

The Profile: America's national nightmare & the NBA talent factory

Hi guys,

It's The Profile's one-year anniversary this week. 🎉 You've stuck with me through it all — the bad jokes and the even worse formatting. Remember what it looked like [on Day 1](#) when my readers consisted of just my mom and her friend Peggy? But alas, we made it. So thank you to all of you who keep opening these emails week after week. Cheers to many more.

'ASK ME ANYTHING:' This week's AMA is with [Baxter Holmes](#), a national NBA writer focusing on feature stories for ESPN. He wrote last week's article on [the NBA's secret wine club](#) as well as this week's story on how Kinston, N.C. is a talent factory for professional basketball players (see below). Join me in [The Profile Telegram group](#) right now, and ask him anything from what elements are necessary for a compelling profile to whether Steph Curry is *really* that nice.

LINKS

- [America's national nightmare](#) **[**HIGHLY RECOMMEND**]**
- [Corporate America's unlikely guru](#)
- [The NBA talent factory](#)
- [The sports media site with no journalists](#)
- [The 'ass-backward' tech company](#)

PEOPLE TO KNOW.

[America's national nightmare](#): TIME Magazine devoted every single page of its new issue to the stories of people on the front lines of the opioid epidemic. The series delves into the crisis that's ravaging America through the eyes of its victims. This is some of the most heartbreaking, powerful, and outstanding storytelling. [Tweet this story.](#)

"If there was a terrorist that showed up in Montgomery Country today & shot 50 people or 25 or 10 for that matter, this community would be in an uproar. There would be an army here trying to stop it. That's exactly where we are with opioids. But who's showing up to stop it?"

[Corporate America's unlikely guru](#): Eric Ries is well-known in the tech world as a startup evangelist. He has now transformed into an unlikely corporate adviser by teaching large, old-economy companies how to think like Silicon Valley entrepreneurs. His No. 1 tip for corporate America: Stay lean & move fast. [Tweet this story.](#)

"It's fundamentally about uncertainty," he says. "And therefore anyone who meets this definition is an entrepreneur."

The NBA talent factory: The tiny hometown of Brandon Ingram and other NBA superstars has survived hydrogen bombs, floods, gang violence, and severe poverty. Not only is Kinston, N.C., still standing, but it's become the NBA's best incubator of talent. Here's the bizarre story of how that happened. [Tweet this story.](#)

"If I hear there's a player in Kinston, I am going to go there quicker than I would go to New York City."

COMPANIES TO WATCH.

The sports media site with no journalists: What can we make of Derek Jeter's sports media site, The Players' Tribune? It's not fair to call it P.R. because the access it provides is genuine. But it's also not true journalism if the story's subject has the final say. Either way, one thing is for sure: Players are flocking to the platform because everyone wants to control their narrative. [Tweet this story.](#)

"Is it P.R. to say I'm putting a face on somebody that you feel completely free to attack willy-nilly without knowing who they are?" he said. "Yes, it's good strategy for an athlete to control his own — I don't even call it image — his own narrative. That'd be a good strategy for you and me too."

The 'ass-backward' tech company: Users have been complaining about Twitter's troll problem, so the company took action. It added a "report abuse button." But the abuse continued. It cracked down on ISIS-related accounts. But other hate groups multiplied. It hired a head of trust and safety. But no one trusts her. Twitter is trying to win the battles, but it's ultimately losing the war. [Tweet this story.](#)

"It's a technology company with crappy technologists, a revolving door of product heads and C.E.O.s, and no real core of technological innovation."