics like *High Noon* and *The Quiet Man*, as well as *Ivanhoe* and *Moulin Rouge*. **SNUBBED** Hollywood's best musical, *Singin' in the Rain!* **TRIVIA** *Time* magazine had the most apt review, calling it a "mammoth merger of two masters of malarkey for the masses: P.T. Barnum and Cecil B. DeMille." Many saw the win as a belated reward for DeMille, whose pioneering work was produced pre-awards. But director Stanley Kramer probably came closer to the truth, alleging that the win was political: The McCarthy hearings were in full swing, DeMille was a conservative Republican, and *High Noon* screenwriter Carl Foreman would soon be blacklisted.

**85 The Great Ziegfeld 1936**

William Powell is characteristically excellent as theater impresario Florenz Ziegfeld, but if this meandering 176-minute biopic were made today, it would be rightfully labeled Oscar bait. **WHAT IT BEAT** *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Dodsworth*, *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, *Anthony Adverse*, *Libeled Lady*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *San Francisco*, *Three Smart Girls*, *The Story of Louis Pasteur*. **SNUBBED** Hollywood's greatest screwball comedy, *My Man Godfrey* (also starring Powell).

**84 Out Of Africa 1985**

In retrospect, best director Sydney Pollack's epic romantic drama seems just an excuse to pair two big stars, Meryl Streep and Robert Redford. *Africa* is like watching a

beautifully shot nature doc in slow motion, only less exciting. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Witness*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Prizzi's Honor*, *The Color Purple*.

**83 Around The World In 80 Days 1956**

Despite some charm, this sprawling, massively popular adventure-comedy's win is all about the pervading bigger-is-better mentality (see three out of four of its fellow nominees). **WHAT IT BEAT** *Friendly Persuasion*, *The King and I*, *The Ten Commandments* (Cecil B. DeMille's last film), *Giant*.

**82 Forrest Gump 1994**

Robert Zemeckis's saccharine love letter to the boomers, starring Tom Hanks (best actor, for the

second year in a row), is nostalgia at its absolute worst—"We Didn't Start the Fire" in movie form. **WHAT IT BEAT** The industry-changing *Pulp Fiction*, as well as *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Quiz Show* and *The Shawshank Redemption*. **TRIVIA** Zemeckis broke technical ground by inserting Forrest into historical moments, but the film also gave America the Bubba Gump Shrimp Co., so call it a wash.

**81 Gentleman's Agreement 1947**

Oscar loves a "message" (see *Crash*), and best director Elia Kazan liked to target his adopted country's social problems. In this case, it's anti-Semitism, a scourge a reporter (Gregory Peck) discovers when he goes undercover. *Agreement's* win showed studios there was gold in superficial treatment of important topics. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Crossfire*, *Miracle on 34th Street*, *The Bishop's Wife*, *Great Expectations*. **SNUBBED** Michael Powell's glorious fever dream *Black Narcissus*, as well as noir classics *Kiss of Death* and *Out of the Past*.

**80 The Life Of Emile Zola 1937**

William Dieterle's stolid biopic includes the French writer's involvement in the Dreyfus affair, an infamous example of anti-Semitism. The film, starring Paul Muni, was unanimously praised upon release, but later evidence revealed the Nazi consul in Los Angeles was allowed input. "A perfect example," wrote critic David Denby, "of the half-boldness, half-cowardice and outright confusion that marked Hollywood's response to Nazism and anti-Semitism." **WHAT IT BEAT** *Stage Door*, *The Awful Truth*, *The Good Earth*, *A Star Is Born*, *Captains Courageous*, *Dead End*, *Lost Horizon*, *In Old Chicago*, *One Hundred Men and a Girl*.

**79 The English Patient 1996**

*Seinfeld's* Elaine Benes spoke for many when she shouted, "Quit telling your stupid story about the stupid desert and just die already!" Evidence, again, of Oscar's infatuation with romantic, period travelogues. **WHAT IT BEAT** The win is even more confounding in light of the nominees: instant classic *Fargo*, *Secrets & Lies*, the enormously satisfying crowd-pleaser

FROM LEFT: MONDADORI; PORTFOLIO/GETTY; DREAMWORKS SKG/GETTY; PREVIOUS SPREAD TOP RIGHT: MARK MAKELA/GETTY



Jerry Maguire and *Shine*. **TRIVIA** *English Patient* was Harvey Weinstein's first prestige pic win.

**78** **Hamlet 1948**  
The class-obsessed academy couldn't resist a film directed by and starring Laurence Olivier—considered the greatest English-speaking actor at the time. But in one of Oscar's most mind-boggling decisions, it chose this noir-styled Shakespeare adaptation over a tour de force of class, imagination, set design and cinematography: Michael Powell's *The Red Shoes*. **WHAT IT BEAT** In addition



**77** **AMERICAN BEAUTY 1999**

A midlife crisis in the soulless suburbs, elevated to high tragedy, felt achingly relevant at the tail end of the Clinton '90s, but this Sam Mendes-directed, Alan Ball-written satire starring Kevin Spacey (all of whom won Oscars in their category) has aged into a mediocre slice of warmed-over ennui. The less said about Spacey's middle-aged father lusting after a high school girl, itself a sad reread of *Lolita*, the better. **WHAT IT BEAT** *The Insider* (should have won), *The Cider House Rules*, *The Sixth Sense*, *The Green Mile*. **SNUBBED** Stanley Kubrick's cinematic high-wire act *Eyes Wide Shut*, *Fight Club*, *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, *Three Kings*.

to *Red Shoes*, the John Huston classic *The Treasure of Sierra Madre*, *Johnny Belinda*, *The Snake Pit*.

**76** **Going My Way 1944**  
At the height of World War II, Americans and the academy were not interested in downers, and thus best director Leo McCarey's sentimental musical comedy-drama starring the aggressively unthreatening Bing Crosby. **WHAT IT BEAT** Hollywood's ultimate film noir, *Double Indemnity*, and a George Cukor classic, *Gaslight*; plus *Since You Went Away* and *Wilson*.

**75** **The Sting 1973**  
Maybe academy members needed to take a breath between two *Godfather* wins? How else to explain the triumph of George Roy Hill's thoroughly fun and utterly bland Depression-era con game comedy? It's not even the best Robert Redford-Paul Newman vehicle (that's *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*). **WHAT IT BEAT** This is sad: *Cries and Whispers*, *The Exorcist*, *American Graffiti*, *A Touch of Class*.

**74** **The Last Emperor 1987**  
Best director Bernardo Bertolucci's epic about the last emperor of China is a feast for the eyes and deserved every visual and sound award it received. But best picture? We're still scratching our heads over this one. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Fatal Attraction*, *Hope and Glory* and two of the '80s most beloved romantic comedies, *Broadcast News* and *Moonstruck*.

