

Strike Looms at Gray Lady (Or, Maybe Not)

by [Edward Grossman](#) (October 2020)



Strike (for *Fortune Magazine*), Ben Shahn, 1947

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New York—Staffers at the *New York Times* have vowed to shut the paper if management does not commit to appointing a young lesbian of color as its next executive editor.

Sources in the organization who prefer to remain anonymous say the ultimatum was delivered earlier this week in a group-to-person Slack to the publisher, A.G. Sulzberger, 39, a cisgender white male. It was signed by 982 employees of all races, identities and sexualities with a mean age of 26 and requires him to promise he will name a lesbian of color not older than 29 when the present executive editor, Dean Baquet, 63, a cisgender Black male, steps down in 2022.

If a notarized pledge to that effect is not forthcoming, the signatories will “be left with no choice but to go on 24/7 strike picketing 620 Eighth and halting production of digital and hard copy editions until our non-negotiable just demand is satisfied,” the message reads.

620 Eighth Avenue is the address of the Renzo Piano-designed *Times* headquarters. Piano, 82, is a white cisgender male.

No deadline for receipt of the pledge was indicated.

According to sources, one group, calling itself the If Not Now When Front, wants the strike to begin Halloween if by then Sulzberger has not acted.

Yesterday a member tweeted: “Floyd murder priceless opportunity never again save earth humanity future generations watching do it— #strikwwhileironhot #BLM.”

The reference is to George Floyd’s death in Minneapolis in May in police custody. Floyd, 47, was a cisgender Black male. The incident sparked nationwide protests and jumpstarted

the Black Lives Matter decentralized anti-racism movement.

So far the If Not Now position has garnered 1,619 upvotes in-house.

It is unclear whether “If Not Now When” references a Hebrew saying attributed to Hillel the Elder, 110 BCE-10 CE, a Jerusalem male rabbi, skin color unknown, sexuality unknown, or the same as translated into English and spoken by Emma Watson during the 2014 HeForShe campaign for gender equality initiated by the United Nations.

Watson, 30, is a white female model/actress/feminist describing herself as “self-partnered.”

On the other hand, members of the Let’s Not Rush Front, who signed the note to Sulzberger, favor waiting to make good on December 15th—the day after the Electoral College meets to certify the election of next U.S. President Joe Biden, 77, ex-senator (Del.-D), ex-vice-president, white cisgender male.

A representative tweet: “FIRST EVICT TWEETER-IN-CHIEF LIZARDMAN!!!”

This is a reference to Donald Trump, 75, white cisgender male, incumbent U.S. President (R.).

Among the Let’s Not Rushers is Charlotte Greensit, age unclear, a white cisgender female hired by Sulzberger last summer to be Opinion managing editor and associate Editorial Page editor. She was brought in from *The Intercept*, an award-winning progressive investigative website of which she was managing editor. During her tenure, *The Intercept* reported how money keeps the U.S. Congress in the grip of the Zionists and how the Israeli police train American police to kill Blacks.

“If we want #real change,” she advised in a tweet which so far has garnered 419 upvotes in-house, “we must focus laser election. After December 14 we strike if necessary & add to

Bennet/Weiss.”

Her reference was to the June and July resignations of controversial *Times* editors James Bennet, 54, a cisgender white male, and Bari Weiss, 36, a white female no longer married to a white or any other male.

Bennet’s decision to green-light an op-ed by 43-year-old cisgender white male Senator Tom Cotton (R.-Arkansas) advocating use of the military to end turmoil in the wake of the Floyd killing if local authorities were unable or unwilling cost him his job.

Staffers, not all of color, predominately—though not all—born in 1991 or later, branded the Cotton op-ed racist, fascist and inflammatory and said it endangered them.

At first Sulzberger and Baquet supported Bennet, claiming readers of the world’s most trusted, most influential, most Pulitzered daily were owed a gamut of views. The function of a newspaper, they claimed, goes or should go beyond sharing the wisdom and decency of management and staff. However, when this intensified the storm, the publisher accepted Bennet’s resignation.

