Twitter Thread by @DRJessieNYC

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The whiteness of this piece on "climate refugees" (corrected link) is deep.

The piece centers the story of Jen and Ryan Cashman, a white couple + their kids who used to live in Paradise, California.



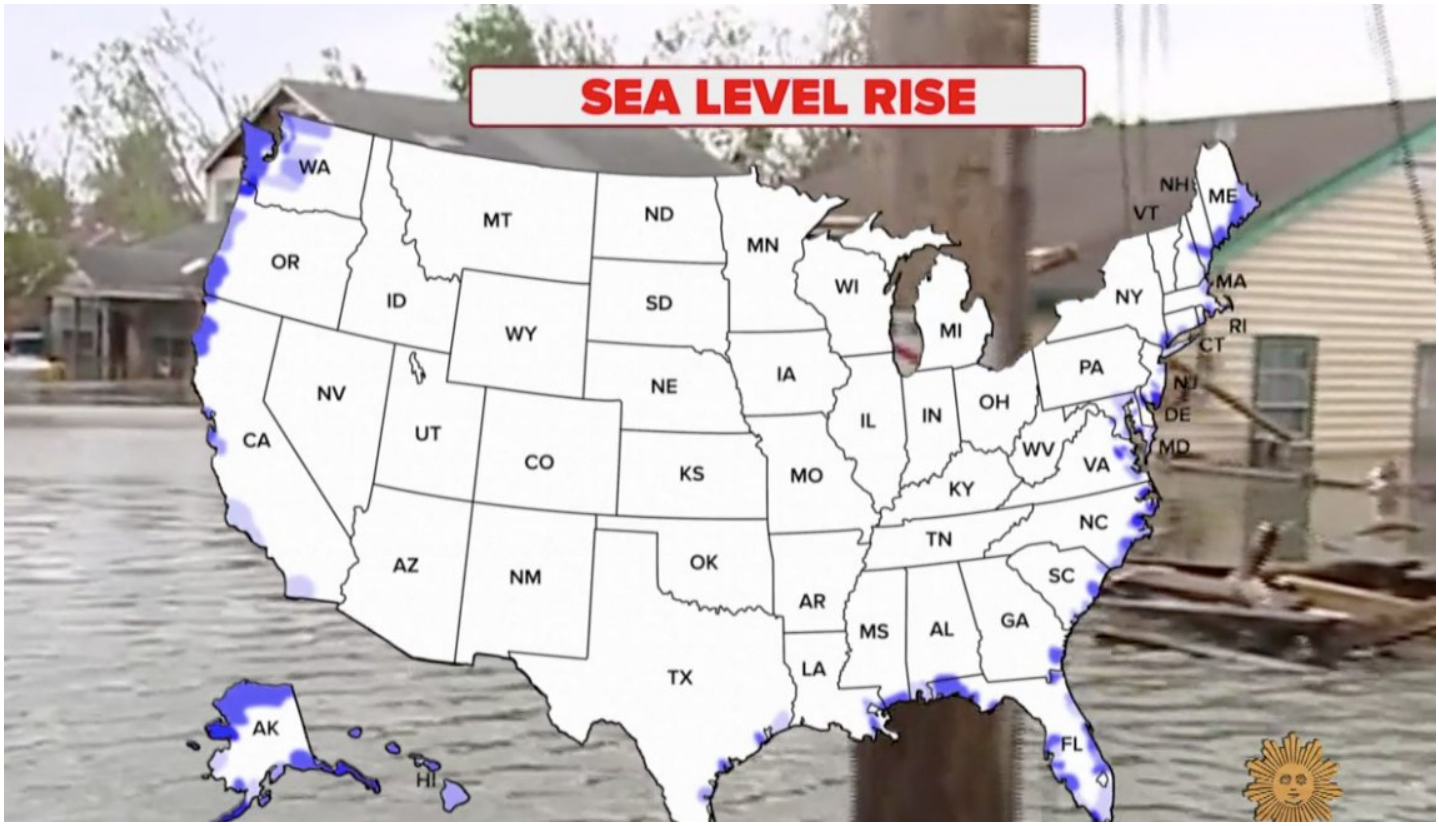
It does include an interview with Dr. @JalonneWNewsome who explains that climate change hits folks of color harder, and they may be less able to move due to fewer economic resources + less willing to move b/c of greater ties to their communities.