**73** **The King's Speech 2010**  
Best actor Colin Firth is terrific in the title role of Tom Hooper's historical drama. But this bland Harvey Weinstein-produced smash—about King George V's struggles to overcome a stutter—had no business winning in a year replete with sharp, powerful dramas. **WHAT IT BEAT** *127 Hours*, *Inception*, *The Kids Are All Right*, *Toy Story 3*, *Winter's Bone*, *True Grit*, *The Social Network*, *The Fighter*, *Black Swan*. **TRIVIA** The French paper *Le Monde*'s amusing summation of the film, which ignores the royal support of appeasement: "We are ugly and boring, but, by Jove!, we are right!"

**72** **You Can't Take It With You 1938**  
As delightful as best director Frank Capra's film is (and Jean Arthur and James Stewart are the definition of delightful), the comedy—based on a hit play by incomparable wits George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart—is a prime example of era-specific, particularly in light of the other nominees. **WHAT IT BEAT** Jean Renoir's masterpiece, *La Grande Illusion*, plus *Jezebel*, *Pygmalion*, *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, *Alexander's Ragtime Band*, *Four Daughters*, *Boys Town*, *The Citadel*.

**71** **Shakespeare In Love 1998**  
Thoroughly charming, well acted and sharply written (by playwright Tom Stoppard), *Shakespeare* scored \$289 million in global box office—a buttload for a romantic comedy—and deserved a nomination, though not the win. Its victory is forever tainted by producer Harvey Weinstein, whose aggressive academy campaigning dramatically escalated here: He is rumored to have spent a record \$5 million to defeat Steven Spielberg's heavily favored *Saving Private Ryan*. **WHAT IT BEAT** In addition to *Ryan*, *The Thin Red Line*, *Elizabeth* and a second Weinstein offering, *Life Is Beautiful* (best actor for Roberto Benigni). **TRIVIA** Judi Dench nabbed best supporting actress for eight minutes on screen (the record is held by Beatrice Straight for her six minutes in *Network*).

**70** **Driving Miss Daisy 1989**  
While Spike Lee was scaring the pants off white America with the best picture—snubbed *Do the Right Thing*, his provocative statement on race, *Driving Miss Daisy* offered a more soothing—and quietly sinister—take on the conversation. A white woman (best actress Jessica Tandy) learns about the plight of black Americans via her longtime chauffeur (Morgan Freeman). **WHAT IT BEAT** *My Left Foot*, *Born on the Fourth of July*, *Dead Poets Society*, *Field of Dreams*.

**69** **A Beautiful Mind 2001**  
Remember when Russell Crowe was a major movie star? Best director Ron Howard's biopic of mathematician John Nash came one year

after Crowe's best actor win for *Gladiator* (which itself came a year after he *should* have won for *The Insider*). And this *Mind* has many fine performances—none of which are helped by Howard's (and the academy's) fondness for manipulative sentimentality. **WHAT IT BEAT** Todd Fields's devastating and masterfully understated *In the Bedroom*, *Gosford Park*, *Moulin Rouge!*, *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*. **SNUBBED** *The Royal Tenenbaums*, *Training Day*, *The Others*.

**68 Gandhi 1982** Best actor Ben Kingsley's magnetic performance is the reason to see this lengthy biopic by best director Richard Attenborough. But despite high production values and clear ambition, the film too often feels like homework. Worse, there are numerous examples of inaccuracy and just plain ol' making shit up. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Missing*, *Tootsie*, *The Verdict*, *ET: The Extra-Terrestrial*.

**67 Dances With Wolves 1990** Not a landmark year for film. On the other hand: *Goodfellas*! But let's give best director and star Kevin Costner this: Despite subsequent criticism—for misrepresenting the Sioux (as too noble), for promoting a “white savior,” for historical inaccuracies—the massively popular *Wolves* was the first major Hollywood film to place Native Americans at the center of a Western. And if you can get beyond the controversial stuff, it's beautifully made. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Awakenings*, *Goodfellas*, *Ghost*, *The Godfather: Part III*. **SNUBBED** *Pretty Woman*, *Edward Scissorhands*, *The Grifters*.

**66 Chariots Of Fire 1981** The exquisitely shot historical drama about two 1924 Olympic hopefuls—one Catholic, one Jewish—is moving and inspiring, especially in light of today's massive doping scandals. Yet not once have we felt compelled to rewatch it; fellow nominee *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, on the other hand, is on heavy repeat. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Raiders*, *Atlantic City*, *Reds*, *On Golden Pond*.

**65 Chicago 2002** The film's virtues—its brassy energy and sensuality—are

all courtesy of impeccable DNA: music and lyrics by Kander and Ebb and book and choreography by Bob Fosse (if only he had been alive to direct it). But the \$307 million in worldwide box office did revive the Hollywood musical. **WHAT IT BEAT** Martin Scorsese's ham-handed *Gangs of New York*, *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*, *The Hours*, *The Pianist*. (In one of the academy's more controversial moves, convicted rapist Roman Polanski won for best director.)

**64 Gladiator 2000** The kind of swords-and-sandals epic that once fueled Hollywood, *Gladiator* is a fine action film, with director Ridley Scott's trademark brand of propulsive action sequences and excellent performances, particularly from best actor Russell Crowe and Joaquin Phoenix. But as a whole, it's too thin for a best picture. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Chocolat*, *Erin Brockovich*, *Traffic*, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. **SNUBBED** *Requiem for a Dream*, *Almost Famous*, *In the Mood for Love*.

**63 A Man For All Seasons 1966** Academy voters weren't interested in celebrating edge or humor in 1966. Rather, they went for the pageantry of best director Fred Zinnemann's highly literate Sir Thomas More biopic. Subsequent history has not been kind to the sanctimonious More, but this vivid and visually stunning film holds up quite well. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Alfie*, *The Sand Pebbles*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *The Russians Are Coming*, *The Russians Are Coming*.

**62 Oliver! 1968** How, you might wonder, did this beat *Funny Girl*? Because it's a top-notch musical, thanks to director Carol Reed—more famous for the classic thrillers *Odd Man Out* and *The Third Man*. Comparing *Oliver!* to the musicals of Rene Clair, Pauline Kael called it “one of the few film musicals to improve upon the stage version.” **WHAT IT BEAT** In addition to *Funny Girl*, *Rachel, Rachel*, *The Lion in Winter* and *Romeo and Juliet*. **SNUBBED** We need an alien monolith to explain how Stanley Kubrick's sci-fi masterwork *2001: A Space Odyssey* was ignored.

**61 12 Years A Slave 2013** Steve McQueen's unflinching portrait of a free black man kidnapped and sold into slavery—based on the 1853 memoir of Solomon Northup—is horrifying to watch. And so it should be. This remarkably accurate representation of American slavery remains disturbingly relevant in a country still arguing over the validity of the Confederate flag. Still, there's a stark calculation to McQueen's direction that never quite aligns with the heartrending performances of Chiwetel Ejiofor and best supporting actress Lupita Nyong'o. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Philomena*, *American Hustle*, *Dallas Buyers Club*, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, *Nebraska*, *Gravity*, *Captain Phillips*, *Her*.