Several weeks afterward in an open letter addressed to “Dear A.G.” the no-longer-married Weiss, a Never-Trumper but non-progressive, claimed that after being lured from the *Wall Street Journal* to bring some diversity to the conversation at 620 Eighth she was tagged a fascist and a Nazi by her new co-workers. Moreover, under his watch the “once-great” *Times* had, she claimed, “betrayed” its “standards of intellectual curiosity.”

Therefore, she was quitting.

Kathleen Kingsbury, acting Editorial Page editor in the wake of Bennet’s resignation/firing, said in a statement that “we appreciate the many contributions that Bari made to *Times*

Opinion. I'm personally committed to ensuring that The *Times* continues to publish voices, experiences and viewpoints from across the political spectrum."

Kingsbury, 41, is a white cisgender female.

However, inside 620 Eighth, the Weiss letter was savaged and her self-cancellation widely welcomed.

Deirdre Davidovicz, 21, asexual white female, intern on the rewrite desk, tweeted: "Cry Me a River, Zio." She predicted "Snowflake Weiss" would soon be "making big bucks" at Fox News.

Aaron Nkrumah, 24, Black cisgender male, styles, tweeted: "R U kidding?...private company....no duty platform racist...STAY SAFE!"

Jane Smith, 25, white lesbian, city desk, tweeted: "WEISS FAKE LESBIAN STOP APPROPRIATION!!!"

Since resigning, Weiss has moved to the Bay Area where it is understood she lives with another female.

And in a number of in-house Slacks, Google Hangout chats and tweets, Aisha Shabazz-Finkelstein, 27, deputy head of the Be a Better Person Desk, called Weiss's self-removal "long overdue" and expressed the hope that other *Times* contributors, reporters and executives holding Weiss-like views would be leaving.

Shabazz-Finkelstein prefers the plural pronoun and verb. Their mother is Black and father Israeli. Although Shabazz-Finkelstein were born male they transitioned while at Brown and currently identify as female by gender and piquer-curious by sexuality.

Their thesis for an MA at Brown's department of Intersectional Heuristics and Racism was entitled "The Pre-Synecdochic Gaze: Towards a Commodification of White Feminist

Subjectivity in Late-Stage Neo-Capitalism.”

In a tweet, Shabazz-Finkelstein asked why the *Times* would employ anyone who as Weiss did signed “the *Harper’s* letter.”

They were referring to a letter published in *Harper’s* Magazine last month voicing concern over what its signatories claimed was the “stifling” of free speech by “ideological conformity.” It was signed by among others Noam Chomsky, 92, a cisgender white male linguist; Wynton Marsalis, 51, a cisgender Black male jazz musician; R.W. Rowling, 54, a cisgender female white fantasy novelist; Martin Amis, 71, a cisgender white male novelist; Salman Rushdie, 73, a cisgender brown male novelist; and Andrew Sullivan, 57, a gay white independent opinionator.

Shabazz-Finkelstein characterized the letter as “boring” and its signatories as “famous nobodies.” At last count, their Slacks, Google Hangouts and tweets on Bennet, Weiss and the *Harper’s* statement had garnered 998 upvotes and one downvote.

There is some mystery as to the identity, gender and sexuality of the downvoter. Her or his or their screen name is “Dinosaur,” and he or she or they reference or references “better days” at “the old building” when “Abe was in charge” and “this paper was taken seriously.”

Possibly the references are to the former headquarters on 43rd Street and to A.M. “Abe” Rosenthal, 1922-2006, city editor, then managing editor, then executive editor, 1963-1988, during whose regime the *Times* collected Pulitzer Prizes for its coverage of the Vietnam War and Watergate and successfully took the White House to the Supreme Court to publish the so-called Pentagon Papers. A cisgender white male, Rosenthal was a Zionist fellow traveler.

On his gravestone the self-chosen epitaph reads, “He

Kept the Paper Straight.” In view of his undisguised distaste for gays and lesbians, some consider it fitting.