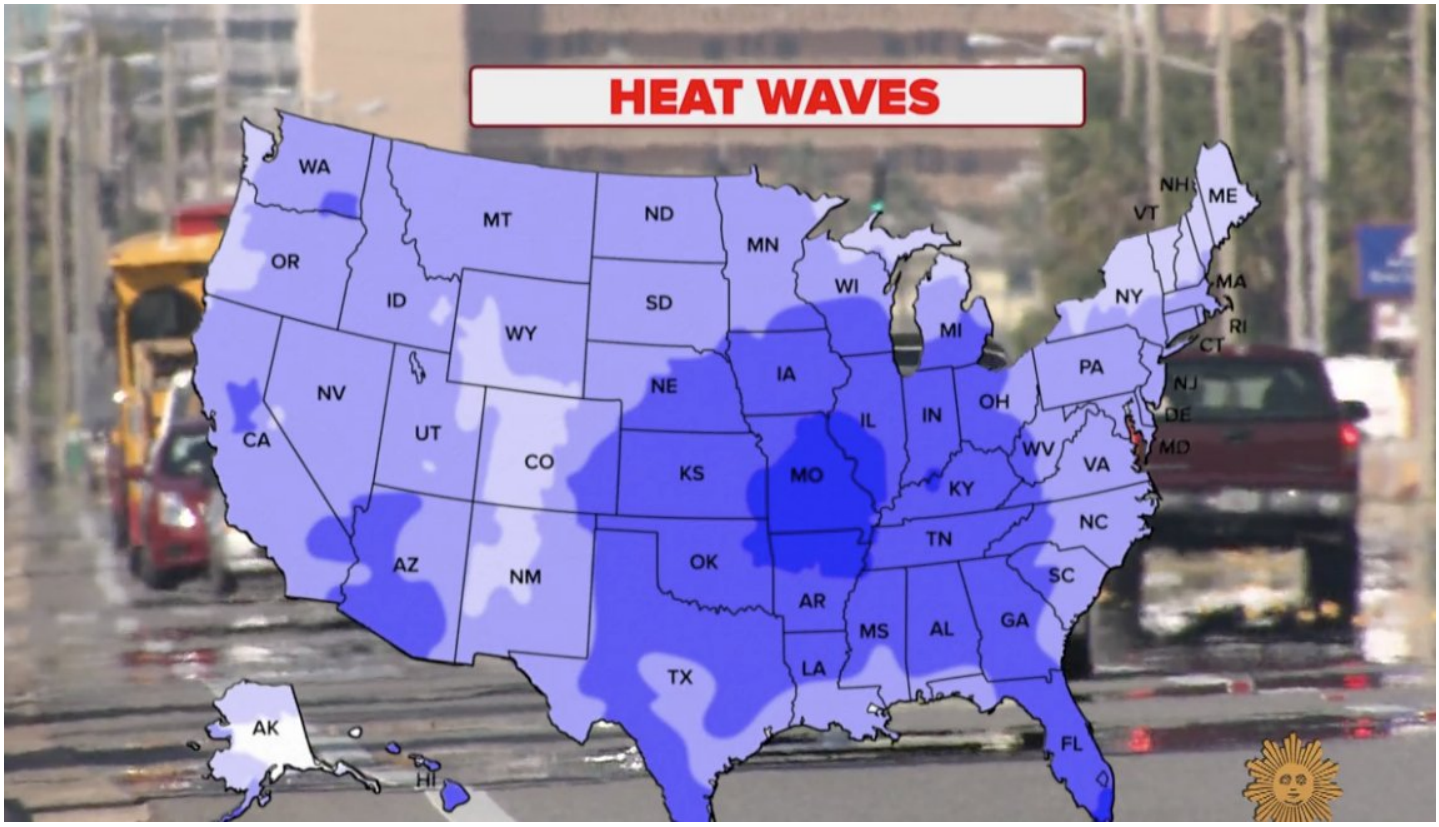
After this perfunctory nod to her excellent work, then the reporter (*cough* abuser *cough*) goes on to segue with one of the biggest "yeah, buts" I've ever heard...

"If you have the luxury of choosing where to live and climate change is a factor, here's the formula..."

