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WSJ

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL WEEKEND



The Fiction Of 'Effortless' Style
OFF DUTY

What's News

- Business & Finance**
- ◆ **Eli Lilly will spend \$5.3 billion** to boost manufacturing capacity for its anti-obesity drug Zepbound and cousin diabetes drug Mounjaro. **B9**
 - ◆ **Alibaba plans to raise \$4.5 billion** through a convertible-bond issue to fund share repurchases. **B9**
 - ◆ **Norway's sovereign-wealth fund** will vote against the re-election of Exxon Mobil director Joseph Hooley, opposing a move it says undermines shareholder rights. **B10**
 - ◆ **E.l.f. Beauty** is increasing its marketing investment to 25% of net sales in its fiscal 2024 from 7% in fiscal 2019. **B10**
 - ◆ **The S&P 500 and Nasdaq** rose for the fifth straight week while the Dow snapped a weekly winning streak that had lasted since mid-April. **B11**
 - ◆ **U.K. retail sales** slipped 2.3% in April compared with a month earlier, more sharply than forecast. **A10**
 - ◆ **Kabosu, the Shiba Inu dog** who became an internet meme and mascot of the cryptocurrency dogecoin, died. **B11**

- World-Wide**
- ◆ **The U.S. and its allies** are moving toward an agreement on a novel financing plan that would provide Ukraine with up to \$50 billion. **A1**
 - ◆ **Ukraine hit a Russian military complex** in Crimea with long-range missiles that were provided by the U.S. **A9**
 - ◆ **Families of children** killed in the 2022 mass shooting in Uvalde, Texas, sued the maker of Call of Duty videogames, Instagram and an AR-15 rifle manufacturer, accusing them marketing military-style semi-automatic guns to minors. **A3**
 - ◆ **The U.N.'s highest court** ordered Israel to halt military operations that could lead to the complete or partial destruction of the Palestinian population in the Gaza city of Rafah. **A8**
 - ◆ **Gang members in Haiti** have killed two American missionaries and a Haitian director they worked with, the Missions in Haiti group said. **A9**
 - ◆ **Died: Morgan Spurlock**, "Super Size Me" documentarian, 53... **Caleb Carr**, author of "The Alienist," 68. **A11**

NOONAN
Teach your children to love America **A15**

NOTICE TO READERS
WSJ.com and WSJ mobile apps will publish throughout the holiday weekend. The Wall Street Journal print edition won't be published on Monday, Memorial Day.

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Naval Academy Graduates Chart Next Course



ANCHORS AWAY: Midshipmen shout 'I do' upon taking their oath to serve during the commencement and commissioning ceremony Friday at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. The class of 2024 had 315 women among its 1,040 members.

Reinsurance Market Driving Rise in Home-Coverage Costs

By **JEAN EAGLESHAM**

Joshua Enloe has gone from home-insurance paragon to pariah in just three years. Since 2021, the 36-year-old Texan has been twice dropped by insurers, and his annual rate has almost tripled to \$13,000 from \$5,000, before ending up with a bare-bones

state insurer of last resort. His offense? Living in El Lago, a coastal suburb of Houston. The 1960s, 2,200-square-foot home Enloe shares with his wife and dogs is in Harris County, hammered by 2017's Hurricane Harvey. Last week the city's latest deadly storm swept through El Lago. One leading, but little-dis-

cussed, cause of this coverage crunch: a big increase in the cost of reinsurance policies, a sort of insurance for insurers. Now all eyes are on a round of reinsurance renewals currently under way in Florida and elsewhere that will help determine whether more premium increases are in store for homeowners.

Insurers buy reinsurance policies to limit their risks. After suffering a sharp drop in profits, reinsurers raised rates and cut coverage at the start of last year. That hit home insurers, making it harder to manage their losses from storms and other extreme-weather events. Many of them

Please turn to page A2

Away From Campus Protests, Some Find a Middle Ground

By **MOLLY BALL**

SAN LUIS OBISPO, Calif.—The conversation was halting at first, not because the students didn't have anything to say, but because they were afraid. Later, they would say their political discussion had been clarifying and even cathartic.

They sat scattered in a classroom after hours on

chairs attached to desks, 15 undergraduates at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, trying to make sense of the world and its discontents, starting with the recent campus Israel protests. "I see people saying, like, 'The students just want to feel heard,' and it's like, no, they want to make a difference," said Conner Phillips, a 20-year-old history major with

bleached-blond hair. "They're missing the complete point," agreed Baohan Tran, a 21-year-old political science major wearing a black hairband. "This disruption is obviously unfortunate, but now the whole world is talking about it, including the president," said Kayhan Mokhtari, a 19-year-old majoring in business.

Please turn to page A4

EXCHANGE



SUMMER SEQUELS
Why Hollywood isn't following last year's successful movie playbook **B1**

West Is Nearing Deal on Russian Assets

U.S., allies seek to tap investment returns to provide \$50 billion in funding to Ukraine

By **ANDREW DUEHREN AND LAURENCE NORMAN**

STRESA, Italy—The U.S. and its allies are closing in on a novel financing plan that would provide Ukraine with up to \$50 billion, though Western officials are still working through important details on the use and structure of the funds. The idea relies on the investment returns—mainly interest payments—generated by the roughly \$300 billion in Russian sovereign assets that the U.S. and Europe froze in their jurisdictions after the 2022 invasion of Ukraine. Biden administration officials have proposed creating a new financial instrument that would deliver many years worth of expected profits on the Russian assets to Kyiv in the short term, while leaving the underlying Russian assets untouched. The funding could provide another stream of aid for Ukraine as support for the war-torn nation has become mired in political divisions in the U.S. Presumptive Republican nominee Donald Trump has opposed money for Kyiv, and officials involved in the talks see a narrow window to strike a deal before elections in Europe and the U.S. this year. Finance ministers from the Group of Seven advanced democracies discussed the funding questions in recent meetings in Italy. The U.S. goal is to refine the idea enough that the heads of governments that lead the G-7 could endorse it at their own gathering in the coming weeks, even if some technical work is left for the summer. "If we're able to obtain broad agreement on the concept, we'll spend the next several weeks" finalizing details, *Please turn to page A9*

◆ **Ukraine hits Crimea with U.S. missiles.....** **A9**

'You Stole!' Runners Divided Over 'Bandits' Who Crash Races

The Miami Marathon cracks down on interlopers; in San Francisco, they are gods

By **ROBERT McMILLAN**

During the 2023 Miami Marathon, Frankie Ruiz, an event founder, spotted a bandit and pounced. He interrogated a runner wearing a comically bad counterfeit racing bib pinned to her shirt. She

claimed she and pals had paid for entry to the race, and were told to print out their bibs at home. "Who did you give the money to?" Ruiz asked. "My friend," the woman answered vaguely. "That's not a friend," Ruiz replied. "You're not

Please turn to page A10



The salmon run

Ticker Shock: Stock Symbol Gaffes Fuel Investors' 'Fat Finger' Trades

By **SARAH E. NEEDLEMAN**

A trader cost Citigroup \$78 million in fines this past week by mistyping an order to sell shares. It's a gaffe that ordinary investors like Derek Robinson of Seattle can relate to. The 45-year-old electrician was rushing one day last year to jump in on an investing trend he'd read about on Reddit. In his haste, he entered the wrong ticker symbol. "A biotech company was

having a little bit of a squeeze," he said. "I tried to jump in right at the end of the day, and I fat fingered the wrong ticker." The blunder left Robinson holding \$500 worth of shares in shipping company Imperial Petroleum, whose ticker symbol is IMPP. He had meant to buy shares of Immutech, which specializes in cancer immunotherapy and goes by IMMP. Erroneous stock purchases like Robinson's comprise less than 1% of all trades, but that

represents a whopping \$3.5 billion a day based on current trading volumes, according to Rutgers University finance professors Vadim Balashov and Andrei Nikiforov. They estimate more than half of stocks that trade on the Nasdaq and the New York Stock Exchange at any given time have tickers that are similar to others, making them ripe for confusion. Mistakes aren't always apparent right away. Robinson

Please turn to page A5

U.S. NEWS

CAPITAL ACCOUNT | By Greg Ip

Britain Offers Hard Lessons for the U.S.



President Biden, fighting for re-election with abysmal approval ratings, can count himself lucky in at least one respect: He's not Rishi Sunak.

The British prime minister called a general election for July 4, and like Biden he is weighed down by public pessimism over the economy. But unlike Biden, Sunak can't claim that pessimism is disconnected from hard data.

Britain has had one of the worst performances of major economies since the pandemic broke out in 2020, with lower growth, higher inflation and weaker investment than its peers.

Blame bad luck, and bad choices. Some of those choices fall at the feet of Sunak's Tories, in particular the decision to leave the European Union. But that doesn't mean Labour, which might form the next government, will do better. And in that lies lessons for the rest of the world: Whatever the flaws of globalization, turning your back on it can be costly and difficult to undo.

Let's start with the bad luck. As in the U.S., inflation is among the public's top complaints in Britain. While the latest reading at 2.3% isn't high relative to other countries, the cumulative increase in prices since February 2020 has been larger in Britain than in the U.S. or eurozone (using an index that corrects for measurement differences).

Everyone's energy prices rose after Russia invaded Ukraine, but Britain's more

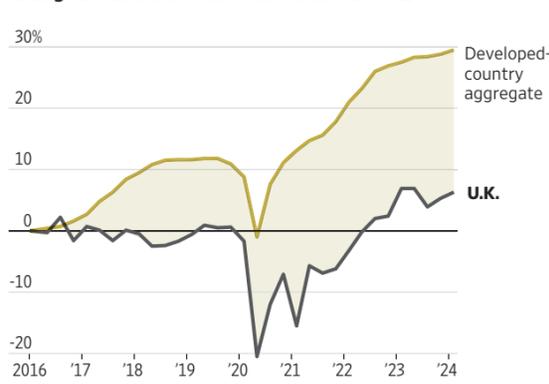
than most; it imported very little gas from Russia, but lots from Norway and the U.S., whose prices soared after Russia cut off supplies to Western Europe.

Britain also suffered one of the developed world's highest per capita death tolls in the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic, and long-term illness was a primary factor keeping people out of the labor force. The feeble labor supply has in turn kept unemployment low, vacancies high and wage growth brisk, contributing to inflation pressure. That has kept the Bank of England from cutting interest rates, cuts that Sunak, like Biden, is counting on.

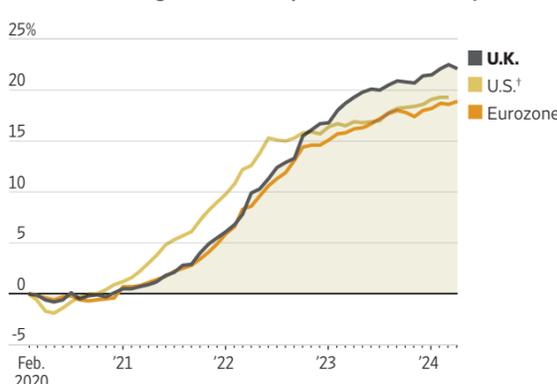
Economic performance can seldom be tied to any leader's specific decision, and the shocks of recent years hit almost everyone. Still, Britain has been uniquely bad at coping with them.

Biden took heat for feeding inflation with government stimulus, but he got an enviably strong labor market. Not so Sunak, a former Goldman Sachs analyst who was Chancellor of the Exchequer at the start of the pandemic and became prime minister in 2022. A report by Federal Reserve economists shows that even though the U.K. administered almost as much stimulus relative to economic output as the U.S., it has less to show for it, underperforming the eurozone, Canada and the U.S. on job growth, hours worked per employee and productivity.

Change in business investment since start of 2016



Cumulative change in consumer prices* since February 2020



*Harmonized index of consumer prices (HICP) †Through March Sources: J.P. Morgan, WSJ calculations (business investment); Haver Analytics (consumer prices)

Weak growth alongside stubborn inflation are partly explained by stagnant productivity (output per worker), which in turn can be traced to an investment slump that began after Britain voted to leave the EU in 2016, with Sunak's backing. Between early 2016 and

the end of 2023, British investment fell 17% relative to other developed economies, according to J.P. Morgan. Half of that can be plausibly tied to the administrative barriers and uncertainty brought on by Brexit. A study co-written by Jonathan Haskel, a policymaker at the

Bank of England, put investment in the U.K. 10% lower in 2022 than if the pre-2016 trend had persisted.

This is the opposite of what the Tories bet on: that outside the EU, Britain could become a lightly regulated magnet for foreign investment, a hub for the export of high-valued services, and a free trade partner with the U.S. and China.

Britain bet on globalization long before Brexit. "New Labour" under former Prime Minister Tony Blair embraced the so-called Washington consensus, in which goods, services, capital and ideas would flow ever more freely across borders.

In such a world it didn't matter that Britain had deindustrialized; manufacturing represented just 9% of national output in recent years, lower than in the U.S. at 11% and less than half the figure in Japan and China.

Britain thought it could pay its way because it excelled in what technology writer Dan Wang has called the "sounding-clever industries" such as media, finance and higher education.

But Brexit was horribly mistimed, coming just as globalization went into reverse: China became more explicit in its push to promote national champions at the expense of the West, and in the U.S., President Donald Trump embraced tariffs to protect American industries and punish China.

In a fragmenting world, multinationals want a pres-

ence in every economic bloc, and Britain left the largest.

Labour claims to be ready for this new world. "Globalization, as we once knew it, is dead," Rachel Reeves, likely Chancellor of the Exchequer in a Labour government, said in March. Echoing themes heard in Washington, Brussels and Beijing, she called for a "modern industrial strategy" that expands "domestic productive capacity," identifies sectors "critical in determining our future" and builds on Britain's existing "comparative advantage."

Yet whether Labour or the Conservatives win, both are constrained by the reality of a fragmenting global economy in which the U.K. lacks the U.S.'s deep pockets to subsidize investment, or name-brand manufacturers to anchor domestic production and innovation. For an economy Britain's size, self-sufficient supply chains are prohibitively expensive.

Britain could make up for that by gaining access to an internal market as big as China's or the U.S.'s. Both Labour and the Tories have ruled out rejoining the EU.

There are lessons here for the rest of the world. Globalization and free trade have their flaws, and sacrificing some efficiency—via subsidies or tariffs—may be necessary to correct them. But taken too far, the result will be smaller markets and higher prices. The U.S. won't feel the effects as much as Britain, but the direction will be the same and, as Britain is finding, hard to undo.

Reinsurance Drives Up Premiums

Continued from Page One passed on the higher costs and reduced coverage to their customers.

"The unregulated, global reinsurance market is a significant driver of the high cost of property coverage across the country, including in Houston," said Douglas Heller, director of insurance at the Consumer Federation of America.

Home insurers are hiking rates and pulling back from disaster-prone areas, such as Houston. Since the start of last year, regulators have greenlighted a 26% home-insurance rate increase in Texas, one of 45 states to suffer a double-digit increase, according to an analysis by S&P Global Market Intelligence for The Wall Street Journal.

Enloe now has very basic coverage from the state's FAIR Plan insurer of last resort. The Texas FAIR Plan, which has more than half of its policies in Harris County, reported a 41% increase in its reinsurance premiums last year.

Reinsurance lets insurers sell policies in vulnerable areas without the risk of being wiped out by one big disaster. Those policies have become increasingly expensive. A 63% rate increase last year by Louisiana's Citizens plan was "almost totally a result of the increased cost of reinsurance," state insurance regulators said.

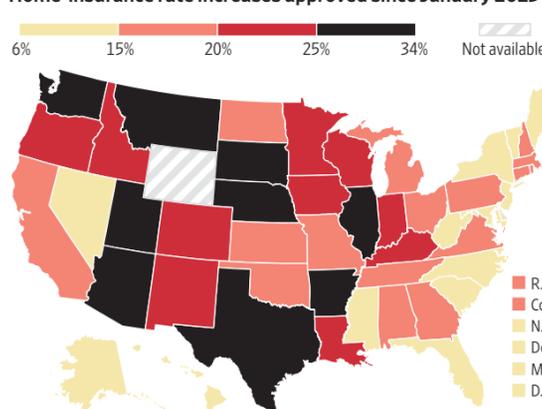
David Duffy, head of global clients at the reinsurance broker Guy Carpenter, said: "The whole premise of the reinsurance industry is that you can be a Florida or a Louisiana homeowner insurer and you can spread your very concentrated catastrophe risk...to the global insurance market."

The cost of this industry safety net increased sharply at the start of last year, after re-



A neighborhood in Cypress, Texas, that has suffered storm damage. Home insurers are pulling back from disaster-prone areas.

Home-insurance rate increases approved since January 2023*



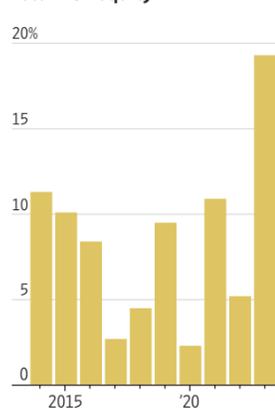
*As of May 10 †Change in the Guy Carpenter Rate on Line U.S. property catastrophe index, a measure of the dollars paid for coverage Sources: S&P Global Market Intelligence (map); Aon (return); Guy Carpenter (reinsurance)

insurers suffered a yearslong profits slide. "The companies decided they weren't getting the returns their investors needed," said Brian Schneider, a senior director at Fitch Ratings. "We saw 30%, 40%, even 50% rate increases."

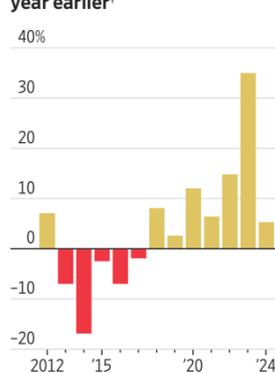
Most states, including Texas, allow insurers to share this pricing pain with their custom-

ers. The impact can be particularly marked in disaster-prone states, such as North Carolina. Insurers there say soaring reinsurance costs are a "major driver" of their requests to regulators to raise home-insurance rates by 99% in coastal areas, or 42% on average across the state. The request is due to go to a hearing this fall.

Reinsurance sector return on equity



Cost of U.S. commercial- and residential-property reinsurance, change from a year earlier†



The tough reinsurance market is affecting the availability of home insurance, as well as its cost. The shift goes back to late 2022, when reinsurers significantly hardened their policy terms. The companies raised the level of losses at which they would typically pay out and reduced coverage for rapidly rising losses from

perils such as thunderstorms. "The market restructuring shifted a lot of the risk of relatively frequent catastrophes back to insurers," said David Flandro, head of strategic advisory at the reinsurance broker Howden Re. "Reinsurers by and large have stood their ground since then," he added, leaving insurers saddled with

greater exposure to storms and wildfires.

That has contributed to consumers' being charged higher premiums and required to pay a greater share of hail and wind claims. Some smaller, regional companies have been forced to take more-dramatic action, pulling back from certain areas.

The home insurer Cypress Property & Casualty has reduced sales of home-insurance policies in the interior of Texas. The reason: Affordable reinsurance is no longer available to offset losses from the "incredibly destructive" storms battering the state, according to Co-Chief Executive Enda McDonnell.

"When you've got grapefruit-sized hail coming down, that does serious damage to a roof," he said. "No reinsurer is willing to take on that risk."

While home insurers have struggled—the industry last year lost almost 11 cents for every dollar of premium written, according to S&P—reinsurers are enjoying their most profitable stretch in years.

The 2023 market reset has had a "dramatic effect on the fortunes of reinsurers," according to the broker Aon. The industry, which tends to operate in cycles, is now on an upswing.

Consumer advocates have complained that reinsurer profits have come at the expense of homeowners. They have called for a federal reinsurance program to "insulate consumers from unrestrained cost increases."

The industry says critics of reinsurers are aiming at the wrong target. "The fundamental issue is the heightened level of losses in the system associated with home insurance," said Josh Knapp, an executive vice president at the broker Gallagher Re North America.

Insurance brokers tracking a round of reinsurance policy renewals next month say they expect premiums to stay fairly level, including in Florida. One driver is a wave of new money coming into the industry, which could lower prices. The wild card that could make the expected pricing reprieve short-lived is the hurricane season, which begins June 1. On Thursday, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicted an above-normal Atlantic hurricane season with the largest number of major hurricanes it has ever forecast.

"Consumers are still feeling the rate increases because there's a lag time," said Lisa Miller, a Florida-based insurance adviser and former regulator. "But the 2024 reinsurance costs are going to be better."

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CORRECTIONS & AMPLIFICATIONS The Federal Communications Commission fined a political consultant for AI-generated calls to New Hampshire voters. In some editions Friday, a headline with a U.S. Watch article about the fine incorrectly referred to the FEC. The Energy Department's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory is in Richland, Wash. A May 15 Technology & Business article about using artificial intelligence to reduce the environmental impact of jet contrails incorrectly said the lab is in Richmond, Wash. Readers can alert The Wall Street Journal to any errors in news articles by emailing wsjcontact@wsj.com or by calling 888-410-2667.

U.S. NEWS

Travelers Fight the Crowds

Travelers contended with big crowds and flight delays Friday, which was expected to be the busiest day of the Memorial Day weekend.

More than 4,000 U.S. flights were delayed by mid-afternoon on the East Coast, continuing a trend that has tested the patience of travelers all week. Relatively few flights were canceled—fewer than 100, according to tracking data from FlightAware. Fliers waited in line Friday at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport in Arlington, Va., right photo.

There were delays on the highways, too. Along Florida's Turnpike, Wallis Tinnie said a traffic accident and road work slowed her drive to an African-American history commemoration in the Florida Panhandle, the site in 1816 of the first battle of the Seminole Wars.

The Transportation Security Administration predicted that Friday would be the busiest day of the holiday weekend for air travel, with nearly three million people expected to pass through airport



checkpoints. TSA screened just under 2.9 million people Thursday, coming within about 11,000 of breaking the

record set on the Sunday after Thanksgiving last year.

"Airports are going to be more packed than we have

seen in 20 years," AAA spokesperson Aixa Diaz said.

Highways also are likely to be jammed. AAA pre-

dicted this will be the busiest start-of-summer weekend in nearly 20 years, with 43.8 million people expected

to roam at least 50 miles from home between Thursday and Monday.

—Associated Press

Uvalde Suit Focuses on Rifle Marketing

BY ELIZABETH FINDELL

Families of children killed in the 2022 school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, filed lawsuits Friday accusing companies including the maker of Call of Duty videogames, Instagram and an AR-15 rifle maker of colluding to market military-style semiautomatic guns to minors.

The two lawsuits were filed in state courts in California and Texas by dozens of family members and survivors from the shooting, in which 19 children and two adults died. They target more than a dozen companies, including Daniel Defense and several gun-accessory companies, videogame publisher Activision and its parent, **Microsoft**, and Instagram and its parent, **Meta**.

The suits allege that Georgia-based Daniel Defense, a maker of AR-15 rifles, marketed specifically to young people, in part through Call of Duty, a shooter videogame that the suit says has featured the company's rifles. Daniel Defense also marketed them to minors through its own Instagram page and posts by gun influencers, the suits allege.

Activision issued a statement expressing sympathy for the "horrendous and heart-breaking" shooting, but said, "Millions of people around the world enjoy videogames without turning to horrific acts."

Daniel Defense and Meta didn't immediately return requests for comment.



Families of Uvalde victims at a news conference with attorney Josh Koskoff on Wednesday.

A 2005 federal law protects gun makers from lawsuits if their products are used in a crime. Friday's suits focus on the marketing and advertising of guns to children, which isn't protected under that law.

The suit against Daniel Defense filed in Texas, says that the company sent an email to Uvalde shooter Salvador Ramos weeks before he turned 18. The company had noticed he had visited its website and had selected, but not bought, an AR-15 rifle. "Your DDM4v7 is ready in your cart!" the email read, according to the suit. Minutes after he turned 18, he did, carrying out the massacre with that gun eight days later.

The suit alleges that the company email to Ramos was evidence of a targeted strategy to "groom" underage peo-

ple to buy their guns.

Before the rifle purchase, Ramos was an avid Call of Duty player who would browse the Internet for weapons featured in the game, the suit alleges. Ramos also spent hours a day on Instagram, where he followed gun content including posts by Daniel Defense featuring the rifle he ultimately bought, according to the suit.

Instagram policies don't allow paid gun advertisements, but there are no limitations on posts by gun companies or influencers that spread organically, according to the suit. Social-media posts by Daniel Defense and other weapons companies frequently use Call of Duty hashtags and encourage players of the game to tag each other to spread their posts, the suit says.

The lawyer leading the effort is Josh Koskoff, who two years ago secured a \$73 million settlement against gun maker Remington for families of children killed in the mass shooting at Connecticut's Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012. Internal company documents revealed that Remington had an agreement with Activision to place its guns in Call of Duty games.

Koskoff said the suits filed Friday—the second anniversary of the Uvalde massacre—are an extension of the Sandy Hook effort by focusing on gun companies' marketing.

"It's the logical next step to look into the ecosystem that underwrites the gun industry and enables it," he said.

—Cameron McWhirter contributed to this article.

SCAN FOR A CLOSER LOOK

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Trial Finds Ozempic Slows Kidney Disease

BY DOMINIC CHOPPING

Novo Nordisk's Ozempic drug slows the progression of chronic kidney disease and cuts the risk of kidney failure, heart attack, stroke and death in patients with Type 2 diabetes, detailed results of a long-term trial showed Friday.

The findings on Ozempic, which has helped propel Novo Nordisk to Europe's most valuable company, are further evidence of how the new class of diabetes and weight-loss drugs could benefit patients' health more broadly. The company is racing to discover what other effects the drug might have on health conditions ranging from heart problems to osteoarthritis.

Headline results from the multiyear study of semaglutide, which is marketed as Ozempic to treat diabetes and Wegovy to treat obesity, were announced in March and showed the drug cuts the risk of kidney disease-related events in diabetic patients by 24%. This, after Novo Nordisk said in October it had stopped the trial early due to successful results—news that at the time sent shares of dialysis-services providers such as Fresenius Medical Care, DaVita and Baxter International plunging as investors began to

question the future demand picture of dialysis machines.

Detailed findings presented at a medical conference in Stockholm on Friday and published in the New England Journal of Medicine show that the rate of kidney function decline slowed significantly in patients who took semaglutide versus a placebo, while the risk of a major heart problem fell by 18% and risk of death from any cause fell 20%.

"These findings offer great promise in reshaping treatment strategies for individuals at high risk of diabetes-related complications, offering a new avenue for kidney and cardiovascular protection," said Professor Vlado Perkovic, provost at Sydney's University of New South Wales, who led the study. "The reassuring safety findings further support the strong potential value of semaglutide."

Ozempic is approved to treat diabetes but the company expects to file for a label expansion in the U.S. and EU this year. Novo Nordisk is developing the next generation of treatments that combine semaglutide with other ingredients to enhance benefits and expand into areas such as cardiovascular disease, outside of its core diabetes and weight-loss market.

MAESTRO OF MOVEMENT: EDGAR DEGAS

This highly important original pastel by Edgar Degas is one of six finished depictions the master created of the Ukrainian folk dancers. Captivated by these performers who toured Paris at the end of the 19th century, Degas harnessed their spontaneity and vibrancy in stunning color and rich texture. The present work was heralded by the J. Paul Getty Museum as the masterpiece of the series, with others belonging to prestigious institutions including the National Gallery in London and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Pastel and charcoal on mounted tracing paper. Circa 1899. Stamped "Degas" (lower left). Paper: 22 1/4" h x 29 1/2" w. Frame: 35 3/4" h x 42 3/8" w. #31-8597

Scan to learn more about this pastel

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U.S. NEWS

With 'No Regrets,' Navarro Plots New MAGA Agenda

From federal prison, former top adviser to Trump says he doesn't want pardon

By ALEX LEARY

Peter Navarro, a former top White House adviser to Donald Trump, isn't interested in a pardon should "the boss" return to power.

"I will not give the Supreme Court any excuse to duck what is otherwise a landmark constitutional case regarding the separation of powers and executive privilege," Navarro wrote to The Wall Street Journal from prison in Miami, referencing his appeal now before a federal appeals court. The 74-year-old is two months into a four-month sentence on a contempt of Congress conviction for stonewalling the House panel investigating the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol.

Perhaps no one has demonstrated loyalty to Trump like Navarro, the polarizing, wiry former White House China hawk and pandemic trouble-shooter. And no one has quite paid the same price: Navarro is the first White House official in history to be imprisoned for contempt.

"I have no regrets," said federal inmate No. 04370-510. "I didn't choose this fight, this fight chose me."

He might not want a pardon but Navarro will have a home in a new Trump administration if he wants it.

"I would absolutely have Peter back. This outrageous behavior by the Democrats should not have happened," Trump said in a statement to the Journal. (Navarro said he wasn't looking for a job but would consider one "if the boss needs me.")