However, some believe it alludes to his notion that as regards choice of stories, wording of headlines and placement of leads a Great Wall should divide a paper’s news department from its opinion department.

“Boy,” tweeted Dinosaur, “If any of u If Not Now & Let’s Not Rush useful idiot punks tried it on Abe he would’ve had u out on yr woke *ss so fast yr heads would spin.”

In response to Dinosaur’s comment Dirk Wang, 28, obituaries, Asian, male, pansexual Let’s Not Rusher tweeted “LIKE, DIE OLD LOSER!!!” and Fonda Peters, 25, reader experience, white, lesbian If Not Nower tweeted “WE KNOW WHERE U LIVE.”

Meanwhile, there is general agreement that while the departure of Bennet and Weiss represent a start, it was only that, a start. “Two Down, Four to Go 🗡️ ” and “Sh*t List 🗑️ ” have been trending on various in-house content sharing tools. It is agreed that while Bennet and Weiss micro-aggressed people of color and minority sexualities, others remaining on payroll do worse, including:

- Bret Stephens, 47, white cisgender male opinionator, climate change skeptic, blatant Zionist and Never-Trumper lured from the *Wall Street Journal* with Weiss.
- Ross Douthat, 41, white cisgender male opinionator, blatant Roman Catholic.
- Roger Cohen, 65, white cisgender male opinionator, declared Zionist, signed *Harper’s* letter.
- David Brooks, 58, white cisgender male opinionator, raised Jewish, today Roman Catholic, signed *Harper’s* letter. Brooks’s son has served in the Israeli army.

Sources at the *Times* say that Stephens, Douthat, Cohen and especially Brooks routinely physically assault LGBTQIA+

co-workers, especially but not only those of color, in the newsroom, cafeteria, elevators, rest rooms and yoga lounges.

In addition to the Sh*t List, a three-person Watch List has been posted:

- Michelle Goldberg, 45, cisgender white female opinionator, scourge of Trump, the Republican party, Zionism and neoconservatives but signed *Harper's* letter.
- Thomas Friedman, 67, cisgender white male opinionator, past and possibly future Zionist.
- Ben Smith, 44, cisgender white male so-called "media editor."

There are two cisgender white males over 35 appearing neither on the Sh*t List or Watch List:

- Nobel Prize-winning economist and opinionator Paul Krugman, 67, in whose opinion "truth has a liberal bias."
- Nicholas Kristof, 61.

Another in-house tweet connected to neither *If Not Now* or *Let's Not Rush* spoke of "the wimp on the 6th floor." The reference is unclear, although the publisher's office is on the sixth floor at 620 Eighth.

Not since 1962-1963 has the *Times* been struck. This was during the all-white cisgender male typesetters union action against all the city's papers, lasting 114 days, killing the *Daily Mirror* and mortally wounding the *Herald-Tribune* and the *Journal-American* while birthing the *New York Review*.

If forced into a strike, the signatories of the Slack to Sulzberger undertake to wear Covid-19 masks. However, they cannot guarantee that, like the one in the 20th century, this one will be peaceful.

UPDATE: In a *Times*-wide email (see [link](#)) the publisher

together with co-owner Carlos Slim, 80, a cisgender Hispanic male, say they are weighing one of three unnamed young Black lesbians for next executive editor.

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Edward Grossman has reported and opinionated for the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Jerusalem Post*, *Jerusalem Report*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Weekly Standard*, *Harper's*, *Commentary*, *New Republic*, *American Spectator*, *New Leader*, *New York Observer*, *Crawdaddy*, *Reader's Digest*, *Mosaic*, *the Atlantic*, *Newsday*, *Midstream*, *Dissent*, *Harvard Magazine*, *San Francisco Examiner*, *Buzz* (Los Angeles), *Les temps modernes* (Paris), *Dagens Nyheter* (Stockholm), *Jewish Chronicle* (London), *Times of Israel*, *Maariv* (Tel Aviv), *Shefa* (Jerusalem) and *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo).

NER on Twitter