

IN YOUR WORDS

Tools of modern terror

This article is very good in terms of describing the scope of a big problem, but the efforts to use fear and loathing of firearms to further gun control is a futile strategy. In the communities where gun violence is frequent, they desperately need gun control to remove the weapons from access to those who will misuse them. There are many communities where gun ownership is high but not gun violence, and the need for gun control is different in those locations.

CASUAL OBSERVER, LOS ANGELES

What is it in the American psyche that leads so many ordinary citizens to claim the inalienable right to own and parade in public spaces the same weapons of war used by soldiers in conflict zones, terrorists and members of narco cartels?

SUSAN, PARIS

There are more than three million AR-15 weapons in circulation in the United States. This article clearly states that there have been only four, that's right, four, instances where an AR-15 rifle was used in a mass killing. Yet the hysteria about the AR continues unabated. The total number of weapons available to civilians in the U.S. is about 300 million. . . . This article is meant to raise emotions of the public, who are told they should be outraged at the proliferation of the AK and the AR. In truth, it is misleading and dishonest.

JAY, FLORIDA

Olympic spirit in Brazil?

It's really too bad that Brazil won the games when they were riding high and now, mired in recession and political polarization and scandals, have to open up their country to world athletes. But stoning the Olympic Torch bearer because of local anger is not going to win Brazil many points on the world stage. That said, asking people who are starving to put on bold, bright face is also not fair. Brazilians have been deserted by their leaders on so many fronts, but asking them to be happy after they've made off with the spoils is really asking them too much.

HISTINE MCMORROW, WALTHAM, MASS.

From Rio. I love Rio. It has big problems, as in most large cities in third world countries, perhaps more so than most. Yet no matter how bad the economic situation is, I always find Cariocas (natives of Rio) the friendliest and happiest people.

SAN FRANCISCO

See what readers are talking about and have your own comments at [invt.com](#).

IN OUR PAGES

International Herald Tribune

1891 China on the Brink of Rebellion

Our Shanghai correspondent, in a letter which we publish today [Aug. 6], sends us news of the gravest importance. China is on the brink of a rebellion permeating every corner of the Empire. The dynasty is in great danger. The central authority is paralyzed. Peking is in a panic. Foreign volunteers are drilling assiduously at Shanghai. Not only the ignorant masses, but the Mandarins, literati and the highest officials of the Empire are concerned in the rebellion. It seems certain that Europe and the United States are confronted with a re-iteration of the stirring days of the Taiping rebellion of a quarter of a century ago. The present uprising, which already assumes the proportions of a civil war, is directed against the ruling dynasty. Can it be that the famous Li Hung Chang, surnamed the "Bismarck of China," is at the bottom of all this, and his own strong arm, adroitly abetted England's connivance, is about to usurp the throne of the Tartar dynasty?

36 Rock Hits King in Chicago Riot

CAGO Martin Luther King was hit on the head with a stone today [Aug. 5] as he stepped from his car in an all-white neighborhood to organize a demonstration against discrimination in housing. A young man was wounded by a knife wound at Dr. King as rioting erupted on Chicago's Southwest Side. Cherry bombs and rocks, sticks and bottles were thrown among the marchers by young men, cursing, jeering residents of the white Chicago Lawn. The 600 marchers moved slowly down the street as thousands of residents rioted. More than 100 policemen attempted to control the people. Police threw three deep charged hoses blocking the march. Volleys of stones and bottles were hurled. A barrage of rocks rained on the march from a crowd of thousands. Police charged into the crowd and shouted "Police brutality" and "Kill a cop." They waved American flags and yelled "King go

retrospective of news from 1887 to 1917 at [retrospective.blogs.nytimes.com](#).

'No choice but to keep looking'

Five years after tsunami, Japanese find solace in searches for loved ones

BY JENNIFER PERCY

Yuko Takamatsu was somewhere in the sea off the coast of Japan. Two and a half years had passed since the tsunami, and no one had found her; but no one was really looking, either, except her husband, Yasuo Takamatsu, who loved her

Between 'missing' and 'deceased' From The New York Times Magazine

very much. Takamatsu first searched on land, at the bank where she vanished, and along the beaches of Onagawa, and in the forests in the mountains. After two and a half years, in September 2013, when he still hadn't found her, he turned to the sea.

He contacted the local dive shop, High Bridge, to ask about lessons. The dive instructor, Masayoshi Takahashi, led volunteers on dives to clean up tsunami debris along the coastline. Takahashi and his team had encountered bodies locked inside cars or drifting through the water. Takamatsu felt sure Takahashi would be the one to help him find Yuko. At the shop, he confessed his plan. "At the age of 56," he said, "the reason I'm actually interested in learning to dive is that I'm trying to find my wife in the sea."