The Jan. 6 committee was made up of seven Democrats and two Republicans, including former Rep. Liz Cheney of Wyoming, who lost a primary election in 2022 to a Trump-backed challenger. The panel wanted to speak with Navarro in part because he laid out a strategy in a book for getting then-Vice President Mike Pence to stop the certification of Joe Biden's victory.

Navarro is being held at Federal Correctional Institution Miami, which is for male inmates. Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega spent two decades there for drug trafficking. Lou Pearlman, the boy-band impresario turned swindler, died in 2016 while serving 25 years.

Navarro is in quarters for low-security offenders. Shortly before his surrender in March, when he showed up in all black with a green bomber jacket, CNN observed that inmates could hear the roar of lions from the nearby zoo.

"This is prison, plain and simple, no country for old men," Navarro said. "Don't fall into that pastoral zoo bull—" He has various complaints, including what he says is a diet high in sugar and carbohydrates: "Protein MIA. Haven't seen a fresh orange or grape-



Peter Navarro is two months into a four-month sentence on a contempt of Congress conviction for stonewalling the House panel probing the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol.

fruit in the heart of citrus country since I got here."

Navarro communicated with the Journal via a prison email system. A request for an in-person interview was denied. Others who have tried to interview Navarro in prison have also been rejected. Rep. Matt Gaetz (R., Fla.), who hosts a podcast, said Bureau of Prisons director Colette Peters told him Navarro is "too notorious."

Gaetz rejected that description, saying, "He's like an elderly college professor."

A BOP spokesman said the agency doesn't discuss conversations with members of Congress. The agency said it provides a variety of healthy food options, including fresh fruit

daily. Navarro, though, said inmates resort to buying better food in the commissary. "I'm a hot chili ramen noodle freak," he said.

Navarro did get a recent personal visit from Donald Trump Jr. and the conservative publisher Sergio Gor as they prepare to release Navarro's forthcoming book, "The New MAGA Deal." It is billed as an unofficial guide to "Make America Great Again" policies Trump could pursue in a second term, ranging from tougher trade practices and border security to shaking up the leadership ranks at the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Justice Department, long viewed with contempt by Trump.

The book is timed for release around the GOP convention, which would already be under way when Navarro is slated to be released from prison July 17, two days after his 75th birthday.

If given a chance to speak at the convention—which would deliver the kind of dramatic moment Trump covets—Navarro plans to reflect on his plight and the various prosecutions facing Trump. "Something like, 'If they can come for me—and they surely did—they can come for you,'" he said.

He said he and Trump don't seek retribution, but added accountability is needed for those who have been investigating and prosecuting Trump. He

warned that those "helping to orchestrate this mockery of our justice system should keep their emails, phone messages, and other correspondence when the Trump FBI and DOJ come a-calling."

Navarro joined the administration on Inauguration Day and quickly established himself as a polarizing figure in both style and substance, railing against "globalist" advisers Trump also brought in. Rivals, including some who weren't as hawkish on trade, blocked Navarro from key meetings, and aides were instructed to call the chief of staff whenever he got close to the Oval Office, former White House officials have said.

Navarro persisted, helping animate the tough-on-China posture that led to Trump's trade war and heavy tariffs. His role included work to boost domestic manufacturing and during the pandemic, Navarro helped marshal the government response. Trump referred to him as "my Peter" and would summon him to scratch a populist itch.

A typical day in prison, Navarro said, involves rising before dawn, having breakfast and walking a mile around the track to watch the sunrise before work in the law library. Lunch is followed by more work, then dinner at 4:45 p.m., and more exercise in the yard.

He sleeps in a dorm pod with about 50 other inmates. When time permits, Navarro works on his appeal before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Students Find Middle Ground

Continued from Page One

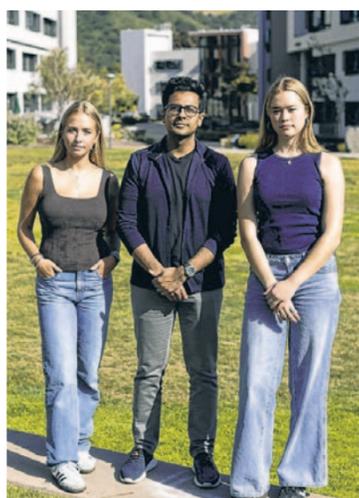
The protests that have upended colleges from coast to coast have focused America's attention on the volatile condition of campus politics and the unsettled state of the youth vote that could prove critical to this year's election. But fewer than 1 in 10 college students have participated in the protests, according to a recent Generation Lab poll, and while a plurality supported the protests, most opposed disruptive tactics like occupying campus buildings.

Even as some young people are erupting in anger, the students gathered here—a group that met on a recent weekday evening for a political discussion hosted by BridgeUSA, a national organization devoted to improving campus dialogue—are evidence that many are searching for a different way of approaching politics.

But they have few constructive outlets for political discussion in a campus atmosphere dominated by extremes and activist fervor. As the students here chatted about current events, their frustration with their political choices was apparent, but so was their yearning for an alternative to the militancy that has consumed so many of their peers.

Most were in middle school when Donald Trump was first elected president in 2016 and in high school during the pandemic dislocations and social-justice protests of 2020. Having come of age in a time of toxic polarization, their young lives marked by violent disagreements that have torn apart families and communities, they were hungry for some sort of constructive engagement—an idea so exotic that just taking baby steps toward it felt scary.

That deficiency is precisely what BridgeUSA was founded to address. Co-founder Manu Meel was a freshman at the University of California, Berkeley, when student demonstrations against a 2017 speech by the alt-right provocateur Milo Yiannopoulos degenerated into violence. The fracas upset Meel, an apolitical pre-med, who believed the extremists on either side didn't represent most students who didn't have strong opinions but lacked ways to talk things out without being bullied. After graduating in 2020, Meel and others took BridgeUSA national. It now has chapters at 63 colleges and 17 high schools in 39 states, and will hold its third national summit in Chicago over the summer.



Above, Manu Meel, CEO of BridgeUSA, center, with students Grace Reiff and Madison Mairs. Top right, the Recreation Center at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo. At right, students held a political dialogue hosted by BridgeUSA.

"The real divide in Gen Z is not left-right but moderate versus extreme," said Meel, 25, whose organization is funded by an ideologically diverse group of donors and foundations. His inbox has filled up lately with speaking invitations from major organizations anxious for approaches to tackle the polarization that some see as a central problem threatening the nation's, and the world's, future. "There's a silent majority that wants to have a dialogue, but all the air is taken up by the vocal extremes, and the universities are held hostage by them."

Sporadic protests

Cal Poly SLO, a top-rated school for engineering and agriculture along coastal Central California, isn't particularly political. Though students report tensions, it's a far cry from the raucous atmosphere at many California campuses. Eight hours' drive to the north, at Cal Poly Humboldt, anti-Israel protesters shut down the campus, defacing and barricading themselves inside buildings for weeks.

At Cal Poly SLO, there have been sporadic protests during the past several months, including one that led to student arrests in March. Earlier this month, about 100 students and faculty gathered for a campus "die-in" to express solidarity with the Palestinian people, while a handful of pro-Israel demonstrators looked on peacefully, according to a KCBX radio report. On Thursday, local police arrested six protesters, including a chemistry professor, after they blocked an entrance to the university. Some students have put Israeli or Palestinian flags on their backpacks. A few



weeks ago, a student in one of Madison Mairs's music classes stood up and yelled "Free Palestine!" and walked out in what appeared to be part of a coordinated action, she recalls.

Mairs, 20, helped start the BridgeUSA chapter with her friend and dormmate Grace Reiff, also 20, when both were freshmen last year. The two political science majors both come from politically mixed families and communities that have been riven asunder by politics in recent years. Mairs

lot of issues, but I love the idea of listening to all sides and having open conversations."

In high school, Reiff's family, mostly apolitical themselves, teased her that she was destined to become a politician because she was so poised and opinionated. She watched as Seattle was "turned upside down" by the 2020 protests and wished there was a way for people to recognize each other's humanity across perspectives. "So many friends and family members don't have relationships anymore because of politics," she said. "It can turn so ugly so quickly when people aren't trying to understand each other."

At the BridgeUSA meeting, Mairs and Reiff stood at the front of a classroom in the red-walled Agriculture building. A table was draped with a banner with the group's logo and the slogan "Constructive Dialogue. Ideological Diversity. Better Understanding."

As the sun set outside and students in sweatpants filtered into the room, Reiff read a set of "discussion norms" off the overhead projector, including "Critique the perspective, not the person" and "Recognize that participants represent

'The real divide in Gen Z is not left-right but moderate vs. extreme.'

only their ideas and are not expected to speak for their entire social group."

Part of what's driving the spasms of campus outrage may be a lack of other venues for political expression. At Cal Poly, both the College Republicans and College Democrats are defunct. Nationally, today's students can feel faced with a choice between the far-right Trumpism of organizations like Turning Point USA, known for racially inflammatory antics and surveilling liberal professors, and the far-left zealotry of protesters who romanticize armed resistance and see everything from Palestinian liberation to climate change as part of an urgent "omnicause." There's little space for open-minded exploration. The Bridge students lamented that their professors seem to avoid hot topics, making it hard to get educated on charged issues.

"We want to learn more," said Isabella Veran, a 20-year-old sociology major in a baggy white sweater. "It's disappointing that they're not addressing it."

Different world

Discussing the election, the students sought to understand the candidates' appeal. It was a left-leaning group, though it contained at least one Trump supporter and some who seemed curious about inde-

pendent Robert F. Kennedy Jr. "It's disappointing that these are our two best options, an old guy who can barely form sentences versus Trump, who's a racist," Mokhtari said.

"It's not enough to make me vote for Trump, but you wish we lived in a different world where the candidate was not [President] Biden," Phillips said.

Kate, a student who declined to give her last name, said Trump appealed to her as a businessman who could strengthen the economy. Rather than jump down her throat when she said this, the Biden-supporting students responded with curiosity and anecdotes about the devotion and patriotism of Trump supporters in their communities. "His supporters feel like, as committed as they are to him, he's committed to them," Reiff observed.

To be sure, for many of their peers, the division these students lament is a feature, not a bug. Plenty of idealistic youth perceive today's problems as too urgent for compromise and view the disruption of a corrupt status quo as necessary. Using their bodies to jam the gears of oppression is the only way they see to force a response from a system that shuts out their voices. As this generation prepares to steer the future course of the nation, politics will be a contest over whom the future belongs to.

Debriefing after the Bridge meeting, several students said it was a relief to be able to talk about politics without feeling like they were walking on eggshells. "I lean liberal, but sometimes I'm like, 'I'm not sure I agree with that,'" Phillips said. "But I don't want to say something that would get me ostracized by the group I identify with."

Dylan Taxer, a 20-year-old political science major, said some of his family members are no longer on speaking terms. "It's amazing to see how polarizing politics has become where they can't even talk to each other," he said. "A lot of us are scared because we've seen it with our own friends and relatives."

Meel, the national group's CEO, says the goal is not mushy-headed centrism or "kumbaya nonsense," but finding ways for even strong disagreements to be expressed without anyone being demonized, shouted down or violently attacked. For this seemingly anodyne stance, he has been called a fascist more times than he can count.

"This is your opportunity as young people to try to change the culture on campus," he told the Cal Poly students as they filtered out into the night. "You're actually advocating for something that is, like, countercultural. It's a middle finger to how f—ed up our politics is."

RUBY WALLAU FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (3)

U.S. NEWS

Emory Student Suspended Over AI Tool Fights Back

Eightball co-creator Benjamin Craver, 'pretty shocked,' is suing the university

By JOSEPH PISANI

College student Benjamin Craver was flying high. It was March 2023 and the artificial-intelligence tool he helped launch won a \$10,000 first-place prize at his university's startup competition.

Six months later, Emory University suspended him and his co-founder for that same AI tool.

"I was pretty shocked," Craver said in an interview with The Wall Street Journal. "A suspension goes on your permanent record forever, basically. I would always have that mark of academic dishonesty, which is upsetting."

Study tool

The AI tool, called Eightball, offers a way to help students study, Craver said. Users upload classroom slides or notes, and the tool uses that information to create flashcards and practice-test questions.

Craver has filed a lawsuit against Emory in the U.S. District Court in Atlanta, hoping that will get the university to reverse its decision and wipe the suspension from his record. The 20-year-old, who just finished his junior year, said his parents are funding the lawsuit.

An Emory spokeswoman declined to comment, saying the university doesn't talk about pending litigation. In court documents, the school has said Eightball could be used to spread class information outside the school and help Emory students cheat.

A report issued by Emory's honor council, which investigates academic misconduct, said the \$10,000 prize doesn't mean Emory supported Eightball. It isn't up to the university to ensure that the tool is developed ethically, said the report, which was disclosed in court documents.

Schools and universities have grappled with how students could use AI without cheating since ChatGPT launched in late 2022. Some schools have embraced AI chat bots, allowing students to use them as a first step to writing papers or finding information. Others have suspended students for cheating.

Craver, who is studying history and economics, said he got involved with the AI tool in the winter of 2022. A tech-savvy friend was "messing around and building stuff," he said, when he asked Craver to join him to enter the idea in a startup contest at Emory.

The two worked together to create a slideshow and an early version of the tool to

pitch contest judges.

Craver declined to name the friend, who was also suspended, for privacy reasons. The friend isn't named in the lawsuit. A third student who was with Eightball at its start left the company in the summer and wasn't suspended, Craver said.

Eightball is different than ChatGPT, Craver said, because instead of pulling information from online sources, Eightball specifically uses class materials that students upload. From those it can create flashcards or test questions, or build a study

guide. It doesn't grab other material from the internet.

Craver said his friend built the code for Eightball, while Craver was entrusted to get the word out by creating fliers and social-media posts to attract users. They picked AI because it is up-and-coming, said Craver.

"It's definitely going to affect the world in a huge way, much like the internet did," he said. "We wanted to focus on that and try to harness it for something positive."

They worked to have a test version ready by March 2023 to enter Eightball in the annual Pitch the Summit event held by the university's business school, where students pitch their startup ideas. Eightball won first place,

beating out six other ideas.

"We did not expect that at all," said Craver, who says winning the \$10,000 prize was a highlight of his time at Emory. "It was really cool."

They spent the prize money on making Eightball a reality, Craver said. Craver said he went back home to Lexington, Mass., last summer and worked on Eightball. For advice, Craver said he talked to alumni suggested by a dean at Emory.

Vanessa Youshaei, an Emory alumna who graduated in 2013 and who judged the pitch contest, said in court documents supporting Craver that she and the other judges were impressed by Eightball, and issues of cheating or using the school's software didn't come up.

"I for one wish that Eightball had been available when I was a student," Youshaei said in her letter of support, dated May 20.

'A little freaked out'

When Craver and his friend went back to school in the fall, the two of them lived together in an apartment. They would work on Eightball together after classes. In November, he was in that apartment when he received an email from the school that said he was at risk of being suspended. Craver said he had received no warning from the school before.

"I was upset and a little freaked out," Craver said about reading the letter on his laptop. "I just laid in bed for a



Emory said the way the AI tool was used violated school policy.

while that day."

Rob Nelson, who teaches a class on the history of higher education at the University of Pennsylvania and blogs about AI in education, said most universities aren't issuing new policies or guidance on how to use AI, but relying on teachers to be clear with students about what is allowed and what isn't.

Citation needed

Emory's code of conduct says students can use AI, as long as it is cited in their work. Students should ask professors on the appropriate use of AI if they are "unclear about the expectations," the code of conduct says.

Craver said he and his friend shut Eightball down at Emory several days after the letter. The tool had been live for a few weeks and didn't have many users, Craver said, though he doesn't know the exact number.

"I don't think it reached 100 at all," he said. "It was a very small handful."

Emory's honor council held a hearing in January. In Emory's hearing report, which was included in court documents, the school said having

Eightball connected to its learning software, where professors post class notes, was against university policy.

Craver said Eightball was designed to be connected to the learning software, and no one disapproved of it when it was pitched.

Appeal denied

Craver appealed the honor council's decision in February. His appeal was denied by the council a month later.

His suspension means he can't take classes this summer or fall. Craver said he also wouldn't be able to do his final thesis to graduate, or participate in fall career fairs. He will have to reapply to the school in the spring.

His lawsuit asks Emory to reverse its decision, let him come to school this fall, and to pay damages of more than \$75,000.

He isn't abandoning Eightball. He and his friend are working on getting it used by students at other universities.

"My No. 1 goal is to return to school and be able to finish my education," he said. "If I can do that and Eightball, then for sure, that'd be really cool."

Symbols Trip Up Traders

Continued from Page One

didn't discover his error until the following morning, when he saw that Immutep's shares had gone up by about a dollar, yet his holdings hadn't budged.

"It dawned on me I was losing money on a trade everyone else was making money on," he said.

Robinson stuck with Imperial in hopes that it would turn out to be a moneymaker. That gamble paid off; the stock is up 56% year to date, while Immutep is up 25%. "I got lucky," he said. Still, he has changed how he goes about investing.

"I'm slower following the Reddit hiveminds into trades, and if I do, I'm exercising more caution," he said. "I'm double-checking myself and triple-checking the sentiment."

In the Citi case, an unnamed trader's "inputting error" led to the sale of \$1.4 billion in equities, prompting a "flash crash" in European stocks. U.K. regulators said in a report that the trader was able to override alerts, due to poorly designed internal controls.

For everyday investors, racing to beat the clock is a common reason cited for mistakes, as are old-fashioned typos. Others blame companies for choosing stock symbols that sow confusion. Consider that automaker Ford Motor trades

under F—not FORD, which is the ticker for Forward Industries, a design and manufacturing company.

Ticker mix-ups date back decades, the Rutgers professors say. When JP Morgan merged with Chase Manhattan Bank in 2000, for example, the new company's ticker symbol became JPM. Some investors confused it with JPM Co., a manufacturer that traded under JPMX. (That stock symbol has since been retired).

In June 2020, Evgenii Markin decided to buy \$10,000 of Tesla shares. It wasn't until he realized that he'd become an accidental investor in biotech company Tiziana Life Sciences. The stocks,

which trade under the symbols TSLA and TLSA, respectively, were initially rising at about the same rate.

"It was a coincidence," said the 29-year-old real-estate professional in Staten Island, N.Y. "So I was happy with this result."

After about two months, Markin's error didn't seem so fortunate. By then, Tesla shares had doubled in value. Tiziana stock had gained but not nearly as much.

"I tried to console myself with the fact that Tiziana was also a relevant investment," said Markin. "It could have been worse."

As Zoom's video meetings surged in popularity early in the pandemic, investors confused the company's ZM ticker with Zoom Technologies' ZOOM. It was enough of a problem that the Securities and Exchange Commission suspended trading on the latter, citing "the public interest and the protection of investors."

When Elon Musk changed Twitter's name to X last July, shares of U.S. Steel got a bump. The Pittsburgh-based manufacturer's ticker symbol is also the letter X.

Brian Meiggs, 33, has been day trading since he was in college and runs a personal-finance website called My Millennial Guide. Early on in the meme-stock craze of 2021, he decided to invest about \$50,000 in GameStop, whose ticker is GME. Instead, he ended up holding shares of Globus Medical, a biotechnology company that trades under GMED.

It was 3:54 p.m., and Meiggs, who lives in Northern Virginia, said he was rushing to take advantage of the videogame retailer's rapidly rising stock price minutes before the market closed.

Meiggs was trying out a new investing app and figured that one of his fingers must have inadvertently touched the letter D on the keypad just before he hit "buy." He noticed the error immediately. It was too late to stop the transaction, but he had enough time left to sell what he'd just bought. It cost him about \$150; Globus Medical's share price had fallen by 17 cents during the few seconds in between.

"It's an easy mistake to make if you're on a new platform and kind of rushing," said Meiggs. "I'm more meticulous now."

The suspension came six months after a university prize for same tool.

—Nancy A. Youssef

U.S. WATCH



A WASHINGTON MONUMENT'S DEMISE: Stumpy, a beloved cherry tree on the Tidal Basin, is cut down as part of project that will remove about 300 trees to repair the eroding sea wall. The National Park Service plans to plant new trees.

PENTAGON Austin Undergoes Medical Procedure

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin underwent a medical procedure Friday night related to a previous bladder issue, and temporarily handed over his duties to his deputy, the Pentagon said.

The treatment, which the Pentagon said was a "successful, elective, and minimally invasive follow-up non-surgical procedure," lasted about 2½ hours. Austin returned home and resumed his duties.

The Pentagon disclosure is part of an apparent effort to be more transparent after the defense chief underwent two medical procedures without notifying the president and Defense Department leaders, raising questions about who was in charge of the U.S. military during those periods.

Austin underwent a procedure to treat prostate cancer on Dec. 22, and was discharged the next day. On Jan. 1, he was readmitted after complications stemming from the procedure. The White House only learned about the initial procedure after the Jan. 1 hospitalization.

Deputy Defense Secretary Kathleen Hicks assumed Austin's duties during Friday's treatment.

NEW MEXICO Judge Won't Stop Baldwin Case

A New Mexico judge has rejected actor Alec Baldwin's request to dismiss a criminal charge against him in the fatal shooting on the set of the film "Rust."

Baldwin, a co-producer of the film and its star, had sought to have the involuntary manslaughter charge dropped. He was holding a weapon on the Western film set when it discharged, fatally striking cinematographer Halyna Hutchins in October 2021.

Judge Mary Marlowe Sommer said Friday the court found no evidence the prosecution had acted in bad faith.

Baldwin, who is set to go on trial in July, has said he didn't pull the trigger and wasn't aware there was a live round in the gun. "We look forward to our day in court," his attorneys said Friday.

Involuntary manslaughter in New Mexico has a sentence of up to 18 months in prison.

Earlier this year, the movie's armorer, Hannah Gutierrez-Reed, was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter and sentenced to 18 months in prison.

—Suryatapa Bhattacharya

LOUISIANA Governor Signs Bill On Abortion Drugs

First-of-its-kind legislation that classifies two abortion-inducing drugs as controlled and dangerous substances was signed into law Friday by Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry.

The Republican governor announced his signing of the bill in Baton Rouge a day after it gained final legislative passage in the state Senate.

Opponents of the measure, which affects the drugs mifepristone and misoprostol, included physicians who said the drugs have other critical reproductive healthcare uses, and that changing the classification could make it harder to prescribe the medications.

Supporters of the bill said it would protect expectant mothers from coerced abortions, though they cited only one example of that happening, in Texas. The bill passed as abortion opponents await a final decision from the U.S. Supreme Court on an effort to restrict access to mifepristone.

The new law will take effect on Oct. 1. Language in the bill appears to carve out protections for pregnant women who obtain the drug without a prescription for their own consumption.

—Associated Press

COLORADO Grisly Discoveries Spur Funeral Laws

Colorado Gov. Jared Polis signed two bills into law Friday that overhaul state oversight of the funeral-home industry after gruesome discoveries, including 190 discomposing bodies in a facility, families being sent fake ashes and the unauthorized sale of body parts.

The cases put Colorado's lax funeral-home regulations—some of the weakest in the U.S.—in the spotlight and rocked hundreds of already grieving families. Some families had ceremonially spread ashes that turned out to be fake. Others said they had nightmares about what their loved ones might have looked like in a decayed state. The new laws bring Colorado in line with most other states.

One requires regulators to routinely inspect funeral homes and gives them more enforcement power. Another implements licensing for funeral directors and other workers. They would need to pass background checks and a national exam while possessing degrees and work experience. Previously, funeral home directors in Colorado didn't have to graduate from high school, let alone have a degree.

—Associated Press

WORLD NEWS

U.N. Court Orders Israel to Stop Attacks

Gaza operation threatens civilians, says International Court of Justice

By Jess Bravin and Anat Peled

The United Nations' highest court ordered Israel on Friday to halt military operations that could lead to the complete or partial destruction of the Palestinian population in Rafah, the Gaza Strip city where hundreds of thousands of civilians and units of the Hamas militant group have sought refuge.

The 13-2 vote by the International Court of Justice capped a week of international repudiation for Israel. On Monday, the International Criminal Court, a separate tribunal, said its prosecutor would seek to charge Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, along with three Hamas leaders, with war crimes related to the Gaza operations and the Oct. 7 attack on Israel that provoked them.

After the ICJ decision was announced, Netanyahu's office said he was consulting with his top cabinet officials on next steps. Hamas issued a statement welcoming the decision and called on the international community to ensure that Israel complies.

The directive is the ICJ's latest provisional order intended to protect Palestinian civilians, while a case filed in December by South Africa accusing Israel of genocide proceeds. Israel has denounced the accusations and said its operations are intended to destroy Hamas and free hostages, and that they are consistent with international law.

Although the world court's orders are binding, the tribunal has no means to enforce them. Zane Dangor, director-general of South Africa's Foreign Ministry, said his government would ask the U.N. Security Council to mandate Israel's compliance.



The International Court of Justice voted 13-2 vote to order Israel to stop some military operations in Rafah, in southern Gaza.

The head of the Israeli National Security Council and the spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said, "Israel will continue its efforts to enable humanitarian assistance and will act, in full compliance with the law, to reduce as much as possible harm caused to the civilian population in Gaza."

Parties to the 1948 Genocide Convention, including Israel and South Africa, can file claims at the ICJ seeking to enforce it against another nation. The treaty gives the court jurisdiction over actions intended to destroy or decimate particular population groups, but not over ordinary military actions, even those that may give rise to allegations of war crimes.

The ICJ has no authority over Hamas, which isn't a state, but it again called for the immediate release of hostages the militant group ab-

ducted from Israel.

Friday's decision didn't give South Africa everything it requested in its latest motion, which asked the ICJ to order Israel to withdraw its forces entirely from Gaza. But the world court made clear it is dissatisfied with Israeli actions to protect civilians.

"The court is not convinced that the evacuation efforts and related measures that Israel affirms to have undertaken to enhance the security of civilians" in Rafah "are sufficient to alleviate the immense risk to which the Palestinian population is exposed," said the court's president, Judge Nawaf Salam of Lebanon.

The ICJ also ordered Israel to keep the Rafah border crossing with Egypt open for the delivery of humanitarian aid and to permit U.N.-authorized investigators to enter

Gaza to gather evidence regarding the genocide allegations. The Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza has been closed since Israel began its operation in Rafah and took over the Gaza side of the crossing in early May. Egypt says it will reopen the crossing after Israeli troops leave.

On Friday, following a phone call between President Biden and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, Cairo said it would temporarily allow aid into Gaza via the Israeli Kerem Shalom crossing until a deal could be reached on the operation of the Gaza side of the Rafah border crossing. The White House welcomed the move. An Israeli official said talks on operating the Rafah crossing are continuing.

The court's American judge, Sarah Cleveland, joined the majority. The dissenters were

the court's vice president, Judge Julia Sebutinde of Uganda, and the Israeli judge appointed to sit on the case, Aharon Barak.

Both dissenters have argued consistently that the Genocide Convention doesn't apply to the Gaza operations.

"War inevitably, and tragically, affects the lives of civilians. But this does not make Israel's war against Hamas inherently illegitimate or unlawful and nor does it transform it into an act of genocide," Sebutinde wrote.

More than 800,000 Palestinians have fled Rafah in recent weeks, according to the U.N., as Israel expanded its operation to root out Hamas militants there. Israel says Hamas's remaining battalions are in Rafah and that an offensive in the city is necessary to eliminate its last bastion.

More Hostage Bodies Found

Israel said Friday it recovered the bodies of three hostages: Israeli citizen Hanan Yablonka, 42 years old; Brazilian-Israeli citizen Michel Nisenbaum, 59; and French-Mexican citizen Orion Hernandez Radoux, 30, who the military said were all killed in the Oct. 7 Hamas attack on Israel.

Families of hostages held in Gaza are holding nearly daily protests across Israel to press the Israeli government to increase efforts to free their loved ones. Israel has recovered the bodies of 19 hostages. Some 121 hostages, dead and alive, remain in the enclave.

Central Intelligence Agency Director William Burns was set to travel to Europe this weekend to meet his Israeli counterpart, Mossad chief David Barnea, and the prime minister of Qatar, Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani, and try to revive Gaza talks, say Egyptian and U.S. officials. Egypt hasn't confirmed its participation in the meetings.

NICK GRANITZ/AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

The U.S. had opposed a Rafah operation for weeks over concern about a lack of measures to protect the population. The Biden administration gained confidence that an expanded operation could go ahead after Israeli officials recently briefed national security adviser Jake Sullivan on their revised plans to address potential harm to civilians and evacuations from the area, according to a senior administration official.

Costly Pier Brings Little Aid

By Stephen Kalin and Nancy A. Youssef

An ambitious U.S. effort to get aid into Gaza via a floating pier in the Mediterranean Sea has gotten off to a sluggish start, facing many of the same logistical challenges that have throttled broader attempts to ease the humanitarian crisis in the Palestinian enclave.

