

ethnic hate and prejudice, and Priit Vesilind's ability to convey the hopelessness yet inner strength of an entire people is brilliant.

JIM GOESER  
*Scandinavia, Wisconsin*

Your coverage is unconscionably simplistic. It stereotypes all Albanians as naive, innocent victims surrounded by evil forces on all sides. The article grossly misrepresents other groups in the region, particularly the people of neighboring Macedonia.

RICHARD GAUGHAN  
*Skopje, Macedonia*

Your article demonizes the whole Serbian nation, without distinguishing between innocent civilian and criminal elements. However, the article separates the KLA terrorists, drug dealers, and other criminals from the Albanian population at large. According to some reports, since KFOR troops moved into the region, possibly 300,000 non-Albanians have fled Kosovo and Metohija. Are readers to understand that no damage or tragedy was inflicted on the Serbs?

SNEZANA VITOROVICH  
*President, Association of Serbian Women  
Toronto, Ontario*

## Eyewitness Kosovo

I, too, was an eyewitness in Kosovo. I served as part of the U.S. contingent of the NATO peacekeeping force last summer. I saw firsthand the devastation the Serbs had wrought on Kosovo—the burned houses, destroyed machinery, and graves. I saw the heartfelt thanks we were given by the returning Kosovar refugees. Then, as the summer wore on, I saw the shoe on the other foot. I saw these same Kosovar Albanians turn around and attack their Serb neighbors with a vengeance. They burned Serb homes and shot local Serbs by night. They blew up Serb Orthodox churches, defaced and tore down Serb historical monuments, and even desecrated Serb cemeteries. The senseless tragedy that I saw convinced me that there are no "innocent victims" in the Balkans—save, perhaps, the children, and even they quickly learn to hate when they are so taught.

GEOFFREY R. WALDEN  
*Schweinfurt, Germany*

Thanks for the wake-up call from Alexandra Boulat's startling photographs from Kosovo. Too often we become complacent about happenings on the other side of the world. God bless Ms. Boulat for having the guts to tell the story.

PETE MELKERT  
*Brantford, Ontario*

As a 13-year-old NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC reader I find that many of the photos in your article are not at all in good taste. Do you really have to print a photo of a lot of dead people lying on the ground to explain the horror of the situation?

BEN THOMSON  
*Killingworth, Connecticut*

## The Balkans/Refugees Map

Croatia was not Axis aligned during World War II, as you state, or at least the majority of the population wasn't. The majority of Croats joined the resistance at its very beginning, along with the Serbian population. The government was Axis aligned, but that government wasn't chosen by the people, nor did it represent the opinions of the Croatian people. But then again, maybe I wasn't taught the true history at school. In the Balkans every nation has its own version of history.

MLADEN MARAVIC  
*Zagreb, Croatia*

Using solid colors to depict ethnic groups that make up more than 50 percent of the population in their region—without defining the size of a region and without shading for different levels of percentages—creates a monolithic visual impression that belies the ethnolinguistic complexities of the area. The result is oversimplification to the point of inaccuracy.

VICTOR A. FRIEDMAN  
*Chair, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures  
University of Chicago  
Chicago, Illinois*

You point out that there are 229,000 refugees in Armenia but ignore the many displaced persons who exist in pitiful circumstances in neighboring Azerbaijan. With one million displaced persons in a population of seven million, Azerbaijan endures one of the worst refugee/displaced person tragedies in the world.

DAVID PRITCHARD  
*Anchorage, Alaska*

## Central Africa's Orphan Gorillas

Good thing Michael McRae remembered his gorilla manners and "bowed submissively" to the 275-pound gorilla (page 95). I did not and was sorry. In 1991 I went trekking in Rwanda to see mountain gorillas. Covered in sweat and nettle rash, exhausted from hours of climbing, I suddenly came upon a group of gorillas just a few feet in front of me. In a rare moment of awe I forgot the cardinal rule of gorilla etiquette: Don't stare! But stare I did, for at least two seconds, whereupon the silverback male gorilla got up, beat his chest, displayed an impressive set of teeth, and pushed me away. I lost my balance and fell down but was unhurt. It was just a friendly reminder to watch my manners.

BERNADETTE KAYE  
*Ottawa, Ontario*

## Selma to Montgomery

Those traveling down the civil rights path have come a long way, but there remains a long distance to go. As a freelance journalist I attended the memorial service at an African-American church for James Earl Ray, alleged assassin of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. There we were, a seemingly educated crowd overall, paying our respects, and for the most part the African Americans sat on one side, the whites on the opposite side. No sign or