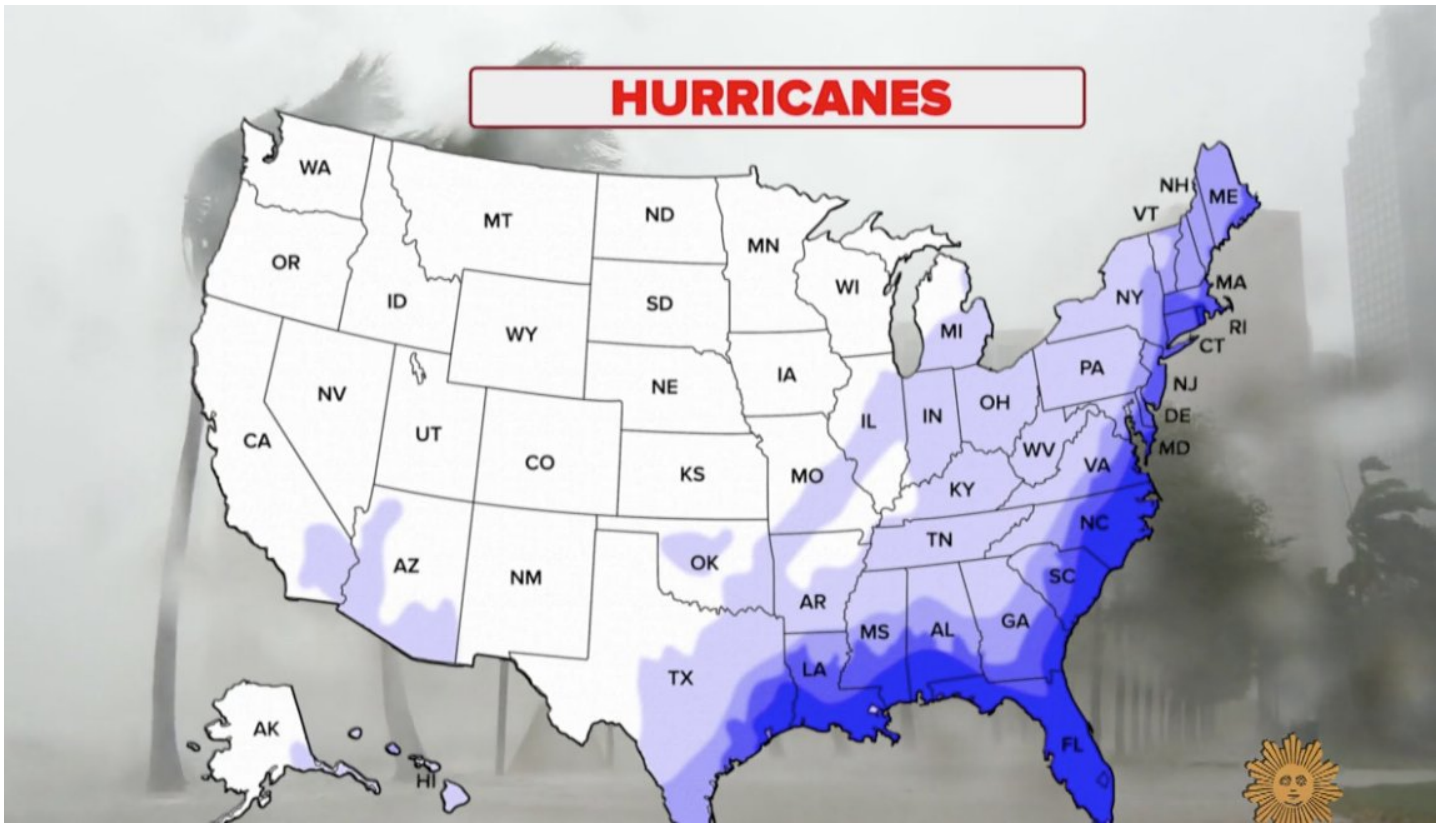
"...you want to be far enough inland to avoid rising sea levels..."



"...far enough north to avoid the worst of the heat waves..."

