



1. *The Murder of Blaze Bernstein*
2. *Is Joe the New Jack?*
3. *Russians Protest Putin Ahead of March Election*

The Murder of Blaze Bernstein

By JULIA DUPUIS
STAFF WRITER

Over winter break, a college student from my hometown went missing. Blaze Bernstein, a 19-year-old at the University of Pennsylvania, disappeared after going to a park in Orange County, California with a friend late at night while home from college. Police officers and community volunteers scoured the area for days, circulating posts on social media and holding out hope that he would be found alive.

Less than a week later, they found his body buried at the edge of the park, right next to the elementary school. He had been stabbed 20 times.

Samuel Lincoln Woodward, a former high school classmate of Bernstein, was arrested and charged with murder, and authorities are considering whether to treat it also as a hate crime. It wasn't a secret in our town that Woodward was a bigot of the worst kind: openly homophobic, anti-Semitic, and racist.

What we didn't know is that he belonged, according to a recent report, to the growing neo-Nazi organization Atomwaffen—a group that has shot to the forefront of the white supremacist movement with its promises of violence, revolution, and an impending race war.

Woodward apparently joined the hate group in 2016 and attended a three-day training camp with other members in Texas. Wearing skull masks and making Nazi salutes, the group trained in handguns, assault rifles, and hand-to-hand combat in preparation for its aim of overthrowing the U.S. government.

The organization views whites as an oppressed race who are being overwhelmed by a rising tide of people of color. Jews are portrayed as a malevolent force seeking to orchestrate their downfall.

They first gained national attention last May, when 18-year-old Devon Arthurs, one of the founding members of Atomwaffen, was charged with murdering two of his roommates in Florida. Atomwaffen surfaced again when linked to a double homicide in Virginia, in which a 17-year-old member shot his girlfriend's parents after

they urged her to break up with him.

Bernstein's death is the fifth high-profile killing connected to Atomwaffen in the past year.

Even though they are small—with an estimated 100 members nationwide—a combination of intense white nationalism, social media, and the recent neo-Nazi activity in Charlottesville has made this group incredibly dangerous.

Young, angry, middle-class white youth are the exact demographic that this hate group targets. They appeal to a sense of patriotism and rebellion by presenting the American government as overrun by a Jewish “New World Order”—one

These men—emotionally unstable, deeply violent, and struggling with crises of identity—make an easy target for such neo-Nazi groups.

that Atomwaffen alone can challenge by violent force.

Perhaps taking notes from its biggest idol, Adolf Hitler, the organization

has learned to dumb down their argument: Good guys vs. bad guys. Repeating the same themes over and over again until they become reality.

Many of the leading online personalities of the neo-Nazis, including Woodward's online persona as “Saboteur” on the website iFunny, use social media to disseminate aggressive and obscene hate speech or conspiracy theories.

“The whole point is to make something outrageous,” said Andrew Anglin, founder of the neo-Nazi propaganda site The Daily Stormer. “It's about creating a spectacle, a media spectacle that desensitizes people to those ideas. Ridicule is man's most potent weapon.”

This isn't all that attracts potential members to groups like Atomwaffen. Woodward himself was rumored to be aggressively homophobic partly because of his own closeted feelings. He told investigators that Bernstein kissed him on the lips as they sat in a parked car, and he pushed him away and called him a “faggot,” according to the affidavit.

These men—emotionally unstable, deeply violent, and struggling with crises of identity — make an easy target for such neo-Nazi groups.

The five murders, so far, don't

continued on back

Is Joe the New Jack?

By FRED POLLEVICK
STAFF WRITER

Congressman Joe Kennedy III of Massachusetts delivered the Democratic response to President Trump's State of the Union address last week. Speaking to a small audience in Fall River, Massachusetts, Kennedy elicited a range of responses during CNN's live Facebook stream. One of the most-liked comments on the stream came from an older man who said he “closed his eyes and heard him.” Other commenters were quick to agree that Joe Kennedy III sounded like his great-uncle, the 35th president of the United States, John F. Kennedy.

The congressman from Massachusetts' 4th Congressional District since 2013 is an up-and-coming “hot shot” for the Democrats. Before his speech last week, Kennedy was well-known among Democrats for his speeches on topics like Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). As he showed in his response to the State of the Union address, he is well-trained in public speaking. That is one factor among many making Joe Kennedy III a compelling candidate to become the new face of the Democrats.

The 2016 election should have taught candidates that they have to be more personable with their audiences. While

The 2016 election should have taught candidates that they have to be more personable with their audiences.

presidential nominees have historically aspired to sound “presidential,” both Trump and Senator Sanders broke that supposed law of politics to address people more directly—and the people loved it. Likewise, many voters responded negatively to Secretary Clinton's poised and controlled mannerism, often calling her robotic.

