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**Subject:** The New York Times Magazine: The Death of Michael Deng

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Thursday, August 10, 2017

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“That final walk, in which the pledge is shepherded to his Big by all of the fraternity’s members, is intended to teach him that solidarity with his fellow Asians is his only hope of making it in a white world,” Jay Caspian Kang writes in this week’s cover story, about a violent fraternity hazing and the search for Asian-American identity. [The death of Michael Deng](#), 19, during a ritual meant to connect him with his Asian fraternity brothers, reveals much about how fraught that search can be.

Elsewhere in the magazine, Caelainn Hogan writes about the terrible choice facing parents of [children with cancer in Syria](#): risk traveling for treatment, or risk forgoing it. Ruth Franklin profiles Claire Messud, one of our foremost [chroniclers of women’s hidden appetites](#). And Jane Coaston writes about “[virtue signaling](#)” — taking a stand mostly to look noble doing it — and our inability to believe other people hold real convictions.

Happy reading,

**Jake Silverstein**

Editor in Chief



Jamie Chung for The New York Times

# What a Death Revealed About the Painful Search for an Asian-American Identity

By JAY CASPIAN KANG

When Michael Deng, a college freshman, joined an Asian-American fraternity, he was looking for a sense of belonging and identity. Two months later he was dead.

 Rahima Chawish, 5, from Deir Ezzor, about to get treatment for kidney cancer at Al-Bayrouni University Hospital cancer center in Damascus.

Sebastián Liste/NOOR, for The New York Times

 Claire Messud

Irina Rozovsky for The New York Times

## ‘The War Is Easier on Me Than the Sickness of My Child’

By CAELAINN HOGAN

Every day in Syria, parents of children with cancer face a wrenching choice: to risk traveling for treatment, or to risk forgoing it.

## Who’s Afraid of Claire Messud?

By RUTH FRANKLIN

The novelist’s characters have been called “difficult women.” She would say they are simply women with desires.

## Victory in the Shadows

By TEJU COLE

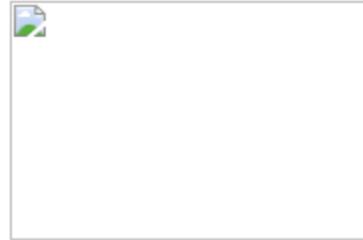
Through blur, darkness and drift, the photographer Santu Mofokeng shows that black South Africans are more than their suffering



# How Do I Deal With a Gun at a Relative's Home?

By KWAME ANTHONY APPIAH

The magazine's Ethicist columnist on a family's prejudices against gun ownership and the guilt of making more money teaching English as a native speaker.



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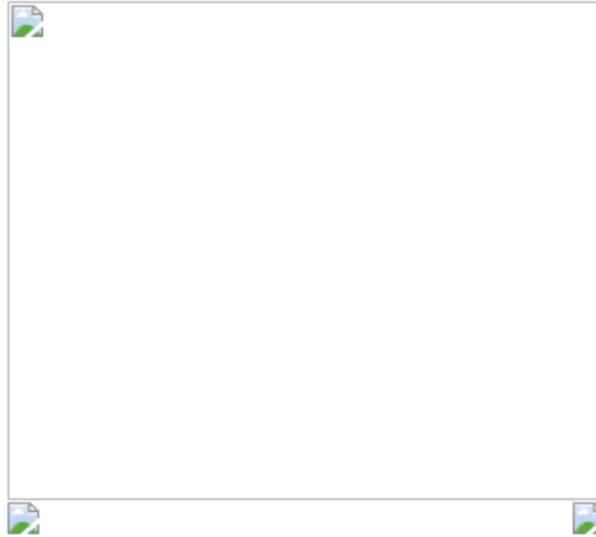


Illustration by Derek Brahney

# 'Virtue Signaling' Isn't the Problem. Not Believing One Another Is.

By JANE COASTON

The more sheltered and fragmented American communities become, the harder we find it to trust that other people hold real convictions.

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 Gum chewing isn't stimulant and addictive, like cigarette smoking. Its pleasure is closer to that of a pacifier.

Sam Kaplan for The New York Times

 Ispahan Sablés.

Gentl and Hyers for The New York Times. Food stylist: Maggie Ruggiero. Prop stylist: Amy Wilson.

## Letter of Recommendation: Gum

By KARL OVE KNAUSGAARD

Gum chewing isn't stimulating and addictive, like cigarette smoking. Its pleasure is closer to that of a pacifier.

## Elevating the Humble Cookie

By DORIE GREENSPAN

Pierre Hermé's raspberry and rose sablés taste wonderfully complex, but making them is easy.

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### TALK

## Andy Slavitt Wants to Unite America on Health Care

Interview by ANA MARIE COX

The former head of Medicaid on the most recent efforts to repeal or replace the A.C.A. and whether President Trump can distinguish between health and life insurance.

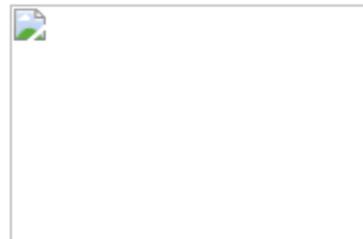


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## How to Have Your Health Food and Love It, Too

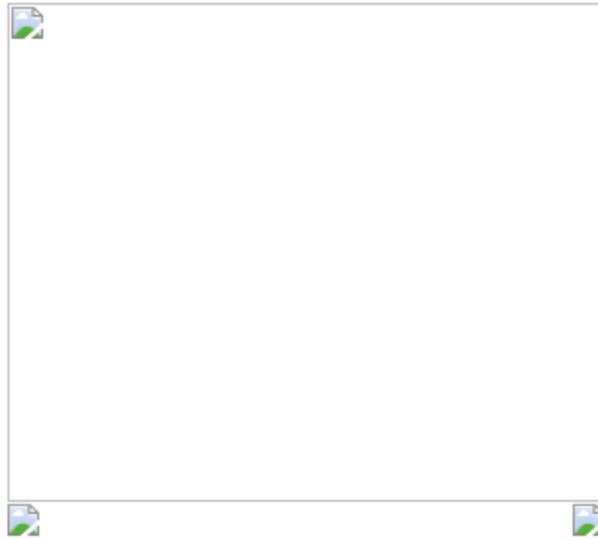
By GABRIELLE HAMILTON

Make your own tofu, then serve it with a French butter sauce – the best of two very different kinds of cooking.



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