**60 Ordinary People 1980** If best director Robert Redford's quietly chilling story of the dissolution of an American family had been released a year later, it could have won best picture and no one would have objected to this win. But defeating Martin Scorsese's *Raging Bull* strips this win of any sense. Also senseless: Mary Tyler Moore—playing hard-against-type as a bitter, grieving mother—losing best actress to Sissy Spacek. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Raging Bull*, *Coal Miner's Daughter*, *Tess*, *The Elephant Man*. **SNUBBED** *The Shining*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, *The Big Red One*.

**59 Braveheart 1995** Epic-scale filmmaking? Rousing speeches? A martyred protagonist? Checks all around, which makes this sturdy swords-and-kilts biopic of Scottish hero William Wallace (Mel Gibson, star and best director) classic best picture material. **WHAT IT BEAT** The should-have-won *Babe*, *Apollo 13*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Il Postino*. **SNUBBED** Three flawless films by emerging American auteurs: Richard Linklater's *Before Sunrise*, Michael Mann's *Heat* and David Fincher's *Se7en*.

**58 Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtues of Ignorance) 2014** Best director Alejandro González Iñárritu's Godardian showbiz satire gives the appearance of great originality without being very original at all. It's sumptuously shot, well acted and





57

**PLATOON 1986**

Described by critics at the time as the most harrowing film about Vietnam, it is also, in retrospect—and in typical Oliver Stone style—one of the most heavy-handed. The work of a stellar ensemble, however, remains strong. **WHAT IT BEAT** Woody Allen's last classic, *Hannah and Her Sisters*, *A Room With a View*, *Children of a Lesser God*, *The Mission*. **SNUBBED** Given the academy's historic disrespect for sci-fi, ignoring *Aliens* is unsurprising, but the James Cameron-directed classic certainly surpasses *Platoon* (and most of the other nominees) in influence and longevity.

ambitious, but in the most clinical way. It's also pretentious (see title) in the most annoying way. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Boyhood* (pulsing with life-affirming ambition), *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, *American Sniper*, *Whiplash*, *Selma*, *The Imitation Game*, *The Theory of Everything*.

**56 In The Heat Of The Night 1967**

Norman Jewison's police procedural pits a black Northern detective (Sidney Poitier) against a bigoted Southern sheriff (best actor

Rod Steiger)—a fine film with a social conscience. But the win was a clear compromise between Hollywood's conservative old guard and the libertine longhairs about to crash the backlots.

**WHAT IT BEAT** *The Graduate*, *Bonnie and Clyde*, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (also starring Poitier), *Doctor Dolittle*.

**55 Kramer Vs. Kramer 1979**

Ideas about the roles of mothers and fathers were changing, and divorce was a hot topic in film (*An Unmarried*

*Woman* came out in '78). Without the power of that cultural moment, best director Robert Benson's nuanced *Kramer* feels less urgent. This doesn't diminish the film's fine performances, including best supporting actress Meryl Streep, though best actor Dustin Hoffman's work is now tainted by her revelations that he bullied her during filming. **WHAT IT BEAT** Bob Fosse's deliciously dark *All That Jazz*, Francis Ford Coppola's dementedly brilliant *Apocalypse Now*, *Breaking Away*, *Norma Rae*.

**54 Rain Man 1988**

Best director Barry Levinson's buddy road-trip dramedy, featuring Tom Cruise as a slick operator and best actor Dustin Hoffman as his autistic brother, is Oscar pandering at its very worst. But Hoffman kills it, and Cruise shows early signs of the range that directors like Paul Thomas Anderson, Cameron Crowe and Stanley Kubrick would tap into years later. **WHAT IT BEAT** Mike Nichols's enormously satisfying *Working Girl*, Stephen Frears's sharp-witted *Dangerous Liaisons*, *Mississippi Burning*, *The Accidental Tourist*. **SNUBBED** Hayao Miyazaki's masterpiece *My Neighbor Totoro*, *Die Hard*.

**53 Terms Of Endearment 1983**

Best director James L. Brooks (who also won for screenplay) created a tearjerker like no other. Beautifully acted (by best actress Debra Winger and Shirley MacLaine), smartly scripted and unpredictably funny, it is also a precursor to the contentiously loving mother-daughter relationship of *Lady Bird*. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Tender Mercies*, *The Big Chill*, *The Right Stuff*, *The Dresser*.

**52 Mrs. Miniver 1942**

Best director William Wyler was second only to John Ford in his mastery of film craftsmanship, but he was tops in pulling performances of unusual emotional depth out of actors—all apparent here, in this stirring but never cloying melodrama. **WHAT IT BEAT** *49th Parallel*, *Random Harvest*, *Kings Row*, *The Pride of the Yankees*, *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *The Pied Piper*, *The Talk of the Town*, *Wake Island*, *Yankee Doodle Dandy*.



**51** **The Artist** 2011  
 Consider the balls it took for best director Michel Hazanavicius to make a black-and-white silent movie—a tribute to silent film, no less—in the year 2011. Joyful, elegant and witty—everything a Hollywood crowd-pleaser should be—it was nevertheless a controversial win. Haters gonna hate. **WHAT IT BEAT** *The Tree of Life, The Descendants, Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close, Midnight in Paris, War Horse, The Help, Moneyball, Hugo.*

**50** **Slumdog Millionaire** 2008  
 Best director Danny Boyle's modern-day prince and the pauper tale is not unlike injecting adrenaline into your veins—as giddy as his *Trainspotting*, but with the gorgeously sordid sensory overload of India, where the film is set. If its joyfulness feels calculated, as one critic complained, it's a satisfying and transporive calculation. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Frost/Nixon, The Curious Case of Benjamin Button, The Reader, Milk.* **SNUBBED** *The Dark Knight.*

**49** **Million Dollar Baby** 2004  
 What starts as a classic rags-to-riches underdog tale of a female boxer (best actress Hilary Swank), best director Clint Eastwood wittingly flips into a gut-wrenching tragedy. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Finding Neverland, Sideways, The Aviator, Ray.* **TRIVIA** The first sports film to win best picture since *Chariots of Fire* (1981), a championship drought of more than 30 years.