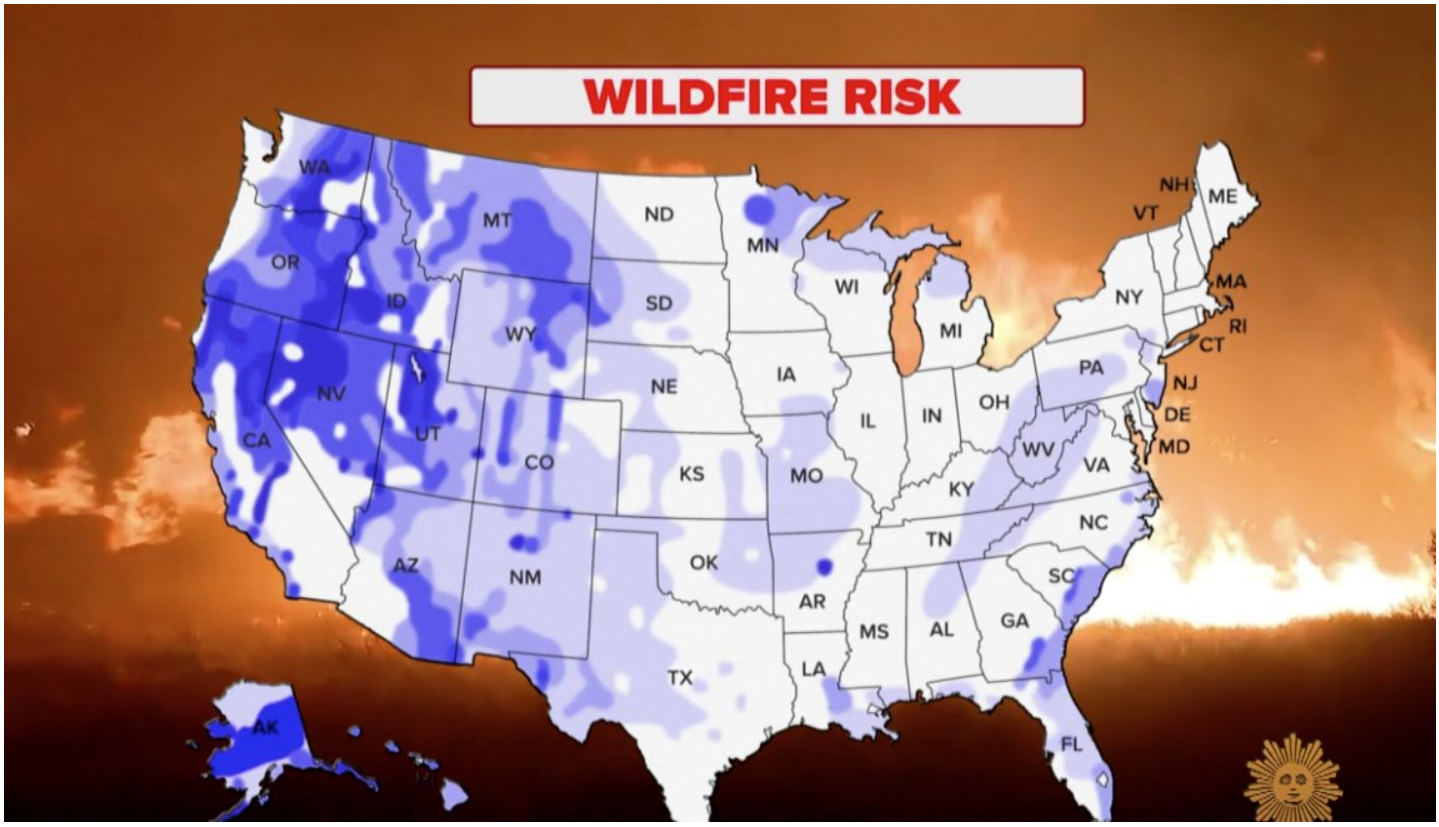


"...far enough west to avoid hurricanes..."