The Pentagon spent \$320 million and engaged 1,000 soldiers and sailors to open a major maritime corridor this past week, delivering on President Biden's promise in March.

But in the first week of operations, only 820 tons of aid was delivered through the pier, of which about two-thirds reached distribution points within Gaza, the Pentagon said Thursday. That is roughly equivalent to 71 truckloads—far below the initial target of 90 truckloads a day, and about 15% of the estimated minimum daily need.

Roughly a dozen trucks from the pier never made it to their destinations inside Gaza, according to United Nations officials, who said that desperate Gazans commandeered the aid and that the trucks couldn't use alternative routes because of Israeli restrictions.

"It is not flowing at the rate that any of us would be happy with," national security adviser Jake Sullivan said Wednesday, adding that the U.S. was working on security arrangements to prevent looting.

One step to improving aid to Gaza came Friday when President Biden secured a commitment from Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi to resume shipments of U.N.-provided assistance funneled through Egyptian territory to the Kerem Shalom crossing in Israel. Egypt had been holding back that assistance to try to pressure Israel to end its Rafah operation.

U.S. officials have said the pier would expand capacity to enable 150 trucks a day to enter Gaza, helping at least 500,000 people a month. Sullivan blamed the current lower levels on "a dynamic environment."

The pier has begun operating at a critical time, with Israeli military advances in Rafah



Gazans have stormed some trucks carrying aid from the pier.

obstructing passage through two southern border crossings that were supplying most of the aid to the entire Gaza Strip.

But the maritime corridor is a cumbersome system with several potential bottlenecks. Food, medical supplies and other goods are sent to Cyprus, where it is screened and packaged onto pallets and transported by ship some 200 miles to a floating platform built by the U.S.

There, the pallets are put into trucks, which are driven onto smaller military vessels that carry them about 6 more miles to a floating U.S.-built causeway secured to the beach by Israeli army engineers. The trucks drive a few hundred feet down the causeway and onto the beach. Aid workers transfer the pallets onto a separate fleet of trucks for the final leg to warehouses and distribution points inside Gaza.

Weather poses a particular threat. Choppy waters could damage the pier and make it unsafe, military officials have warned. Storms delayed installation for several days and could stop operations again.

Michelle Strucke, a former deputy assistant secretary of defense for global partnerships including humanitarian affairs and disaster response, called the pier an "extraordinary measure" by the U.S. government. But she said it was rendered ineffective by distribution issues on the ground and Israel's lack of an effective system to protect aid

operations from military activities. Israel says it doesn't target aid workers, and after a deadly incident last month the defense minister said the military would coordinate directly with aid groups.

The pier operation also adds a dangerous new dimension to Washington's involvement in the Gaza war, which includes supplying Israel with weapons. The pier pushes U.S. forces to the edge of a chaotic battlefield. Engineering work came under mortar fire a month ago by "various terrorist organizations," according to the Israeli military. Three U.S. troops have been injured at sea already, said Vice Admiral Brad Cooper, deputy head of U.S. Central Command.

The danger to aid workers—more than 260 of whom have been killed over the course of the war, according to the U.N.—was highlighted last month when seven workers from World Central Kitchen, a charity founded by celebrity chef José Andrés, were killed in Israeli airstrikes.

Months of insufficient aid deliveries have pushed parts of Gaza into famine. More aid began entering in April after the U.S. and other foreign governments pressured Israel to open new ground crossings and ease restrictions on existing ones. But after Israel launched military operations in Rafah this month, the level of aid deliveries collapsed.

—Gordon Lubold contributed to this article.

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WORLD NEWS

Ukraine Hits Crimea With U.S. Missiles

Russia's military infrastructure is target of new longer-range weapons

By IAN LOVETT
AND NIKITA NIKOLAIENKO

KYIV, Ukraine—Ukraine hit a Russian military complex in Crimea with U.S.-provided long-range missiles Thursday night, the latest in a series of strikes aimed at slowing the Russian war machine.

The strike hit a communications center of Russian air-defense forces in the city of Alushta, according to a Ukrainian defense official. Crimean social-media channels reported several explosions.

While Ukraine is struggling to hold back Russian forces along the northern and eastern fronts, ATACMS, which stands for Army Tactical Missile System, has allowed Kyiv to menace Russia's hold on Crimea, focusing largely on high-value targets such as air-defense systems, jet fighters and warships.

The long-range attacks are a central part of Ukraine's strategy to buy time to rebuild its military while degrading Russia's ability to wage war. Front lines in the north and

east of the country are under pressure from Russian offensives. Long-range ATACMS, first provided by the U.S. earlier this year, have significantly boosted the range, value and number of targets Ukraine can attack.

Launched from the back of a truck, ATACMS fly faster than the British and French missiles, making them tougher to shoot down. The long-range variants can hit targets more than 180 miles away.

The Biden administration has barred Kyiv from using U.S.-supplied weapons to strike on Russian territory. That has made Crimea, a Russian staging post for the war, the main target. Ukraine's first use of the longer-range variant of ATACMS in April hit an airfield in Crimea.

This week, Ukrainian military officials said they had hit the port in Sevastopol, damaging a warship. While officials didn't say what weapons had been used, Russian officials in Crimea said they had shot down nine ATACMS missiles the night of the attack.

Ukraine's military said it destroyed an advanced Russian S-400 air-defense system on Wednesday, which open-source analysts attributed to an ATACMS strike near occupied Mospyn in eastern



Law officers carried a victim of a Russian missile attack Thursday on the city of Kharkiv, in a region Moscow invaded this year.

Ukraine. Three weeks ago, an ATACMS strike on a training ground in the occupied Luhansk region killed dozens of Russian soldiers, analysts said.

Sergei Aksyonov, a Russian-installed official in Crimea, wrote on Telegram Thursday night that Ukrainian missiles had killed two "bystanders," and an "empty commercial property" was damaged. He didn't comment on the communications center.

On Friday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said American weapons were being used to strike "a wide variety of targets outside the conflict zone," though he didn't men-

tion any sites.

Mark Cancian, a former artillery officer in the U.S. Marine Corps now at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said Ukraine would likely focus on deep strikes while it tries to rebuild manpower in hopes of launching a more robust counteroffensive next year. Crimea, he said, was an appealing target because of fixed military facilities that can't easily be camouflaged or spread out.

"I don't think they can cut it off, but they can make Crimea uncomfortable," Cancian said.

Ukraine had hoped that ATACMS missiles would help disrupt the Russians and

weaken their ability to maintain their front-line defenses, enabling a Ukrainian breakthrough in a 2023 counteroffensive. In the end, Russia beat back the Ukrainian attacks, with Kyiv suffering heavy losses of personnel and equipment, leaving it in a much more dire position than a year ago.

The U.S. decision to send the longer-range ATACMS was the subject of intense debate for well over a year. At first, the Biden administration was wary, but as the conflict dragged on, its concern that the Ukraine conflict might escalate into a direct U.S.-Russia clash began to fade. In the

U.S., some members of Congress have been pressuring the Biden administration to allow Ukraine to fire ATACMS and other U.S.-made weapons into Russian territory. The ban on doing so, military analysts say, has impeded Ukraine's efforts to halt Moscow's recent invasion of the Kharkiv region.

—Daniel Michaels and
Kate Vtorygina
contributed to this article.

Watch a Video



Scan this code for an inside look at a front-line Ukrainian artillery unit.

West Nears Russian-Assets Deal

Continued from Page One
Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said during a news conference Thursday.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told the state news agency TASS last month that the U.S. would have to answer for the confiscation of any of Russia's frozen assets. Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree this past week giving Moscow jurisdiction over American property in Russia to compensate for damages from any future seizure of Russian assets.

Under the discussed structure, Western nations would lend to a newly created financing entity, which would, in turn, disburse the money as grants to Kyiv, according to people familiar with the matter. The profits from the frozen Russian assets would then go toward paying back Western nations for the loan to the financing entity.

With this system, U.S. officials believe they could make the loan without Congress and at little cost, an advantage also for cash-strapped European governments. Because a financing entity would take out the loan, this structure would avoid adding to Ukraine's debt burden.

The U.S. plan has started to gain traction after months of divisions between Washington and European capitals over what to do with the frozen assets. With the support of the U.K. and Canada, the Biden administration has been pushing for seizing the assets out-



Janet Yellen, second from left, attends a Group of Seven meeting in Lake Maggiore, Italy.

right. Congress last month gave the U.S. the legal authority to take the small portion of the assets under U.S. jurisdiction and use them to support Ukraine. But other European countries have resisted seizing the assets, arguing that such a move could violate international law.

Two-thirds of Russian central-bank assets were in Belgian clearinghouse Euroclear when the assets were frozen days after Russia invaded Ukraine, giving Europe significant sway over the use of the money.

The latest plan avoids the thorny legal questions raised by confiscating another nation's sovereign wealth. It also draws from an existing European plan to send the returns on the Russian assets to Ukraine this year. The first 1 billion euros, about \$1.1 billion, from the Europe plan is expected to go to Ukraine by July 1—the first of what officials said could be up to 4 billion euros this year.

The U.S. idea is to accel-

erate several future years of Russian interest payments into one, larger financing package available to Ukraine as soon as this year.

French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said he would propose a European variation of the U.S. plan, a French official said. The person said the idea mainly involves the structure of the plan, in particular how the risk is shared across the G-7 countries.

For the financing proposal to succeed, the European Union would have to amend its plan to send returns on the Russian assets directly to Ukraine. The timing of that change will be sensitive, European officials said, but they still could channel proceeds from the assets into the U.S. proposal next year.

Another open issue is whether Kyiv should be allowed to buy weapons with the money or whether the G-7 should restrict the use of the money to fund Ukraine's reconstruction.

The size of the package

would depend on how far into the future Western officials lay claim to returns generated by the Russian assets.

One question hanging over the talks is a possible end to the war, when Russian assets might be returned to Moscow. That could cut off the revenue stream dedicated to paying back the loan, meaning G-7 nations ultimately might have to bear the cost of the plan.

European countries want to ensure that the plan fairly accounts for the possibility that the G-7 nations have to pay for the funding. Yellen said on Thursday that even if the West eventually loses control of the Russian assets and their proceeds, Moscow likely would still be forced to pay for the Ukraine aid.

"I don't believe as a general matter that it's necessary to block the assets until the money is paid back," Yellen said. "We hope that there is a peace agreement. In the course of such an agreement, decisions could be made for Russian compensation for Ukraine."

Haitian Gang Members Kill 2 U.S. Missionaries

By JUAN FORERO AND KEJAL VYAS

Gang members in Haiti have killed two American missionaries of an Oklahoma-based group and a Haitian director they worked with, the Missions in Haiti group said on Facebook.

The U.S. victims, identified as Davy Lloyd and his wife, Natalie Lloyd, were ambushed by three truckloads of armed men Thursday night after the couple left the mission's compound, the group said. Natalie Lloyd is the daughter of a Republican state representative in Missouri, Ben Baker. The Haitian director of the orphanage run by the mission in the troubled country, Jude Montis, was also killed, according to a WhatsApp group in Haiti called Information and Security.

"My heart is broken in a thousand pieces," Baker wrote on Facebook.

Missions in Haiti runs an orphanage in Lizon, north of Port-au-Prince, an area riven by violent gangs. The shootings erupted after chaos broke out at the compound with the arrival of the gangs. The group said Davy Lloyd was tied up and beaten by gang members who stole the church's trucks and other belongings. Then, another armed group arrived leading to a gunbattle in which the Lloyds and Montis were killed, said Missions in Haiti.

The killings came as a new

governing council in Haiti awaits the deployment of police from Kenya as part of a U.S.-supported plan to try to bring a semblance of security to the country of 11 million people.

The gangs have formed a loose union and vowed to battle the deployment of the Kenyan forces. President Biden and Kenya's President William Ruto, during a state visit by the African leader to Washington on Thursday, didn't say when the Kenyan police would be deployed but affirmed their commitment to the security operation.

The Lloyds moved to Haiti a few months after they got married in June 2022, and helped organize education and religious services for children at Missions in

Haiti, the missionary group Davy Lloyd's parents started in 2000, according to the group's website.

On their Instagram accounts, the couple regularly posted photos and videos of the work they were carrying out. "Thankful for this life," Natalie Lloyd wrote in one July post that included a video of children smiling into the camera.

In another post from last month, Davy Lloyd led children during a youth church service.

"We've been talking about the armor of God," he wrote. "Tonight we talked about the breastplate of righteousness."

The killings came as leaders await the arrival of police from Kenya.

IRAN No Signs of Attack In Helicopter Crash

The helicopter carrying Iran's late President Ebrahim Raisi caught fire soon after it crashed May 19, and there was no sign it was attacked, state media reported, citing military investigators.

Communications with the control tower contained nothing suspicious, according to the statement, which said the crew's last communication was with two accompanying helicopters about 90 seconds before the crash. There was no sign of anything shot at the helicopter, and its flight path didn't change, the statement said.

In all, eight people died when the aging Bell helicopter went down in a fog.

—Associated Press

PAKISTAN Bombing Victims' Families to Be Paid

Pakistan will pay \$2.58 million to the families of five Chinese engineers killed in March when a suicide bomber targeted the vehicle carrying them to their jobs at Dasu Dam, and \$8,950 to the family of the Pakistani driver who died in the attack.

The government says the attack was planned in Afghanistan and the bomber was an Afghan citizen, which Afghanistan's Taliban government and Pakistani militants deny.

Thousands of Chinese are working on projects related to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Some have been attacked in recent years by militants who accuse them of plundering mineral resources.

—Associated Press

HUNGARY Orbán Goes Against NATO Ukraine Plan

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said Friday that Hungary opposes a plan NATO is weighing to provide more predictable military support to Ukraine to repel Moscow's invasion, saying it has taken a position as a "nonparticipant" in any potential NATO operations to assist Kyiv.

Hungary is working on how it can exist as a member of the military pact while not participating in NATO actions outside of its territory, he said. Orbán said he doesn't share concerns that Russia's military wouldn't cease its aggression if it wins in Ukraine—which shares a border with Hungary—and has refused to supply Ukraine with military aid.

—Associated Press

WORLD WATCH



GEARING UP: A driver prepared Friday for Sunday's Grand Prix of Monaco in Monte Carlo.

WORLD NEWS

Hundreds Feared Dead in Papua New Guinea



BURIED: People gather at the site of a devastating landslide in Maip Mulitaka in Papua New Guinea's Enga province. Officials in the South Pacific island nation said that more than 100 people were believed to have been killed Friday.

China's Chatbot Makes Sure It's A Good Comrade

By Stu Woo

SINGAPORE—Chinese artificial-intelligence companies face two big challenges in trying to create chatbots on par with OpenAI's ChatGPT. One is overcoming U.S. export controls on buying leading-edge artificial-intelligence chips.

The other? Making sure the chatbot adheres to Xi Jinping Thought.

That's the doctrine of Xi, the leader of China's ruling Communist Party. And Chinese authorities offered a reminder of how AI companies are expected to behave on Monday, when they announced a new chatbot trained on Xi's 14-point theory, which emphasizes socialist values and the party's leadership over everything in China.

Officially, the chatbot is meant to provide cybersecurity and information-technology research. Designed by

it questions about network technology, and it can generate responses in Chinese and English.

The regulator said the chatbot can, for example, outline reports on the current status of AI development, or describe the difference between technologically driven economic growth and older forms of productivity.

China in 2017 announced plans to become the world's dominant power in all aspects of AI by 2030. It outlined a top-down agenda that encouraged educational institutions and companies to get on board, and they have responded.

In competing with the U.S., China has some natural advantages. Its 1.4 billion people give it potentially much more data to quickly train systems for autonomous vehicles and computer vision, a field that involves interpreting information from images and videos.

But for training chatbots

China's cyberspace academy, the chatbot derives data from seven sources. Six of them are professional databases about technology. The other is the doctrine, known formally as "Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism With Chinese Characteristics for a New Era."

China and the U.S. are vying for leadership in AI, a tech sector that promises to boost economic productivity while transforming how people work. But in one subset of AI, Chinese companies face a disadvantage, because Beijing censors not only what chatbots can spit out, but also what data they can learn from.

The chatbot announced Monday is being tested internally at China's cyberspace research institute, and it is unclear whether it will be made public. According to the announcement by China's cyberspace regulator, people with access to the chatbot can ask

such as OpenAI's ChatGPT, the U.S. has an edge. AI systems developed by OpenAI, Google and others require large oceans of information to learn from. That has prompted deals such as the recent content-licensing partnership between OpenAI and Wall Street Journal owner News Corp, in which the publisher will provide data that can help improve ChatGPT.

In China, AI developers face restrictions. Just as the country's cyberspace regulator blocks access to Google, Facebook and foreign-news sources, it also has a preapproved list of sources that AI chatbots can be trained on, said Rebecca Arcesati, an analyst at the Mercator Institute for China Studies, a German think tank. The regulator also verifies that the chatbot avoids answering queries on politically sensitive topics.

"These large models need to implement core socialist values," Arcesati said.

Beijing censors what chatbots can spit out and what data they can learn from.

Strike Threat by Border Agents In Canada Imperils U.S. Trade

By Paul Vieira

OTTAWA—The union representing Canadian border agents said over 90% of its members voted to go on strike as soon as next month, posing a risk to billions of dollars in daily cross-border commercial trade between the U.S. and Canada.

A strike could bring truck traffic to a standstill at designated crossings along the 4,000-mile U.S.-Canadian border, and marks a second threat this summer to the North American supply-chain network. Canada could face a possible simultaneous strike at the country's two main railroads, Canadian National Railway and Canadian Pacific Kansas City, sometime in July.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture warned this week such an event could have "significant impacts" for agriculture trade, producers and consumers.

The Public Service Alliance of Canada said its 9,000 members who work at the Canada Border Services Agency would be in a legal strike position once a federal labor-board committee delivers a report recommending how the employer, the Canadian government and the union can settle differences on a new agreement.

Canada said 90% of the border agency's employees are deemed essential workers, so they need to stay on the job during so-called strike action. However, as they did in a nearly daylong partial strike

in August 2021, border agents would conduct a work-to-rule campaign, which triggered a decline in productivity and long delays to process shipments and travelers at Canadian land crossings, airports and shipping ports.

During the 2021 labor disruption, commercial truckers in the U.S. faced delays of up to four hours to enter Canada at major land crossings in Michigan, Vermont, New York, North Dakota, Montana and Washington.

Canadian government data estimates that \$2.6 billion of goods and services crosses the U.S.-Canada border daily.

The union said it is seeking an increase in wages that are aligned with other law-enforcement agencies across the

country, and improvements in retirement benefits and hours of work.

Canada's Treasury Board, which handles day-to-day administrative operations and labor negotiations, said that although it recognizes that workers have the right to strike, "at this time it is unnecessary. We are ready and willing to return to the bargaining table at any time."

The decision by border agents to take possible strike action in June "adds another element of significant risk for the flow of goods between Canada and the U.S.," said Pascal Chan, senior director of transportation, infrastructure and construction at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

Inflation, Rain Damped April U.K. Sales

By Joshua Kirby

U.K. shoppers held back on spending last month as consumers on both sides of the Atlantic prove reluctant to spend in stores amid still-high price inflation.

Retail sales slipped 2.3% in April compared with a month earlier, more sharply than forecast, Office for National Statistics figures showed Friday. Consumer-price inflation was higher than expected during the month, limiting spending power among U.K. shoppers.

In the U.S., sales similarly

missed expectations in April as American shoppers began showing signs of spending fatigue amid high rates of inflation. A sustained boom in consumer spending that began with the global pandemic has until now kept the U.S. economy growing faster than many peers in the developed world.

By contrast, consumers in the U.K. have struggled to regain confidence since the blow of early 2022, when Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine caused shock waves that sent markets into turmoil and prices soaring.

Constant rainy weather also dragged sales in April, the ONS said, as shoppers stayed away from main-street stores selling furniture, clothes, toys and sports equipment.

"Poor weather reduced footfall," the agency said.

The U.K.'s retail sector could however be set for brighter days ahead as consumer confidence continues to inch higher, according to a survey also published Friday.

"Falling inflation and still strong wage growth are combining to drive a recovery in

consumer confidence that should keep the economy humming along," said Rob Wood, chief U.K. economist at consultants Pantheon Macroeconomics. "We are optimistic that retail sales will quickly bounce back."

That would prove a fillip for Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, who this month called snap elections for July. He pointed to the improving economy as reason for voters to back him, but faces a mountain to climb as his Conservatives trail the opposition Labour Party in opinion polls.



A new chatbot in China is trained on Xi Jinping's 14-point theory, which emphasizes socialist values.

Runners Debate Freeloaders

Continued from Page One registered." Her run was done. She left the course, just 300 meters from the finish line.

As the public face of the marathon's surveillance group, aka the "bandit busters," Ruiz posts videos of his team catching bandits—runners who crash events without signing up.

In "bandit reel" videos, he'll intercept interlopers or his crew will strip medals from bibless finishers. Excuses fly: "It fell off, bro, it fell off." One man unzips his jacket, feigning surprise at the missing bib. Caught red-handed, many sheepishly surrender their medals without a word.

As running booms, some races burst at the seams. Sold-out events and increasing fees, which can top \$150, spur some bandits to sneak in, while others simply see no harm in crashing the course.

Last month, influencer Alexa Curtis bandited a sold-out New York City race, like a

party she wasn't invited to.

"I just ran 13.1 miles for the Brooklyn half marathon at a 7.43 minute pace," she humbledragged in a tearfully triumphant Instagram message, mentioning her "fearless" journey. "I didn't sign up for this race. I just asked the security where it started and where it ended and jumped in." She didn't know what was about to hit her.

To critics, Curtis committed the cardinal bandit sin: crossing the finish line.

"You are a bandit and you stole from this race," one commenter wrote. A defender retorted, "if there was a line that was marked as 'finish line' and she walked over it, that doesn't cost anything to anyone."

Curtis initially was confused. "I literally googled, 'What is a bandit,'" she said in an interview.

In the running world, among peers and in online forums, the bandit debate rages like a nasty blister. Are bandits happy runners harmlessly enjoying public roads? Or narcissistic resource-hogs using up porta potties and guzzling ill-gotten Gatorade?

Race banditry has a rich history. Bobbi Gibb, the first woman to run the Boston Marathon, crashed it in 1966

when women couldn't register. Tolerance varies. The Miami Marathon, a qualifier for Boston and other prestige races, takes a hard line. But San Francisco's anarchic Bay to Breakers 12k? That's a different story altogether.

If race banditry had an Olympics, it would be this race. California Gov. Gavin Newsom bandited Bay to Breakers in 2010. Organizers reported 21,000 registered participants this year, but anticipated as many as 10,000 additional crashers.

"Bandits are a part of Bay to Breakers," said race director Kyle Meyers. "Do they all finish? No."

The most notable bandits are "the salmon," die-hard mostly-unregistered runners who show up yearly, dress as salmon, and run in the wrong direction.

This past Sunday, a dozen plunged into a crowd of about 30,000 participants, heading not to the finish line but to the Chieftain, an Irish pub near the start.

The lead runner, who gave

his name as Uncle Milty, wore four old race bibs. "One of those was official," he said when asked. "The rest were ones we made up."

After ensuring the serious runners had passed, Milty rallied his school into Hayes Street. They approached advancing racers, shouting: "Spawn! Spawn! You're going the wrong way!"

To run with the salmon, as this reporter discovered Sunday, is to experience many things at once. Setting off downhill with some trepida-

tion, you view thousands of participants, flowing toward you for block after block, like sparkly crawling ants, and feel an initial grim sense of awe at the thought of navigating through them. But that fades as passing racers greet you with glee.

You high-five 125 sweaty hands in a single block, including crabs, cows, bananas, banana slugs, furbys, Cybertrucks and nudists.

You stop and dance every time there is music, especially if there are bubbles. You scream in mock terror when a bear runs by.

Frankie Ruiz began wrangling bandits a decade ago when the Miami Marathon ran out of medals for nearly 1,500 finishers, despite having ordered enough.

Ruiz is now known—and revered by some—for his bandit videos. He's even nabbed bandits at Thanksgiving turkey trots. "I've had entire families showing up without paying."

The Miami Marathon now uses holograms on bibs to prevent counterfeiting, and Ruiz is looking into facial-recognition technology.

What does he think of San Francisco's salmon-suited bandits? "I'm glad you guys didn't show up to my race," he said. "I don't know what I'd do."



Runners dress as salmon and go upstream at the Bay to Breakers race in San Francisco.

OBITUARIES

SONJA CHRISTOPHER | 1937–2024

‘Survivor’ Contestant Was First to Be Voted Off

By JON MOOALLEM

When we see her, she is discombobulated but cheerful and bleeding from her leg.

This is deep into the first episode of “Survivor,” the mainstream reality show, in which 16 strangers, split into two “tribes,” are marooned on an island off the coast of Borneo and forced to fend for themselves.

Up to this point, 63-year-old Sonja Christopher has been a marginal on-screen presence. But now, surveying her wound, she says, good-humoredly, “I’ve been thrashing around like I’m 35, instead of acting my age!”

Next scene: Christopher sits on a log in the shade, strumming her ukulele. She and another castaway, Richard Hatch, have been left alone on the beach, and she’s playing him a parody of the Tin Pan Alley tune “Bye Bye Blues,” slipping goofy, parenthetical quips about Prozac and Paxil in between lines of the melody.

It’s a famous scene in the annals of “Survivor,” memorable because it has little in common with the cutthroat, adrenalized feel of the rest of the show—an ordeal during which, every three days, for 39 days, one contestant will be voted off the island by their increasingly hungry, resentful and hygienically bedraggled peers. The last one standing gets a million dollars.

“Survivor” premiered in May 2000—a prelapsarian era in terms of reality TV. Its radical premise was decried in the media as “ruthless” and “fiendish.”

For many viewers, Hatch would exemplify that amorality. A transparently devilous competitor, he has already announced, minutes into the first episode, “I’ve got the million-dollar check written already. I’m the winner.” But here, Christopher has managed to disarm him with her extremely silly song. He sits like a preschooler at circle time, clapping and tapping his toes. Somehow, Christopher has created what feels impossible in the context of reality television, 24 bewildering years later: a guileless moment of human connection.

Hatch went on to win that first season of “Survivor.” Christopher—who died April 26 at home in Walnut Creek, Calif., after a long illness, at age 87—became the first person in the show’s 46-season history (and counting) to be voted off.

Christopher was born Jan. 28, 1937, in Olympia Wash., and grew up playing ukulele and banjo in a large, musical family. (One of her three siblings, Gretchen Christopher, would become part of the vocal group the Fleetwoods.)

Christopher was an outdoorsy child, paddling a



Sonja Christopher attended a ‘Survivor: The Reunion’ party in 2000, and she’s pictured on the island during filming, in white.

kayak her father built her around Puget Sound, swimming, fishing, picking blackberries and digging clams.

In 1961, after graduating from the University of Washington, Christopher moved to the Bay Area. There, during the next decade, she would get married, adopt a son and get divorced. From then on, she supported herself as a single mother in the suburb of Walnut Creek as a tennis instructor, schoolteacher and real-estate investor. She starred in regional theater productions. She formed a band that played old standards for Alzheimer’s patients, and frequently performed at her own retirement community and her Unitarian Universalist church—where, according to minister Leslie Takahashi, she was known lovingly as a “purveyor of terrible jokes.”

“I was physically, emotionally and spiritually exhausted,” she wrote, in the anthology “How We Became Breast Cancer Thrivers.” “Reports of poisonous snakes and 4-foot monitor lizards worried me less than wondering if I could get my

arthritic body up off the sand in the middle of the night to answer nature’s call.”

But after participating in an outdoor camp for cancer survivors—three days of rock climbing, mountain biking and orienteering—Christopher felt emboldened to apply. For her audition video, she wrote a cheeky ditty about “Survivor” and performed it on her ukulele. She pitched herself to producers as a surrogate for “other seniors out there, looking to redefine what it means to age.”

Seeking castaways

In 1999, Christopher spotted a newspaper ad: CBS seeks castaways. “I was so taken with the idea of that beautiful white sand and building a shelter in the trees,” she told the “First One Out” podcast in 2017.

She had just endured a grueling battle with breast cancer, during which her longtime partner was unfaithful, and the relationship collapsed. (Christopher had come out as a lesbian at age 43.)

“I was physically, emotionally and spiritually exhausted,” she wrote, in the anthology “How We Became Breast Cancer Thrivers.” “Reports of poisonous snakes and 4-foot monitor lizards worried me less than wondering if I could get my



leaving home, bringing a length of rope to bed every night to practice her knots, and reading books on wilderness survival. Arriving on the island, however, she was taken aback to learn that her teammates, who were also her competitors, had read books like “How to Win Friends and Influence People” and Machiavelli instead.