**48** **Grand Hotel** 1931-32  
 Old glamour meets *Ocean's Eleven* in Edmund Goulding's dramatic roundelay of A-listers before there were A-listers (Greta Garbo, John Barrymore, Joan Crawford, etc.), each of whom offers an engaging argument for early Hollywood theatrics. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Arrowsmith, Five Star Final, Shanghai Express, The Smiling Lieutenant, Bad Girl, One Hour With You, The Champ.*

**47** **Tom Jones** 1963  
 Best director Tony Richardson's lusty, kinetic and irreverent satire had a script by political activist playwright John Osborne, and it feels, in some ways, like



46

**AMADEUS** 1984  
 Best director Milos Forman's bonkers, rule-breaking biopic of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Tom Hulse)—told from the perspective of his bitterly jealous rival Antonio Salieri (best actor F. Murray Abraham)—is the kind of risk-taking filmmaking more directors should engage in. It's also monumentally excessive. **WHAT IT BEAT** *A Passage to India, A Soldier's Story, The Killing Fields and Places in the Heart.* **SNUBBED** *Blood Simple, This Is Spinal Tap, The Terminator.*

a precursor to *Slumdog Millionaire*. The film's cockeyed charms, however, rest largely on the pale shoulders of its star, Albert Finney. **WHAT IT BEAT** *America America, Lilies of the Field, Cleopatra, How the West Was Won.*

**45** **Mutiny On The Bounty** 1935  
 Lewis Milestone's grim, sumptuously shot black-and-white film includes a singular performance by the great Charles Laughton, who, admittedly, turned Captain Bligh into more of a sadist than he actually was. Artistic license, people. **WHAT IT BEAT** Seemingly every picture released that year: *A Midsummer's Night Dream, Alice Adams, Broadway Melody of 1936, Captain Blood, David Copperfield, Les Misérables, Naughty Marietta, The Informer, Ruggles of Red Gap, Top Hat, The Lives of a Bengal Lancer.*

**44** **The Lost Weekend** 1945  
 Best director Billy Wilder's darker work (*Sunset Boulevard, Ace in the Hole*) is emotionally shattering, but this one, about a drunk (best actor Ray Milland) facing his demons, borders on overwrought. Still, it's a potent advert for the dangers of alcohol and regret. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Shoulda-won Mildred Pierce, Spellbound, The Bells of St. Mary's.* **SNUBBED** David Lean's superbly restrained *Brief Encounter*.

**43** **All The King's Men** 1949  
 Graft, corruption, betrayal, philandering, the subversion of idealism for power—what could be more timely than the rise of political bully Willie Stark, played by ripsnorting best actor Broderick Crawford? Powerful and eloquent with film noir stylings, it still makes you squirm. **WHAT IT BEAT** *A Letter*

FROM LEFT: MOVIESTORE COLLECTION LTD/ALAMY; HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY



to *Three Wives*, *The Heiress*, *Twelve O'Clock High*, *Battleground*. **SNUBBED** Carol Reed's *The Third Man*, the British Film Institute's No. 1 British film.

**42 Marty 1955** Best director Delbert Mann's unlikely hit (made for six figures in 16 days) and shocking win was beautifully written by playwright Paddy Chayefsky and heavily influenced by the no-frills realism of early teleplays. Best actor Ernest Borgnine defines perfect casting as a lonely butcher who finds love with a plain schoolteacher (Betsy Blair). **WHAT IT BEAT** *Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing*, *The Rose Tattoo*, *Mister Roberts*, *Picnic*. **TRIVIA** Chayefsky is the only winner of three solo Academy Awards for best screenplay (the others: 1971's *The Hospital*, 1976's *Network*).

**41 From Here To Eternity 1953** Best director Fred Zinnemann's adaptation of the James Jones best-seller is set in Hawaii on the eve of Pearl Harbor, offering a before-and-after take on the attack—complacent, frivolous American servicemen get punished by war. Flinty and unsentimental, the film contains a revelatory performance from best supporting actor Frank Sinatra. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Shane*, *Roman Holiday*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Robe*. **SNUBBED** Yasujiro Ozu's landmark *Tokyo Story*. **TRIVIA** The year the Oscars was first broadcast on TV.

**40 Wings 1927-28** At the first Academy Awards ceremony, two best pictures were given: one for general production, the other for unique and artistic production. *Wings*, director William Wellman's silent World War I bonanza of aviation derring-do, won the former. The film's still-thrilling aerial dogfights and stunt work influenced decades of war films. **WHAT IT BEAT** *7th Heaven*, *The Racket*. **SNUBBED** The academy ignored great films from the get-go: Fritz Lang's sci-fi opus *Metropolis*, Alfred Hitchcock's *The Lodger*, Josef von Sternberg's proto-noir *Underworld*.

**39 My Fair Lady 1964** This is the film that beat Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove*, which probably didn't seem like much of an

upset at the time. But in hindsight, no contest. Not to take anything away from best director George Cukor's splendid confection, or the divine work of Audrey Hepburn and best actor Rex Harrison, but time has diminished its appeal, if not the froufrou of Cecil Beaton's costumes. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Becket*, *Mary Poppins*, *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, *Zorba the Greek*. **TRIVIA** Julie Andrews, passed over for the *My Fair Lady* lead, a role she'd originated on the stage, won best actress for *Poppins*. Revenge is sweet!



**38**

### HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY 1941

John Ford's lovely working-class melodrama of Welsh miners married the class consciousness of his *The Grapes of Wrath* with the pleasing nostalgia he'd draw on for 1952's *The Quiet Man*. A middle-of-the-road selection that made sense for an America on the brink of war, but not a film deserving of a win, given the competition. **WHAT IT BEAT** Two masterpieces—*The Maltese Falcon* and *Citizen Kane*—plus *Suspicion*, *Sergeant York*, *The Little Foxes*, *Blossoms in the Dust*, *Here Comes Mr. Jordan*, *Hold Back the Dawn*, *One Foot in Heaven*. **TRIVIA** Ford won his third best director award in six years, following 1935's *The Informer* and 1940's *Grapes of Wrath*. He'd win one more, for *The Quiet Man*, making him Oscar's most honored director.

**37 Argo 2012** Lots that Oscar loves here: a fact-based period piece (the Iran hostage crisis) that comments on a contemporary issue (terrorism) while also celebrating Hollywood. Ben Affleck directed and starred in this taut, funny political thriller that was such a surprising win, even Affleck seemed stunned. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Lincoln*, *Django Unchained*, *Amour*, *Life of Pi*, *Silver Linings Playbook*, *Zero Dark Thirty*, *Les Misérables*, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*.

**36 Patton 1970** With the country entrenched in a controversial war, Hollywood decided to celebrate a divisive military hero with a nearly three-hour biopic. Franklin J. Schaffner's famous opener has Patton delivering a kill-the-bastards speech in front of a massive American flag. Superb acting (particularly by best actor George C. Scott) and writing (script by Francis Ford Coppola), but colossally tone-deaf. **WHAT IT BEAT** Significantly, the anti-war farce *MASH* and the counterculture classic *Five Easy Pieces*; plus *Airport* and *Love Story*.

**35 No Country for Old Men 2007** Best directors Joel and Ethan Coen's adaptation of Cormac McCarthy's novel is as unflinching and spare as its source material. What makes the film an unshakable experience are the details, textures and characters—most notably best supporting actor Javier Bardem's lumbering hitman with a Prince Valiant hairdo. **WHAT IT BEAT** *There Will Be Blood*, *Michael Clayton*, *Atonement*, *Juno*. **TRIVIA** Bardem was the first Spanish actor to win an Oscar.

**34 The Departed 2006** The ultimate Oscar make-good: Hong Kong's *Infernal Affairs* was his first best picture, and it earned him a long overdue best director award. The grisly crime thriller doesn't come close to his classics, but it's supremely good fun. **WHAT IT BEAT** *The Queen*, *Little Miss Sunshine*, *Babel* and Clint Eastwood's audaciously experimental *Letters From Iwo Jima*. **SNUBBED** *Pan's Labyrinth*, *Children of Men*, *Black Book*, *Shortbus*, *Inland Empire*.

