

# Why are people talking about these stories?\*

**A Nazi party game**

**Paranoia in American politics**

**Zadie Smith on who owns black pain**

**In praise of idleness**

**A fresh take on Thomas Merton**

**The internet and the new age of  
authoritarianism**

**Homicides among the  
elderly: mercy or malice?**



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\* See page one of the enclosed letter.

**PLUS:** Look for your special offer from HARPER'S Magazine.

**Look inside to find your link to the past ...  
your window to the present ...  
and your gateway to the future.**

- > A Nazi party game
- > Paranoia in American politics
- > Zadie Smith on who owns black pain

These are just some of the most popular stories chosen by the readers of *HARPER'S Magazine* this year.

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Dear Reader,

George Santayana, the novelist and philosopher, famously said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

Looking at the world today, Santayana's observation is truer than ever. It seems that the past is repeating itself to a disturbing degree right before our eyes:

What's  
going on?

THEN: In 1939, on the eve of World War II, Nazism had become an ideology of hate for millions of people.

NOW: In 2017, the streets of Charlottesville, Virginia, were flooded by hundreds of hate-mongering bigots spewing anti-Semitic venom.

THEN: In 1965, more than 100 members of Congress opposed the Voting Rights Act.

NOW: In 2013, the Supreme Court gutted a key part of the legislation and stripped away hard-fought protections for citizens of color.

THEN: In September 1963, four African-American girls were killed in the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham.

NOW: In June 2015, nine African-American parishioners were killed in the gun attack on the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston.

THEN: Before the *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973, abortion was outlawed in nearly every state in the United States.

NOW: In 2019, Alabama made abortion a felony again, joining a growing number of states passing punitive laws that criminalize a woman's right to choose.

Through all these milestones, one publication has borne witness to the best and worst ... the famous and infamous ... the celebrated and sinful in American and international culture.

*HARPER'S Magazine.*

In a moment, I'll tell you how you can subscribe to *HARPER'S Magazine* at over 85% off the regular annual cover price.

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*HARPER'S Magazine* is the oldest general-interest monthly in America, rolling off the press for the

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... readers have turned to *HARPER'S Magazine* for independent reporting, incisive commentary, and fearless truth-telling.

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- > The opt-in Friday newsletter that puts the week's events into context with curated articles
- > **PLUS:** Your subscription entitles you to full and complete access to the Online Archive: every issue of *HARPER'S Magazine* from June 1850 to the current issue, easily searchable and utterly fascinating. Every article, every story, every word—at your fingertips. This is time travel at its best.

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Sincerely,



John R. MacArthur  
President and Publisher  
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P.S. William Faulkner said, "The past is never dead. It's not even past." In that spirit, *HARPER'S Magazine* gives you historical context and illuminates your understanding of today's turbulent times in ways you don't find anywhere else. Save over \$70 off the regular annual cover price when you subscribe today.

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# HARPER'S Magazine



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Charlottesville, VA, August 2017



Madison Square Garden, NY, February 1939

## Worried that history is repeating itself?

### Holding up a mirror to our times for 169 years

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- John Muir on the living glaciers of California (November 1875)
- Winston Churchill with a plea for the American tradition (January 1916)
- H. G. Wells on the idea of a world encyclopedia (April 1937)
- Thurman Wesley Arnold on how not to get investigated (November 1948)
- Charles Schaeffer and Art Cosing on the perils of air pollution (October 1959)
- David Halberstam on the face of the enemy in Vietnam (February 1965)
- Seymour Hersh on the My Lai massacre (May 1970)
- Carlos Fuentes on the Monroe Doctrine (August 1981)
- Kurt Vonnegut on his relationship with technology (September 1996)
- Barry Graham on America's toughest sheriff (April 2001)
- Thomas Frank on the N.R.A. and Hollywood (March 2013)
- Sam Frank on the apocalyptic libertarians of Silicon Valley (January 2015)
- Gemma Sieff on looking for love in the age of Tinder (February 2016)
- Alexandra Starr on sexual abuse and the Olympics (November 2017)
- Abe Streep on a Syrian refugee family settling in Montana (June 2018)
- Ferris Jabr on the story of storytelling (March 2019)

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# SEEKING THE TRUTH

## ABOUT YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

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*HARPER'S Magazine* publishes some of the finest journalists and writers of the day. You'll find thought-provoking, engaging, deeply reported work that tackles the people, topics, and issues affecting your life.

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How's this for relevance: A piece on fake news from October 1925 by Edward McKernon and an essay on privacy from July 1955 by William Faulkner.

### The HARPER'S Index

Perhaps the most well-known feature of the magazine, the *HARPER'S Index* serves up a heaping slice of life through offbeat, surprising, irresistible figures and stats.

Here's one: The number of states that allow roadkill to be salvaged for food: 31

### A worldwide sampling of sources

In Readings, you'll get excerpts and short takes on everything from accounts of nonsexual orgasms from the *International Journal of Sexual Health* to a radio interview with psychic Uri Geller to public apologies by U.S. politicians—and hear from voices that will have you shouting, “I didn't know that!”

### Breakthroughs in science

In Findings, you'll get a one-page summary of the weird and wonderful, unusual and unbelievable discoveries, experiments, studies, and results from the frontiers of science—delivered in a deadpan style.

Here's one: People have better working memory if, in their native language, meanings remain, until the end of the sentence, unclear.

### Gripping, evocative short fiction

Take a break from the headlines and political battles and escape into the proverbially good story, rendered by grand masters and rising stars in the literary firmament, such as Robert Tindall · Joyce Carol Oates · John Barth · Lucinda Rosenfeld · Rick Moody · Alice Munro · Bob Shacochis · Heidi Julavits · Paul Yoon · and a galaxy of others.

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