“She went into it innocently,” her son, Dan Shumaker, explains, “thinking it was going to be more like camping. She was, God bless her, optimistic and thinking the best of everyone, as opposed to how cutthroat it turned out to be.”

Before the first “Tribal Council,” the ceremony at which “Survivor” contestants are voted off, another woman pulled Christopher aside to propose forming an alliance. “I said, ‘Should we be talking like this?’” Christopher later recalled, laughing at herself. She worried it was against the rules.

Friends describe Christopher as having a gift for bringing people together and deeply mindful of our moral

obligations to others. “Trying to create community and care for each other—that was important to her,” says Takahashi, her minister.

But on “Survivor,” a different ethos was taking hold. It would be later that same season that one of Christopher’s tribemates, Kelly Wiglesworth, would speak the phrase that’s been uttered repeatedly across thousands of hours of reality TV ever since, to justify all manner of backstabbing, indifference or deceit: “I’m not out here to make friends.”

But Christopher? Making friends was her whole deal. “It’s probably why she was voted off,” Takahashi says.

“Taking the fall”

Also, it was because she fell down.

During the first episode’s “immunity challenge”—a critical part of the overall competition, which involved a lot of running on the beach and lighting tiki torches—Christopher lost her footing, allowing the other tribe to overtake her tribe and win.

Christopher apologized to her teammates—but taking responsibility only made her a more obvious target. “She’s the reason we lost yesterday,” a former Navy SEAL said, solemnly dropping his ballot into the show’s ceremonial voting urn.

Christopher never totally believed that everything she’d seen unfolding on the island could successfully be turned into a television show; it struck her as too contrived and “hokey,” she explained to the podcast in 2017.

Instead, the show was a sensation. Some 15.5 million people watched Christopher be voted off at the end of the first episode. She was flown to New York and thrown into interviews: MSNBC, Fox News, “Entertainment Tonight,” Rosie O’Donnell, Ellen. CBS couldn’t make other castaways available to the media without spoiling future episodes, so for a short time, Christopher was the face of reality TV—and a rather incongruous one: a chipper, elegant older woman in a batik silk scarf, who seemed to have no regrets or grudges, no hubris or hunger for fame; who, appearing on the “Daily Show,” mostly just giggled at Jon Stewart’s jokes, as any ordinary civilian would.

Asked by the “Early Show” what she’d learned from the experience, Christopher could only reply: “One thing I think I learned [is] that I’m sort of naive.”

Not long before she appeared on “Survivor,” Christopher’s church had built a new sanctuary but ran out of money for a fellowship hall beside it. She decided to use the \$2,500 the show had paid her—her “booby prize,” as she called it—to set up a building fund for the church. Other congregants joined. In 2008, they broke ground on a \$1.6 million addition.

From there, Christopher leveraged her notoriety to raise money for breast-cancer research and other causes, doing speeches, selling signed memorabilia, and appearing with other reality stars at charity events. She proved to be a fan favorite, easily differentiated from the ballooning ranks of sexier, fitter, hipper reality stars. The other reality stars embraced her, too.

“I didn’t see her struggling with celebrity,” says Hatch, who became a friend. The public can be cruel to some reality stars, “but the amount of positivity Sonja got was pretty powerful,” Hatch says. “Somehow, that was armor. I think it fueled this kind of self-esteem and confidence that helped her actually be who she is.” Instead of losing herself in all that headiness, she found herself. “She really, really bloomed.”

In late 2000, Christopher fell in love again, with Gail Sexton. The two would live together, traveling widely, until Sexton’s death in 2018.

Christopher left behind a document on her computer named “Life Story.outline.” Toward the end of the timeline, where her long life intersected with “Survivor,” it reads: “Found out fame doesn’t change anything.” But also: “A lot of attention is great fun!”

More stories at [WSJ.com/obituaries](https://www.wsj.com/obituaries)

MORGAN SPURLOCK | 1970–2024

‘Super Size Me’ Director Shook Up Fast Food

By JOSEPH DE AVILA

Morgan Spurlock, the documentarian who rose to fame for his Academy Award-nominated film “Super Size Me,” has died.

The 53-year-old died Thursday from complications from cancer, according to his family.

“Super Size Me” documented his 30-day diet of eating food only from McDonald’s. He gained more than 20 pounds and saw his cholesterol spike over the course of the film.

The film, which was his first, became a cultural phenomenon, grossing more than \$20 million, according to IMDb. It won Best Directing honors at the Sundance Film Festival in 2004 and was nominated for Best Feature Documentary at the Academy Awards in 2005.

Along with Eric Schlosser’s book “Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal,” it sparked backlash against the fast-food industry and helped spur change.



For 30 days, Morgan Spurlock ate food only from McDonald’s. He gained weight and his cholesterol jumped.

McDonald’s dropped its supersize portions not long after “Super Size Me” premiered. The company said the move was unrelated to the film, which it criticized.

Born in Parkersburg, W.Va., in 1970, Spurlock studied film at New York University. After graduating in 1993, he spent time as a production assistant. He created “I Bet You Will,” which became an MTV show.

“Super Size Me” gave Spurlock a large platform,

even as the film later came under scrutiny. He would go on to direct and produce nearly 70 documentary films and television series before his death.

In 2008, he released “Where in the World Is Osama bin Laden?”—a comedic take on the war on terror. In his 2011 documentary “The Greatest Movie Ever Sold,” he explored advertising in films, funding the project through product placement. Spurlock created and

hosted the FX reality show “30 Days,” in which people immersed themselves in an unfamiliar lifestyle for a month. The show aired for three seasons between 2005 to 2008. He also hosted a show on CNN called “Morgan Spurlock: Inside Man” that ran from 2013 to 2016.

At the height of the #MeToo movement, Spurlock wrote a blog post about sexual misdeeds he committed. He also disclosed that he had been drinking heavily for 30 years, throwing some of the health claims he made in “Super Size Me” under greater scrutiny. He later stepped down from his production company Warrior Poets.

In his December 2017 blog post, Spurlock said he hoped his admissions would help him change.

“We should all find the courage to admit we’re at fault,” Spurlock said.

Spurlock is survived by his two sons, Laken and Kalen, as well as his parents, two brothers and his former wives, Alexandra Jamieson and Sara Bernstein.



CALEB CARR | 1955–2024

Military Historian Won Fame for ‘The Alienist’

Caleb Carr, a son of founding Beat member Lucien Carr who endured a traumatic childhood and became a best-selling novelist, military historian and memoirist of his cat

Masha, has died at age 68. “The Alienist” was his most famous book. His publisher, Little, Brown, says Carr died Thursday of cancer.

—Associated Press

SPORTS

Behold the Great Surrender.
 For many years, big-time college sports stubbornly insisted they were special. Their product couldn't be categorized as pure business—it was something precious, singular, not to be questioned or disrupted. As the outrageous money flowed, they asked us to look at the billion-dollar television contracts and eight-figure coaches flying private and not trust our own eyes. They wanted us to believe they were engaged in something more elevated than good old-fashioned capitalism.

Spoiler alert: This is a business, and always has been. You saw it, the players saw it, the courts started seeing it, and finally, the NCAA and its five biggest conferences (the "Power Five") have come around, backs to the wall, revealing their intention to settle a string of cases designed to acknowledge and reward the obvious:

Big-time college sports are big-time professional stuff. Which of course they are. You don't pay a \$2.8 billion settlement if it's not about the money. College sports may have been buffered by nostalgia and tradition, and defenders had explanations to justify an unbalanced system—*without us, there'd be no water polo!*—but they couldn't stop the public from smelling a moldy myth.

How do you hide all that money? The NCAA kept pointing to its monster and calling it a mouse. But the courts turned skeptical—the Supreme Court showed bipartisan skepticism, from justices who can't agree on the day of the week—and the entire toothpick tower looked ready to collapse. And still might.

Now, with disaster looming, there's an attempt to get on the level. Don't ask me how it's supposed to all shake out—I don't think the NCAA itself knows. There's a monetary settlement with past athletes, and a proposal here to share annual revenue with schools and let them dispense payments to athletes, with \$20 million a reported figure. There's no clarity on how that money should be distributed, if it needs to adhere to the equality standards of Title IX, and what happens if athletes win the right to collectively bargain and renegotiate.

The NCAA is settling here because it feared losing everything in court, and there's still a gargantuan business to protect. They arrived here with their Power Five co-defendants, aka the "haves," and this is a point of contention,

JASON GAY

No, College Sports Aren't Over. But They'll Never Be the Same.

A massive looming settlement from the NCAA and the Power Five conferences acknowledges a reality that has been long denied—this is a business, and always has been



The NCAA agreed to share revenue with athletes in a \$2.8 billion settlement. Left, the LSU gymnastics team celebrates a national title.

employees, which could throw the whole landscape into a blender again.

It's messy, because of course it's messy. How do you level such a warped system? There will be casualties in nonrevenue sports, and likely women's sports, but let's not act like those parties hadn't already been trampled over by conference realignments fruitful for football but a travel nightmare for everyone else. The same voices now agonizing about the end of college sports were the ones signing up to send the softball team across the country.

As for public reaction, it's possible you've hit your limit. If NIL reform didn't do it, and transfer portal madness didn't do it, if geography-indifferent conference re-

alignment didn't do it, maybe this is the moment that sends you over the edge. It's worth pointing out that there's been no major fan exodus; interest remains robust. College sports have been lucky

\$20 million
 Approximate amount that Division I schools will distribute to athletes

here. Despite an astonishing lack of foresight from the people in charge, the golden goose still flaps its tired wings. (Look at private equity's effort to crash the party.)

This settlement is not foresight—it's a crumbling behemoth's humbled bet to stay in the game. It might feel like the aesthetic end of college sports, and it's going to get chaotic, but the powers in charge are the ones who pushed the system to the brink. This is a business, *their* business, and at last they're saying it out loud. The Great Surrender is here.

By JOSHUA ROBINSON

Paris

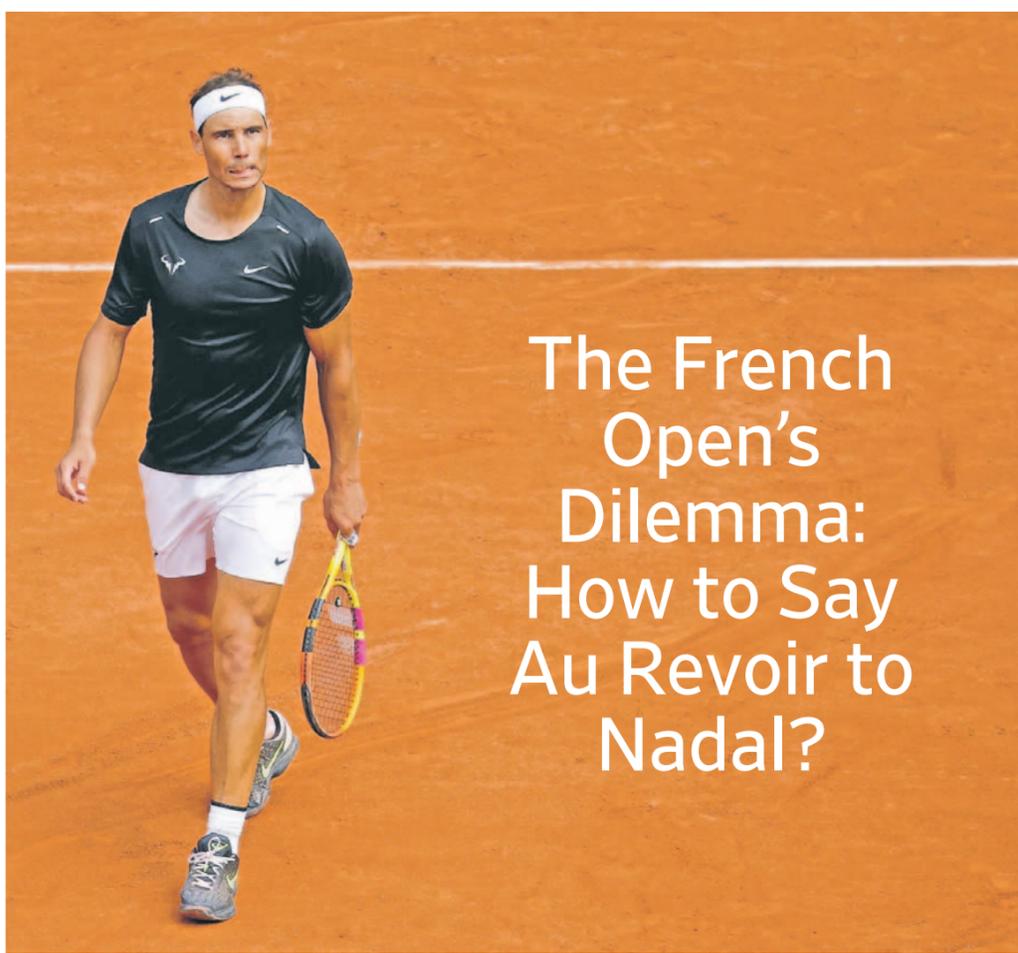
THE FRENCH OPEN has known for about a year that it would soon be saying goodbye to its favorite Spaniard. Rafael Nadal had announced that 2024 would be his last lap around the tennis calendar before he gave his creaking body a rest.

But nowhere would that farewell take on greater significance than here at Roland-Garros, where he has been as close as any player could be to unbeatable. Nadal's dominance of the French Open, which he has won more than any singles player has won any major, spanned an entire era of the sport. And it saw Nadal transform from a teenager in Capri pants with a monster forehand into a grizzled 14-time Roland-Garros champion in short shorts—also with a monster forehand.

The question for Roland-Garros now is how to appropriately mark this momentous *au revoir*. Organizers haven't said what they have in mind—the French Tennis Federation didn't respond to a request for comment. But they know that they can't just let him leave with a free towel and a Gallic shrug. As the era of the tennis GOATs comes to an end, it's their turn to plan a suitable curtain call for the man who turned these clay courts into his living room.

Roland-Garros prides itself on its attention to detail around the big moments. This is, after all, a tournament that opens its finals with an interpretive dance performance on clay. And back when the French Open used to overlap with Novak Djokovic's birthday, it always made a point of presenting him with a cake—gluten-free, to comply with his strict diet.

But Nadal, 37, is a different proposition. While posting a career record of 112-3, he also lifted the profile of the entire French Open. Nadal's name is so synonymous with Roland-Garros that it already



Rafael Nadal, a 14-time French Open champion, has indicated that this is likely his last year on tour.

The French Open's Dilemma: How to Say Au Revoir to Nadal?

built him a statue three years ago. "The French Open is the most important tournament of my tennis career," Nadal said. "All the things that I lived there, enjoyed there, stay in my heart forever."

His own stay in Paris, however, could be considerably shorter than usual. Nadal's world ranking plummeted to No. 276 during his long absence, meaning there was no way

for organizers to protect him from top players in the early part of the draw. That's how he ended up facing world No. 4 Alexander Zverev in the first round.

So whatever the French Open has planned for him may need to be deployed sooner rather than later. The last time tennis saw anything close to this was in 2022, when the early part of the U.S.

Open turned into a giant appreciation of Serena Williams before she rode off into retirement. On the night of her first match in Arthur Ashe Stadium, which she played in a crystal-encrusted black dress specially designed for the occasion, she was welcomed onto the court by an Oprah Winfrey-narrated highlight reel.

The awkward part came when

Williams won—and won again in the second round. Organizers cobbled together versions of the farewell for each subsequent match, until Williams lost in the third round to Ajla Tomljanovic.

Roger Federer got no such treatment from Wimbledon, where he won a record eight times, in part because his exit was more sudden. Federer decided to hang up his pristine headband in 2022 after undergoing his third knee surgery in the space of two years. He knew that he didn't have even one more major tournament run in him. So instead, he settled for a tearful goodbye at that year's Laver Cup in London.

Unlike Federer, though, Nadal might have one more visit back to the Parisian clay even after the French Open. Roland-Garros will host this summer's Olympic tennis tournaments and Nadal hopes to be there, assuming that he qualifies and that his body cooperates. Neither is a given.

Only the top 56 players in the world rankings after the French Open are eligible for automatic qualification. So the best shot for Nadal is to claim one of the spots reserved by the International Tennis Federation for Grand Slam or Olympic champions who haven't qualified through any other route. The only caveat is that each country is capped at four singles players. (As it stands, Spain only has three in the running for automatic berths, theoretically opening the door for Nadal.)

Nadal himself hasn't speculated much on what awaits him here. All he has promised is that whatever he has left to give on the court has been saved up for this French Open.

"It's really a paramount challenge to play him in Roland-Garros," Djokovic said. "The tenacity and intensity he brings on the court...is something that was very rarely seen I think in the history of this sport."

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OPINION

THE WEEKEND INTERVIEW with David Schizer | By Abigail Shrier

Civil Rights and Antisemitism at Columbia

If failure is the best teacher, several Ivy League schools are in contention for the title of 2023-24 Teacher of the Year. In December, Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania distinguished themselves when their presidents failed to give a straight answer to lawmakers who asked if advocating genocide of Jews violated their schools' disciplinary codes; both presidents soon resigned. But this spring, Columbia might have outdone them.

Protesters set up an unauthorized encampment on South Lawn and defied the administration's demands to shut it down. "We don't want no Zionists here!" they screamed into bullhorns. "Globalize the *intifada*!" Jewish students said they were barred from clubs, assaulted, threatened and spat on for speaking Hebrew.

On April 30, dozens of protesters smashed windows and barricaded themselves inside Hamilton Hall until the New York City Police Department removed them. A week later the university canceled its main graduation ceremony, citing security concerns.

A hostile environment for Jews could mean a cutoff of federal funding and liability under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Columbia was a hotbed of student protest in the 1960s. In the late '90s, when I was an undergraduate, a spirit of hostility toward "the man" and the administration lingered. But until now I had never heard about Columbia students turning on each other.

Yet maybe there's hope. In December, Columbia impaneled a Task Force on Antisemitism. It's a classic bureaucratic response to a crisis—other Ivies have done the same—but one of the panel's three co-chairmen, David Schizer, speaks of the problem with clarity and force.

"There's no way that I'm giving up this territory," Mr. Schizer says. "Jewish people had to fight to get into Columbia decades ago. If we decide to walk away, there are a lot of people who'd like to take our places. But why should that happen? We've contributed a lot to making Columbia what it is, and that should continue."

Mr. Schizer, 55, is a professor and dean emeritus at Columbia Law School. An Orthodox Jew, he was named for his paternal grandfather, who was orphaned at 17 in western Ukraine. When the Russian Civil War broke out in 1917, counterrevolutionaries entered the grandfather's village and lined Jews up against a wall, preparing to shoot them. Communists showed up, and in the crossfire, Mr. Schizer's grandfather slipped away. He made it to America with two younger siblings, matriculated at Columbia's Teachers College, and was so grateful to his adopted country that he volun-

tarily overpaid his taxes.

"Now, I'm a tax lawyer by training, so I don't overpay my taxes," Mr. Schizer says. "But I share his view that I am fortunate every day to live in the United States of America."

After graduating from Yale Law School, where he was a member of the Federalist Society, Mr. Schizer served a clerkship with Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who hired him to disagree with her. "She actually used me to vet arguments," he says. "You know, 'Tell me why you don't agree with that, David,' and I would."

At 35, he was appointed dean, the youngest in the law school's history. He left that post in 2014 after serving out the 10-year term limit. He is putting his legal training to use on the task force, warning administrators that they could face liability under federal civil-rights laws for failing to control antisemitism on campus.

After the NYPD retook Hamilton Hall, Police Commissioner Edward Caban said that "professional, external actors are involved in these protests." Mr. Schizer sees this as something of a cop-out.

"It was not just outside agitators," he says. "What's going on is that students have not believed that there would be meaningful discipline for breaking rules. And it's because the university was so ineffective initially. And it's also because there are faculty members who are encouraging it."

In January, a law-school colleague, Katherine Franke, told PBS's "Democracy Now!" that she was concerned about having graduate students from Israel on campus because they are veterans of the Israel Defense Forces and "they've been known to harass Palestinians and other students seriously in the past."

That comment could be evidence of illegal discrimination, Mr. Schizer says: "Almost everyone in Israel serves in the military. So nearly any Israeli is a veteran. And Columbia has a rule that we don't discriminate based on your status as a veteran. We also don't discriminate based on national origin. So those comments were problematic, not just morally but also legally."

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 makes any institution that receives federal funding liable if it creates a hostile environment for students with a "shared ancestry." Jews qualify as such a group. If the Education Department finds that Columbia had violated Title VI, the university could lose federal funding—an outcome Mr. Schizer calls "catastrophic." The university could also face liability in court. Jewish and Palestinian students have separately sued Columbia alleging civil-rights violations, and three Education Department investigations are under way.

Mr. Schizer is particularly troubled by reports that Jewish students have been barred from several student-run associations unless they renounce Zionism. He calls that exclusion "the most painful thing that I've seen



in 26 years at Columbia."

"It is completely unacceptable for Jewish students to be excluded from student groups because they care about Israel," he says. "That kind of exclusion is clearly a violation of the university's legal obligations."

A week before the Hamilton Hall takeover, campus security advised Jewish students not to enter certain areas of campus because it couldn't guarantee their safety. That's another potential Title VI violation. "The law requires universities to provide equal access to educational opportunities to everyone," Mr. Schizer says. "You can't limit the access of Jews or any other minority group—and that includes clubs, and it includes programs and classes and it includes physical spaces."

Columbia attempted to accommodate students who felt unsafe on campus by allowing them to attend classes remotely. That isn't good enough, Mr. Schizer says: "A university cannot fulfill its responsibility by saying, 'For you, this has to be online.' We cannot have some people allowed to be there in person and others only able to participate online. And that's true if people are explicitly told they have to be online, and it's true also if the university is unable to protect them so that it seems prudent to participate only online." Another potential violation: Some professors taught class from within the "Zionist-free" encampment.

Mr. Schizer hesitates when I ask if he has faced any discrimination or hostility as a Jewish faculty member. "I don't know that I, myself have been—well, I was about to say I haven't been a victim of this, but I have. There has been a lot of bad-mouthing of me because of my connection to the task force."

After his appointment, he says, "faculty would say to each other, 'God, I wonder how much they're paying these people.'" But everyone on the faculty knows that committee service is unpaid. He calls the rumor "strange and, frankly, offensive." Discrimination against Jewish faculty, administrators or staff—including graduate students—could constitute a viola-

tion of Title VII, which bans employment discrimination.

Some universities have considered dealing with the antisemitism problem by expanding their "diversity, equity and inclusion" programs to protect Jews. Mr. Schizer thinks that's the wrong answer. Instead, he proposes that Columbia create a Title VI office, staffed by lawyers and modeled after the Title IX offices that police sex discrimination.

Mr. Schizer acknowledges that aggressive enforcement of antidiscrimination laws can run up against the freedom of speech. His central argument is that antidiscrimination law must protect all groups equally. That may mean scaling back certain protections for all minorities. But administrators aren't free to adjust the dials to different settings based on the groups they favor—suspending students for "misgendering" or displaying a Confederate flag but shrugging off calls for Jewish students to "go back to Poland" or allowing them to wave the banner of Hamas or Hezbollah.

"It's not OK to defer to the subjective experience of some minorities but to apply a different test to Jews," Mr. Schizer says. "Personally, I am in favor of free speech to the maximum extent possible. If that means that Jews need to be resilient in hearing speech that offends them, then that may be the right rule. But it has to apply to everyone."

Mr. Schizer says that much of the discussion about the protesters' free speech misconstrues the First Amendment. For one thing, long-settled law holds that reasonable restrictions on the "time, place and manner" of speech are permissible. Punishing violations of content-neutral restrictions—for instance, by suspending or expelling students who unlawfully occupy portions of campus—is consistent with free speech, even at a public institution.

Nor does the First Amendment enshrine a heckler's veto. "My right to speak can't get in the way of other people's right to speak," Mr. Schizer says. "So Columbia has to make sure that doesn't happen. And the fact that some professors at Columbia seem to think that the

ability to disrupt other people's speech and work is 'free speech' is just wrong, and it's very disappointing that they see it that way."

A protest that disrupts classes, drowns out disfavored speakers, and bars or intimidates students from using the services of the university isn't a constitutionally protected protest. It's a mob. That is true whether the protesters call themselves pro-Palestinian or pro-life. "If we were to go so far as to say, yes, disruption is fine, then what we're essentially saying is: The rights of the people who disrupt are superior to the rights of everyone else," Mr. Schizer says.

Punishment for rule violations is essential and, if administered quickly and consistently, ought to be sufficient to maintain order on campus without police. A student who is suspended must pay a hefty sum (\$32,670) for an extra semester and can't return to school for one year.

Mr. Schizer says he believes Columbia students who refused to leave the encampment will be suspended and those who occupied Hamilton Hall will be expelled. A Columbia spokesperson, citing student privacy, wouldn't confirm whether any suspensions and expulsions had actually occurred, saying only that "disciplinary processes have begun."

But enforcing its own rules could bring Columbia's administration into open conflict with a significant portion of the faculty. Hundreds of Columbia professors signed a letter strenuously objecting to the university's "rushing" to suspend or expel the students who took over Hamilton Hall.

That gets to the heart of the problem: Ultimately, rules are only as strong as the will to enforce them. At many top universities, administrators seem anxious to appease rule breakers by offering concessions that amount to ransom payments. Northwestern promised full-ride scholarships for five Palestinian undergraduates and the hiring of two Palestinian visiting faculty members. Princeton pledged to consider "new curricula in Palestine studies." Brown agreed to put the matter of divestment to a vote. Johns Hopkins granted amnesty to all student protesters. Harvard offered rule-breakers the invitation to discuss divesting from Israel.

On Wednesday, however, the Harvard Corp. overruled the recommendation of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences to allow the graduation of 13 students who were suspended or placed on probation for violating the university's rules at an encampment on Harvard Yard.

It was too little, too late for my husband, a member of the Class of 1999. We were supposed to attend his 25th reunion next week. But we had already canceled our flights. Neither of us has the stomach to go.

Ms. Shrier is author, most recently, of "Bad Therapy: Why the Kids Aren't Growing Up."

Alabama Sues to Stop California's Climate-Change Power Grab



CROSS COUNTRY
By Steve Marshall

Justice Louis Brandeis described states as laboratories of democracy that "can try novel social and economic experiments without risk to the rest of the country." But what happens when a state tries to experiment on its neighbors? That's the question presented to the U.S. Supreme Court in *Alabama v. California*, a case filed this week by 19 states challenging

The Golden State's effort at setting national energy policy is misguided and unconstitutional.

the attempts of California, Connecticut, Minnesota, New Jersey and Rhode Island to regulate out-of-state carbon emissions under the guise of state tort and consumer-protection lawsuits.

This blue-state experiment arises from policy makers' frustrations with the national democratic process. Oil and gas account for two-thirds of U.S. primary energy consumption; they are critical to economic prosperity and geopolitical power. Despite decades of effort, progressive climate activists haven't persuaded Congress to ban fossil fuels.

In recent years, certain blue states have tried a different approach. They now assert that regulating emissions from oil and gas use isn't a federal matter but a state-law issue for their own courts to decide. Under the pretext of "climate nuisance" and deceptive marketing claims, these states have sought to impose a de facto carbon tax on the American oil and gas industry, potentially creating trillions of dollars in supposed liability.

This strategy—backed by a powerful, activist-funded influence operation aimed at judges—has a serious constitutional problem. While the Constitution preserves an expansive realm of state sovereignty, that authority ends at each state's borders. Alabama doesn't get to say what law applies in California, and Hawaii can't regulate conduct in Indiana. Only the federal government can do that, and only when acting within the Constitution's limited delegations of power. State climate suits violate this arrangement because they claim authority to regulate out-of-state emissions, which would effectively make a small cadre of blue states a junior-varsity federal government, unchecked by voters.

If a foreign country tried to do this to the U.S., we'd respond with diplomacy and, if that failed, force. But that isn't how it disputes among U.S. states are resolved. When the states entered the union, the Constitution replaced "war and peace with law and courts," as a recent friend-of-the-court brief put it. Conflicts among states are decided by direct appeal to the Supreme

Court, which applies known and settled principles of law.

State climate suits fail under these principles. Interstate emissions and national energy policy are inherently federal issues that must be resolved under federal law by federal courts. Congress decides how to regulate national energy production and interstate emissions and has done so through laws setting standards for pipelines, power plants and other things that use oil and gas. Congress has never passed a law disrupting the balance of state and federal power in this area; nor has it empowered states to impose their own half-baked climate schemes on their neighbors.

For good reason. The majority of the world's oil and gas production comes from energy companies owned by foreign states, like Saudi Aramco,

Russia's Gazprom and the China National Petroleum Corp. Not even the Bloomberg-funded climate lawyers running many of these climate cases have tried to extend blue states' extraterritorial reach that far.