**33 Gigi 1958**

An example of prime Hollywood escapism. Best director Vincente Minnelli, abetted by a captivating Leslie Caron and Cecil Beaton's sets and costumes, somehow succeeds in turning a salacious story by Colette into family entertainment. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Auntie Mame*, *Separate Tables*, *The Defiant Ones*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. **SNUBBED** Hitchcock's equally beloved and hated *Vertigo*; *Touch of Evil* is pretty great too.

**32 Rocky 1976**

Best director John G. Avildsen's inspirational underdog story was what America needed in this post-Watergate, bicentennial year. And the impossible triumph of palooka boxer Rocky Balboa (Sylvester Stallone) remains as rousing today. But it is, by far, the least deserving of any film nominated in 1976. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Taxi Driver*, *All the President's Men*, *Network*, *Bound for Glory*.

**31 The Best Years Of Our Lives 1946**

Best director William Wyler was transformed by his World War II experiences, and this tough, poignant reaction—with uniformly terrific performances (including best actor Fredric March and best supporting actor Harold Russell)—was his way of helping fellow veterans confront the challenges of returning home. **WHAT IT BEAT** *It's a Wonderful Life* (Frank Capra's World War II response), *Henry V*, *The Razor's Edge*, *The Yearling*. **SNUBBED** Jean Cocteau's influential fantasy *La Belle et la Bête*.

**30 The Lord Of The Rings: The Return Of The King 2003**

Best director Peter Jackson spent three long hours bringing the final chapter in his groundbreaking fantasy series to an end, which doesn't dilute what he accomplished with his beautifully made, box-office-shattering trilogy: from rewriting the rules of special effects filmmaking to legitimizing fantasy storytelling. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Lost in Translation*, *Mystic River*, *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World*, *Seabiscuit*. **TRIVIA** Its 11 Academy Awards ties *Return of the King* with *Titanic* and *Ben-Hur* for most wins.

**29 Spotlight 2015**

In the second decade of the 21st century, an era dominated by tentpole blockbusters, *Spotlight's* win felt remarkable: an expertly made, medium-budget actors' project about *The Boston Globe's* investigation of child abuse by the Catholic Church. In its way, director Tom McCarthy's drama about journalist heroes is as thrilling as *All the President's Men*. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Bridge of Spies*, *The Martian*, *Brooklyn*, *Mad Max: Fury Road*, *The Big Short*, *The Revenant*, *Room*. **SNUBBED** *Carol*, *Creed*, *Sicario*, *Inside Out*.

**28 The Sound Of Music 1965**

Best director Robert Wise's alpine musical easily wins for endurance—even if some of us find its saccharine mountain-climbing unbearable. **WHAT IT BEAT** *A Thousand Clowns*, *Darling*, *Doctor Zhivago*, *Ship of Fools*.

**27 The Hurt Locker 2009**

The lowest-grossing best picture winner ever (with just \$12 million in box office) made history as the first helmed by a woman, best director Kathryn Bigelow. By focusing on one bomb squad sergeant (Jeremy Renner) in Iraq, she conveyed the claustrophobic horrors of war in a profoundly intimate way. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Up, Inglourious Basterds*, *District 9*, *The Blind Side*, *Precious*, *An Education*, *A Serious Man* and *Avatar*; the second-highest-grossing American film after *Gone With the Wind* (directed by Bigelow's ex, James Cameron). **TRIVIA** In a radical move, the academy increased best picture nominees to 10, an effort to make space for blockbusters, indies and diversity.

**26 An American In Paris 1951**

This audacious and unabashedly romantic collaboration between director Vincente Minnelli, and star Gene Kelly, with ravishing music by George Gershwin, was a shocking choice in a year with *A Streetcar Named Desire* among the nominees. But there is no denying its pleasures and lasting influence, on everyone from Ray Bradbury to Madonna to best picture nominee *La La Land*. **WHAT IT BEAT** In addition to Elia

Kazan's *Streetcar* (which fundamentally changed screen acting), *A Place in the Sun*, *Decision Before Dawn* and *Quo Vadis*.

**25 Schindler's List 1993**

Turns out best director Steven Spielberg's visceral style of filmmaking was as effective in telling the story of Oskar Schindler (Liam Neeson), who saved hundreds of Jews from extermination, as it was in scaring the bejesus out of swimmers. The documentary-like scenes—of Nazis storming through Krakow, of prisoners at Auschwitz—are among the most powerful of his career. **WHAT IT BEAT** *The Piano* (directed by Jane Campion, the first woman to be nominated for best director), *In the Name of the Father*, *Remains of the Day*, *The Fugitive*.

**24 Ben-Hur 1959**

Best director William Wyler's widescreen magnum opus had it all: opulent sets, blood feuds and revenge, a spectacular chariot race—still one of the most thrilling scenes ever filmed—and he-man best actor Charlton Heston doing what he did best. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Anatomy of a Murder*, *Room at the Top*, *The Nun's Story*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*. **SNUBBED** *North by Northwest*, *Some Like It Hot*, *The 400 Blows*, *Shadows*.

**23 Titanic 1997**

As big as the berg that sank the real ship. Best director James Cameron forever pushed the boundaries of special effects, catapulted Leonardo DiCaprio into superstardom and produced the highest-grossing film of all time—until 2009, when Cameron beat his own record with *Avatar*. The three-hour-plus epic—with its irresistible mix of history, romance and action—has one enduring flaw: a terrible script written by Cameron. **WHAT IT BEAT** *As Good as It Gets*, *L.A. Confidential*, *The Full Monty*, *Good Will Hunting*.

**22 The Deer Hunter 1978**

One of the first films to confront the trauma of Vietnam—both for veterans and their communities—best director Michael Cimino's portrait of working-class Pennsylvanians before and after the war is brutal and heartbreaking, with haunting performances by best



supporting actor Christopher Walken and John Cazale. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Coming Home* (Hal Ashby's Vietnam vet gem), *Heaven Can Wait*, *Midnight Express*, *An Unmarried Woman*. **TRIVIA** Cazale's final role followed work in *The Godfather*, *The Godfather: Part II*, *Dog Day Afternoon* and *The Conversation*. Talk about a legacy.

## 21 **All Quiet On The Western Front** 1929-30

Best director Lewis Milestone's pre-code film, based on Erich Maria Remarque's World War I novel, remains, 87 years later, as visceral a war film as *Dunkirk*, without the benefit of special effects. Few films better capture war's waste of life, and every war film since has been influenced by it. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Disraeli*, *The Love Parade*, *The Big House*, *The Divorcee*.

## 19 **Unforgiven** 1992

No sacred cow goes unslaughtered here, and when the film ends—in death, destruction and regret—star and best director Clint Eastwood makes us question every trope of the Western, even as it left us wanting more. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Howard's End*, *Scent of a Woman*, *A Few Good Men*, *The Crying Game*.

