

## Letters to the Editor; Letters to the Editor, April 26, 2020

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### Body

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Solution to racism lies within the hearts of all

Editor, Times-Dispatch:

Justin Lo's recent opinion column, "Pervasive patterns: It's time to confront racism against Asian Americans," should cause all of us to think about which dictionary definition of racism we are talking about when we use the word. Is it "a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race"? Or is it "racial prejudice or discrimination"?

Lo focuses on the latter definition, but I wonder if he considers what motivates people to discriminate or show prejudice.

Some might resent the achievements of Asian Americans in academics and a variety of high-paying professions. Some might see Asian Americans operating successful businesses in their communities when their neighbors were unable to do so. Some might mourn the loss of jobs to Asians both overseas and at home. Some might have memories of facing, on distant battlefields, people who look like Asian Americans.

Those reasons do not justify discrimination or prejudice, but should be part of any discussion of ways to strengthen America's uniqueness as the most successfully diverse culture on the planet.

I'm not sure what Lo means about having to "fight to belong in this country," but it is clear from his achievements that he has been victorious. Like my Chinese American daughter-in-law and my Filipino American son-in-law, Lo took advantage of opportunities open to all.

Yes, there is discrimination. It is part of the fallen nature of man. Is the problem as pervasive as Lo suggests? I don't know. But I know the solution lies not in proclamations by government leaders but in the hearts of us all. When we remember that God has created all men equal and that race is not the primary determinant of human traits, racism no longer will plague Asian Americans or anyone else.

Brian Regrut.

Midlothian.

Gadget addiction harms youth and politicians

Editor, Times-Dispatch:

George Will made a good point about what is lost when we stop reading and become slaves to our electronic devices in his column "What we lost when we stopped binge reading." He cites Adam Garfinkle's National Affairs magazine article "The Erosion of Deep Literacy," which makes several interesting points. Dependency on electronic gadgets diminishes the neural pathways of individuals who have become slaves to their gadgets. They have shallow and shortened attention spans. The most telling point in Garfinkle's article states: "Government's problem-solving failures reflect not just hyper-partisanship and polarization, but the thin thinking of a political class of non-deep readers who are comfortable only with the shallowness of tweets. Instantaneous digital interactions encourage superficiality, insularity and tribalism." Garfinkle goes on to say: "Cognitively sped-up and multitasking young brains may not acquire sufficient capacities for critical thinking, personal reflection, imagination, and empathy, and hence will become easy prey for charlatans and demagogues." That also goes for older brains. I leave it to readers to decide who fits this description.

Joe Shocket.

Chester.

Pandemic deaths remind reader of service losses

Editor, Times-Dispatch:

Much has been made recently of COVID-19 victims passing away alone and not in the presence of family members or other loved ones. Current social distancing and isolation protocols prevent the gathering of family at the bedside of those who are gravely ill. Without a doubt, this is most sad and unfortunate. However, let's not forget that every soldier, sailor, airman and Marine who gave his or her life in defense of our country did so at a very young age and very much alone. Family members didn't become aware of their service member's passing for several days until they received a phone call, telegram or a knock on the door. The next time our country places its young people in harm's way, let's be keenly aware of what we are asking of them.

Charles F. Hurlbut.

Prince George.

Red flag legislation missing key components

Editor, Times-Dispatch:

With regard to Virginia's new red flag law, here is what should have been included:

Criminal penalties for those who bring false or frivolous charges. An order is granted when a judge makes the determination, by clear and convincing evidence, that the person poses a significant risk of danger to themselves or others. A judge is required to make a determination of whether the person meets the state standard for involuntary commitment. Where the standard for involuntary commitment is met, this should be the course of action taken. If an extreme risk protection order (ERPO) is granted, the person should receive community-based mental health treatment as a condition of the ERPO. Any ex parte proceeding should include admitting the individual for treatment. A person's Second Amendment rights should only be temporarily deprived after a hearing before a judge, in which the person has notice of the hearing and is given an opportunity to offer evidence on his or her behalf. A mechanism for the return of firearms upon termination of an ERPO, when a person is ordered to relinquish firearms as a condition of the order. The ERPO process should allow an individual to challenge or terminate the order, with full due process protections in place. The process should allow firearms to be retained by law-abiding third parties, local law enforcement or a federally licensed firearms dealer when an individual is ordered to relinquish such firearms as a condition of the ERPO. The individual also must have the ability to sell his or her firearms in a reasonable time without violating the order.

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Just seizing guns without including the above will result in more killings because a sick person might borrow or a steal a gun to kill.

Carl Richardson.

Former Special Agent, United States Secret Service.Bristol.

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