A woman hailed the chief, resist-style — and lost her job

It was the middle-finger salute seen around the world. Juli Briskman’s protest aimed at the presidential motorcade that roared past her while she was on her cycling path in Northern Virginia late last month became an instantly viral photo.

Turns out it has now cost the 50-year-old marketing executive her job.

On Halloween, after Briskman gave her bosses at Akima, a government contracting firm, a heads-up that she was the unidentified cyclist in the photo, they took her into a room and fired her, she said, escorting her out of the building with a box of her things.

“I wasn’t even at work when I did that,” Briskman said. “But they told me I violated the code-of-conduct policy.”

Her bosses at Akima, who have not returned emails and calls requesting comment, showed her the blue-highlighted Section 4.3 of the firm’s social-media policy when they canned her.

“Covered Social Media Activity that contains discriminatory, obscene malicious or threatening content, is knowingly false, create [sic] a hostile work environment, or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and will be subject to discipline up to an [sic] including termination of employment.”

But Briskman wasn’t wearing anything that connected her to the company.

Juli Briskman was observed flipping off President Trump’s motorcade outside his golf course in Sterling, Va., on Oct. 28.
when she was on her ride, nor is there anything on her personal social-media accounts — where she wordlessly posted the photo without identifying herself — to link her to the firm.

She identifies herself as an Akima employee on her LinkedIn account but makes no mention of the middle-finger photo there.

Wait. It gets even more obscene.

Because Briskman was in charge of the firm’s social-media presence during her six-month tenure there, she recently flagged something that did link her company to some pretty ugly stuff.

As she was monitoring Facebook this summer, she found a public comment by a senior director at the company in an otherwise civil discussion by one of his employees about the Black Lives Matter movement.

“You’re a f----- Libtard a------,” the director injected, using his profile that clearly and repeatedly identifies himself as an employee of the firm.

In fact, the person he aimed that comment at was so offended by the intrusion into the conversation and the coarse nature of it that he challenged the director on representing Akima that way.

So Briskman flagged the exchange to senior management.

Did the man, a middle-aged executive who had been with the company for seven years, get the old “Section 4.3” boot?

Nope. He cleaned up the comment, spit-shined his public profile and kept on trucking at work.

But the single mother of two teens who made an impulsive gesture while on her bike on her day off?

Adios, amiga.

Her mistake, said Bethesda lawyer Bradley Shear, who specializes in social-media issues, was her honesty.

“You can’t see her face; she is totally unidentified in that picture,” he said. “But once she identified herself to her employer, they had to consider that information.”

The company takes into account how the image of an employee flipping off the president looks and whether it may draw negative attention or threats, said Shear, who has a blog devoted to such matters.

But what about the First Amendment?

That will save you from being punished by the government for your words, but it doesn’t protect your paycheck, he said. “You can say whatever you want,” he said. “You might not get jailed for what you say, but you might not get the job you want.”

Briskman is not a strident activist.

In fact, after years of working all over the world as part of the nation’s diplomatic corps, she’s usually pretty reserved.

“I think I gave money for clean water once,” she said.

During the Women’s March the day after Trump’s inauguration, she couldn’t make it into Washington. Instead, she said, she stood in somber protest outside the CIA headquarters with a “Not My President” sign.
That day on her bike, she wasn’t planning to make a statement.

She was feeling much like many other Americans who are frustrated with Trump’s behavior and the way he has performed as president.

“Here’s what was going through my head that day: ‘Really? You’re golfing again?’” Briskman said.

She had been pounding out her daily exercise, a little shorter than usual because she was still recovering from running the Marine Corps Marathon, when the phalanx of black cars passed her.

She’d been chewing on the state of the nation during her ride — imagining the devastation in Puerto Rico, furious that young immigrants brought to the United States as children could be deported, despondent over the deaths and devastation in Las Vegas, concerned about her friends in the diplomatic corps who said their daily job is now being the laughingstock of the world — when the presidential golfing procession interrupted her meditation.

“I was thinking about all this, tooling along, when I see the black cars come and I remember, oh, yeah, he was back on the golf course,” she said.

So she did what millions of Americans do on the road every day.

Hail to the chief, resist-style.