If allowed to proceed, state climate lawsuits would create a two-tiered system of "climate justice," with carbon taxes for privately owned companies, most of which are American, and no equivalent limits on their foreign state-owned competitors. That scheme wouldn't reduce global emissions, but it would shift control of oil and gas supplies to foreign powers, some of which are hostile to the U.S. This unilateral energy disarmament via blue-state lawfare risks toppling the U.S. as the foremost energy superpower and returning us to the days when the Organization of the Petro-

leum Exporting Countries and Russia used their energy muscle to control their rivals.

The energy companies targeted by these suits understand our federalist system and have repeatedly sought to vindicate their rights. Thus far the Supreme Court has declined to weigh in. That's the high court's prerogative for lawsuits involving private parties—but Congress made the court's original jurisdiction over suits between states mandatory.

It is the Supreme Court's job to resolve this dispute and put an end to the experiment in extraterritorial climate regulation. Failure to do so would betray the contract of the union.

Mr. Marshall, a Republican, is attorney general of Alabama.

Notable & Quotable: Biden's Farewell Address?

Shermichael Singleton writing for CNN.com, May 22:

The Biden campaign is just entering the valley of despair that Black men have to navigate every day of their lives. The late arrival has been noticed. The damage done is in many ways irreparable. By accepting the invitation to address the Morehouse College Class of 2024 and receive an honorary degree, Biden had the opportunity to meet the moment and the magnitude of his audience.

The families of the Morehouse College Class of 2024 and alumni of the college were polite in their acknowledgments of the office of the presidency. The concerns of many about the nation's foreign policy and war footing were largely subdued. That's because the constituencies of Morehouse are focused on making Black America's leaders of tomorrow. They refused to embrace spectacle and instead were celebrating the transition to the next stage of their lives.

But Biden's public addresses over

the last 50 years have never inspired audiences and the noticeable decline in his speaking abilities during his presidency did not suggest there would be much for the listening audience to gain from his speaking presentation. In that sense, he didn't disappoint.

The speech was more a farewell from a past ally than an invitation to a new vision for a prosperous future. Biden is in the valley as Black voters led by young men abandon him, even while speaking from a red clay hill.

OPINION

REVIEW & OUTLOOK

Bragg Hasn't Proved His Trump Case

New York prosecutors rested their hush-money case against Donald Trump this week, but after 20 days in court and a trial transcript of 4,000 pages, the missing piece is still missing. The question is whether Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg presented the evidence necessary for a conviction, and if we were in the jury room, we'd say no.

The trial evidence shows why the charges should not have been brought.

Ignore the drama of Stormy Daniels on the witness stand, recalling her alleged sexual encounter with Mr. Trump in 2006. Focus on the law. To get a guilty verdict on the 34 bookkeeping felonies, Mr. Bragg must prove both that Mr. Trump falsified business records, and also that he did it with intent to commit or conceal a second crime. Yet there was essentially no direct evidence that Mr. Trump conceived of this all as a scheme to break the law.

The only real witness to Mr. Trump's state of mind was his former fixer, Michael Cohen. When Ms. Daniels threatened to go public in the days before the 2016 election, Mr. Cohen testified that Mr. Trump authorized him to buy her silence for \$130,000. "He expressed to me: Just do it," Mr. Cohen said. "Go meet up with Allen Weisselberg and figure this whole thing out." Mr. Weisselberg was Mr. Trump's longtime CFO.

Mr. Bragg's main argument for the second crime is that because the Stormy payoff was primarily meant to influence the 2016 election, it was in effect an illegal donation to Mr. Trump's campaign. This interpretation of the law is dubious, though put a pin in that for a moment. Did it cross Mr. Trump's mind that the transaction might be criminal? A nondisclosure agreement on its own is perfectly legal.

David Pecker, the National Enquirer impresario, was worried. In 2016 he laid out \$150,000, plus work in his magazines, to quiet another alleged Trump fling, a former Playboy model named Karen McDougal. Mr. Pecker had a deal with Mr. Cohen to get repaid, but he declined after talking to his general counsel. "I am not going forward with this agreement," he testified telling Mr. Cohen. "Rip it up."

Then Mr. Cohen, at least, was on notice of legal exposure? Well, no. Here's his memory of what Mr. Pecker said. "The Karen McDougal front cover on Men's Health magazine had sold more copies than they had not only anticipated, I think that they had ever—the way David expressed it to me, that they had ever sold," Mr. Cohen recalled. "He felt that it was, even for the \$150,000, it was an excellent business deal."

Trying to fill gaps, the DA's team argued the jury should see an interview Mr. Trump gave Larry King in 1999. "Nobody knows more about campaign finance than I do," he said, with typical puffery. The prosecutor: "We think that defendant's admission that he has extensive knowledge of campaign finance laws is obviously directly relevant."

Seriously? A transparent boast on TV in 1999 is proof Mr. Trump intended to facilitate an illegal campaign donation in 2016? Judge Juan Merchan sided with the defense on this, excluding it as "attenuated" and "speculation."

When Mr. Trump repaid Mr. Cohen in 2017, the money was structured as income and then "grossed up" to cover taxes. That was Mr. Weisselberg's idea, Mr. Cohen said, and he wasn't informed why: "To be honest, I didn't really even think about it. I just wanted to get my money back." Mr. Weisselberg, who's currently in jail, didn't testify. Prosecutors said they were reluctant to call him, since he might take the Fifth Amendment, and his big-money severance package has a non-disparagement clause.

Then there's the fateful legal question, which is whether paying hush money even counts as a campaign expense. Brad Smith, formerly of the Federal Election Commission, persuasively argues no. A political candidate might choose, for example, to settle a meritless lawsuit against his business rather than face questions on it from voters. But that motivation wouldn't convert the settlement into campaign activity.

Mr. Smith was ready to take the stand this week, but the defense decided not to call him, given limits that Judge Merchan placed on his testimony. "It's elementary that the judge instructs the jury on the law, so I understand his reluctance," Mr. Smith wrote. Yet if Mr. Trump is convicted, the odds seem reasonable that an appellate court might say paying off Stormy wasn't illegal in the first place.

Closing arguments are expected next week, and the wording of the jury instructions could matter a great deal. Judge Merchan said Tuesday he was reserving decision on a request by the defense to tell jurors Mr. Trump must have acted "willfully" to be found guilty. Either way, the reality is that hush money isn't illegal, disguising the bookkeeping is a misdemeanor that's past its statute of limitations, and Mr. Bragg jury-rigged the felonies using an alleged second crime that doesn't look like a crime.

Conviction or no by a Manhattan jury, this is a case that should never have been brought.

Justice Alito's Latest Vexing Vexillology

Justice Samuel Alito's media flagpole sitters are back, this time with a report that last summer his New Jersey beach house hoisted a banner with a green pine tree and the phrase "An Appeal to Heaven." This flag was used in the Revolutionary War, but because some bozoz brought it to the Jan. 6 Capitol riot, the absurd insinuation is that both it and Justice Alito are tainted.

The Pine Tree flag "is now a symbol of support for former President Donald J. Trump," claim the news reporters at—where else?—the New York Times. Maybe some people use the flag that way, but they don't get to impose their intention on everyone else. Supporters of the Tea Party movement sometimes displayed the Pine Tree at their rallies. Speaker Mike Johnson has one outside his office, which he says was a gift to him from a pastor.

The wording on the flag is from John Locke, who wrote that when the people's rights are being denied, and they "have no appeal on earth, then they have a liberty to appeal to heaven." That's a decent description of what Gen. George Washington and his Continental Army were do-

ing in taking on the British and the world's most powerful empire. Today millions recall their courage every year in the middle of the summer, sometimes at the beach, with flags, parades, hot dogs and recreational explosives.

The Pine Tree skirmish also calls to mind a similar symbology dispute involving the Gadsden Flag, the yellow banner with a coiled rattlesnake and the phrase "Don't Tread on Me." In recent years some have tried to redefine the Gadsden Flag as exclusively a far-right emblem. But many Americans of varying political views like its historical pedigree and its message of liberty, individualism, and defiance toward overbearing authority of all kinds.

Yet Democrats won't let any of this get in the way of a good narrative. Sen. Dick Durbin, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, called the Pine Tree spotted at Justice Alito's summer getaway an "example of apparent ethical misconduct," saying it will "further erode public faith in the Court." No, the people undermining confidence in the Supreme Court are those acting as if Justice Alito is sending secret signals from the flagpole at his beach house.

Another Anti-Israel Ruling in The Hague

Is the International Court of Justice paying attention? On Friday the ICJ ruled that Israel "must immediately halt its military offensive," and other actions in Rafah, "which may inflict on the Palestinian group in Gaza conditions of life that could bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part." Such was the dire prediction of Israel's enemies before the Rafah operation began, but it isn't reflected on the ground.

The only group Israel aims to destroy in Rafah is Hamas. Since the invasion of the city began nearly three weeks ago, Israel has expertly evacuated about a million Gazans. Because Hamas isn't party to the ICJ trial, the ruling demands nothing of it, while seeming to tell Israel unilaterally to stop fighting in the terrorists' last stronghold.

What about the Israelis held hostage in Rafah? The ICJ knows that Hamas refuses to release them, which the ruling calls "deeply troubling." Well, thanks, but the judges effectively ask Israel to abandon the hostages.

Like most rulings from The Hague, this one will be ignored. Israel rightly says it is already in compliance with the court's wishes—its Rafah offensive isn't genocidal, so it need not be halted. No state in Israel's place could do otherwise.

The ICJ also orders Israel to open the Rafah border crossing from Egypt. For weeks Israel has been begging Egypt to open that crossing. But since Israel, not Hamas, now controls Gaza's side of the border, Egypt had refused, holding up 2,000 aid trucks. Only after President Biden called Egypt's President on Friday did Cairo

agree to reopen the crossing. But why was the ICJ blaming Israel?

A dissent on the court is notable. "The Court's jurisdiction is limited to the Genocide Convention," writes Julia Sebutinde of Uganda, and "there are no indicators of a genocidal intent on the part of Israel." The ICJ case brought by South Africa includes examples of allegedly genocidal rhetoric from Israel, but her rejoinder is highly effective.

"The vast majority of the statements referred to the destruction of Hamas and not the Palestinian people," she says. A few "renegade statements" by uninvolved officials were "highly criticized by the Israeli Government itself." She finds that "South Africa has either placed the quotations out of context or simply misunderstood," but also suggests another motive: "South Africa, and in particular certain organs of government, have enjoyed and continue to enjoy a cordial relationship with the leadership of Hamas."

The inversion of international law is something to behold: Hamas slaughters Israeli civilians and hides behind its own so that Israel stands accused. The ICJ's presiding judge is Lebanon's Nawaf Salam, whose bias is outrageous: He has denounced Israel for decades and is active in Lebanese politics, having twice been a candidate for prime minister since joining the bench in The Hague.

The transparent nature of the ICJ ruling has the benefit of making it easier to dismiss. Israel is advancing in Rafah and intends to halt in a few weeks when the job is done. Only when Hamas is defeated in Rafah can war in Gaza ebb.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Remember When Biden Was Going to Unite Us?

I don't see the dismal prospects that President Biden spoke of to the Morehouse College graduates ("Biden's Demoralizing Speech to Morehouse Grads" by Jason Riley, *Upward Mobility*, May 22). That is not what I see in the children with whom I work every day at an elementary school in Harlem where around 90% of the students are of African descent.

I see near-endless possibilities, enthusiasm and energy in the children he would relegate to victims. The world ahead is wide open to them, not closed like president's vision.

GAETANO A. LAROCHE
Bronx, N.Y.

Mr. Riley is spot on regarding Mr. Biden's demoralizing speech. Martin Luther King Jr. would never want the black community to reach for excuses. Of course there is more to do when it comes to achieving racial parity, but not holding people accountable for their own lives and actions is just another way of holding them back.

BILL MERRIAM
Jacksonville, Fla.

In his commencement address at Morehouse College, Mr. Biden said that a person of color had to be "10 times better than anyone else to get a fair shot." I disagree. Was Kamala Harris 10 times better than anyone else to have become vice president?

PETER DODGE
St. Augustine, Fla.

Didn't Mr. Biden run on a promise to unite us? Instead of an uplifting speech about the future prospects for these young people, he is trying to drive a wedge through us and erase all the racial advances we have made over the past 70 years.

DOTTY THOMAS
Roswell, Ga.

Your editorial "Biden to Graduates: America Hates You" (May 21) focuses on racial demagoguery in critiquing Mr. Biden's commencement speech. The quotes cited include: "It's natural to wonder if democracy you hear about actually works for you" and "What is democracy if black men are being killed in the street? What is democracy if a trail of broken promises still leave black communities behind?"

Was the speech an attempt at race division or an attempt to discredit democracy? I hear the latter more than the former.

KEVIN MARTIN
Westerville, Ohio

A suggestion for Morehouse College: Secure Mr. Riley for your 2025 graduation address today. He undoubtedly will have a conflict if you wait too long.

BILL MOSS
Birmingham, Ala.

The president's speech was classic Al Sharpton. Is he the new White House wordsmith?

ROGER W. FROMM
Southern Pines, N.C.

Jamie Dimon Is Massively Underpaid as CEO

It's considered settled science on the left that American CEOs are overpaid ("You Say 'Trickle Down' as if It's a Bad Thing," op-ed by Steven Rhoads, May 22). Jamie Dimon recently indicated that he might retire as CEO of JPMorgan sooner than expected. JPMorgan's stock dropped by 4.5%, or about \$25 billion. Is it possible that Mr. Dimon is massively underpaid?

Maybe the shareholders should do a GoFundMe page to get Jamie back. Just saying.

JEFF YASS
Susquehanna International Group
Bala Cynwyd, Pa.

To anyone who has spent time in the company of successful entrepre-

neurs or artists, it's obvious that the act of creating something is their main passion, and that the trappings of financial success are never the primary motivation. The baubles and toys that come with success quickly lose their luster.

The bureaucratic mentality—Sen. Elizabeth Warren is a pitch-perfect example—often resents the creatives and works out this resentment through various forms of disparagement and attempted confiscation. If it makes her feel any better, the successful capitalist often gets bored by the diamonds and the yachts and wants to get back to work as quickly as possible.

TOM PARONIS
New York

The Media and the Quickest Way to End a War

Regarding William Galston's "Ukraine Pays the Price for U.S. Dithering" (*Politics & Ideas*, May 22): George Orwell wrote that "the quickest way of ending a war is to lose it, and if one finds the prospect of a long war intolerable, it is natural to disbelieve in the possibility of victory." This would seem to address, at least partially, the dithering by our president and those on the left and right opposed to providing full, better and timely support for Ukraine—or for Israel, for that matter.

NICHOLAS J. BRUNO JR.
Dover, N.H.

In Search of a Real Debate Between the Two Candidates

Given the weighty challenges facing our country, debates between the presidential candidates should be a moment for serious airing of the issues ("Biden and Trump Set Debates in June, September," *U.S. News*, May 16). The exchanges between the candidates, however, aren't encouraging. President Biden writes that former President Trump is "acting like he wants to debate me again. Well, make my day, pal," and Mr. Trump responds, "I am Ready and Willing to Debate Crooked Joe."

Nevertheless, the Biden campaign is to be commended for proposing rules to omit a game-show-style studio audience and to include the silencing of microphones to prevent the candidates from ignoring time limits. Perhaps it's a start.

KENNETH A. MARGOLIS
Chappaqua, N.Y.

Ralph Nader Gets the Blame

On the role of third parties ("Will RFK Jr. Swing the Election to Biden?" by Karl Rove, op-ed, May 23): Ever since 2000, Democrats have dwelt on the effect that Ralph Nader had on that election by possibly switching the electoral votes of Florida and New Hampshire to the George W. Bush column. Both states would have been irrelevant, however, had Al Gore succeeded in carrying his home state of Tennessee.

JOHN NORTHGRAVES
Northborough, Mass.

Mr. Galston's central theme is that Ukraine's defense against Russia's invasion is being hampered by the dithering tactics used by Republican House members. I agree, but the true culprit may be our media.

As we all know, the media has a mighty influence on the American public and its government. Accordingly, why is our media coverage of Russia's massive bombing of Ukraine's civilian housing and infrastructure so lightly reported, especially compared with its immediate, intense coverage of Israel's attempts to root out and finally destroy the terrorist organizations that so brutally attacked it on Oct. 7?

ELLERY BLOCK
Westerville, Ohio

House Could Use Intelligence

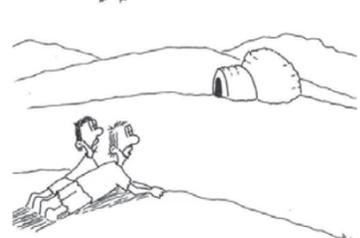
In Kyle Peterson's Weekend Interview with Mike Johnson ("The House Speaker Is 'Tired of Making History,'" May 18), Mr. Johnson notes that some Republican lawmakers refused to attend classified intelligence briefings because they say "they don't believe the deep state, and so they can't believe anything that they're told."

Having worked most of my career supporting the intelligence community, I can say with confidence that the lawmakers would be exposed to information backed up by data and other evidence. It would likely wake them up to reality. Refusing to attend briefings is immature. There needs to be consequences for this behavior. Americans are tired of the self-serving theatrics of a minority fringe on the left and right. Perhaps Mr. Johnson will address this problem with changes on the House Rules Committee.

LAURA ACCORDINO
Phoenix

Pepper ... And Salt

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL



"I'm pretty sure it's a mirage."

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OPINION

Teach Your Children to Love America



DECLARATIONS
By Peggy Noonan

Some Memorial Day thoughts on the importance of love:

Children don't need to be taught to love their parents. From the moment they come out you are everything to them. They seem to arrive with a certain amount of love built in and fix it on the mother who holds them and looks into their eyes and the father who delights them by making them laugh. It really is something, this natural force that comes prepackaged. (In this corner we believe God did this, implanting the love; we believe God in fact invented love, for his and your pleasure.)

But after parents, family and nature—children are especially sensitive to and undefended against the idea of the miraculous within nature—children have to be taught to love certain things. Such as their country.

For Memorial Day, I'm taking inspiration from the New York schools' 1900 'Manual of Patriotism.'

Parents, teach your children to love America, either as an extension of your own love or as a simple kindness to them.

We live in an age—I'll say this part quickly as we all know it—in which children are instructed in 100 different ways through 100 different portals that America is and always was a dark and scheming place, that its history is the history of pushing people around, often in an amoral quest for wealth but also because we aren't very nice. And we never meant it about the Declaration.

Ideology and idiocy imposed this view, shallowness too. It began some

decades ago but has speeded up and became more extreme the past 10 years.

What does this atmosphere of unlove for America do to kids? To little ones 5 and 10 but also 15—what is its impact on them?

To kids from difficult circumstances it means there is no hope; you won't escape a violent or unhappy family into a better place, the world outside, because it isn't better. The world outside is America, which brutalizes the minority, the woman, the different. Inside is scary, outside is scarier. What a thing to do to vulnerable kids.

To kids from easier circumstances it does nothing good and carries a subtle bad effect. It means the thing you're part of is, at its heart, corrupt, so you might as well be corrupt. The ugliness of America becomes a permission structure: We are amoral and you can be, too.

Kids live on dreams. Have the adults who've created this atmosphere forgotten that as they pursue their own resentments and make their accusations?

To kids in all circumstances, it denies a dream of a good thing you can make better. It undercuts the idea the people you came from were brave and hardy and did marvelous things. It robs you of a sense you've got this within you, and can go on and be a marvel too.

It denies kids a secure sense that they're part of something sound and healthy. It subtly discourages them from trying to make things better—you can't right something whose sicknesses are so structural. This isn't a good way to bring up



The frontispiece of 'Manual of Patriotism' (1900).

the future.

You have to start kids out with love. Irony and detachment will come soon enough, but start with love, if only to give them a memory of how that felt.

I've spent the past few days reading an old book, one that couldn't possibly be published today because it's so full of respect for America. "Manual of Patriotism: For Use in the Public Schools of the State of New York," runs 461 pages of text and was published in 1900. The flag that illustrates this column is from its frontispiece.

The manual was written after the Legislature passed an 1898 law requiring public schools to display the American flag and "encourage patriotic exercises." Organized veterans of the Civil War and of the Women's Relief Corps, who were nurses on the battlefield, pushed for it to "awaken in the minds and hearts of the

schoolchildren? You let them have fun. You hold pageants and parades, have them read poems and learn songs. Let them dress up as figures in history and enact great events. This need not be costly: "An old-time coat or dress found in a garret or unused drawer at home may serve all needful purposes."

Tell the story of the American flag. The Continental Congress in 1777 said we need a national banner. Here enters the heroic Mrs. Elizabeth Ross of Philadelphia, known as Betsy, who, on the personal request of General Washington, started sewing. The stars and stripes from her hand, "were unfurled at the battle of Brandywine, in 1777. . . . They sang their song of triumph over defeated Burgoyne at Saratoga. . . . They saw the surrender of the enemy at Yorktown; they fluttered their 'Goodbye' to the British evacuating New York."

Have children memorize and re-

cite Longfellow's "Paul Revere's Ride." Have them enact the battle of Lexington and Concord and read aloud Emerson's "Concord Hymn":

*By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.*

Tell the story of the Mayflower, of the making and meaning of the Compact, of the landing on Plymouth Rock: Quote an old poem: "Here, on this rock, and on this sterile soil, / Began the kingdom, not of kings, but men; / Began the making of the world again."

Remind children, as Sen. James G. Blaine once said, that the U.S. was long "the only country with a known birthday. All the rest began they know not when, and grew into power, they knew not how." America wasn't just some brute force that pushed up from the mud; we announced our birth with a Declaration that was "a revelation": All men are created equal.

The manual includes a lot of opinions on historical events. One I liked was the assertion that the Civil War ended the day Ulysses S. Grant was buried in 1885. Why? Because America saw who his pallbearers were: "Johnston and Buckner on one side of his bier, and Sherman and Sheridan upon the other." The first two were generals of the Confederate army, the last two of the Union Army. Henry Ward Beecher wrote that their marching Grant to his tomb was "a silent symbol that liberty had conquered slavery, and peace war."

You come away from that vignette thinking not only "what men," but "what a country" that could tear itself in two, murder itself, forgive itself, go on.

Parents, help your children love this country. It will be good for them, and more to the point this country deserves it.

Also when you don't love something you lose it. We don't want that to happen.

Open Borders Produced the Biden Economic Boom

By Donald L. Luskin

Supporters of President Biden wonder why he gets such low ratings on the economy despite strong growth and low unemployment. The conventional answer is persistent inflation, and there's truth to that. But an underappreciated factor is that Mr. Biden has achieved his economic successes via a politically unpalatable and ultimately unsustainable means: the uncontrolled influx of immigrants into the U.S. across the southern border. It's a catastrophe of lawlessness and maladministration. But it appears to have contributed to a strong labor market and to economic growth.

Consider the 3.2 million increase in the foreign-born adult population in the U.S. in the 21 months since July 2022. We start at that date because it gives us a clean slate, free from the effects of the pandemic lockdown and reopening. And this period captures the full effect of the Biden administration's loose border policies.

Over that period, foreign-born employment has increased 1.8 million—meaning that roughly 56% of the 3.2 million new foreign-born adult population became employed. Setting aside the political matter of how much of this employment is legal, the stereotype that immigrants don't or can't work appears to be false.

These numbers come from the Bureau of Labor Statistics in its monthly jobs report. They are collected in the Current Population Survey—the so-called household survey—which is used to calculate the national unemployment rate. It's an old-fashioned door-to-door census of 60,000 households in which respondents are asked, among many questions, whether they are native-born or foreign-born. They aren't asked if they are in the country illegally, and no doubt some are. But illegal aliens may be harder to find and less likely

to answer a knock on the door, so the BLS probably undercounts them.

Even undercounted, the foreign-born represent 80% of the 4.1 million U.S. adult population increase since July 2022, and they account for 71% of the 2.5 million new jobs. All else equal, without the new foreign-born workers, total job growth in the economy would have been about 86,000 less every month—only 724,000 over the period, not 2.52 million.

Considering that population and employment growth are the most important variables in economic growth, it would seem that without the present immigration surge the economy would have grown less than a third as much as it actually has in a series of strong quarters since July 2022, across which annual real GDP growth averaged 2.8%—compared with the Federal Reserve's estimate of growth potential at only 1.8%.

That wouldn't be true if the new immigrants were parasitically taking jobs that the native-born would have

gotten otherwise. Since July 2022, the native-born adult population grew by 821,000, and its employment grew by 724,000, which is to say that 88% of them found jobs. It would seem that the problem for new native-born adults is that there are so few of them, not that they can't get work.

Why doesn't he get credit for strong growth? In part because he can't defend his immigration policies.

It is likely the case that the new foreign-born adults are diluting the productivity of the U.S. economy by arriving with few skills and with language and education deficits. But the economy needs many low-skill workers, and they rapidly acquire skills on the job, so they will surely contribute to productivity growth in the future.

America's Presidential Election Dilemma



BUSINESS
WORLD
By Holman W.
Jenkins, Jr.

It's an impossible scenario: Vladimir Putin invading Ukraine without weighing (and weighing and weighing) the likely U.S. response. With due regard for a counterfactual, Donald Trump's perceived unpredictability and reputation for recklessness could not have helped but figure in the Russian's mind had Mr. Trump remained in office in February 2022.

In contrast, Joe Biden was a nested member of the Washington political elite, vice president for eight years under Barack Obama,

surrounded by Obama advisers. It would be surprising strange if Mr. Putin didn't believe he could accurately anticipate Mr. Biden's actions.

Historian and Stalin biographer Stephen Kotkin injects a second wrinkle. In Mr. Trump, Mr. Putin may have seen an extra reason not to pursue war. He might well hope he could coax out of Mr. Trump the enlarged sway he sought over Ukraine without risking conflict with the superior military forces of NATO.

To honor the counterfactual fully, we should permit one other possibility: Mr. Putin might have reached the same decision for war regardless of whether Mr. Trump or Mr. Biden was president—because Mr. Putin needed war for domestic reasons.

Americans generally are ill-advised to elect for president somebody who exhibits the recklessness and irresponsibility that Mr. Trump did on Jan. 6. This doesn't obviate the possibility that, in narrow circumstance, a reputation for irresponsibility and recklessness can be useful. Life is complex.

Life is less complex now with a metastasizing war in Ukraine engaging the efforts of the U.S. and many countries. Mr. Trump's unpredictability is a devalued asset; he is now more readily assessed by our adversaries than he was eight years ago; his mystique has been punctured. If re-elected, he might also face testing and possibly disabling divisions at home when we need them least.

If Mr. Biden dropped dead tomorrow (an outcome I don't make either more or less likely by mentioning

Yes, new immigrants put incremental demands on roads, hospitals, schools and other resources. But so do new native-born citizens. For either population, the question is what they produce as well as what they consume. The evidence shows that the foreign born are more likely to be producers than the native-born. In total, the foreign-born employment-to-population ratio is 63.4%. For the native-born, it is only 59.6%. By hook or by crook, legal or illegal, new immigrants are working.

It would seem that in purely economic terms, and at least for the moment, the Biden administration's loose border policy is a feature, not a bug. But politically it's a loser this election year, and it's no surprise that the Biden administration isn't bragging about it.

In a February Pew poll, 77% of Americans said that the southern border is either a "crisis" or a "major problem." Even 62% of Democrats agreed. People see the bug, not the features, because the boom in

job growth from immigration is, by definition, experienced by people most Americans here already don't know—and, presumably, who won't be able to vote this November. And even with his own political base, it would be awkward for Mr. Biden to argue that he has produced economic growth via laissez-faire deregulation at the border.

Such a policy is unsustainable in any case. Under capitalism, economic growth depends on trust—on the ability of economic participants to rely on others' adherence to a set of defined and stable rules. The ad hoc lawlessness of the Biden border policy undermines that, and unless it can be stabilized it will be corrosive to long-term growth prospects. On the other hand, a border crackdown such as Donald Trump has proposed could end up leading to slower growth. Whoever is president in 2025 will need to take great care in balancing these urgent interests.

Mr. Luskin is CEO of TrendMacro.

asset, his bully pulpit, without risking more harm than good for public confidence. In the meantime, his worst decision may have been his decision to run again and it shows, with his politically motivated flopping around on Ukraine and Israel when adversaries need to see firmness.

Here's what also worries me about Mr. Biden. Our situation requires a major adjustment in the borrowing, spending, special-interest-gratifying trend of domestic policy, of which current signatures are Mr. Biden's trillion-dollar loan forgiveness and electric-vehicle subsidies.

These expensive handouts cultivate a Biden voting coalition. They don't advance any American interest, either in fiscal stability or an alleged energy transition that will ever actually have any effect on climate change.