Takahashi kept maps and records of Takamatsu's searches. Sometimes the men searched the same region several times, because bodies and debris moved around in the currents. Now and then Takamatsu had an intuition that his wife was in one part of the sea or another, and Takahashi tried to accommodate his hopes. But there were many restricted areas — fishing routes, places with dangerous currents — and Takahashi had to coordinate each dive with the Coast Guard and fishermen.

One day, Takamatsu visited the home of Masaaki Narita, a 57-year-old manager at a fish-processing plant, who lost his 26-year-old daughter, Emi, to the tsunami. She was an employee with Yuko at the Onagawa branch of 77 Bank, a regional bank based in Sendai. The women had evacuated to the bank's roof, but the wave swept them away. Takamatsu felt sorry for Narita's loss and offered to look for Emi in the sea, too. But Narita decided he would rather dive for the body of his daughter himself. In February 2014, Takamatsu introduced Narita to Takahashi.

A heavy rain began the morning I watched Takahashi prepare Narita for a dive. It was January 2016, a warm winter, and the flowers were blooming. We drove to a beach called Takenoura, just east of Onagawa's main port.

Narita hoisted the oxygen tank onto his back and wobbled. His wife, Hiromi Narita, paced the loading dock. She climbed barrels of plastic-wrapped oyster shells and lifted her hand to the sun like a visor. She watched all her husband's dives because she worried about him.

On weekends, Hiromi prepared special lunchboxes for Emi that she would deliver into the sea on Sunday. They were packed with Emi's favorite meals, things like pork soup, Salisbury steak, deep-fried shrimp, all in special boxes that decomposed. She tossed the boxes off boat ramps, piers or rock ledges or set them gently adrift on the water. Always someplace hidden, where no one would see her. She had done this for five years.

Thirty-five minutes passed, and Narita resurfaced in the glittering water. Hiromi walked to her car and drove off. It was time to deliver rice balls and deep-fried chicken.

"You will do anything for your child," she said.

TAKAMATSU MET YUKO in 1988, when Yuko was 25 and worked at the 77 Bank in Onagawa. Takamatsu was a soldier in the Ground Self-Defense Force.

On Friday, March 11, 2011, the day of the tsunami, Takamatsu drove Yuko to the bank. It was on the waterfront, at Onagawa's main port. Later that morning, he drove his mother-in-law to the hospital in Ishinomaki. Takamatsu was in the entranceway of the hospital, on his way out the door, when the magnitude-9 earthquake hit. The shaking lasted for six minutes. Takamatsu made his way back to Onagawa and listened to the radio for news of a tsunami. He received a message from the University of Sendai about his son, that he was alive, but he couldn't reach Yuko or his daughter, a high-school student in Ishinomaki.

Finally, at 3:21, he received a text from Yuko: "Are you OK? I want to go home." Takamatsu thought that Yuko would have evacuated to a hospital on Mount Horikiri, about 800 feet from the bank. It was high up on a hill, one of many that surrounded Onagawa, and a designated evacuation point for the town. But Takamatsu couldn't get there. Firefighters blocked the road that led to the hospital.

He had no way to reach Yuko, so he went home. She had been lost once before, he told me, on one of their first dates, when Takamatsu took her to a



Yasuo Takamatsu near the Takenoura port. He learned to dive in order to search for his wife, Yuko, who disappeared after the tsunami in 2011.

"I expected it to be difficult, and I've found it quite difficult, but it is the only thing I can do."

shrine on New Year's Eve. He told her not to get lost in the crowd, but she did anyway, for 20 minutes, until he found her again in the flow of exiting people. He would never forget those 20 minutes.

Takamatsu returned to the hospital in the morning. "I'm here to look for my wife," he told the nurses. He asked if anyone knew what happened to the bank employees. Many people in the hospital had witnessed their fate — their screams, their arms extended — but no one said anything. Finally a woman told Takamatsu that she had heard that some of the employees were wiped off the roof. She was certain they didn't make it. "But I don't know about Yuko," she added.

Takamatsu didn't think she was dead. He went to every floor of the hospital, and when he couldn't find her there, he walked to the gymnasium, the elementary school, the hotels — all the designated evacuation points. On this search, he ran into many friends and neighbors, and from them he learned that his daughter was safe. Still, no one had seen Yuko.