But she couldn’t just ride off. Or watch it whoosh away. The motorcade stopped, bisecting her usual route. She knew it wouldn’t be wise to cut between the cars. And she didn’t want to stay with her routine and look like she was stalking the motorcade when it turned where she usually turned. So she decided to change her route, and punctuated the final insult with another one-fingered salute.

She had no idea the sentiment had been snapped by photographer Brendan Smialowski for Agence France-Presse and Getty Images. And that night, it started popping up all over.

A few of her friends thought they recognized her, tagged her on the photo and asked.

“I said, ‘Yeah, that’s me. Isn’t it funny?’ ” she said. Ha ha. And she posted it as her Facebook cover photo and her Twitter profile picture, so now her 24 Twitter followers could guess that it was her.

The next few days, though, it started getting nasty at the yoga studio, where she is a part-time instructor — something she does mention on Facebook. Some threatening emails came, Briskman said.

“They told the owner of the studio she should fire me,” she said. So Briskman quickly removed mention of the studio and it was all back to ommm at the yoga place and in her life. She wasn’t a celebrity. Only the back of her head and her hand were.

But knowing that connection had been made, Briskman wanted to make her bosses at Akima aware of the situation.

“It was just a heads-up,” she said.

It didn’t take long for her head to roll.

And now, heads are shaking.

Briskman has contacted the American Civil Liberties Union about the case.
Her bosses told her that they do support her First Amendment rights. But they wanted her to “be professional,” she said.

Does Briskman regret that middle finger, that reflexive moment that wasn’t all pussyhats and protest signs, that wasn’t calculated resistance, but rather a totally relatable plain-old, working-woman, living-my-life, what-the-heck-is-going-on-in-our-world reaction?

Nope. “I’d do it again,” she said.

Resist, sister.

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3 D.C. universities warn about spread of mumps

Classes in espionage at Catholic U?

3 D.C. universities warn about spread of mumps

A woman hailed the chief, resist-style — and lost her job

Protestующая женщина извинилась перед начальником — и уволилась

UMC operator criticized pre-vote

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There’s endless choice in the cereal aisle — as long as you’re partial to Cheerios

Cyclist in viral photo lost job after heads-up to boss

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Cyclist in viral photo lost job after heads-up to boss
At lunchtime Wednesday, as he basked in the late spring sun in his wheelchair, Zaan Scott said he was feeling more optimistic. And that was remarkable, considering all he’d been through over the previous five weeks.

At the beginning of April, he was a 25-year-old with a fiancee he adored and a job he loved as a Capitol Hill swim instructor. Coach Z was a pool god who got frightened children out of the shallow end and taught them how to execute a perfect freestyle stroke. He was a coach, mentor and confidant. And he was equally effective with adults who had lied for years about being able to swim.

He and Jamese Harvey, 25, had saved enough money for their wedding and...
started talking about a trip to Jamaica, too.

With one bullet, all that was lost April 9.

Scott was robbed on his way home from work, right after stopping at a South-east Washington corner store to buy Harvey the caramel turtles she loved. A panicked gunman fired, hitting Scott in the spine and leaving him paralyzed. But worse was coming for this fiercely devoted couple.

The night he was shot, Scott heard the pop of the weapon but didn’t feel pain at first. The gunman went through his pockets, he said, then ran. Scott dragged himself out of the street and onto the sidewalk, remembering the courage he asked his students to summon in the pool.

He spent two weeks in the hospital, then almost three weeks at a rehab center. Harvey, the pool manager at the Wilson Aquatic Center in Northwest Washington, held doors open, sponge-bathed him and lifted his limp legs into a car. The bullet had shattered his sixth vertebra and severed half of his spinal cord. Doctors considered removing the slug too risky, so they left it in his back.

“But I can see a silver lining, you know?” Scott said Wednesday, shedding his
thick lap blanket in the unseasonable May heat. “Maybe I’ll be able to teach from the side of the pool. Not beginners, but more advanced students. Or maybe I’ll go back to school. Something in science or math.”

The couple had even started talking about their wedding again. And the trip to Jamaica.

I went to see them at the Courtyard Marriott Hotel in Greenbelt, Md. That was where they were staying while they looked for a wheelchair-accessible apartment they could afford.