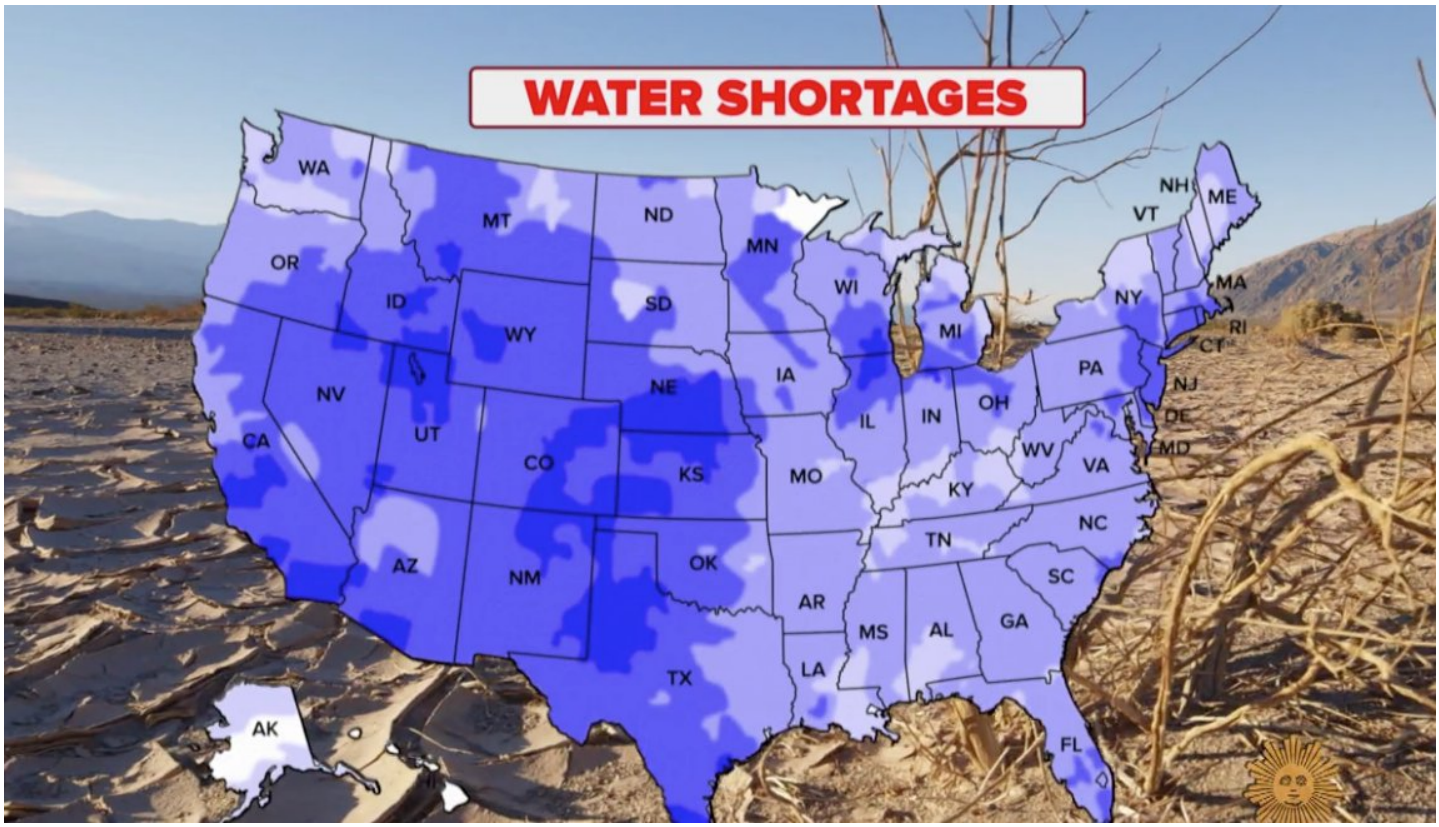


far enough *north

"...and far enough east to avoid wildfires"



"...droughts are also becoming worse in our western states, so you also want plenty of fresh water..."



"So, where does that leave you? The Great Lakes." And, specifically, Madison, Wisconsin.

As a climate change bonus, Madison is actually not that cold anymore.

[according to the reporter + the mayor of Madison]

The interview with the mayor of Madison does include a nod (again perfunctory) to the racial disparities in the "high quality of life" in Madison.



"Now, no place is perfect, even Madison," the reporter says in aw-shucks-folksiness.

"When we make another 'number 1' or 'top 10' [best places to live], well that's clearly true of the white population.

Is that also true for people of color? And the answer is almost always no, it's not."



"That's part of our work going forward."

Reporter segue: no comment about race, "Madison isn't the only great 'climate haven' city."

And, circle back to the Cashmans, burned out of Paradise, California, + who frame the piece. What 'climate haven' did they end up in with their new white kitchen?



In Burlington, Vermont, which has 85.28% white people.

https://t.co/r7CDK8ttQ9

"And the Cashmans couldn't be happier." [reporter]

"It's green, there are no forest fires." [mom]

"It's just a very healthy, functional place." [dad]

"The community embraced us immensely." [mom] //

"I knew we made the right decision." [mom]

There's lots in this one report, but it's telling about the way the climate crisis is unfolding, including:

The "nuclear family as fortress." Here it's the Cashmans who are, as far as this report is concerned, alone in the world against the climate crisis of wildfires.

They not only have the resources to be able to move from CA to VT, but they have apparently no deep community ties (or even, ties to the actual land) holding them to one place or another.

This is a key feature in this new iteration of settler colonialism. Just moving on from one place to another, looking for "the best" in "natural resources" and infrastructure for their nuclear family/fortress.

There's also zero in this report about addressing climate change for ALL of us.

I mean, wtf happens when all the Cashmans/ go to the Great Lakes region.

Will they want to build a wall around it? A mote, perhaps?

And the disgusting remove of this reporter, who reacts to word of the impact of climate crisis on communities of color like he's just learned that pigs can, in fact, fly.



This is the "concern" of whiteness. The suffering of anyone outside the Nuclear Family/Fortress is of no real consequence.

This is what we're up against with *ANYTHING* that requires a collective response, COVID-19, healthcare, social security, a social safety net, gun control, democracy, climate crisis, ALL of it.

We can't have nice things because people like the Cashmans think only of their family + reporters like that one + the network he's on legitimate their choices.

We have to reimagine kinship + think beyond the nuclear family as the highest good, or it will be our undoing. //fin