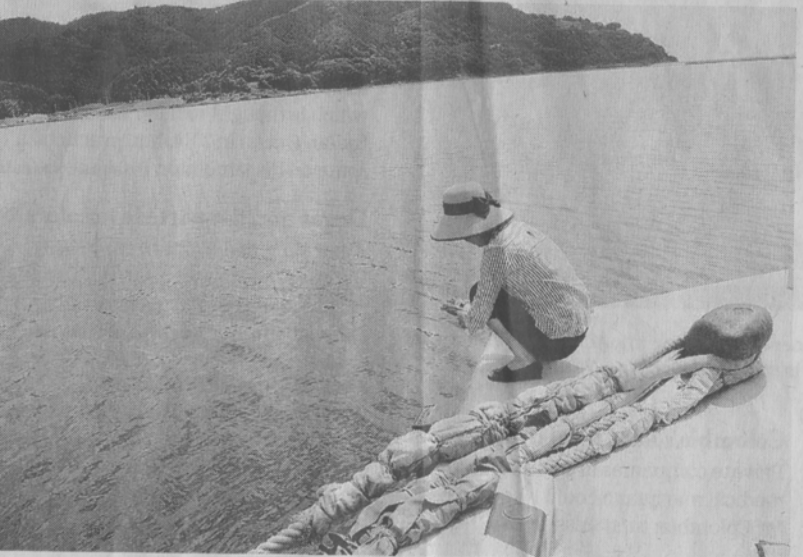
It snowed the day of the tsunami. The wave was expected to sweep in from the ocean at a height of 10 feet. When it first reached the shore at 3:20 p.m., it was

surging as high as 45 feet. Soldiers from the Ground Self-Defense Force arrived at Onagawa, and the morning after the tsunami they began poking through the debris for bodies. All told, 613 bodies have been identified, many elderly who were discovered entombed in their homes.

Sometimes Takamatsu walked alongside the soldiers and listened as they spoke over walkie-talkies. If they announced the discovery of a body, he would ask what the body was wearing. Yuko was wearing black trousers and a camel-colored coat. Even though he was searching for Yuko's body, he was always relieved when it wasn't hers.

A month after the tsunami, when the bank was cleaning its premises, someone found Yuko's phone in the parking lot. Takamatsu found a text he didn't receive, written at 3:25. "So much tsunami," it read. From that text he knew she was alive until 3:25. He guessed the tsunami was up to her feet.

WHEN NARITA HEARD about what happened to the bank employees, all of them swept off the roof by the tsunami, he returned home, crying. He had last seen Emi the day before, on March 10. On Sunday morning, Emi's husband traveled to Onagawa by bicycle, and the next day the Naritas traveled by car. They all looked for Emi's body. Inside the bank they called out her name. They found her business cards in the mud.



Hiromi Narita, in Konori, dropping food into the sea for her daughter, Emi. Once a week, she prepares Emi's favorite meals in lunchboxes that decompose, and sets them adrift.

In April, six weeks after the tsunami, a body was found floating under debris in the waters off Tsukahama Beach, on the opposite side of the port, in Goburra Bay. It belonged to Michiko Tanno, a 54-year-old who worked at the bank for more than two decades. Seven or eight bodies floated nearby. Tanno's sisters, Keiko and Reiko, told Takamatsu the news. The body of a second bank employee washed up in Onagawa, at Takenoura Beach, on Sept. 26, 2011. It was a 25-year-old named Kenta Tamura. Takamatsu worried that his wife would be next.

BY THIS JANUARY, Takamatsu had been on 110 dives, each lasting 40 to 50 minutes. He was not just looking for the body; he was also searching for a wallet, clothes or jewelry — anything that might identify his wife after five years in the ocean.

"I expected it to be difficult," Takamatsu said, "and I've found it quite difficult, but it is the only thing I can do. I have no choice but to keep looking for her. I feel closest to her in the ocean." I thought of the song that a French composer named Sylvain Guinet composed for Takamatsu after he learned of his loss. The title is "Yuko Takamatsu." Takamatsu listened to the song, a piano solo, when he shopped online, ironed his clothes, drove his car and as he fell asleep. I asked him if the song brought back memories of Yuko. "It does not bring back memories," he said. "Because it is not something that I forget."

We often think of searching as a kind of movement, a forward motion through time, but maybe it can also be the opposite, a suspension of time and memory. Heidegger wrote of a metaphoric pain, calling it the "joining of the rift." It's this rift, he said, that holds together things that have been torn apart, to perhaps create a new space where joy and sadness can find communion. This is the space I believed Takamatsu found beneath the sea, where he could feel close to his wife, in the rift between "missing" and "deceased."