“It looks like a hospital room in there,” Harvey said.

I loved talking to them. He was quiet, with a dry sense of humor and an awkward formality. She was a boisterous over-sharer who laughed a lot.

“He shook my hand after our first date,” she said.

“It wasn’t a date,” he deadpanned.

Eye roll, her.

Family photo

Zaan Scott, 25, taught hundreds of children to swim at the William H. Rumsey Aquatic Center on Capitol Hill, where he was beloved by parents and kids alike.

She got his attention two years ago at the William H. Rumsey Aquatic Center, a Capitol Hill swim center where they worked, by pushing him into the pool after a staff meeting.

“He wasn’t talking. I knew I had to make him talk,” she said, laughing.

They were both survivors. She spent time as a kid in foster care. He spent time as a kid in a homeless shelter.

“Now, I’m just a foster kid in love,” she declared.

Eye roll, him.

Scott didn’t know how to swim until he turned 20. Before that, he was a football god. He played at Friendship Collegiate Academy Public Charter School, 6-foot-2 and 180 pounds, all muscle. He graduated and went to South Carolina State for one year, but decided that the Navy would be a better fit.

When he returned to D.C. before enlisting, he knew he’d have to learn to swim before basic training. Another Capitol Hill pool god, Maurice Edim, taught him. And in that blue-tiled haven, Scott found his calling.

“I didn’t know I was good with kids, good at teaching, until I was in that pool,” he said. “And I loved it. I don’t like lifeguarding. But teaching — I love teaching.”

So he got a job with the District’s Department of Parks and Recreation and instantly amassed a cult following among Capitol Hill parents.

He taught Amy Nazarov’s 9-year-old
son, Jake, to swim.

“Our son had long been reluctant to leave the shallow end of the pool, and we consider Zaan to be the person who helped him shed the last of that fear,” said Nazarov, one of the parents who helped Scott with his medical expenses after the robbery. “He was always patient with Jake, but he didn’t coddle him either, and that combination of traits worked really well with Jake and with tons of other kids who learned swimming from Zaan.”

Scott’s humility was refreshing in a town of self-absorbed and self-aggrandizing lawmakers, lawyers and lobbyists, she said.

“He did it with zero fanfare and total focus, though he often did it without his glasses on so he would squint at you in this endearing way trying to make out who you were,” she said.

Coach Z was on his way home from a day at the pool that Sunday in April. Harvey had just ordered dinner for them from Uber Eats when she got the call that he had been shot right in front of their apartment complex on Southern Avenue.

“He was just there in the street, and I felt so helpless,” she said. “Like someone had just ripped my heart out of my chest and was holding it out in front of me.”

After the crazy ambulance ride and all the blood and the surgery, and interviews with four detectives, she was finally able to be by his side.

“Did the food come?” he deadpanned.

“That was the moment. At that moment, when his first words were a joke, that was when I thought, ‘I want to have his children,’ ” she said.

She wasn’t leaving him. And they knew it wasn’t going to be a fairy-tale life.

The folks at the city rec department were totally supportive, promising to find alternative work for Scott. Harvey got enough unpaid leave from the Wilson pool to be able to take care of him for weeks.

But other challenges piled up quickly. Their landlord didn’t want to let them out of their lease, even though Scott couldn’t even get into the apartment in his wheelchair.

“The way they treated us was disgusting,” Harvey said. It wasn’t until she had a lawyer contact the landlords that they eventually let her pay the May rent and get out.

Then the battles over medical costs began. The hospital bills were covered. It was the rehab costs that were crushing them. That’s where their health insurance didn’t help.

Scott was in pain and struggling to accept all the things he could no longer do. It was in rehab that he cried for the first time.

Harvey was learning from the nurses how to handle his bladder bag, his medications, his legs.

“But I constantly have to be careful not to emasculate him when he’s in such a vulnerable state,” she said.

One of the parents who loved Coach Z said he should start a GoFundMe page
to help with the rehab expenses. So Harvey wrote something, they posted photos of Scott in the pool and in the hospital and in rehab. In a week, they had raised $15,000, mostly in small increments from families and friends grateful for Scott's help in their lives.

So Wednesday started out feeling good.

Scott rolled himself to breakfast, then rolled himself back into the room.