On his best day, Mr. Biden was a follower, not a leader, and not a policy innovator. All this complicates the November choice. As much as we don't need a blower-upper of our alliances, we need an active, determined disrupter of patterns at home that are self-defeating and unsustainable at a time when prioritizing our resources and efforts should take center stage.

This isn't an impossible ask. We found two such presidents when we needed them, in Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, who deregulated a sclerotic economy, tamed inflation and pushed into the U.S. military establishment the technology that allowed American to succeed in the Cold War.

through Election Day. He may not drop out or be forced out, as many Democrats want. He may win.

This poses a special problem for voters. Do you have confidence in a team, I might even say an establishment, at the center of which is increasingly likely to be a vacuum? Mr. Biden will likely play a lesser and lesser role in his administration's decisions, thanks to declining ability to focus, follow tortuous debates among his advisers, and manage complexity. If workarounds are found and unelected appointees step up, he'd still be hard-pressed to deploy the White House's most important

The best of the voters' bad choices may be to hope the next president doesn't serve four years.

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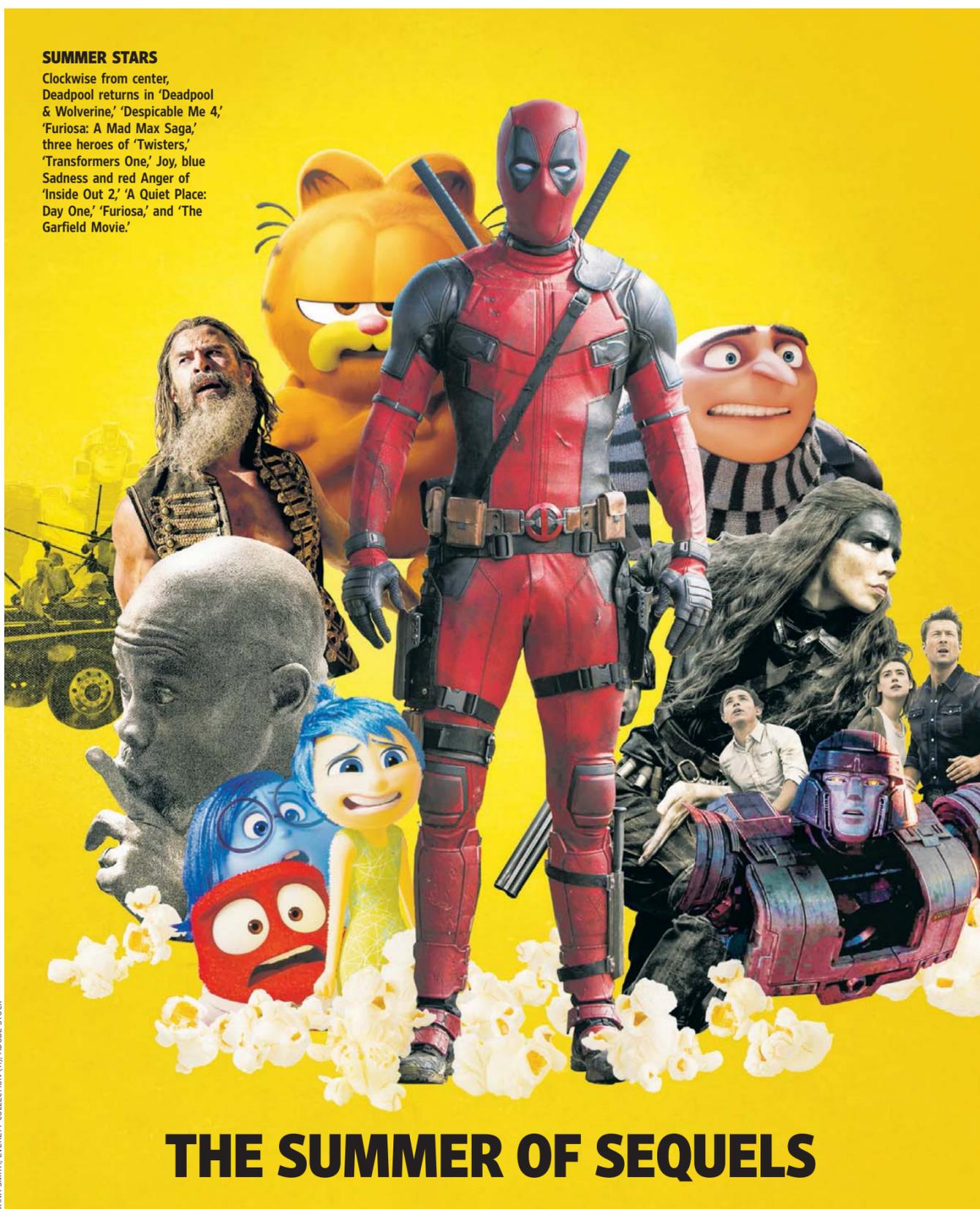
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Dealers Gripe
Stellantis cuts vehicle prices after backlash **B9**

EXCHANGE

Dogecoin
A cryptocurrency mascot has died **B11**



SUMMER STARS
Clockwise from center, Deadpool returns in 'Deadpool & Wolverine,' 'Despicable Me 4,' 'Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga,' three heroes of 'Twisters,' 'Transformers One,' Joy, blue Sadness and red Anger of 'Inside Out 2,' 'A Quiet Place: Day One,' 'Furiosa,' and 'The Garfield Movie.'

THE SUMMER OF SEQUELS

The 'Barbenheimer' frenzy showed that moviegoers are game for something new. The industry got the message. But moviemaking takes years.

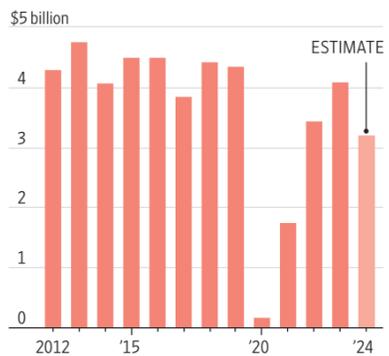
BY ROBBIE WHELAN AND FRANCESCA FONTANA



LAST SUMMER, Barbie and her high-heeled friends saved Hollywood—with a little help from J. Robert Oppenheimer and his atomic bomb.

The "Barbenheimer" frenzy pumped nearly \$2.5 billion into the pockets of studios and theater owners, giving the industry reason to feel like the movie business was back in a big way, despite threats like the rise of streaming, the aftermath of Covid-19 and twin strikes that paralyzed the movie business for months. It showed that audiences are hungry for fresh stories, and willing to spend their money on creative, risky

Annual gross for summer movies*



*U.S. and Canada box-office sales, for movies released on first Friday in May through Labor Day
Source: Comscore

bets if they're done right.

So what is Hollywood doing this summer? It's releasing a bunch of sequels.

"Bad Boys: Ride or Die," the fourth movie in the buddy-cop series, comes out in June. In the 1995 original, star Will Smith, now 55, was in his mid-20s. "Despicable Me 4," is actually the sixth in the franchise, including the two "Minions" movies.

"Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga" is the fifth in a franchise that began in 1979 and was set in an imagined near-future dystopia. The most-anticipated movie of the summer is "Deadpool & Wolverine," the third "Deadpool" movie featuring Ryan Reynolds in the title role.

It might look as if the movie industry didn't learn its lesson, but that's not

A Low-Tech Solution for Our Tech Addiction

BY CORDILIA JAMES

It has come to this: We lack the willpower to stay off our phones, and we need physical barriers to stop us from using them. Enter Yondr, a maker of little bags for locking up your phone.

At schools, comedy clubs, concerts and other venues, the pouches cut off people from the screen without forcing them to surrender their phones.

Schools are struggling with children who can't put down TikTok and YouTube, and lack in-person social skills. Musicians want their audiences to focus on them. Comedians want to stop joke theft or—even worse—have a joke that bombs go viral.

Some 25,000 people locked their phones into Yondr pouches at live shows in 2015, a year after the company launched, it says. By 2022, it was about six million. This year, the number of users is expected to surpass 10 million.

Here's how it works: Once guests arrive at a show and present their tickets, Yondr workers or venue personnel ask them to silence their phones and place them in Yondr pouches. The staffers snap the bags shut, and guests take them inside.

Devices can still receive calls and messages, but to check them, guests have to step outside the venue or go to a cordoned-off phone-use area to have the bag unlocked. After the event, staffers quickly unlock and collect bags as guests exit.

The approach is a break from how many concerts look—a crowd of little cellphone lights in a dark stadium—as many stars, such as Taylor Swift, allow fans to use their phones. Fan videos posted online add to the hype around her shows.

Andy Derer, a 40-year-old record store owner in Westmont, Ill., gets annoyed when he goes to shows where everyone's using their cellphones the whole time. He prefers when people snap a photo or two, then put it away.

When he went to a phone-free alternative concert a couple of years ago and everyone's devices were tucked away in Yondr pouches, the experience was refreshing.

"There was definitely a period where it felt a little awkward, but

Please turn to page B4



A Yondr bag, and the device that unlocks it (when the show's over).

SCIENCE OF SUCCESS | BEN COHEN

The 100 Best Albums, According to Apple Music

The tech giant wanted to acknowledge sounds that have endured for decades—and ones that will. Arguments over Taylor Swift are encouraged.



For the past year, a team inside one of the world's most valuable companies worked on a secret project. It wasn't a phone, a tablet or a computer. It wasn't a mixed-reality headset, either. In fact, it wasn't a device of any kind.

Apple staked its reputation on developing something else that seemed almost impossibly daunting.

A list of music. This past week, Apple Music unveiled a provocative ranking of the 100 best albums ever made, as determined not by streaming data, record sales or the algorithms that rule our lives, but by a metric of

quality that sounds almost radical these days: human judgment.

Apple enlisted about 250 employees, artists and industry executives to vote on the albums, and they came up with a list unlike the many others that already existed.

Those lists tend to reward music that has been revered for decades. The idea behind this one was to recognize more contemporary albums that Apple's voters argue have already earned their place in the music canon. They may not be as old as the classic records, but Apple believes they will be remembered as classics decades from now.

"It's a twist on the list," said Zane Lowe, Apple Music's global creative director.

Neil Young can be found between 50 Cent and Eminem. Carole King is ahead of Nas but behind Wu-Tang Clan. Kraftwerk is sandwiched by SZA and NWA. There is one album from the Rolling Stones and two from Radiohead—and more records from the 2010s than the 1960s. It has Drake and Kendrick Lamar, but not Tom Petty.

The list includes Prince, Lorde, Sade, Robyn and Björk and ranges from "Blue" (Joni Mitchell) to "Kind of Blue" (Miles Davis) to "Blue Lines" (Massive Attack) to "The Blueprint" (Jay-Z).

It has the Beach Boys and the Beastie Boys, the Smiths and Patti Smith, Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen and other staples of

Please turn to page B4



When Rolling Stone first published its list of the 500 greatest albums, Lauryn Hill's 1998 record was 312th. Apple's new list ranked her a lot higher.

EXCHANGE

THE SCORE | THE BUSINESS WEEK IN 7 STOCKS

Retailers' Sales Slow, a New Record for Nvidia

JPMORGAN CHASE

JPM
4.5%

JPMorgan Chief Executive Jamie Dimon won't be the boss forever. Dimon, who is 68 years old, on Monday told analysts he would likely leave the CEO role in less than five years, a departure from his usual boilerplate response when asked about his tenure. He also implied JPMorgan's share price had gotten so high he didn't want to buy back more shares. Later, a JPMorgan spokesman said Dimon was referring to additional repurchases beyond the current pace at which the bank is already buying back stock. JPMorgan shares **fell 4.5% Monday**.

TARGET

TGT
8%

Target announced a fourth straight quarter of sales declines as elevated prices strain shoppers' wallets. To halt its slide, the big-box giant said earlier in the week it is reducing prices on about 1,500 products, with thousands of more price cuts coming over the summer. Other companies, like McDonald's, have been making similar moves to boost business. The retailer expects its current quarter's comparable sales to come in flat to up 2%, which would be the first upward movement in more than a year. Target shares **lost 8% Wednesday**.



Target plans to cut prices on thousands of items to combat a decline in sales.

HIMS & HERS HEALTH

HIMS
28%

Telehealth company Hims & Hers is bringing weight-loss injectables to its platform. The company said Monday that it will add popular GLP-1 injections to its weight-loss treatment offerings. The compounded injections use the same active ingredients as popular drugs Ozempic and Wegovy, which are facing shortages that are limiting access for some patients. The price for the injections will start at \$199 a month. They won't be available in all states. Hims & Hers shares **soared 28% Monday**.



Nvidia's headquarters in Santa Clara, Calif. The company reported record revenue.

NVIDIA

NVDA
9.3%

AI mania powered another blockbuster quarter for Nvidia. The chip maker at the center of the artificial-intelligence boom reported record quarterly revenue, with its sales more than tripling in the latest quarter. The company also raised its dividend and announced a 10-to-1 stock split. Big tech firms and AI startups have scrambled to snatch up Nvidia's chips, resulting in an ongoing shortage. Nvidia plans to launch a new generation of AI chips, code-named Blackwell, late this year. The chips are set to cost more than \$30,000 each. Nvidia shares **gained 9.3% Thursday**, driving its already meteoric stock up above \$1,000 a share. Nvidia's stock price has more than tripled in the past 12 months, sending its valuation above \$2 trillion.

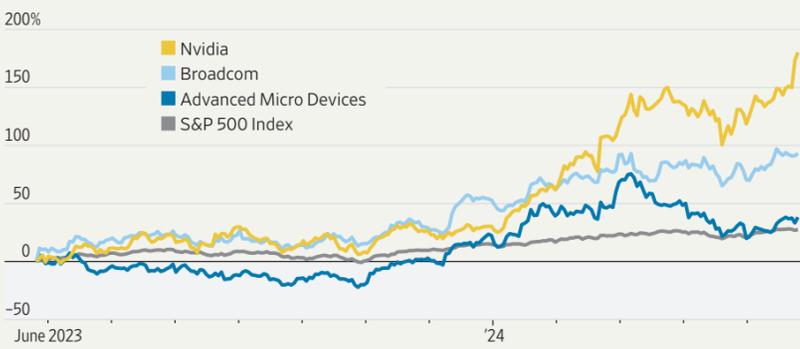
\$30,000

The expected price of Nvidia's forthcoming AI chips, code-named Blackwell

\$2.7 trillion

Nvidia's market capitalization, the third-largest in the S&P 500

Performance of chip stocks over the past year



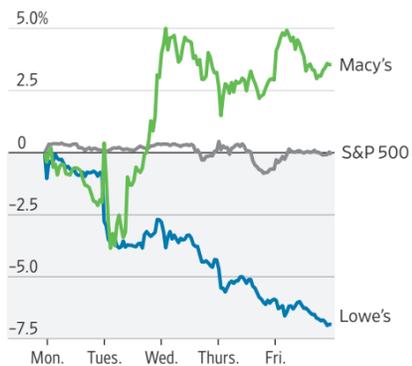
Source: FactSet

LOWE'S

LOW
1.9%

Two big retailers delivered quarterly results Tuesday. Home-improvement chain Lowe's posted better-than-expected quarterly earnings, but its comparable sales declined. The company's do-it-yourself customers cut back on higher-priced discretionary purchases. Department store Macy's also reported declining sales. Still, earnings beat forecasts, and the company boosted its profit forecast. The results suggest Macy's turnaround is starting to take shape. Lowe's shares **fell 1.9% Tuesday**, while Macy's shares gained 5.1%.

Performance of Macy's and Lowe's this week



Source: FactSet

LIVE NATION ENTERTAINMENT

LYV
7.8%

The U.S. government wants to break up Ticketmaster-owner Live Nation. In its lawsuit against the country's largest concert-promotion and ticketing company, the Justice Department alleges that Live Nation used its power to choke off competition, retaliate against rivals, and drive prices and fees higher for fans. More than two dozen states joined the U.S. in the suit. Live Nation said it doesn't have a monopoly in ticketing or promotion and will fight the government's case. Live Nation shares **tumbled 7.8% Thursday**.

BOEING

BA
7.6%

Boeing is burning through more cash than it expected. The beleaguered jet maker expects that it will run through billions of dollars more than forecast in the coming months and won't generate cash for the full year. The warning from Chief Financial Officer Brian West suggests that Boeing is struggling to contain the financial fallout from ongoing production and supply-chain issues. Boeing's troubles ramped up after the midair blowout of a door plug on an Alaska Air flight in January. Boeing shares **slid 7.6% Thursday**.

—Francesca Fontana

WSJ COMIC | DALE HRABI & KAGAN MCLEOD

A Piece of Work | The Takeover That Changes (Almost) Everything

AMID RUMORS THAT BLUFF MARKETING IS FACING A TAKEOVER, JEFFREY STRUGGLES TO FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE...

RUMOR CONFIRMED! THE NEW MARKETING CONGLOMERATE—BLECH, BLECH & BLUFF—WILL BE BASED IN NASHVILLE...

ALL EXISTING BLUFF EMPLOYEES MUST REAPPLY FOR JOBS WITH THE BLECH TWINS IN NASHVILLE...

MEANWHILE, BRENDA SHARES HER PLAN TO BECOME A MARKETING COACH FOR ETSY SELLERS...

TO GAME OUT HOW IDENTICAL TWINS THINK, JEFFREY STUDIES PERTINENT MATERIALS...

BUT NEWS OF THE COMBINED ENTITY'S FOCUS TAKES JEFFREY ABACK...

AT HIS INTERVIEW WITH THE BLECHS, JEFFREY'S NERVES GET THE BEST OF HIM...

OVER GOODBYE DRINKS, OUR TEAM SHARES MORE PLANS...

THE 47 THINGS THAT MADE ME SLIGHTLY UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT.

JUST KIDDING! THE BLECH TWINS WANT ME TO HANDLE THEIR SLINKY ACCOUNT!

EXCHANGE

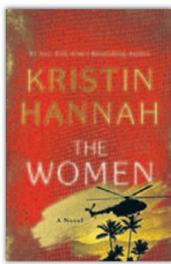
She's a Bestselling Book-Writing Machine

By JEFFREY A. TRACHTENBERG

Novelist Kristin Hannah was an associate at a Seattle law firm and on bed rest during a difficult pregnancy when she decided to try her hand at writing a novel. Until then, she had never written as much as a short story.

She applied what she describes as “the persuasive writing skills” she had learned in law school. “That’s what I’m trying to do as a novelist, to persuade you to enter my world and be changed by it,” says Hannah, who is 63.

That was 25 books ago. Her latest, “The Women,” has sold 2 million copies including print, ebooks, and audiobooks since it was published in



February. This week it landed as the only novel on Bill Gates’s much-anticipated short summer reading and viewing list.

Gates described it as “a beautifully written tribute to a group of veter-

ans who deserve more appreciation for the incredible sacrifices they made.”

“The Women” revolves around a young nurse who impulsively enlists in the Vietnam War and later returns home a changed woman. It is a challenging book set during an era many Americans have tried to forget. It is also, by far, her most successful novel in a career that has spanned more than three decades.

Hannah was born in Huntington Beach, Calif., and experienced drama at an early age. When she was eight her father decided the Los Angeles area was overcrowded and loaded his wife, their three children, two friends, and the family dog into a VW bus and went in search of a new home.

They ended up in the Pacific Northwest, where they were consistently on the move. Hannah attended three junior high schools and three different high schools before enrolling in the University of Washington.

“What I took away from my father was his ability to craft a career from the life he wanted to live,” says Hannah. “I did the same.”

Her parents helped found the Great Alaska Adventure Lodge in Sterling, Alaska, which her father and brother helped run for decades.

Although Hannah’s first effort—a historical romance set in 18th century Scotland that she began to write when she was 26—ultimately didn’t work, she finished it and thought she’d learned enough to try again. She wanted a career, but one that fit

Kristin Hannah’s work as a young lawyer shaped her approach to writing novels. Twenty-five books later, Bill Gates is taking notice.



Kristin Hannah

■ **Stage fright:** Hannah dropped out of an undergraduate creative-writing course when she learned she would have to read one of her stories out loud.

■ **Watch party:** The second season of ‘Firefly Lane’ reached Netflix’s top 10 in 70 countries.

■ **Bestseller:** ‘The Women,’ published in February, has already sold as many copies as her prior title, 2021’s ‘The Four Winds,’ sold in its first year.

her schedule. She had recently lost her mother and intended to spend as much time as possible with her own child.

Hannah initially sold historical romance novels that were published as mass paperback originals.

“I wrote in the carpool lane, late at night, early in the morning, and when my son was napping,” she says. “What it gave me was dedication and discipline, two of the most important

hallmarks of writing. It is, after all, a job.”

Her career changed after she published “Firefly Lane” in 2008 with Macmillan’s St. Martin’s Press. The novel was first published in hardcover and then as a trade paperback, signaling its serious intent to independent booksellers and readers as suitable for book clubs and discussion groups.

Her novels have told of female

friendships in France during the Nazi occupation in World War II, in Texas during the Great Depression and in Alaska during the 1970s, among other settings.

Of the 10 titles she has written for her current publisher, St. Martin’s Press, seven are historical fiction and three are contemporary, including “Home Front,” “Night Road,” and “True Colors.”

Her formula is that “she writes about ordinary women thrust into extraordinary circumstances,” says Jennifer Enderlin, her editor and president and publisher of Macmillan’s St. Martin’s Publishing Group. “Then, when you think it can’t get much worse, it does.”

Hannah first tried to sell a novel about the Vietnam War much earlier in her career. Her best friend’s father, a pilot, had been shot down over Vietnam and was missing. In fourth grade, she began to wear a POW bracelet with the belief that she would take it off when he came home. He never did, and she wore it for many years.

Her editor at the time said that the American public wasn’t ready to read such a book, and advised she might not be ready to write it. “Live more and come back at a better time,” she says the editor told her.

In 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, Hannah thought the moment was right. She saw how divided America was politically, as it had been during the Vietnam War, and she saw how much the nurses and doctors were sacrificing for their fellow Americans.

“I wanted to shine a light on the nurses and women who had served and then returned to a different America from the one they had left,” she says.

She interviewed Vietnam War veterans and spent time with a former Army nurse who founded the Vietnam Women’s Memorial Foundation. She read their memoirs and other historical works.

It took a year to research the book and develop the plot and characters. She then spent another year writing, followed by a full year of editing. With “The Women,” she decided to rewrite the last section to reflect what happened after her main protagonist returns from Vietnam.

What most struck her as she did her research was the lack of attention given to women who had served, she says. “They’d come home and there was no help for them. The country didn’t want to hear about their service. That’s when I realized that experience was as important as going to war.”

Today there are 1.75 million copies of “The Women” in print. The book is No. 1 on the New York Times hardcover fiction list dated June 2.

THE INTELLIGENT INVESTOR | JASON ZWEIG

What Our Brains Know About Stocks—But Won’t Tell Us

Going on gut feelings when you invest is often a terrible idea. New research helps explain why it can sometimes be beneficial.



Thinking we know more than we do—overconfidence—may be our biggest handicap as investors. Knowing more than we realize, rather than being able to use what we know, is another obstacle. It’s a mystery that’s finally getting some attention.

To be an investor, rather than a speculator, you must do deep and deliberate research before you buy an asset. As the late investor Charlie Munger liked to say, you must be “rational.”

That doesn’t mean you must be as unfeeling as Spock on “Star Trek.” One of Warren Buffett’s most famous rules—“attempt to be fearful when others are greedy and to be greedy only when others are fearful”—is rooted in his ability to respond to emotion.

Spock wouldn’t be afraid of other people’s greed or greedy in the face of their fear; he would simply find their behavior inexplicable.

Buffett isn’t unemotional; he is inversely emotional. He takes other people’s feelings, turns them inside out and makes the resulting emotions his own.

In fact, you can’t be rational unless you’re also emotional.

People with damage to the amygdala, a brain region involved in processing fear, pursue “a disadvantageous course of action” when choosing between safer and riskier gambles, a study reported in 1999. The inability to feel fear leads them to chase gains with no regard for the consequences of losses.

Another region of the brain that’s been studied this way is the anterior insula, which relays awareness of bodily states such as your pulse rate, and processes reactions like anxiety and disgust. In an experiment in which people had to decide whether to keep buying a stock that rose up to at least 10 times its fundamental value before it crashed, those whose insula fired up more intensely sold out earlier and made more money.

Research published in 2016 found that professional traders who were more adept at estimating their own pulse tend to generate higher average daily profits over time and have longer careers.

That’s presumably because they were more closely attuned to their gut feelings; excitement may tell them to make a profitable trade, while fear may signal they should cut a loss before it deepens.

In the past few years, researchers have been investigating “neuroforecasting.” That’s the apparent ability of activity in the brain to forecast outcomes—even when people are unaware of it.

Neuroscientists have asked participants to predict which requests for microlending will raise the most money online, which ventures will receive the most crowdfunding, how popular video clips or songs will be, or whether a stock would go up or down.

Consistently, people’s conscious choices when confronted with these sorts of questions aren’t significantly better than chance. But the intensity of activation in their nu-

cleus accumbens, an area of the brain that subconsciously processes anticipation of reward, turns out to be a good predictor of what people will collectively decide they like.

That’s right: A flicker of electrochemical activity in your brain—so faint that you may not sense it yourself—forecasts how people will react to something potentially rewarding.

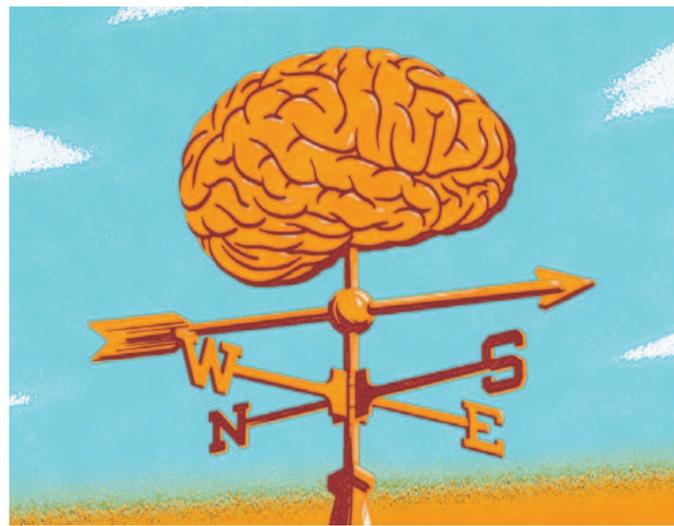
In a study published last month, 36 Dutch professional investors attempted to pick winning and losing stocks while their brains were scanned in a functional MRI machine.

Among the stocks they evaluated: AT&T, Carrefour, Ralph Lauren, Sanofi and Teva Pharmaceutical.

For each stock, the investors viewed a basic profile, including industry sector and market capitalization; a price chart; data on sales and profitability; valuation relative to its peers; and a summary of recent news. The investors weren’t told the names of the stocks and said they didn’t recognize them.

The set of information the investors viewed dated back to various periods between 1999 and 2011. The investors were asked to say whether they thought each stock would outperform or underperform its sector in the 12 months after each measurement period.

Their conscious forecasts were no better than the flip of a coin. However, the researchers also measured the activation in the stock pickers’ nucleus accumbens. And *that* enabled the researchers to predict which stocks would outperform—



with about 68% accuracy. The more intense the activation, the more likely that stock was to end up outperforming.

It’s as if these professional investors have useful knowledge without knowing it. Meanwhile, what they believe they do know—their conscious prediction—is pretty much worthless.

These results are “absolutely fascinating and counterintuitive,” says Brian Knutson, a professor of psychology and neuroscience at Stanford University. (He was a reviewer on the study but wasn’t otherwise involved.)

Many factors can influence investing decisions, including our past experience, our current mood and how much risk we want or need to take. That’s why individuals end up making widely divergent choices, even if their brains show similar initial responses to the same stimulus.

“The brain signal is more equal across a sample than the predictions are,” says Leo van Brussel, a neuroscientist at Erasmus University in Rotterdam who co-authored the new study. “So the brain signal is a better predictor across the population.”

You aren’t going to scurry into a brain scanner every time you’re about to make an investment, so

how can you apply this research?

If you can detect, channel and shape your emotions, they can reinforce, rather than hinder, your ability to be rational.

I’ve learned that my feelings are good contrary indicators: When I’m fearful, I should instead be greedy, and when I’m greedy I should be fearful.

In the global financial crisis, I finally lost heart on March 6, 2009. But I knew my gut feelings well enough to listen to my fear—and to do the opposite. The stock market bottomed three days later, but I kept buying.

Brian Posner, an investor who had a distinguished career at Fidelity, Warburg Pincus and ClearBridge Investments, says his biggest scores were in turnarounds—companies on the brink of failure.