THERE WAS ONE survivor from the bank. The day of the tsunami, fishermen found him, tangled in debris, drifting in and out of consciousness. A month later, the families organized a meeting with the bank, and everyone hoped to speak with him. They wanted to know why the employees evacuated to the roof and not the hospital. But the meeting ended before they could speak

with the survivor. "Everyone was quite confused," Takamatsu said. "We thought we would see him again." The bank would schedule a meeting, but the survivor always canceled.

The following year, Takamatsu received a letter from the bank. It was a formal invitation to a memorial service. At that point, he and the other families discussed filing a lawsuit. No one wanted to sue, but they needed to know what happened. Keiko and Reiko Tanno, the sisters of Michiko, joined some of the families in the suit, with their elderly mother as the legal plaintiff. The trial began in February 2014 in Sendai, and the district court ruled in favor of the bank, concluding that its evacuation plan was reasonable. In April 2015, the families' lawsuit failed on appeal. By then, though, they had finally been able to hear the survivor tell his story in court.

In January, I met Keiko and Reiko at the bank memorial outside the hospital. Keiko told me the survivor's story as she remembered hearing him tell it in court.

At 2:46, there was an earthquake, she said. The manager of the bank in Onagawa was out of the building when it happened. (His name and the survivor's have been kept secret by the bank.) He returned at 2:55. He told them about the tsunami warning. Two customers fled.

One employee asked to leave. "I want to go home," she said. "I'm worried about my children." When she stepped outside, it was 3:05, and the tsunami sirens were already wailing. She lived.

At 3:10, the remaining employees climbed to the roof. The tsunami was expected to reach a height of 10 feet, and the roof was 30 feet. It would arrive at 3:30. They had time. By 3:15, all 13 employees were on the roof. Everyone seemed calm. They made phone calls and wrote to their families. Yuko wrote to Takamatsu. Michiko wrote to her sisters: "I'm safe."

The bank manager told the survivor and Kenta to listen to the radio and monitor the sea. Kenta noticed that the hospital on the mountain was crowded with evacuees. He talked to the survivor about the hospital and wondered if they should go there. They agreed that they still had time to run. Everyone seemed calm. They decided to stay.

The survivor saw the ships near the fish market move suddenly over the water. The bank was built on a floodplain over the ocean, and water swelled up from below. It cracked the earth and spread through the streets. Shortly after 3:30, the wave came. It was low at first and rushed past the building, but then the water level rose, gradually at first and then quickly, to about 65 feet from 19 feet. It took five minutes for the ocean to flood the first floor. The manager commanded everyone to the highest point, a small electrical room with a three-meter vertical ladder. He was the last to climb, and when he stepped up, the building was already underwater.

ON JAN. 11, in the afternoon, Takamatsu, wearing a silver tracksuit and high-top white sneakers, came to watch a body hunt conducted by the Coast Guard. The tracksuit glimmered like tinfoil. Narita wore a puffy jacket with a fur hood.

The search was Narita's idea. Every now and then, he asked the Coast Guard to conduct an official search for his daughter's body. He had asked it to search in May, and in October, and again in January. The government let Narita decide where. On this day, Narita chose a shipping route that belonged to the government, because it was a place he would never be able to dive himself.

Not many people came to watch the search — only the families of the bank victims and Takahashi — and a few local residents. Members of the Japanese press outnumbered spectators.

The Coast Guard divers arrived by sea. There were seven, dressed in bright orange-and-black dive suits and thick yellow helmets. After a brief speech, they saluted the families and drove the boat 20 meters from the dock.

Hiromi poured coffee in the ocean for Emi, and everyone took a photograph. She walked over to me and pointed out to sea. "Today I served Salisbury steak," she said. "Emi's favorite." We waited an hour before the divers resurfaced. The dive commander briefed the families.

"We found nothing," he said. Narita nodded and wiped his nose. Takamatsu was very still.

"Nothing that didn't already belong in the sea," the dive commander continued. "The soda cans are all new. But do you want to see the photos anyway?"

"Yes," Narita said.

The underwater images played on a laptop computer in the back of a van. Narita and Takamatsu leaned forward to look inside. Here is a section of a building, he said, and part of a clock.

Takamatsu walked quickly away from the crowd. He stayed close to the sea, and I tried to catch up with him. He started searching again. He stepped onto a pile of rocks, put his hands on his knees and stared down into the sea. The search for love, the search — his, hers, everyone's — is not for a needle in a haystack, nor a fish in the sea. It's for a specific person on earth. The world never looks as big as when someone is lost.

Adapted from an article that originally appeared in The New York Times Magazine.