Harvey was researching cars that he would be able to drive with a joystick, and they were excited about that idea, especially because Scott loved video games.

And he really wanted to get outside, out of the chilly air conditioning of the hotel room and into the sunshine. And he wanted to go to the mall.

His mom, Rhiki Scott, showed up. She rubbed his head when she got to the lobby.

"I'm so proud of him, the way he has handled all this," she said. She cried that first day in rehab, too. But hers were tears of joy that he was still alive.

"He rolled up to the piano they had there and just started playing," she said. "And I realized how lucky we were. We could have been planning something else after that night, like a funeral."

After he'd enjoyed the sun, they all went back to the room. Scott wanted to change his shirt before going to the mall, and Harvey tapped her wristwatch. "It's time for your medication," she said.

She helped him change, and they rolled out to the parking lot.

My colleague Marvin Joseph, a Washington Post photographer, was taking pictures of the routine they've become so good at. Scott lifted himself up and swung his torso into the car, Harvey moved his legs.

Then he suddenly collapsed in her arms. "Zaan? Zaan! Zaan!" Harvey cried as he went limp. She dragged his body out of the seat and into the parking lot. "You can't breathe?" she screamed.

Joseph dropped his cameras and called 911. Harvey began doing CPR. Rhiki Scott began praying.

After some confusion about the exact location of the Courtyard, the paramedics arrived, put Scott into an ambulance and took off.

Harvey texted me a few hours later.

"Zaan died at 4 p.m.," she wrote. "My heart is enormously heavy."

D.C. police said they are waiting for an autopsy report. At that point, the robbery may become a homicide — one that took five weeks to unfold.

On Thursday, Harvey woke up, surrounded by friends and family, but feeling so alone.

"I'm like an open wound," she said. "Everything hurts."

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Europe alarmed about chaos in U.S.

President Trump on Wednesday appeared to make clear he did not care what the European Union wanted. His advisers conceded it was their goal to mend fences with Europe, but they acknowledged no one in Europe was expecting that.

Mueller's work on probe may complicate other inquiries

Mueller's appointment would do little to resolve the ongoing questions about the Trump campaign's ties to Russia.

Women with advanced breast cancer living longer

Women with advanced breast cancer are living longer, according to a new study.

Couple's love endured, then took final, tragic turn

A couple's love for each other endured until the day they were killed in a robbery.

IN THE NEWS

Controversial Fox News founder made people listen

Roger Ailes made people listen.

IN PERSPECTIVE

Couple's story of love, hope comes to sudden end

The couple's love and hope came to a tragic end.

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IN PERSPECTIVE

Couple's story of love, hope comes to sudden end

The couple's love and hope came to a tragic end.
Noose found at museum indicates we haven’t left our past behind

On Wednesday, as yellow buses disgorged flocks of school groups and as multi-generational visitors pushed wheelchairs and strollers into the Smithsonian’s compelling National Museum of African American History and Culture, something entered the building with them:

Hatred.

Sometime in the afternoon, in the gallery on segregation, someone placed the vile instrument of our country’s history of lynching — a noose — inside the museum. It was the second time in the span of a week that one was found on Smithsonian grounds. A noose was found hanging from a tree near the Hirshhorn Museum four days earlier.

But a noose inside the African American Museum was a disturbing reminder that our history of racial oppression and violence is far from over.

“The noose has long represented a deplorable act of cowardice and depravity — a symbol of extreme violence for African Americans,” Lonnie Bunch, the founding director of the museum, said in a statement. “Today’s incident is a painful reminder of the challenges that African Americans continue to face.

“This was a horrible act,” he said, “but a stark reminder of why our work is so important.”

And that’s especially true in President Trump’s America, where strident white nationalism — a movement that wants to achieve a whites-only state — is on the rise. The Southern Poverty Law Center has recorded about 1,300 incidents since the 2016 election. They are happening almost every day, all over the country.

Three people have been stabbed to death in the past two weeks by alleged white supremacists — two men defending teenage girls on a train in Portland, Ore., and Richard W. Collins III, a Bowie State University student out with friends on the University of Maryland at College Park campus.

In Los Angeles on Wednesday, someone spray-painted racist graffiti outside the home of basketball star LeBron James as he prepared for the NBA Finals.