“In those situations, almost by intuition, one is mostly or entirely alone in recognizing the potential,” he says. “Such investments are unnerving.” In those cases, he suggests, a good signal that you’re on the right track is “wanting to throw up.”

Turning other people’s emotions inside out has worked for Warren Buffett. Turning your own emotions inside out might work for you.

EXCHANGE

Apple Music Says It Knows Best

Continued from page B1

past lists. But it also has Bad Bunny and Billie Eilish.

Instead of dropping the whole thing at once, Apple dripped out 10 albums a day, building suspense as people buzzed about which record could possibly deserve the title of greatest of all time.

The top of the list turned out to be as eclectic, unpredictable and controversial as the rest of it: “Abbey Road” by the Beatles at No. 3, “Thriller” by Michael Jackson at No. 2 and “The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill,” by the singer and rapper Lauryn Hill, crowned the No. 1 album of all time.

When Rolling Stone published its list of the 500 greatest albums in 2003, it was dominated by rock music from the 1960s and 1970s, and the top spot went to “Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band” by the Beatles. As for Lauryn Hill’s 1998 record? It was 312th. Even when the magazine updated its rankings in 2020, bumping “The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill” all the way up to No. 10, it elevated Marvin Gaye’s boomer favorite “What’s Going On” to the No. 1 position.

That album was 17th on Apple’s list, behind records from Adele and Beyoncé—and “Sgt. Pepper” didn’t make the cut.

Of course, the natural response to any list is to point out all the ways that it’s not just wrong but completely embarrassing, so outrageous that everyone involved should have their ears checked.

It’s impossible to compare music across eras and genres, so every list of the greatest albums is inherently flawed, bound to disappoint everybody and satisfy nobody. Half the people who read this one will say there were too many pop albums. The other half will fixate on all the pop albums that were snubbed.

Taylor Swift’s “1989 (Taylor’s Version)” is 18th? Absurd. Obviously, the Taylor Swift records that belong on the list are “Fearless” and “Red.”

This, as it happens, is exactly what Apple Music wants you to do with the 100 Best Albums list: discuss it, debate it, even disagree with it. Maybe you were pleasantly surprised and actually liked it. Maybe you hated it. As long as you’re talking about it.

“If we can ignite a conversation amongst our subscribers and the



Apple Music’s and Rolling Stone’s list of best albums

APPLE MUSIC RANK	ROLLING STONE RANK	ARTIST	ALBUM
1	10	Lauryn Hill	The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill
2	12	Michael Jackson	Thriller
3	5	The Beatles	Abbey Road
4	8	Prince and the New Power Generation	Purple Rain
5		Frank Ocean	Blonde
4	6	Stevie Wonder	Songs in the Key of Life
7		Kendrick Lamar	good kid, m.A.A.d city
8	35	Amy Winehouse	Back to Black
6	9	Nirvana	Nevermind
	10	Beyoncé	Lemonade
1	17	Marvin Gaye	What’s Going On
2	20	The Beach Boys	Pet Sounds
3	16	Joni Mitchell	Blue
7	11	Fleetwood Mac	Rumours
9		Bob Dylan	Blood on the Tracks

Note: Rolling Stone’s list is the 2020 version. Bob Dylan’s album didn’t make Apple’s list.

industry,” said Oliver Schusser, Apple’s vice president of Apple Music, “that’s success.”

It was clearly a stunt to get attention and sell subscriptions to

Apple Music, which isn’t nearly as big as industry giant Spotify.

It was also a risk. Apple recently apologized for a shockingly tone-deaf iPad advertisement, and

this was another marketing ploy that could have backfired and sparked more criticism, since a list of the 100 best albums might as well be an invitation to a roast.

But it was a flex, too. Unlike other lists, Apple Music’s includes the bells and whistles of a streaming platform, and the company’s goal was to break through the noise of online discourse and get people to actually engage with these albums.

There were lots of jokes when the list came out that it reads like something generated by ChatGPT. In fact, the opposite was true. At a time when albums are being atomized into playlists and platforms are dominated by algorithmic recommendations, the most contrarian part of this project is that it was crafted by human tastemakers.

“We have always placed a premium on human curation,” said Ebro Darden, Apple Music’s global editorial head of hip-hop and R&B.

Human curation is one way to describe how an endless list of albums got whittled down to the final 100 Best Albums list.

Another way is that a bunch of people got in a room to sit around and talk about music.

“Nobody here can think of a better use of their time than sitting around and talking about music,” said Rachel Newman, Apple Music’s senior director of content and editorial.

They talked about the influential albums of the past. They talked about the transcendent records that will inevitably shape the future. They really talked about a question that Lowe put this way: “How long does an album have to exist before it’s considered one of the greatest of all time?”

Apple thought differently about its answer.

It would have seemed premature to have the Beatles or Marvin Gaye on such a list 50 years ago. But it would have been prescient. This list set out to celebrate the modern records that will be on similar lists of historically significant albums 50 years from now.

The ones that were “complete thoughts, not just collections of hit songs,” Darden says. The ones that captured a feeling, reflected a moment and inspired other musicians. The ones that defined a time or were so far ahead of their time that they proved timeless.

When it was time to put the list together, Apple Music employees submitted their albums, ranked No. 1 through No. 25. The rest of the voters included artists, songwriters and producers across a broad spectrum of genres and eras, from disco to country to punk-pop.

Once the votes were tallied, Apple Music prepared the final list and waited for the most human part of the whole exercise.

For everyone to complain that whatever Taylor Swift album they chose was too high or way too low.

A Bag That Locks Up Our Phones

Continued from page B1

30 minutes into the show I’d say I totally forgot about it,” Derer says. “It ends up being that you don’t need to have your phone photos, your own video, stuff like that.”

Two schools in Torrington, Conn., started using Yondr bags a couple of years ago, paying \$60,000 to use the pouches for roughly 2,000 students.

“We think the return on investment is well worth it,” says Superintendent Michael Wilson. More students chat with one another in the lunchroom and hallways since they can’t retreat to social media or music during moments of downtime, he says.

No-phone zones

When Graham Dugoni founded Yondr a decade ago, Oxford University Press had just named “selfie” the word of the year. Instagram didn’t have Reels videos yet and TikTok didn’t exist.

Dugoni was in his 20s, between jobs and living in San Francisco, when he noticed how many people were glued to their phones during live performances. He worried that future generations wouldn’t know how to exist without their mobile devices, and wanted to do something about it.

“What was the experience for young people going to be, walking through the world with a computer in their pocket?” says Dugoni, now 37 years old.

He spent six months tinkering on a bag for mobile phones that would be tough to penetrate but easy to lock and unlock. He settled on a neoprene-like material with a magnet-controlled locking mecha-



nism. He chose the name, he says, because it evokes a sense of living in the moment: “People ask, ‘What’s happening over yonder?’ Well, you have to be there to know.”

Dugoni drove around California asking schools and venues to try the bags. His first taker was a biker bar in Oakland that wanted to keep patrons from recording a burlesque show.

Preserving punchlines

Comedian Dave Chappelle in 2015 became the first major artist to use Yondr pouches. Musicians can play their songs again and again, but comedians can’t keep telling old jokes. They don’t want their fresh punchlines spoiled on social media. Besides, comedy clubs are where they test new material that might not be funny at all.

Some attendees at Chappelle’s first Yondr-controlled shows had strong feelings: One fan was caught with his phone after smuggling it in his underwear, and had to be escorted out, Dugoni says.

Satisfied with the pouches’ success, Chappelle continues to use them at all of his shows, says Carla Sims, a Chappelle spokeswoman.

Comedian Wanda Sykes’s security director, Dontae R. Cunningham, has a saying about cellphones during shows: “If it glows, it goes.” Yondr staffers have been locking

up audience members’ phones at Sykes’s shows for five years. The explanations they give include that, “she’s working on new material,” or, “you’re going to be the first to experience what she’s getting ready to film on Netflix.”

Pricing varies: Schools pay \$30 per student in the first year and can buy additional materials as needed; artists, such as Sykes or Chappelle, and venues can rent the pouches and book Yondr staff for events.

About 40% of Yondr’s revenue came from schools in 2023, and it is expected to reach 70% by the end of this year, a spokeswoman says. By fall 2023, more than one million students were using Yondr pouches across 21 countries, the company says.

Competition in the locking-bag business isn’t stiff, though outside the U.S., similar businesses are thriving. Phone Locker, founded in Australia in 2020, got a boost when its home country banned mobile devices in public schools late last year. It says it sold 50,000 in Australia in the six months through March, and operates in eight other countries—but not the U.S.

Pushing buttons

Some people find that locking up their devices can cause feelings of anxiety. Chris Marshall spent more than \$2,000 on flights and

VIP tickets to attend a Garth Brooks show at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas a year ago, before he learned the event would be phone-free.

His wife, who has Type 1 diabetes, uses her phone to monitor her blood sugar.

“I’d say there’s less than a 33% chance we would have gone on that trip knowing up front that we couldn’t take our phones to the show,” says Marshall, 52.

During the show, Marshall kept checking his wife to make sure she was OK. The noise of the show made it difficult to hear if her phone was getting any crucial alerts. Everything turned out fine, but the Churchill, Tenn., couple was relieved when they unlocked the pouches after the show.

Phone policies for phone-free shows are stated at the top of Ticketmaster’s event page, a Caesars Entertainment representative said. Videos online show students how to bypass Yondr’s locks with scissors or magnets.

The company says that it is always looking to improve the design and durability of the pouches. It also aims to educate parents and students about schools’ phone-use expectations to better create an environment where children don’t break the rules.

Some places prefer to ban phone use the old-fashioned way: the honor system. Movie-theater chain

Yondr bags can be opened with a magnetic device in designated phone-use areas at venues, and near the exits, far left.

About 40% of Yondr’s revenue came from schools in 2023. The percentages is expected to reach 70% by the end of this year.

Alamo Drafthouse banned texting in 2007, and still enforces the rule.

“It just became more and more pervasive with the advent of the iPhone,” says Tim League, the chain’s co-founder. The screens were brighter and distracting to other theatergoers, he added.

Guests get one verbal warning to put their phones away before being expelled. Even as theater misbehavior gets more pervasive, League says Alamo doesn’t plan on using lockable pouches.

A new reality

Before a Wichita, Kan., court began using Yondr last June, some defendants would text, sometimes threateningly, during sessions, says Nathan Emmorey, a court administrator.

The city rents 100 Yondr pouches and requires plaintiffs, defendants, witnesses and observers to lock up their devices when entering a courtroom. Emmorey expected resistance, but those who came in respectfully obliged.

“People hold on to their phones like my children hold on to comfort items,” Emmorey says. “You see people clutching it as almost a security device, like a teddy bear or a blanket.”

Yondr’s Dugoni is excited about expanding more into courts, but says the company’s focus is on young people. Parents tell him that their children’s phone-free time at school has nudged them to use phones less overall.

“That’s kind of our goal, to help young people establish what it means for them—not by telling them but by showing them,” Dugoni says. “Then they can make their own choices.”

EMIL LENDOFF/THE WALL STREET JOURNAL; GETTY IMAGES (6)

FROM LEFT: JOHN LEVBA/GETTY IMAGES; ANGELA DECEZIO FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

EXCHANGE

Why It Is The Summer Of Sequels

Continued from page B1
 what's going on. Movies take years to make under the best of circumstances, making it hard for studios to quickly pivot based on the lightning-in-a-bottle success of a few big hits.

Hollywood is less nimble than usual. It is still working through a clogged pipeline of movies from when the pandemic halted production. The actors' and writers' strikes last year further added to the backlog; movie releases were postponed because striking actors couldn't promote them. This year is the industry's first uninterrupted production year in half a decade.

"Last summer proved that movies based on new ideas, if they're good, can be huge successes," said Patrick Whitesell, a top Hollywood talent agent and executive chairman of entertainment company Endeavor. "I think the studios know they have to take bold, big swings, but it takes some time to transition to that approach."

Despite a growing awareness of the potential for sequel fatigue among audiences, Hollywood, for now, is still turning to familiar, proven stories and characters to coax audiences into changing out of their sweatpants, getting off the couch, and spending money at cineplexes. Sometimes a sequel can be a smart bet, as the expectations for "Deadpool" show.

Barring a surprise, most box-office tracking estimates show this year's total haul in the U.S. and Canada at just over \$8 billion, compared with around \$9 billion in 2023. That decline would be a step backward for the movie industry: Since 2020, when Covid-19 decimated the business, box-office receipts had been steadily increasing every year.

Memorial Day to Labor Day is a season for big-movie releases. Last year, summer releases accounted for about 45% of annual movie ticket sales, according to industry-tracking website Box Office Mojo.

'Movies were back'

Barbenheimer stoked the hopes of theater owners and their boosters across the country. Moviegoing was an event. People came in costume and in large groups. "Barbie" fans saw "Oppenheimer" on the same day and vice versa, just for bragging rights.

"We put DJs in our lobbies playing the 'Barbie' soundtrack. Instead of a red carpet there was a pink carpet. We had pink popcorn and drinks topped with cotton candy, creating this fun atmosphere that you just can't get at home," said Anthony LaVerde, chief executive of Michigan-based Emagine Entertainment, a major theater chain with locations across five states. "Movies were back."

So far this year, the movies have lost their mojo. Through May 19, cinematic ticket sales in North America totaled \$2.42 billion, down 21.4% from the same period last year—an unusually steep drop—according to box-office tracker Comscore.

Movies aren't performing as well on a per-title basis, either. For the 37 widely released movies through late May, the average box-office gross was \$53.6 million, down 28% from the same period in 2023.

"There hasn't yet been a film to ignite audience interest" this year, said Paul Dergarabedian of Comscore. Upcoming summer titles need to "punch above their weight," he said.

Some titles, like "Godzilla x Kong: The New Empire," (the first Godzilla premiered in 1954), "Dune: Part Two" and "Kingdom of the Planet of the Apes" (the fourth in the reboot, or ninth if you go back to the original in 1968) have fared well.

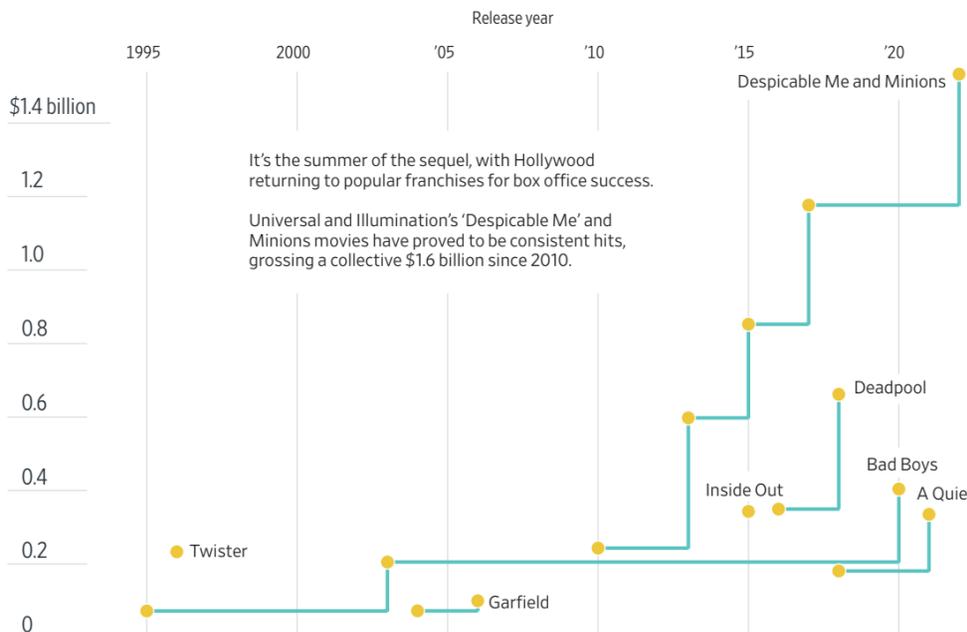
Others, like "The Fall Guy," starring Ryan Gosling and Emily Blunt and loosely based on a 40-year-old TV show, saw ticket sales sputter in their debuts. Ironically, the two leads were both coming off of Oscar nominations for their starring roles in "Barbie" (Gosling) and "Oppenheimer" (Blunt).

"Sequels are good—if the films are good—because you have some idea of the audience that's going to be coming. But the new fresh movies are



'Deadpool & Wolverine,' is the third movie centered on Ryan Reynolds's Deadpool, here with Hugh Jackman as Wolverine.

Cumulative grosses of selected movie franchises with new films coming out this summer



Note: U.S. and Canada ticket sales. Source: Comscore



what keeps us excited and the business excited," said Bob Bagby, CEO of B&B Theaters, which is based in Kansas City and operates more than 50 locations in 14 U.S. states.

"If we fall short this summer, we're going to make it up in the fall and in the fourth quarter," Bagby said.

His best hopes for the fall? More sequels: "Beetlejuice Beetlejuice" (a sequel to 1988's "Beetlejuice") and "Joker: Folie à Deux" (a sequel to 2019's "Joker").

Blame Maverick

There are signs that Hollywood is regaining its appetite for risk-taking. Several big studios have named new leaders in recent months, promoting executives known for championing artsy auteur films. Disney named David Greenbaum, the former co-head of Searchlight Pictures who as a producer helped shepherd Best Picture

▲ 'Bad Boys: Ride or Die' is the fourth in the buddy-cop series and stars Martin Lawrence, left, and Will Smith

winner like "Nomadland" and "The Shape of Water," as well as more recent critical darlings like "Poor Things," as head of its live-action division and its 20th Century Studios.

Disney's Bob Iger has said that the company's movie studios—especially Marvel—have indulged in too many sequels. At a financial conference in March of last year, shortly after returning to lead Disney as CEO, he questioned whether "you need a third or a fourth" iteration of a movie, "or is it time to turn to other characters?"

The company says it's now being more selective about which sequels it makes. On an earnings call this month (May), Iger pointed out that in animation, Disney is "now swinging back a bit to lean on sequels," including the new "Inside Out" and a planned new "Toy Story" installment.

"There's a lot of value in the sequels, obviously, because they're known, and it takes less in terms of marketing," he said.

In its efforts to divine our tastes, Hollywood tends to extrapolate from one success.

Just two summers ago, "Top Gun: Maverick," a flashy aerial-action sequel to a 1986 blockbuster, was hailed as a box-office savior when it arrived in theaters on Memorial Day weekend. The Tom Cruise-led sequel hauled in \$1.5 billion globally, even without a release in the important Chinese market.

For many in the film industry, the lesson of "Maverick" was that familiar story lines and tried-and-true franchises would lead audiences back to cinemas. Another lesson: it still worked to release them on long summer weekends.

21%

how much ticket sales have dropped in North America compared to last year, as of May 19

45%

of 2023 movie-ticket sales were summer releases

▲ 'The Garfield Movie' is one of the kids' movies this summer.

By the following year, however, the appetite for sequels cooled. "Mission: Impossible — Dead Reckoning Part One," the seventh in the franchise, generated the franchise's worst domestic box office gross since 2006. "Fast X," the latest sequel to "The Fast and the Furious," had the franchise's worst domestic performance in two decades. (Both films found bigger audiences overseas.) And "The Marvels" was the biggest flop in Marvel history by a wide margin.

Even so, the movie many in the industry think has a good shot at becoming the highest-grossing film of 2024 is yet another sequel: "Deadpool & Wolverine," coming out this July.

It's the third movie to be centered on Deadpool, the wisecracking mutant vigilante played by Reynolds, making the character a youngster when compared with the protagonists of the Avengers universe, some of whom have popped up in as many as 10 or 12 movies.

Last month at CinemaCon, the annual theater-owners convention in Las Vegas, Disney showed an extended trailer of the movie—the first "Deadpool" distributed by Disney—featuring the movie's stars, Reynolds and Hugh Jackman. In one scene, Reynolds pokes fun at the outside role sequels have taken on in Marvel movies.

Kevin Feige, Marvel Studios' chief and the architect of its "cinematic universe" strategy of interconnected story lines and characters, played up the movie's R-rating and foul language while introducing it, saying from the CinemaCon stage that the movie was "f—awesome." He joked that "Ryan Reynolds would be so proud" of him for dropping the F-word in public—basically unheard of from the straight-laced Feige.

"Deadpool & Wolverine" broke records for first-day presales when they went online this past Tuesday, according to Fandango, the online movie-ticket seller. The movie was leading two Fandango surveys tracking audiences' most-anticipated films of the year.

Even with children's movies—which have been relatively scarce in recent years—studios are relying on sequels on several key holiday weekends this summer, including June 14, when Pixar's "Inside Out 2" comes out just ahead of Father's Day, and July 3, when Illumination's "Despicable Me 4" debuts.

These movies are a bet against the conclusion that much of Hollywood drew during the Covid pandemic: that parents prefer to stream movies for their children at home.

That's no Barbie box

A big weekend to watch is July 19, when "Twisters," the update to the 1996 tornado thriller "Twister," comes out. Bill Paxton, the star of the first installment, died in 2017, and is replaced as leading man by up-and-coming heartthrob Glen Powell, while Paxton's co-star Helen Hunt will be replaced in the female leading role by Daisy Edgar-Jones.

Just as the "Barbie boxes"—life-size replicas of the doll's packaging—were ubiquitous in cinema lobbies last summer, providing the perfect backdrop for thousands of social-media photos, "Twisters" has its tube. Moviegoers can go inside a phone booth-like enclosure and feel a rush of air blown on their bodies to simulate the feeling of high winds.

After Universal debuted the tubes at CinemaCon, a Gizmodo reviewer tried out one. It was "like standing in front of a really strong, large hand dryer," he wrote, and didn't do justice to a real tornado.

Elizabeth Messier saw "Barbie" in theaters six times last year. She and her friends followed along as news and on-set photos trickled out before its release. They took selfies with a Barbie online filter and dressed in Barbie pink for the movie.

"This summer is looking kind of bleak," said Messier, who works in marketing for the local chamber of commerce in her hometown of Florence, S.C. "I can't remember the last time there's been a cast reveal or a clip from a new movie that made me as excited as I was with 'Barbie.'"

Top five summer movies in 2023, by gross*

Barbie	\$636 million
Spider-Man: Across The Spider-Verse	382
Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3	359
Oppenheimer	330
The Little Mermaid	298

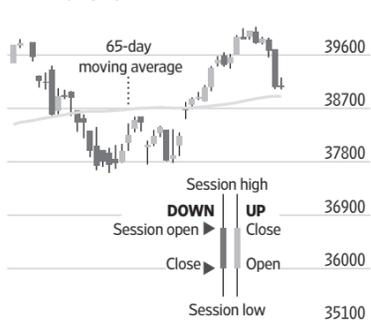
*U.S. and Canada ticket sales, for movies released between May 5 through Sept. 4, 2023. Source: Comscore



MARKETS DIGEST

Dow Jones Industrial Average

39069.59	Last	Year ago
▲ 4.33	Trailing P/E ratio	27.28 22.05
or 0.01%	P/E estimate *	18.97 17.35
All-time high	Dividend yield	2.14 2.13
40003.59, 05/17/24	Current divisor	0.15221633137872



Bars measure the point change from session's open
 Weekly P/E data based on as-reported earnings from Birinyi Associates Inc. † Based on Nasdaq-100 Index

S&P 500 Index

5304.72	Last	Year ago
▲ 36.88	Trailing P/E ratio *	23.25 18.37
or 0.70%	P/E estimate *	21.47 18.55
All-time high	Dividend yield *	1.35 1.67
5321.41, 05/21/24		



Weekly P/E data based on as-reported earnings from Birinyi Associates Inc. † Based on Nasdaq-100 Index

Nasdaq Composite Index

16920.79	Last	Year ago
▲ 184.76	Trailing P/E ratio **	31.32 28.27
or 1.10%	P/E estimate **	27.36 26.67
All-time high:	Dividend yield **	0.83 0.80
16920.79, 05/24/24		



Weekly P/E data based on as-reported earnings from Birinyi Associates Inc. † Based on Nasdaq-100 Index

Track the Markets: Winners and Losers

A look at how selected global stock indexes, bond ETFs, currencies and commodities performed around the world for the week.

Index	Currency, vs. U.S. dollar	Commodity, traded in U.S.*	Exchange-traded fund
	Wheat		7.06%
S&P 500 Information Tech			3.44
	Corn		2.71
S&P BSE Sensex			1.90
	Soybeans		1.63
Nasdaq-100			1.41
Nasdaq Composite			1.41
Norwegian krone			0.91
WSJ Dollar Index			0.36
Indian rupee			0.30
U.K. pound			0.28
S&P 500 Communication Svcs			0.25
S&P 500			0.03
	iSh 20+ Treasury		-0.01
	DAX		-0.06
	iSh 1-3 Treasury		-0.06
	iSh TIPS Bond		-0.13
	VangdTotalBd		-0.19
	iShiBoxx\$InvGrdCp		-0.20
	Euro area euro		-0.24
	iShiBoxx\$HYCp		-0.25
	iSh 7-10 Treasury		-0.25
	Chinese yuan		-0.27
	VangdTotIntlBd		-0.29
	NIKKEI 225		-0.36
	STOXX Europe 600		-0.45
	Canadian dollar		-0.45
	Mexican peso		-0.52
	iShJPMUSEmGbd		-0.53
	Indonesian rupiah		-0.54
	Euro STOXX		-0.58
	Swiss franc		-0.60
	S&P/TSX Comp		-0.64
	Bloomberg Commodity Index		-0.68
	S&P 500 Industrials		-0.68
	IBEX 35		-0.72
	iShNatIMuniBd		-0.80
	Japanese yen		-0.82
	S&P 500 Materials		-0.86
	CAC-40		-0.89
	Australian dollar		-1.00
	South Korean won		-1.03
	S&P/ASX 200		-1.11
	S&P 500 Utilities		-1.16
	FTSE 100		-1.22
	Russell 2000		-1.24
	S&P 500 Health Care		-1.31
	S&P MidCap 400		-1.31
	S&P 500 Consumer Staples		-1.32
	S&P SmallCap 600		-1.35
	KOSPI Composite		-1.36
	South African rand		-1.39
	S&P 500 Consumer Discr		-1.85
	S&P 500 Financials		-1.97
	Shanghai Composite		-2.07
	Lean hogs		-2.30
	Comex silver		-2.31
	Dow Jones Industrial Average		-2.33
	Nymex crude		-2.34
	FTSE MIB		-2.57
	Dow Jones Transportation Average		-2.70
	Nymex ULSD		-2.92
	Bovespa Index		-3.00
	Comex gold		-3.30
	Nymex RBOB gasoline		-3.50
	S&P 500 Real Estate		-3.70
	S&P/BMV IPC		-3.77
	S&P 500 Energy		-3.82
	Nymex natural gas		-4.04
	Hang Seng		-4.83
	Comex copper		-5.51

*Continuous front-month contracts
 Sources: FactSet (indexes, bond ETFs, commodities), Tullett Prebon (currencies).
 THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Major U.S. Stock-Market Indexes

	High	Low	Latest Close	Net chg	% chg	High	52-Week Low	% chg	YTD	% chg 3-yr. ann.
Dow Jones										
Industrial Average	39220.31	39020.29	39069.59	4.33	0.01	40003.59	32417.59	18.1	3.7	4.3
Transportation Avg	15104.66	15012.84	15082.94	74.08	0.49	16695.32	13556.07	8.5	-5.1	-1.1
Utility Average	928.97	922.16	926.11	1.92	0.21	955.01	783.08	3.6	5.0	0.7
Total Stock Market	52725.75	52382.60	52658.61	376.95	0.72	52892.35	40847.04	25.7	10.2	6.4
Barron's 400	1152.80	1140.53	1152.80	12.27	1.08	1166.53	895.36	26.1	7.5	4.8
Nasdaq Stock Market										
Nasdaq Composite	16947.80	16771.58	16920.79	184.76	1.10	16920.79	12595.61	30.4	12.7	7.4
Nasdaq-100	18851.99	18664.79	18808.35	184.96	0.99	18808.35	14109.57	31.5	11.8	11.3
S&P										
500 Index	5311.65	5278.39	5304.72	36.88	0.70	5321.41	4117.37	26.1	11.2	8.1
MidCap 400	2978.22	2960.77	2976.67	24.73	0.84	3046.36	2326.82	21.9	7.0	3.3
SmallCap 600	1320.67	1312.21	1320.59	11.85	0.91	1345.71	1068.80	15.2	0.2	-0.7
Other Indexes										
Russell 2000	2070.23	2056.35	2069.67	21.26	1.04	2124.55	1636.94	16.7	2.1	-2.4
NYSE Composite	18147.53	18028.47	18110.60	82.12	0.46	18388.26	14675.78	20.1	7.5	3.2
Value Line	597.06	592.36	596.79	4.43	0.75	615.81	498.09	11.1	0.5	-3.6
NYSE Arca Biotech	5243.45	5202.97	5211.14	-25.00	-0.48	5511.46	4544.40	-1.5	-3.8	-2.1
NYSE Arca Pharma	1029.46	1024.85	1025.36	-4.10	-0.40	1035.14	837.32	20.9	12.7	11.7
KBW Bank	104.91	104.27	104.88	0.90	0.87	107.64	71.71	34.7	9.2	-7.5
PHLX ^S Gold/Silver	144.50	143.10	143.47	1.63	1.15	151.36	102.94	17.9	14.1	-4.4
PHLX ^S Oil Service	85.44	84.43	84.63	0.11	0.13	98.76	69.29	16.0	0.9	11.7
PHLX ^S Semiconductor	5232.32	5149.31	5220.91	94.93	1.85	5220.91	3185.18	47.2	25.0	18.7
Cboe Volatility	12.89	11.89	11.93	-0.84	-6.58	21.71	11.86	-33.5	-4.2	-13.4

† Nasdaq PHLX
 Sources: FactSet; Dow Jones Market Data

Trading Diary

	NYSE	NYSE Amer.
Total volume*	740,404,327	13,116,375
Adv. volume*	517,484,502	9,850,438
Decl. volume*	210,290,325	3,142,320
Issues traded	2,872	303
Advances	2,046	182
Declines	740	100
Unchanged	86	21
New highs	101	6
New lows	41	6
Closing Arms¹	1.07	0.37
Block trades*	3,614	185
	Nasdaq	NYSE Arca
Total volume*	5,836,044,796	194,141,434
Adv. volume*	3,710,328,736	129,661,852
Decl. volume*	2,087,000,852	61,746,840
Issues traded	4,359	1,902
Advances	2,726	1,622
Declines	1,469	256
Unchanged	164	24
New highs	93	54
New lows	116	4
Closing Arms¹	1.04	2.93
Block trades*	59,436	1,096

*Primary market NYSE, NYSE American NYSE Arca only.
¹(TRIN) A comparison of the number of advancing and declining issues with the volume of shares rising and falling. An Arms of less than 1 indicates buying demand; above 1 indicates selling pressure.