So how did the youngest Kennedy elicit such positive responses from viewers? As I continued to watch his speech, I couldn't help thinking how he sounded like a politician yet genuine at the same time. His tone strongly resembled that of his great-uncle JFK, who successfully addressed Americans in this style. I concluded that Joe

continued on back

appear to have been coordinated. Most of them seem to have arisen from domestic disputes, which only highlights the pattern of volatility and recklessness that is linked to young men who become immersed in white supremacist ideologies.

Like so many emotionally damaged young men, Woodward apparently tried to become something bigger than himself—something cruel, to cover up the vulnerability he couldn't stand in himself. Fantasy overtook reality, and now a 19-year-old is dead.

IS JOE THE NEW JACK? cont.

Kennedy III is an enigma; he is a non-traditional "establishment" candidate.

I realize this sounds counter-intuitive. How could the grandson of Robert Kennedy not be an establishment candidate? Nothing short

of marrying a Bush or a Clinton could increase the prominence of Kennedy III's political lineage. For good reason, the name evokes images of the kind of inherited political aristocracy that many voters are weary of. But just like his great-uncle, Joe Kennedy was able to differentiate himself from the Democratic establishment. He spoke in Spanish when addressing the Dreamers, sounding thankful to his audience and emotional — without a hint of robotics! In his response to Trump's speech, he found an effective combination, maintaining a professional tone while still addressing voters as equals.

Of course, not everyone enjoyed the speech. Many viewers dismissed Kennedy as just another son of a wealthy

political family. And Sanders, too, crafted a response to the State of the Union that sent a counter-establishment message. I am not saying the junior congressman is the next president, even if "Joe Kennedy III 2020" is a popular Google search. As

I concluded that Joe Kennedy III is an enigma; he is a non-traditional "establishment" candidate.

anyone else should, I want to hear more about his stances and his plans for the future before coming to a conclusion.

Nonetheless, I believe the Democrats have found a good candidate in Kennedy III. He presents an interesting message by combining the qualities of a well-spoken politician and a young, ambitious ordinary American. The Democrats picked the best contender to deliver a response to President Trump. Only time will tell if there will soon be another Kennedy sitting in the Oval Office.

Russians Protest Putin Ahead of March Election

By ELZA HARB
STAFF WRITER

"Down with the czar!" cried the protesters in Pushkin Square. This was in January 2018, not November 1917, and the protesters meant Vladimir Putin, not Nicholas II. About 1,000 Russians gathered in Moscow to protest the upcoming March 18

Alexei Navalny, who is considered Putin's most formidable political rival, organized the protests to highlight the election's unfairness.

virtually no opponent, he is expected to get over 90 percent of the vote, as he usually does. A poll from last June indicates that 87 percent of Russians approve of Putin and his policies. Through the recent demonstrations, Navalny and the protesters hoped to show the obvious corruption inside the Kremlin. Protests against Putin have been going on since 2011, and have actually declined

in support. The ones in January had the lowest turnout yet. The AP writes: "No figures were available for how many people participated in the protests, but the turnout was clearly smaller than for rallies Navalny organized last year. The size and scope of the earlier protests, which took place in provincial cities regarded as the center of Putin's support, rattled the Kremlin."

The government feared the protests after 2011 and took them seriously this January. For example, in Tula, a city

south of Moscow, police went to every house where occupants indicated on social media that they would attend the demonstration to warn them about the dangers of doing so. Overall, they detained 256 people all over Russia.

Navalny never made it to his most recent protest, on January 28. While on his way, he was detained by Kremlin officers. A video taken of the arrest shows the officers beating and dragging him onto a bus. He tweeted to encourage his supporters: "I've been detained. That doesn't matter. Come to Tverskaya. You're not coming out for me, but for yourself and your future."

This is not Navalny's first detainment; the Kremlin has cracked down on him and his supporters before. The authorities are careful, however, to detain him for only one month at a time to prevent an uproar from his supporters. Navalny himself is also careful in the way he conducts his opposition. He never directly insults Putin. This is a survival tactic, as Putin is prone to poison members of the opposition who pose a real threat or directly insult him.

Putin is here to stay, and he has made that obvious.

While many westerners and some young democratic Russians have high hopes for Navalny, it does not appear he will be successful anytime soon. The boycott will likely not change the outcome of the election. Putin is here to stay, and he has made that obvious.

ENQUIRY

vol. V

Sam Benevelli
Editor-in-Chief

Claire Anastasia Kitz
Andrew Juchno
Associate Editors

Helen Sternberg
Layout Editor

STAFF WRITERS

Julia Dupuis
Eric Fischer
Elza Harb
Michael LaPorte
Fred Pollevick
Montana Sprague
Allison Zuckerman

The opinions expressed in these articles are the views of their authors and do not represent the views of Enquiry or the Alexander Hamilton Institute.

Enquiry accepts articles of 500 to 800 words at sbenevel@hamilton.edu. Please be aware that we do not accept anonymous submissions.

CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

1. *The Murder of Blaze Bernstein*
#BernsteinMurder
2. *Is Joe the New Jack?*
#JoeTheNewJack
3. *Russians Protest Putin Ahead of March Election*
#RussianProtests