“No matter how much money you have, no matter how famous you are, no matter
how many people admire you, being black in America is tough,” James told reporters. And he invoked the memory of Emmett Till’s mother, who forced the world to look at her lynched 14-year-old son. “The reason she had an open casket was that she wanted to show the world what her son went through as far as a hate crime and being black in America,” James said.

Till’s casket is on display at the African American Museum, where the noose was left the same day James’s house was vandalized.

Assuming the noose was left by a racist white person, it shouldn’t be too hard to find the culprit. Far too few white people go there.

When the museum opened in September amid the ugly rhetoric of the Trump presidential campaign, I begged my fellow white Americans to please go to the museum.

Because this place isn’t just black history. It’s America’s history.

And the searing, soaring five-story museum fills the gaps in our country’s complicated story that too many of us have forgotten, sanitized or simply never knew.

But white folks weren’t listening too well.

The Smithsonian doesn’t keep track of the races of the more than 1 million visitors who have flocked to the museum since it opened. But I could see it every time I passed the building and during my four trips inside. The vast majority of visitors are black.

The very crowd with the most to learn, the Americans wrestling hardest with the legacy of race in their country, seemed to be avoiding the place.

I went to the museum Wednesday to see whether my impression was correct.

And with each wave of visitors holding their timed-entry passes, except for the school groups, it was always the same. Black, black, black, black, white, white, black, black, black, black.

“No matter how many people admire you, being black in America is tough.”

Basketball star LeBron James

“I don’t want to get you in trouble, but you’re here every day,” I said to one security guard. “Would you say this is the demographic profile you see every day?”

“Yes. I’d say about 10 percent, 20 percent white,” the guard said.

Same answer from all of the other employees who were kind enough to talk to me.

Marcia Lawrence and her friend Mike Goulet were among the white visitors in the 10:30 a.m. wave. They came from Connecticut, and Lawrence’s daughter, a history teacher in Pennsylvania, got their passes ahead of time.

“We’re all together in this, we’re all one country, and we should learn about our
country that way,” she said.

There were also plenty of white folks who were thwarted by the museum’s popularity.

“We’re here from Memphis, and we really want to go,” one white couple told me. “But we just didn’t get passes today.”

It’s still a hot ticket. And to get in, you’ve got to go online to get free, timed-entry passes or get lucky enough to score the walk-up passes released throughout the day.

Not surprisingly, black tourists are more purposeful about coming to the museum. They reserve the passes online, then build a trip around them.

The Morwoods, a white family visiting from San Diego, got lucky with walk-up passes on Wednesday.

When they left the museum before lunch Wednesday and blinked in the bright sun outside, they were trying to digest what they had just seen.

“It’s just, why isn’t this in all other museums?” Jenna Morwood, 43, asked. “I mean, when you see the impact, the rich history, and you see what was left out of all these other museums across the country, you wonder. And you realize how white-centric we are.”

She got it.

And so did the eighth-graders in watermelon-pink school shirts from De Kalb, Tex.

“What really got me was how many people didn’t survive the trip over,” said Maebry Petty, 13, shaking her head a bit. “Those slave ships.”

The millions brought in chains to the United States also stunned her dad, Ray Petty, 37, who’d never been to Washington and was now glad he’d chaperoned the trip.

One of the other teens in their group said that learning this history “was like learning about the Holocaust. We have to.”

We have to.

The waves of middle-schoolers gave me hope. They are learning far more about our nation’s truth than their parents and grandparents did.

But when that noose was found just a few hours later, I couldn’t believe it.

Someone walked inside the museum and ignored the power and meaning of the child-size shackles, the human bill of sale, Emmett Till’s casket and the gruesome photos of lynchings. A noose placed alongside these artifacts yanked us back into that past, reminding us that the most virulent strains of racism are still with us.

“We haven’t seen such mainstream support for hate in decades, not since the civil rights era 50 years ago,” Southern Poverty Law Center spokesman Ryan Lenz told Smithsonian magazine.

Police cordoned off the section where the noose was found and removed it as evidence.

When the investigation is over, they should bring it back. Leave it right where they found it. And the museum can put it in a glass case, with a marker noting: “Noose. Symbol of contemporary hatred and racism. 2017.”