## 18 **Moonlight** 2016

It's too early to say if last year's best picture winner will remain as powerful, but odds are good. Director Barry Jenkins made a small, intimate coming-of-age film of outsized emotion, grace and poetry, with knockout performances by best supporting actor Mahershala Ali, Naomie Harris and a trio of newcomers

playing the central character. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Arrival*, *Fences*, *Hell or High Water*, *La La Land*, *Hacksaw Ridge*, *Hidden Figures*, *Lion*, *Manchester by the Sea*. **TRIVIA** In an all-time embarrassing moment, *La La Land* was briefly declared winner.

## 17 **The Silence Of The Lambs** 1991

The only horror thriller to win this award—and just the third to be nominated (after *The Exorcist* and *Jaws*)—was as taut as a Hitchcock thriller (if a lot more graphic), thanks to the masterful hand of best director Jonathan Demme and a terrifyingly good performance by best actor Anthony Hopkins as Dr. Hannibal Lecter. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Beauty and the Beast*, *JFK*, *The Prince of Tides*, *Bugsy*. **SNUBBED** *Thelma and Louise*.

## 16 **The Apartment** 1960

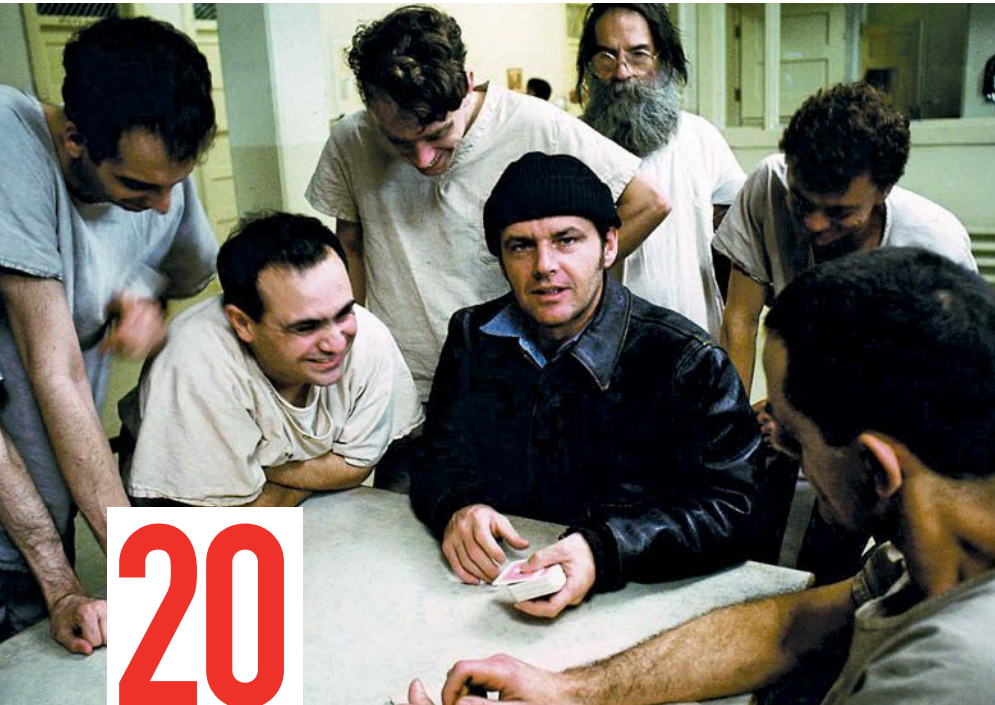
Arguably Billy Wilder's greatest film (better even than *Some Like It Hot* and *Sunset Boulevard*), *The Apartment* strikes an unflinching balance between his brand of urbane comedy and misanthropic drama, delivered with heartbreaking understatement by Shirley MaLaine and Jack Lemmon. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Elmer Gantry*, *The Alamo*, *Sons and Lovers*, *The Sundowners*. **SNUBBED** Hitchcock's genre-bending *Psycho* and Jean-Luc Godard's transformational *Breathless*.

## 15 **Midnight Cowboy** 1969

Considering 1969's other nominees, it's a miracle that best director John Schlesinger's X-rated film won. Even now, after years of edgy indie fare filled with desperate losers, *Cowboy's* hopelessness remains singular, as do the fearless performances of Dustin Hoffman and Jon Voight (as a gay prostitute!). **WHAT IT BEAT** *Anne of the Thousand Days*, *Hello, Dolly!*, *Z*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*.

## 14 **Rebecca** 1940

Alfred Hitchcock's first American project was released in a year when at least three other nominees were arguably as good, if not better. But the gothic thriller remains startlingly suspenseful and haunting, as well as beautifully constructed. Even the stagey acting of Laurence Olivier and



## 20

## **ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST** 1975

Best director Milos Forman's adaptation of Ken Kesey's seminal novel is a microcosm of the culture wars inflaming America in the 1970s. Set in a mental hospital with one hell of a nurse (best actress Louise Fletcher), best actor Jack Nicholson gives the bravura performance that certified his status as king of crazy. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Barry Lyndon*, *Dog Day Afternoon*, *Jaws*, *Nashville*. **TRIVIA** The appropriately oddball ensemble introduced Danny DeVito, Brad Dourif and Christopher Lloyd.

## Culture

Joan Fontaine feels intentional. **WHAT IT BEAT** *All This and Heaven Too*, *Foreign Correspondent*, *Kitty Foyle*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Our Town*, *The Letter*, *The Great Dictator*, *The Long Voyage Home*, *The Philadelphia Story*. **TRIVIA** Rebecca was Hitchcock's only best picture win; he never won best director.

### 13 **Lawrence Of Arabia** 1962

The Hollywood spectacle to end all spectacles, best director David Lean's nearly four-hour biopic of T.E. Lawrence used the widescreen frame unlike any film before it. It's also technically brilliant—a master class in editing, cinematography and scoring—with a towering performance by Peter O'Toole. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Mutiny on the Bounty*, *The Longest Day*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Music Man*. **SNUBBED** *Gypsy*, *The Manchurian Candidate*, *The Exterminating Angel*, *Jules et Jim*, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*.

### 12 **The French Connection** 1971

The rise of moody American auteurs continued with William Friedkin and his game-changing film about cops and drug dealers. *Connection* made a star of Gene Hackman and pulled off a death-defying verité car chase that every action filmmaker since has tried to emulate. **WHAT IT BEAT** *The Last Picture Show*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Nicholas and Alexandra*. **SNUBBED** Alan J. Pakula's exceptional thriller *Klute*, *Harold and Maude*, *McCabe & Mrs. Miller*.

### 11 **West Side Story** 1961

The adaptation of the Broadway smash (itself a riff on *Romeo and Juliet*), overseen by best director winners Robert Wise and choreographer Jerome Robbins, with music by Leonard Bernstein and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, feels as visceral as a live performance. And the topics of immigration and assimilation—is there a more enduring American storyline? **WHAT IT BEAT** *Fanny*, *The Guns of Navarone*, *The Hustler*, *Judgment at Nuremberg*. **SNUBBED** *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. **TRIVIA** *Story* holds the record for most awards won by a musical.



