

# TIME

## THE OPIOID DIARIES

Photographs by  
**JAMES NACHTWEY**



UK £12.00  
CAN \$22.00  
MEX \$10.00  
INDONESIA \$10.00  
MALAYSIA \$10.00  
PHILIPPINES \$10.00  
SINGAPORE \$10.00  
THAILAND \$10.00  
US \$10.00  
US MAIL PERMIT NO. 420 NY NY  
POSTMASTER: SEND NO MONEY BACK FOR UNDELIVERED PERIODICALS



# About this issue

THE OPIOID CRISIS IS THE WORST ADDICTION EPIDEMIC IN U.S. HISTORY. Drug overdoses kill nearly 64,000 people per year, and the nation's life expectancy has fallen for two years in a row. But statistics alone can't tell the story. TIME commissioned veteran conflict photographer James Nachtwey to document this crisis over the past year through the people living it every day. Along with TIME's deputy director of photography, Paul Moakley, Nachtwey traveled across the country gathering stories from users, families, first responders and others at the heart of the epidemic. On the pages that follow, his images are paired with voices from Moakley's interviews, which have been edited. The result is the Opioid Diaries, the first issue in our 95-year history devoted entirely to one photographer's work. This is a visual record of a national emergency—and it demands our urgent attention.

## The Opioid Diaries on TIME.com

Visit [time.com/opioids](http://time.com/opioids) for an expanded digital edition of this special report, including:

### Photography

See Nachtwey's complete portfolio of pictures from his reporting from across the country

### Video

Watch short documentaries about the lives behind the Opioid Diaries

### Voices

Read firsthand accounts of loss and resilience from contributors, including the Rev. William Barber; writers Mimi O'Donnell, Kay Warren and Elizabeth Wurtzel; photographer Nan Goldin; musicians Flea and Macklemore; and others

### Resources

Access a guide to finding help for those struggling with addiction

### On the cover:

An unidentified drug user injecting himself in San Francisco on Jan. 31

Photograph by James Nachtwey for TIME





'I was 17 when I started shooting heroin. Since then, I've gotten clean, gotten high again, gotten clean, gotten high. I've always been good at finding veins. You've got to blow up your cheeks to make the vein pop out so you can hit it.'

**BOBBY LEE, 45, injecting a friend inside his van in San Francisco on Jan. 30**



'Heroin grabs ahold of you, and it won't let go. It turned me into somebody I never thought I would be.'

CHAD COLWELL, 32, being revived by EMS workers after overdosing in his truck in Miamisburg, Ohio, on July 4, 2017. He says this, his fourth overdose, led him to seek treatment



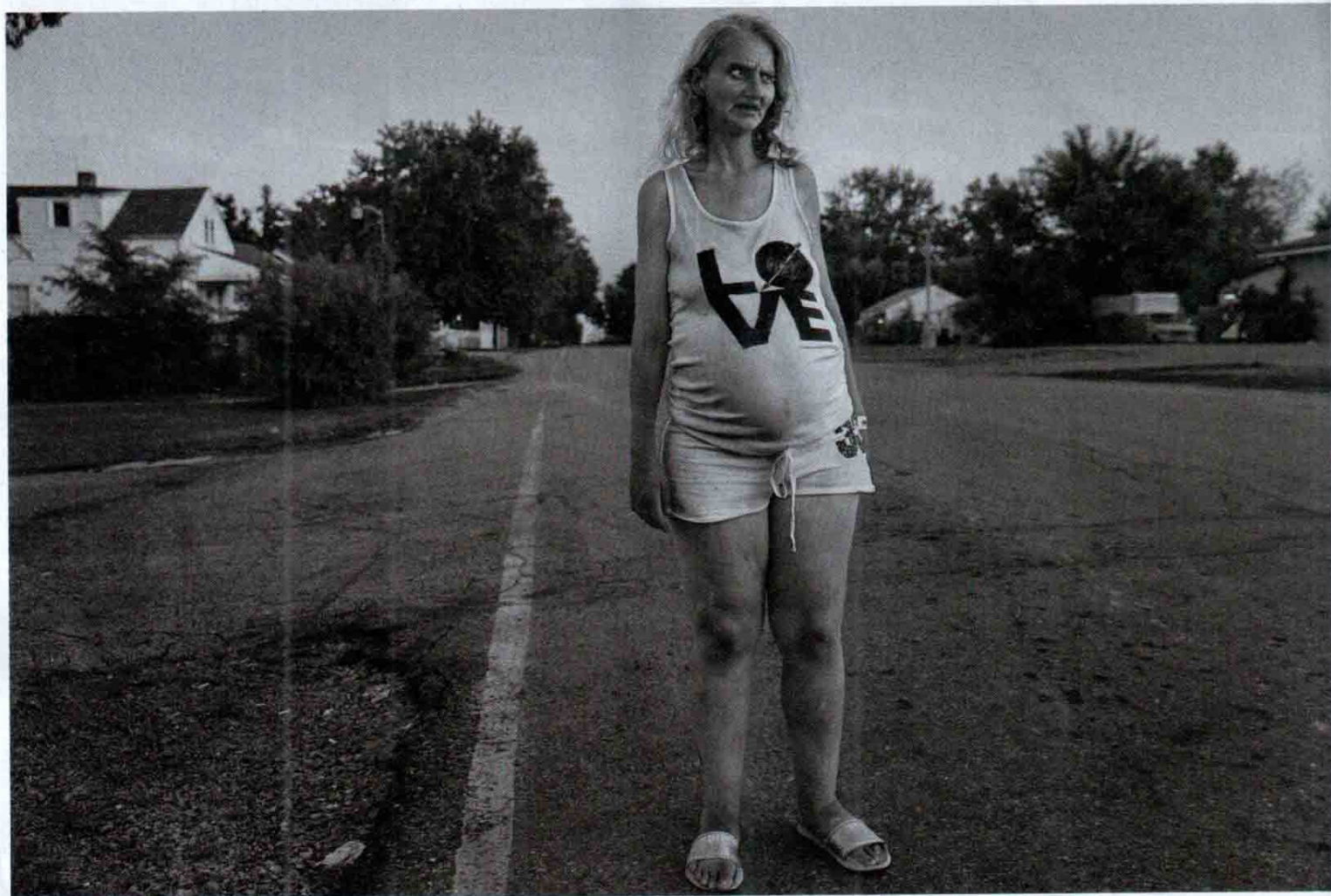




*'After Michaela died,  
I saw it clear as day.  
They're not only  
destroying themselves,  
they're destroying us.'*

**CHERYL SCHMIDTCHEN,**  
*67, being consoled  
at the funeral for her  
granddaughter Michaela  
Gingras in Manchester,  
N.H., on Sept. 17, 2017.  
Gingras, a heroin user,  
was 24*





# 'I want my daughter. I shouldn't have used with her. But I was too late.'

*RACHEL HOFFMAN, who says she was six months pregnant when this photo was taken in Dayton, Ohio, on July 2, 2017. After prematurely giving birth, she lost custody of her newborn girl. Hoffman, 35, says she is now in recovery*