This isn’t history yet.

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Noose found at museum indicates we haven’t left our past behind

Next chief of Fairfax schools is no stranger

SPORTING THEIR SPELLING SKILLS IN PRIME TIME.

In 2 years, idea for a shared pool hit bottom

PETRA DIONIS
A hateful sign that racism isn’t history yet

THE WEATHER
Demolition at a storage facility means discarding people, too

Gut-wrenching decisions have been made this week in the dirty, musty-smelling halls of a storage facility several blocks from the U.S. Capitol.

Capital Self Storage is on red alert, the loudspeaker crackling with the countdown of how many hours are left before the building in Northeast Washington is gone. No one is obsessing about former FBI director James B. Comey’s testimony in front of the Senate Intelligence Committee here. Instead, a man in a straw fedora is pushing out cartloads of file boxes, another man is moving stacks of oil paintings and dozens of folks are stuffing garbage bags with all of their earthly possessions, then wandering, a little lost, like wartime refugees in the streets.

Plenty of stuff didn’t make the cut.

Trophies and tutus, Grandma’s broken armoire, faded photos of women in bikinis, Auntie’s china, calculus textbooks, the box of Wheaties with the Redskins on it, and at least one full dress military uniform were left behind, in drifts and piles.

The stuff? It’s just stuff. Probably a good commentary on our consumer culture. But there’s more going on here, a sadder story of a changing city and its human toll.

Because in this place, people are being discarded, too.

“It was the only place that let me keep some of my things. My life, you know? My dignity,” said Kathalene H. Kilpatrick, 74, from her perch in one of the bargain, top

Debris and abandoned possessions litter the hallways at Capital Self Storage in Northeast Washington.
units, where $40 a month lets her hold on to the remnants of her tattered life.

Like many storage facilities across the country, this one also served as a halfway house for the city’s hidden homeless. These are folks who still have the possessions that proved they were once part of mainstream, housed society, but have lost the place to put them. They still have lives, just not homes.

Many of them are employed. And each morning, as the loading bay doors rolled open, they’d pour into the warehouse and begin their morning routine. Pants were ironed on boards dragged into the hallway, irons, hair clippers and small TVs were plugged into extension cords, shaving was done.

There were waiters changing into work clothes; handymen getting their tools. A little deodorant, some mouthwash, and they were ready for the day.

Eldon Garrett, left, helps a friend, Kathaleone H. Kilpatrick, 74, move out of her storage unit before demolition begins at Capital Self Storage in Northeast Washington.
At night, when the storage facility locked up and the longtime manager patrolled the hallways to urge everyone to leave, these folks slept in shelters, or on friends’ couches or in a cousin’s spare bedroom. Officially part of the homeless population, but not totally disenfranchised. For many of them, it was a workable, by-the-bootstraps, self-styled social safety net.

There were 1,070 units, and the former business manager there told me she estimated that between 30 and 40 percent were rented by homeless folks.

Kilpatrick stays in a shelter or sleeps in Franklin Square park on mild nights. She was fierce in her day — one of the city’s first female bus drivers, roaring through the nation’s capital, shifting all those gears and pumping the clutch when so many believed a woman couldn’t do such work.

But she lost her savings after her daughter was killed in a domestic-violence murder-suicide, and she found herself raising her grandson. He’s in the military now, but she was evicted from her senior housing unit after too many clashes with her landlord over the unit’s bedbug problem a couple of years ago and hasn’t found a new place since then.

So now she’s living rough, a homeless advocate who shows up at every public meeting with D.C. Mayor Muriel E. Bowser (D) to encourage her to find better solutions for homeless senior citizens. There’s one Friday. She asks everyone to be there.

This storage unit was her base of operations, her safe place.

“As if I get someone to drive me to Rhode Island Avenue, they have units there,” she said, joining many of the homeless folks moving their stuff to a facility in another part of the city. “But it’s not so cheap. Not sure how I’m going to pay for it.”

That facility charges twice — about $64 for a 5-by-5 space — what Capital Self Storage charged.

“It was the only place that let me keep some of my things. My life, you know? My dignity.”