# 10

### **IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT** 1934

You can separate American film comedy into two periods: before *It Happened One Night* and after. Best director Frank Capra's film, the first screwball comedy, is pitch-perfect, as are its stars, best actress Claudette Colbert and best actor Clark Gable. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Cleopatra* (also starring Colbert), *Here Comes the Navy*, *Flirtation Walk*, *Imitation of Life*, *One Night of Love*, *The Gay Divorcee*, *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, *The House of Rothschild*, *The Thin Man*, *Viva Villa!*, *The White Parade*.

### 09 **The Bridge Over The River Kwai** 1957

Best director David Lean's widescreen World War II epic—the kind of bravura filmmaking that sustained Hollywood in the '50s—includes a matchless ensemble, led by William Holden and best actor Alec Guinness, whose madness we prefer to O'Toole's in *Lawrence of Arabia*. It's not as technically ambitious as the latter, or as big in scope, but *Kwai* has a rousing humanity *Lawrence* lacks. **WHAT IT BEAT** *12 Angry Men*, *Sayonara*, *Peyton Place*, *Witness for the Prosecution*. **SNUBBED** An insane number of classics: *Sweet Smell of Success*, *Paths of Glory*, *The Seventh Seal*, *Wild Strawberries*, *Throne of Blood*, *3:10 to Yuma*, *A Face in the Crowd*.

### 08 **Annie Hall** 1977

Best director Woody Allen created the blueprint for the contemporary romantic comedy. Period. Without this film—with its indelible

lead performance by best actress Diane Keaton—there is no *When Harry Met Sally* or *Sleepless in Seattle* or *The Big Sick*, and few films of any genre can touch the unbearable sadness of this unbeatably funny gem. If nothing else, it introduced nihilism to the masses. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Star Wars*, *Julia*, *The Goodbye Girl*, *The Turning Point*.

### 07 **All About Eve** 1950

Even with two other classics in the nominee mix, *Eve*, with its prescient poke at Hollywood ageism, deserved to win. Best director Joseph Mankiewicz's depiction of ruthless ambition is unparalleled, with Bette Davis—as film's most savagely witty (and quotable) narcissist, Margo Channing—giving the performance of her lauded career. **WHAT IT BEAT** Bad timing for *Sunset Boulevard*, Billy Wilder's even darker take on the aging female star, as well as *Born Yesterday*, *King Solomon's Mines* and *Father of the Bride*. **TRIVIA** The film's all-time record of 14 nominations led to another win for Mankiewicz: best screenplay.

### 06 **On the Waterfront** 1954

Best director Elia Kazan's uncompromising take on the dangers of standing up and speaking out gave best actor Marlon Brando his greatest role: Terry Malloy, a longshoreman who “coulda been a contenda” and instead gets blacklisted and beaten for taking sides against the mob-run docks. One of the great American morality tales, and perhaps self-serving absolution, it came two years after Kazan named names in front of the House Un-American Activities Committee, which led to the blacklisting of many of his Hollywood colleagues. **WHAT IT BEAT** *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, *Three Coins in the Fountain*, *The Caine Mutiny*, *The Country Girl*. **SNUBBED** *A Star Is Born*, *Rear Window*, *Seven Samurai*.

### 05 **Casablanca** 1942

On its face, best director Michael Curtiz's classic is the kind of sophisticated doomed romance Hollywood (and viewers) can't get enough of. But scratch at its narrative, and you find an allegory for America's isolationism on the eve of World War



II. It might not be subtle, but who can resist a call to arms issued by Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman? **WHAT IT BEAT** *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, *In Which We Serve*, *The Human Comedy*, *The Ox-Bow Incident*, *Watch on the Rhine*, *Song of Bernadette*, *The More the Merrier*, *Madame Curie*, *Heaven Can Wait*.

**04** **Sunrise 1927-28**  
The second winner at the first Academy Awards (for unique and artistic production) went to *Sunrise*—a film so beautiful, sophisticated and humanistic that it can feel as if movies are still trying to catch up. Director F. W. Murnau pushed the silent film form to its limits, creating a new visual vocabulary. **WHAT IT BEAT** *The Crowd* and *Chang: A Drama of the Wilderness*.

**03** **The Godfather 1972**  
Looked at one way, the *Gone With the Wind* for Italian-Americans is everything Hollywood was supposed to be moving away from in 1972: a nearly three-hour period film starring best actor Marlon Brando that had impeccable production values and was based on a best-selling novel. But in the hands of upstart Francis Ford Coppola, the adaptation of Mario Puzo's pulpy Mafia tale became a showcase for what a new generation could accomplish. **WHAT IT BEAT** Best director Bob Fosse's sublimely transgressive *Cabaret*, as well as *Deliverance*, *Sounder* and *The Emigrants*.

**02** **Gone With The Wind 1939**  
It's racist, too long, melodramatic and lacks a singular vision (thanks to three directors). And yet, if we're talking studio system movie magic and the definition of superstar charisma (best actress Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable), you can't do better than *Gone With the Wind*. As the late critic Judith Crist wrote, it is "undoubtedly still the best and most durable piece of popular entertainment to have come off the Hollywood assembly lines." **WHAT IT BEAT** Bad timing for another of Hollywood's greatest achievements, *The Wizard of Oz*, but also *Dark Victory*, *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*, *Love Affair*, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, *Ninotchka*, *Of Mice and Men*, *Stagecoach*, *Wuthering Heights*. A banner year for film.



**01**

**THE GODFATHER: PART II 1974**

Best director Francis Ford Coppola used the second chapter of his Mafia saga to deliver a sophisticated interrogation of power and its corrosive consequences. Coppola weaves a seamless and dazzling intergenerational tapestry that sets the rousing rise of young mob boss Vito Corleone (best supporting actor Robert De Niro) against the tragic debasement 40 years later of his son and heir, Michael (Al Pacino)—with the fortunes of the family empire sitting at the corrupt center. It's an audacious feat of storytelling and filmmaking, closer to Shakespeare than DeMille, that has yet to be topped. **WHAT IT BEAT** A star-studded dud, *The Towering Inferno*, and three greats: *Chinatown*, *Lenny* (pitting Coppola against Fosse again) and *The Conversation* (pitting Coppola against himself). **TRIVIA** Coppola had such a hard time making *The Godfather*, he suggested Paramount find a replacement director. One of his suggestions? Martin Scorsese. The studio passed. **N**

## PARTING SHOT

# Gloria Allred

**➤** SHE'S BEEN FIGHTING FOR WOMEN FOR 42 YEARS, BUT ATTORNEY Gloria Allred, 76, says she's just getting started. "Women depend on me to be strong, to be fearless and to protect their rights," says the star of the new Netflix documentary *Seeing Allred*. Her ferocity and steadfast commitment to women began after a brutal attack when she was a young woman on vacation in Mexico. (Her date, a doctor, pulled a gun on her.) The subsequent rape led to a pregnancy that she chose to abort in pre-*Roe v. Wade* America, and the botched procedure resulted in a hemorrhage and high fever. The female nurse at the hospital told her, "This'll teach you a lesson."

Allred's personal experiences help her understand the hundreds of women she has represented over her long career, including accusers of Bill Cosby and Donald Trump. In the documentary, she describes the modern world as a war zone for women, "with real consequences—emotional, physical, financial, social—every way, every day." And, as she tells *Newsweek*, the fight has just begun.

## The global #MeToo movement has, not surprisingly, caused backlash. What's your response?

Backlash is a sign that we're doing something significant, that this is a significant moment. #MeToo already represents change because women have decided they're no longer going to suffer in silence or let fear rule their lives. Women are feeling empowered in a way they never did before, and this, for many of them, is a form of justice. It's not a conventional form, but it is a form of justice.

## Your critics over the years have been incredibly harsh. You've been called a lot of names. Does that take a personal toll?

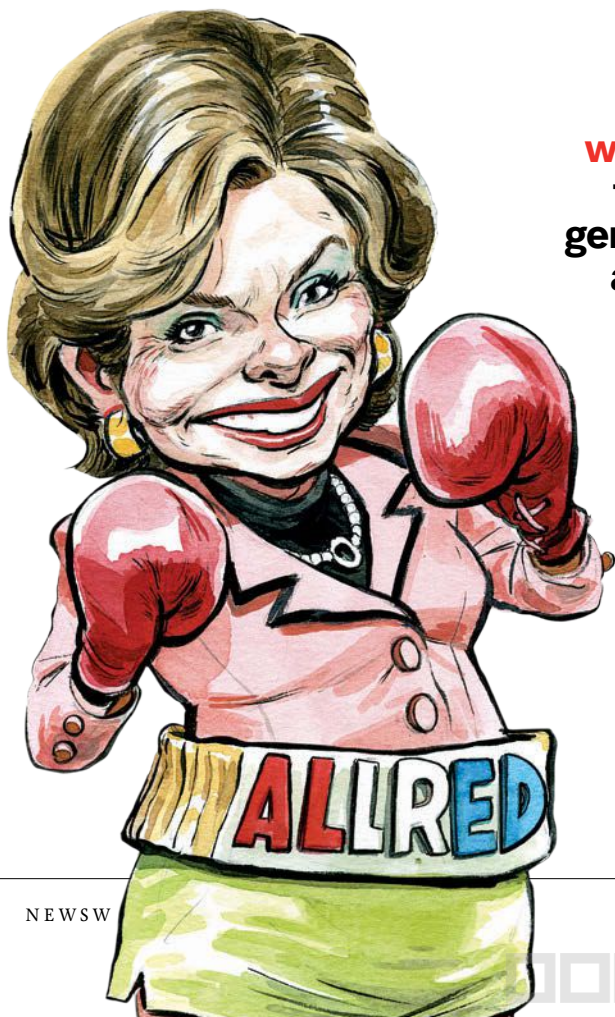
No personal toll. None. And I get a lot of positive feedback too. But this is the price. To paraphrase the suffragists, any woman who fears the criticism of men will never make any meaningful difference for women's rights.

And if they're calling me names, it means I've won my argument. If they had a good argument against me, they would present it. Calling me a four-letter word referring to a woman's genitals? That's all you have? They might as well haul out the white flag of surrender.

## What's next in the fight?

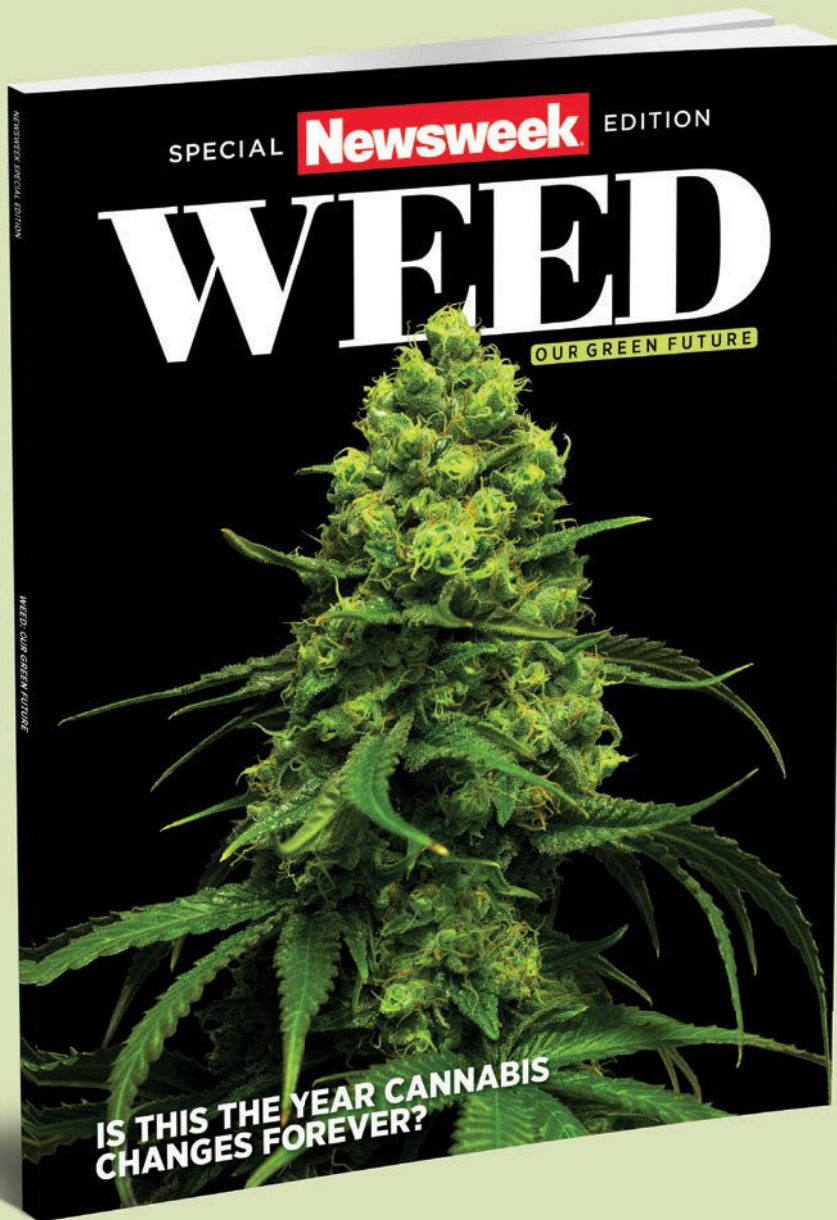
We need to add the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution to guarantee women equal rights under the law. It's been 95 years since Alice Paul first proposed it in 1923! —Stav Ziv

**"Calling me a four-letter word referring to a woman's genitals? That's all you have?"**





# WILL 2018 LEAD TO MONUMENTAL CHANGE?



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