Kathalene H. Kilpatrick, 74, a retired bus driver who is now homeless and rented a storage unit at Capital Self Storage

As my husband and I joined the evacuation frenzy — moving sleds, his aunt’s rock maple dresser we can’t part with, skis and the kids’ boogie boards that never fit into our small city townhouse — we said goodbye to some of the folks we’d seen there over the years.

Eric Sheptock, one of the city’s most vocal homeless advocates, was on our floor of the warehouse, dragging his bag of stuff to a new place when I ran into him.

In many of his meetings with city and nonprofit organization officials, the issue of storage comes up as one of the many casualties of gentrification, he said.

“Three laundromats that I’ve used over the years have been shut down,” Shep-
tock said. “The storage near Fourth and H Northeast was closed a couple of years ago. Different amenities used by the poor and homeless are being taken away.”

The city is quickly becoming a place only for people who can afford a shiny, new condominium with ample closets and laundry rooms. There’s an REI in the neighborhood now. And more places with $14 cocktails.

The old warehouse — which is in a part of town now called NoMa — will be gutted like so many others have, two years after developers bought it and began touting its location near a Metro stop — an asset that drew homeless folks, too. It will become a boutique hotel and luxury apartments.

It was built in 1931 as National Capital Press, a printing facility that turned out war manuals, bulletins for the Pan-American Union, the Congressional Record and the Choctaw Indian language version of the Catechism of the Catholic Religion, according to the D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board’s summary of the developer’s plans.

During the move-out this week, developers walked through to check on progress, men in starched shirts and khaki pants who tucked their arms in, careful to avoid touching the open metal doors and the filthy railings on stairwells.

As units were emptied, a tent city bloomed along the sidewalk outside the warehouse, folks who truly had no place else to go.

I talked with one man who came here from West Africa two years ago. He was working as a nurse but was recently laid off. He sat outside the warehouse with two suitcases, a duffle bag and a backpack. He wasn’t sure how he’d be able to carry it all to the friend who said he’d store the stuff for him.

“This was the best bargain in America,” he said, waving toward his old unit. “It made America possible for me. Now the city is changing. America is changing.”

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Demolition at a storage facility means discarding people, too

“It made America possible for me”: Final moments in a refuge for the homeless

Va. Democrats court black voters

New science center a path to the future

Metro’s latest hurdle: Dissent

New science center has a tech upgrade

It’s Bowie State’s turn.

“Here at the barber shop, we’ve got to be important. ... I’m going to walk, but we’ve got to do some research first.”

Artists say Pride festival should ditch corporate ties

Bowie State.

“Just having a place for the homeless to talk and laugh, or even sleep in, is a selling point.”

To achieve this mission, [Metro’s] board committed to a $5 billion plan for an improved system “safe and reliable,” …

“Once the only place that let me keep some of my things. Hi life, you know? Hi dignity.”

“Just having a place for the homeless to talk and laugh, or even sleep in, is a selling point.”
President Trump lit every one of those torches in Charlottesville.

Yes, the white supremacists have always been with us. A parade of racist bigots is no surprise to anyone familiar with our history, especially those who have been the target of hatred and violence for centuries.

But when the mob of white men marched in Charlottesville carrying flaming torches Friday night shouting “Heil Trump” as the curtain-raiser for a day of violent clashes with counterprotesters that left three people dead, they showed the world that America is once again playing with fire.

And Trump was the one with the match.

The symbolism was not subtle. Torches, witch hunts, flaming crosses — they all stretch back to our country’s founding. All those white-power bros knew exactly the kind of fear they were trying to evoke, even if their tiki torches came from Home Depot’s end-of-the-season patio sale.

The Nazi and Confederate flags were equally chilling to the millions of Americans who lost relatives in the Holocaust or in the fight against Hitler, or those with vivid memories of relentless racial oppression, including lynchings, church bombings and assassinations at the hands of the Ku Klux Klan and other white supremacist terrorists.

Now we’re live-streaming that very same hatred while Trump looks the other way. It was 90 years ago that Fred Trump, the president’s father, was arrested for failing to disperse at a Ku Klux Klan rally in Queens that sounded a lot like the scene at Charlottesville.

Except today, there are no hoods.

Donald Trump gave everyone permission to take those hoods off with his winks, nods and refusal to take a moral stand on racial hatred and intimidation during his campaign and during the first six months of his presidency. He’d already spent years questioning the birthplace and legitimacy of President Barack Obama, the nation’s first black commander in chief. And the haters loved him for it.

On Saturday, the president stayed
silent at his New Jersey golf club for hours, even as former KKK grand wizard David Duke declared Charlottesville a “turning point” for a movement that aims to “fulfill the promises of Donald Trump.”

First, he offered a vague tweet condemning hatred without any explicit reference to the hundreds of men, some wearing red Make America Great Again hats, who chanted “White lives matter,” “You will not replace us” and “Jews will not replace us.”

It wasn’t until a driver with alleged Nazi sympathies used an Islamic State-inspired tactic and plowed into a crowd of peaceful counter-demonstrators, injuring 19 and killing one woman, that Trump addressed the terrorist attack on his own soil.

“We condemn in the strongest possible terms this egregious display of hatred, bigotry and violence on many sides. On many sides,” he said.

Wrong.

“There is only one side,” former vice president Joe Biden succinctly replied on Twitter.

Trump is so afraid of offending his Tiki Tribe that he didn’t even own his flaccid statement with “I.”

On Sunday morning, his daughter Ivanka Trump finally called out the cancer that is at the heart of this domestic terrorism.

“There should be no place in society for racism, white supremacy and neo-nazis,” she tweeted.

She, however, is not the commander in chief.

We are the ones who have to extinguish the blaze our president sparked. Democrat, Republican, independent — it doesn’t matter. Everyone must reject what’s been unleashed in this country. And that’s already happening.

Former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee (R), the father of White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders, tweeted: “’White supremacy’ crap is worst kind of racism-it’s EVIL and perversion of God’s truth to ever think our Creator val-
ues some above others.”

Sen. Orrin G. Hatch (R-Utah) agreed: “We should call evil by its name. My brother didn’t give his life fighting Hitler for Nazi ideas to go unchallenged here at home.”

The torches in Charlottesville are a dangerous sideshow in America’s ongoing culture war.

We need to stop attributing the resurgence of racism to income inequality or job loss and stop tucking it into the great red vs. blue, progressivism vs. conservatism, urban vs. rural struggle that is at the heart of debate in our society.

The University of Virginia, where the white extremists marched with their lit torches, is the home of James Davison Hunter, the sociologist who helped define the contemporary American culture war. In 1992 — as the American presidential election was rocked by the debate over a TV character’s single motherhood in “Murphy Brown” — Hunter reminded us that these cultural skirmishes aren’t just rhetoric or “political froth.”

“Cumulatively, these disputes amount to a fundamental struggle over the ‘first principles’ of how we will order our life together,” Hunter wrote in The Washington Post. “Through these seemingly disparate issues we find ourselves, in other words, in a struggle to define ourselves as Americans and what kind of society we want to build and sustain.”

Yes, there are many sides in the culture war that the racists keep trying to hitch their flaming wagon to.

But this abomination that happened in Charlottesville over the weekend is not up for debate. It’s not a cultural take or a political platform. Racism, bigotry and terrorism in the name of white nationalism isn’t a “side.” It’s a poison.

And doing anything other than calling it what it is, defining it and snuffing it out is simply un-American.

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In Va., bipartisan censure of white supremacy

White supremacists have thrown back their hoods

Broad condemnation follows violence

Md. home intruders held family hostage

Stray bullet sniffs out radiant spirit, bright mind

Why school principals lie to ineffective teachers: Honesty takes too long

Trump fanned the flames of racist violence in Virginia

Test results have proved erratic

The formal and confidential research of state education systems and teachers is a key factor in determining the effectiveness of schools in the United States. Researchers have found that the majority of teachers are not receiving accurate evaluations, which can lead to ineffective teachers being retained in the classroom.

Researchers have long debated the effectiveness of standardized tests and principal evaluations in determining the performance of teachers. The research has shown that these evaluations are often inaccurate and do not reflect the true performance of teachers.

The research has also shown that the majority of teachers are not receiving accurate evaluations, which can lead to ineffective teachers being retained in the classroom. This can have a negative impact on the quality of education in the United States.

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