International Stock Indexes

Region/Country	Index	Close	Net chg	% chg	YTD % chg
World	MSCI ACWI	791.57	2.60	0.33	8.9
	MSCI ACWI ex-USA	333.63	-1.05	-0.31	5.4
	MSCI World	3462.13	15.71	0.46	9.2
	MSCI Emerging Markets	1082.98	-8.39	-0.77	5.8
Americas	MSCI AC Americas	2000.91	13.61	0.68	10.3
Canada	S&P/TSX Comp	22320.87	120.08	0.54	6.5
Latin Amer.	MSCI EM Latin America	2408.59	-11.35	-0.47	-9.5
Brazil	Bovespa	124305.57	-423.83	-0.34	-7.4
Chile	S&P IPSA	3677.13	-11.86	-0.32	6.0
Mexico	S&P/BMV IPC	55413.12	-505.26	-0.90	-3.4
EMEA	STOXX Europe 600	520.57	-0.99	-0.19	8.7
Eurozone	Euro STOXX	521.77	-0.21	-0.04	10.0
Belgium	Bel-20	3969.92	-5.82	-0.15	7.1
Denmark	OMX Copenhagen 20	2767.23	-23.17	-0.83	21.2
France	CAC 40	8094.97	-7.36	-0.09	7.3
Germany	DAX	18693.37	2.05	0.01	11.6
Israel	Tel Aviv	1973.52	...	Closed	5.8
Italy	FTSE MIB	34490.71	23.04	0.07	13.6
Netherlands	AEX	915.21	0.94	0.10	16.3
Norway	Oslo Bors All-Share	1651.83	-6.28	-0.38	8.7
South Africa	FTSE/JSE All-Share	79150.84	194.77	0.25	2.9
Spain	IBEX 35	11246.00	-65.10	-0.58	11.3
Sweden	OMX Stockholm	999.34	-4.13	-0.41	10.7
Switzerland	Swiss Market	11931.70	-35.05	-0.29	7.1
Turkey	BIST 100	10676.65	-115.88	-1.07	42.9
U.K.	FTSE 100	8317.59	-21.64	-0.26	7.6
U.K.	FTSE 250	20770.93	139.63	0.68	5.5
Asia-Pacific	MSCI AC Asia Pacific	179.39	-1.41	-0.78	5.9
Australia	S&P/ASX 200	7727.60	-84.20	-1.08	1.8
China	Shanghai Composite	3088.87	-27.52	-0.88	3.8
Hong Kong	Hang Seng	18608.94	-259.77	-1.38	9.2
India	S&P BSE Sensex	75410.39	-7.66	-0.01	4.4
Japan	NIKKEI 225	38646.11	-457.11	-1.17	15.5
Singapore	Straits Times	3316.56	-6.06	-0.18	2.4
South Korea	KOSPI	2687.60	-34.21	-1.26	1.2
Taiwan	TAIEX	21565.34	-42.09	-0.19	20.3
Thailand	SET	1364.48	-3.36	-0.25	-3.6

Sources: FactSet; Dow Jones Market Data

Percentage Gainers...

Company	Symbol	Latest Session Close	Net chg	% chg	High	52-Week Low	% chg
Akanda	AKAN						

MARKET DATA

Futures Contracts

Table of futures contracts including Metal & Petroleum Futures, Copper-High (CMX), Gold (CMX), Palladium (NYM), Platinum (NYM), Silver (CMX), Crude Oil, Light Sweet (NYM), NY Harbor ULS (NYM), Gasoline-NY RB0B (NYM), and Natural Gas (NYM).

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Table of agriculture futures including Corn (CBT) and Sugar-Domestic (ICE-US).

Exchange-Traded Portfolios | wsj.com/market-data/mutualfunds-etfs

Table of Exchange-Traded Portfolios (ETFs) with columns for Symbol, Closing Price, Chg, and YTD (%) for various sectors like Tech, Healthcare, and Energy.

Table of Exchange-Traded Portfolios (ETFs) with columns for Symbol, Closing Price, Chg, and YTD (%) for various sectors like Tech, Healthcare, and Energy.

Borrowing Benchmarks | wsj.com/market-data/bonds/benchmarks

Money Rates

Table of money rates including Inflation (April index, Chg From), U.S. consumer price index, and International rates.

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Bonds | wsj.com/market-data/bonds/benchmarks

Global Government Bonds: Mapping Yields

Yields and spreads over or under U.S. Treasuries on benchmark two-year and 10-year government bonds in selected other countries; arrows indicate whether the yield rose (▲) or fell (▼) in the latest session

Table of global government bonds showing Country, Maturity, Yield, and Spread for various countries like U.S., Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, and U.K.

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Table of investment-grade spreads for various issuers like IBM, General Electric, Netflix, Goldman Sachs, etc.

...And spreads that widened the most

Table of spreads that widened the most for various issuers like Cisco Systems, Citigroup, GlaxoSmithKline Capital, etc.

High-yield issues with the biggest price increases...

Table of high-yield issues with the biggest price increases for various issuers like Bausch Health, Prime Security Services Borrower, etc.

...And with the biggest price decreases

Table of high-yield issues with the biggest price decreases for various issuers like Hughes Satellite Systems, Macy's Retail Holdings, etc.

New Highs and Lows

The following explanations apply to the New York Stock Exchange, NYSE Arca, NYSE American and Nasdaq Stock Market stocks that hit a new 52-week intraday high or low in the latest session. % CHG-Daily percentage change from the previous trading session.

Table of new highs and lows for various stocks, including APAC A, ASP, and others.

Table of new highs and lows for various stocks, including TPC, ULS, and others.

BIGGEST STOCKS

Table with columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists top 100 largest companies by market capitalization.

Table with columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists top 100 largest companies by market capitalization.

Table with columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists top 100 largest companies by market capitalization.

How to read the Stock Tables: The following explanations apply to NYSE, NYSE Arca, NYSE American and Nasdaq Stock Market listed securities...

Underlined quotations are those stocks with large changes in volume compared with the issue's average trading volume.

Boldfaced quotations highlight those issues whose price changed by 5% or more if their previous closing price was \$2 or higher.

Footnotes: *N52-week high; *N52-week low; *D indicates loss in the most recent four quarters.

Stock tables reflect composite regular trading as of 4 p.m. ET and changes in the official closing prices from 4 p.m. ET the previous day.

Table for Friday, May 24, 2024. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists various stocks including AECOM, AES, AFL, ANS, APA, ASX, etc.

GHI

Table for GHI. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like GE Aerospace, GE Healthcare, GE Vernova, etc.

TUV

Table for TUV. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like TALENT, TALENT, TALENT, etc.

DEF

Table for DEF. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like DTE Energy, DTE Energy, DTE Energy, etc.

OPQ

Table for OPQ. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like ONEOK, ONEOK, ONEOK, etc.

JKL

Table for JKL. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like Jabil Circuit, Jabil Circuit, Jabil Circuit, etc.

ABC

Table for ABC. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like AECOM, AES, AFL, ANS, etc.

RST

Table for RST. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like RBC Bearings, RBC Bearings, RBC Bearings, etc.

WXY

Table for WXY. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like WEC Energy, WEC Energy, WEC Energy, etc.

XYZ

Table for XYZ. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like Xcel Energy, Xcel Energy, Xcel Energy, etc.

MN

Table for MN. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like M&M's, M&M's, M&M's, etc.

LMN

Table for LMN. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like Laclede Group, Laclede Group, Laclede Group, etc.

OPQ

Table for OPQ. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like ONEOK, ONEOK, ONEOK, etc.

RST

Table for RST. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like RBC Bearings, RBC Bearings, RBC Bearings, etc.

UVW

Table for UVW. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like Umicore, Umicore, Umicore, etc.

XYZ

Table for XYZ. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like Xcel Energy, Xcel Energy, Xcel Energy, etc.

ABC

Table for ABC. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like AECOM, AES, AFL, ANS, etc.

DEF

Table for DEF. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like DTE Energy, DTE Energy, DTE Energy, etc.

GHI

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JKL

Table for JKL. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like Jabil Circuit, Jabil Circuit, Jabil Circuit, etc.

MNO

Table for MNO. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like M&M's, M&M's, M&M's, etc.

OPQ

Table for OPQ. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like ONEOK, ONEOK, ONEOK, etc.

RST

Table for RST. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like RBC Bearings, RBC Bearings, RBC Bearings, etc.

UVW

Table for UVW. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like Umicore, Umicore, Umicore, etc.

XYZ

Table for XYZ. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like Xcel Energy, Xcel Energy, Xcel Energy, etc.

ABC

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DEF

Table for DEF. Columns: YTD % Chg, 52-Week High, Low, Stock, Yld, Sym, % PE, Last, Net Chg. Lists stocks like DTE Energy, DTE Energy, DTE Energy, etc.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Jeep, Ram Dealers Gripe as Cars Sit on Lots

Stellantis cuts prices and launches incentive program following backlash

BY RYAN FELTON

A group of Jeep and Ram brand dealers were invited to the Detroit area this spring to meet with executives from parent company Stellantis and check out upcoming new models. The retailers saw their chance to vent.

Many attendees were frustrated with unsold cars and trucks piling up on their lots, people familiar with the meeting said. Inventory levels had increased to a three-month supply of vehicles, well above the industry average.

Dealers told executives that the company's resistance to lower prices was to blame, the people said. Prices remained high at Jeep and Ram, Stellantis's two top-selling U.S. brands, as rivals were offering deeper discounts and as higher interest rates were inflating customers' monthly payments.

Stellantis's U.S. sales hovered below 9% of the U.S. market in the first quarter, and fell to 7.7% in April. That was down from around 10% last year and 12.5% in 2020, according to research firm Motor Intelligence—a massive decline in an industry where a half-point drop is enough to rattle car executives.

"Market share is on our minds. Profitability is on our minds," said Randy Dye, who owns a Daytona Beach, Fla.-based dealership that sells Jeep, Ram, Dodge and Chrysler vehicles, and who didn't attend the Detroit meeting. "We've expressed those things."

Stellantis has cut some prices since the dealer meeting and took the unusual step of paying dealers bonuses to accept cars from the factory.

"We are seeing solid improvement over last month with these programs," a company spokesman said, adding that updated versions of a Ram pickup truck and other models should also lift sales.

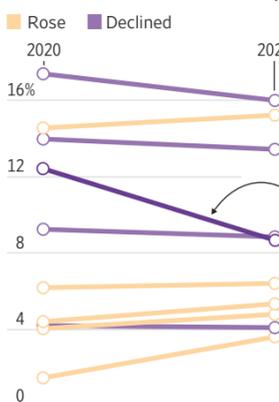
The dealer backlash in the profitable U.S. market poses a challenge for Stellantis Chief Executive Carlos Tavares, who has led the automaker since it formed through the January 2021 merger of Fiat Chrysler Automobiles and France's PSA Group.

Tavares has emphasized the importance of maintaining profit margins by controlling



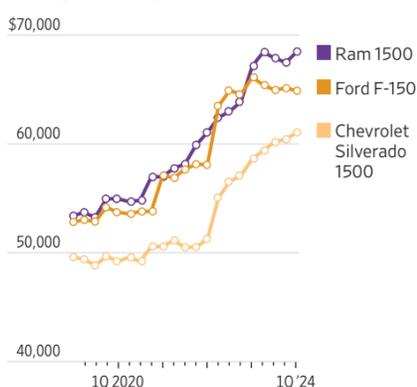
U.S. sales for Stellantis hovered below 9% of the U.S. market in the first quarter, and fell to 7.7% in April.

Share of U.S. new-vehicle sales, 2024 vs. 2020*



*2024 data are through April. Shows 10 largest automakers by 2024 share. 2020 Stellantis figures are for Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, which merged with PSA Group to create Stellantis in 2021. Tesla shares are estimates. †MSRPs are weighted averages based on each truck's model sales breakdown. Sources: Motor Intelligence (share); Edmunds (prices)

Manufacturer's suggested retail prices for large trucks, quarterly



costs, especially as the company spends heavily to make the transition to electric vehicles.

In recent years, investors cheered the Jeep maker as it delivered record profit and margins that exceeded those of rivals Ford Motor and General Motors. Stout pricing, helped by vehicle scarcity and rollouts of the Jeep Wagoneer SUV and other high-end models, fueled the bottom line.

But dealers say Stellantis's pricing remains too high relative to rivals and is at the root of the market-share declines.

Sticker prices on Ram pickup trucks moved higher than on Ford's F-150 over the past few years, flipping the longtime pecking order in which Ram was often seen as the value play.

The average list price for a Ram 1500 recently was about \$68,400, compared with \$64,800 for an F-150, according to car-shopping site Edmunds.

The auto retailers say they want Stellantis to do more to ease a crunch of inventory, the industry's largest. Some had seen their new-car lots get so

backed up, they were refusing to take shipments of new vehicles.

Tricky recalibration

The dealers' concerns underscore the tricky recalibration that auto companies must navigate as markets normalize following a protracted period in which U.S. shoppers were willing to pay top dollar for cars and other big-ticket items.

American car buyers have seen a gradual return of cash-back discounts and other in-

centives, now that pandemic-related supply-chain troubles have largely eased. Still, many auto executives have vowed not to let their new-car inventories return to prepandemic levels, which often required profit-sapping discounts to clear.

Historically, Chrysler had a reputation for building too many cars and then sending surplus vehicles to dealers, only to resort to steep discounts. That changed under Tavares, who in January said he was "trying to avoid a race to the bottom" by cutting prices to keep pace with rivals.

Earlier this year, the CEO said he would adjust pricing in the U.S. only as fast as the automaker can reduce costs. Tavares more recently has said he isn't ignoring competitors' price moves and that the company's market share is under pressure.

Stellantis has reduced sticker prices across many models recently, the company said. In recent months, Stellantis cut prices on the Chrysler Pacifica minivan and Jeep Grand Cherokee SUV, and slashed the sticker on some heavy-duty Ram pickups by as much as \$9,000.

Analysts at Jefferies in a research note this week expressed concern that Stellantis's profit

margins would suffer as the company takes steps to whittle down the backlog of cars. They also flagged worries about "adversarial relations with the industry ecosystem."

"Carlos Tavares's industry views are refreshing and inspiring but created an adversarial environment with suppliers, dealers, unions and public authorities," the analysts said. Stellantis declined to comment on the note.

New sales program

During the meeting in Detroit, which was attended by the company's newly appointed head of North America, Stellantis executives sought to reassure attendees that the dealers' concerns had been heard, people familiar with the meeting said.

In early May, Stellantis unveiled the new sales program for dealers, which provides cash awards for hitting aggressive monthly targets.

Under such programs, dealers typically are paid bonuses for hitting a monthly sales target. This one came with an unusual twist: Stellantis has structured the program so that the bonuses are tied to the number of cars shipped to their store, according to company documents reviewed by The Wall Street Journal.

The intent, dealers have said, is to funnel them money that could be used to sweeten deals and move more cars, while at the same time enticing them to continue taking more.

"I don't know that this has ever been done in the industry," said Jason Stoicevich, Stellantis's head of U.S. sales, during a May 1 dealer meeting to introduce the bonus program. The Journal reviewed a partial recording of the meeting.

In a statement from Stellantis on Wednesday, Stoicevich said the company works closely with a dealer-advisory committee to develop such incentive programs.

On Friday, the company said Stoicevich had left the company for personal reasons, and named a replacement, Matt Thompson, a veteran of its sales group.

In a late-April conference call, Stellantis Chief Financial Officer Natalie Knight told analysts the company has work to do to reclaim market share and cited a goal of getting back to double digits.

"We have some things to prove before we're going to get there," she said.

Lilly Sets \$5.3 Billion to Ease Shortage of Hot Drugs

BY PETER LOFTUS

Eli Lilly will spend \$5.3 billion to boost manufacturing capacity for its hot-selling anti-obesity drug Zepbound and cousin diabetes drug Mounjaro, a huge investment to ease shortages of the popular drugs.

The company announced Friday that it will significantly expand a production site that is under construction on 600 acres in Lebanon, Ind., about 30 miles from Lilly's Indianapolis headquarters. Together

with funding that it previously committed, Lilly will spend \$9 billion total on the new site, the largest manufacturing investment in its history.

Lilly's rival, Novo Nordisk, also has been unable to keep up with demand for its similar drugs, Ozempic and Wegovy, causing supply disruptions. The companies have committed billions of dollars to increasing manufacturing capacity to meet the soaring demand for the drugs.

Zepbound was introduced in late 2023 and is already

generating more than 74,800 prescriptions a week in the U.S., on average, according to J.P. Morgan analysts. Mounjaro average weekly prescriptions have risen 48% from a year earlier to more than 300,000.

Novo Nordisk in November said it planned to spend more than \$6 billion to expand production at a manufacturing site in Denmark. This February, Novo said it would pay \$11 billion for manufacturing plants that its owner agreed to buy as part of a deal ac-

quiring contract manufacturer Catalent.

"You've seen the impressive demand we've had for our medicines," said Edgardo Hernandez, president of Lilly's global manufacturing operations. "That's driving the investments."

But these projects take years to complete, and both Novo and Lilly have said they don't expect to make enough products to satisfy demand in the near term. Some patients have turned to custom-made, or compounded, versions due

to shortages as well as cost.

Lilly said it expects the Lebanon site to begin making medicines toward the end of 2026, and that operations will increase over the subsequent two years.

Lilly's new site will produce tirzepatide, the main ingredient of both Zepbound and Mounjaro. The plant also will be capable of making other drugs, including experimental anti-obesity drugs that Lilly has been developing, if they succeed in clinical testing and are approved by regulators,

Hernandez said.

The company expects more than 5,000 construction workers will build the facilities, and that 900 Lilly employees will staff the site when it is fully operational.

Indiana's state government is providing Lilly with certain economic incentives tied to the company's hitting investment and employment goals.

Lilly also has started other projects to bolster manufacturing capacity in North Carolina, Ireland and Germany in recent years.

Alibaba to Issue Bonds To Fund Stock Buyback

Alibaba Group Holding plans to raise \$4.5 billion through a convertible-bond issue to fund share repurchases, following a similar move by rival e-commerce giant JD.com.

The convertible senior notes maturing in seven years will carry a coupon of 0.5%, Alibaba said in a filing to Hong Kong's stock exchange Friday. The deal size could reach \$5 billion if the option to purchase additional notes is exercised in full.

The notes can be exchanged for shares at an initial conversion price of about \$105.04 per American depositary share, a 30% premium over Thursday's closing price of \$80.80. Alibaba plans to repurchase about 14.8 million ADS.

"We expect Alibaba to continue its shareholder return policy over the next few years," Fitch Ratings said, as-

signing an A+ rating to the notes. The credit ratings company expects Alibaba to spend \$11 billion to \$13 billion on share buybacks over the next few fiscal years. Alibaba's fiscal year runs from April to March.

This past week, online retail peer JD.com raised \$2 billion through a five-year convertible bond that could be exchanged for shares at a 35% premium to the company's reference price of \$33.85 per ADS.

Alibaba spent a record \$4.8 billion buying back its shares in the first three months of 2024 when they touched multiyear lows.

The accelerated pace of buybacks comes as the Hangzhou-based company faces growing e-commerce competition and a sluggish Chinese economic recovery from the pandemic.

—P.R. Venkat



Alibaba spent \$4.8 billion buying back shares in the first three months of 2024. An aerial view of Alibaba's headquarters in China.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Norway Fund to Vote No on Exxon Director

Move follows suit by the company to block investor proposals on curbing emissions

By DOMINIC CHOPPING

The world's largest sovereign-wealth fund will vote against the re-election of Exxon Mobil director Joseph Hooley, becoming the latest investor to oppose a move by the U.S. oil giant they say undermines shareholder rights.

Norges Bank Investment Management, the arm of Norway's central bank that manages the country's \$1.6 trillion oil fund, has joined a growing list of shareholders to air their concerns over a lawsuit filed by Exxon Mobil against two sustainability investor groups.

The company sued Arjuna Capital and Follow This in January to block their shareholder proposal that would commit Exxon Mobil to further curb greenhouse-gas emissions.

The pair have since dropped the proposal and

sought to have the lawsuit dismissed, but a Texas District Court judge ruled Wednesday that the case could continue against U.S. impact investor Arjuna Capital, while the suit against Dutch activist group Follow This was dropped over a lack of jurisdiction.

The oil fund holds a 1.4% stake in Exxon Mobil, placing it in the top 10 largest shareholders, and it said it would vote against the re-election of Hooley, lead independent director and chair of the nominating and governance committee.

"While we appreciate the significant value generated during Mr. Hooley's tenure as Lead Independent Director, Norges Bank Investment Management continues to place utmost importance on the protection of shareholder rights and raises concern around the potential impacts of litigation against shareholders stemming from the submission of a shareholder proposal," the oil fund said.

A group that includes several U.S. state treasurers and New York City Comptroller

Brad Lander, said in a letter this week that it was calling on the world's largest asset managers to vote against executive chair and CEO Darren Woods and Hooley.

In the letter, which was submitted Tuesday to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, the group said it believes that the oil company's attempts to undermine shareholder rights reflect a failure of board oversight and that it has wasted corporate assets on litigation.

The letter was also signed by a trustee of the United Steelworkers International Union Staff Pension Plan, a trustee of the AFL-CIO Staff Retirement Plan and three members of the California Public Employees' Retirement System board of administration. Earlier this week, Calpers, the nation's largest public pension manager, said it planned to vote against every Exxon Mobil board member.

"We're disappointed with Norges' decision, as it and other investors have clearly benefited from Mr. Hooley's leadership, which has helped drive more than more than



Norges Bank Investment Management, an arm of Norway's central bank, shown at right, plans to vote against the re-election of Joseph Hooley, above, lead independent director and chair of Exxon's nominating and governance committee.

\$90 billion of earnings, \$60 billion of shareholder distributions, and a nearly 23% total shareholder return over the past two years," an Exxon spokesperson said.

—Stephen Nakrosis contributed to this article.



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UCC Sale. All assets of Municipal Finance & Services Corp, 581 Main St, Suite 660, Woodbridge, NJ 07095, including all rights to Accelerated Municipal Payments (AMP) platform, non-factoring accounts payable program for local governments, to be sold at public sale at 10:00 am local time on Friday, 5/31/24 at 5330 Yacht Haven Grande, Suite J-206, St Thomas, VI 00802. You may register to bid by phone, contact info@dgdfunds.com or (340)-774-8800 for more information

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NOTICE OF SALE

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Public Sale No. 1: Wednesday, May 29, 2024 10:00 a.m. EDT

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2	589992K09	MESC 13 M1	MH	3,000,000.00
3	045428B09	ABFC 2002-NC1 M2	Subprime	5,000,000.00
4	619090AF3	MABS 2002-NC1 M3	Subprime	5,000,000.00
5	760985EB3	RAMP 2001-RS2 M1B3	Subprime	2,000,000.00
6	268617AP2	EMAC 1999-110	Zero Factor - Franchise	3,000,000.00
7	301965B15	FFCA 1999-2C2	Zero Factor - Franchise	2,160,000.00
8	301965B00	FFCA 1999-2D2	Zero Factor - Franchise	2,160,000.00
9	301965B06	FFCA 1999-2E2	Zero Factor - Franchise	2,150,000.00
10	393505A85	GT 1998-2 B1	Zero Factor - MH	5,000,000.00
11	67087AT8	OAK 1999-D B1	Zero Factor - MH	9,624,000.00
12	542514BC7	LBMLT 2001-3 M3	Zero Factor - RMBS	5,830,000.00

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E.l.f. Beauty Says Sales Jump Reflects Boost in Ad Spending

By MEGAN GRAHAM

E.l.f. Beauty has layered on the marketing in a big way, increasing its investment to 25% of net sales in fiscal 2024 from 7% in fiscal 2019, even as companies on the whole cut their marketing as a proportion of revenue.

The cosmetics company said Wednesday that it generated net sales of \$321 million in the fourth quarter of the year ended March 31, up 71% from the period a year earlier.

"Our marketing investment is working," Chief Marketing Officer Kory Marchisotto said in an interview after E.l.f. reported its earnings. "We have a very simple philosophy: Do more of the stuff that's working and stop doing the stuff that isn't."

The jump in spending compared with net sales has come gradually since 2019, Marchisotto said. A significant increase came that year, when the company closed its bricks-and-mortar stores to focus on distribution through other retailers and online sales. It poured the money it saved into building its brand, bringing its marketing allocation to 13% of net sales.

"When the 13% delivered exceptional results, then you have the confidence to move it to 16%," Marchisotto said. "The 16% delivered even more per-

formance than the 13%. So then, we moved it to over 20%. You see how this works."

The company along with the marketing efforts on platforms such as TikTok, Twitch and Roblox, and in February ran its first national Super Bowl ad.

The company asks questions to gauge how helpful additional marketing has been, according to Marchisotto. "What new door did it open for us?" she said. "What new audiences were we able to capture? What new technologies were we able to play in? What new platforms were we able to build new audiences on?"

Marketing reached 34% of net sales in the quarter that ended March 31 as the company stepped up its investment given better-than-expected top-line trends.

"We're investing from a position of strength and believe these marketing investments will continue to fuel our growth," Chief Financial Officer Mandy Fields said on a call to discuss the quarterly results. "From a cadence standpoint, we are planning a more

balanced pace of marketing and digital spend throughout fiscal 2025."

E.l.f.'s marketing has benefited from a strong working relationship between its CFO and CMO, Marchisotto said. "Usually the CMO and CFO have a high level of friction or tension," she said. "We're very closely aligned. She knows exactly what we're doing and why we're doing it. She'll be the first to actually want to pour more fuel on the fire if we both see the signals that this is working."

The possible U.S. ban on TikTok could affect E.l.f.'s marketing, which has included a heavy dose of the platform, but Chief Executive Officer Tarang Amin said on the earnings call that the company could find its consumers elsewhere if necessary.

Some analysts said the same. "With a number of initiatives in place across a wide range of digital platforms, we also expect the company will be able to adapt should the company have to pivot away from any major platform, e.g., TikTok," Raymond James analysts said in an equity research note this week.

\$321M

Net sales generated by the cosmetics company in its latest quarter

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MARKETS

S&P 500, Nasdaq Notch Weekly Gains

Dow snaps winning streak as several of its components had a tough week

By KAREN LANGLEY

Technology stocks helped push the S&P 500 higher Friday, capping off a rocky week in markets.

The broad U.S. stock index and the tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite rose for a fifth straight week. The Dow Jones Industrial Average snapped a weekly winning streak that had lasted since mid-April.

In daily trading Friday, the S&P 500 gained 0.7%, while the Nasdaq climbed 1.1% to a record. The Dow added less than 0.1%, or about 4 points.

Major indexes were on pace to finish May with their best monthly performances of 2024. The Dow industrials crossed 40,000 for the first time last week, a day after data showed a key measure of inflation had posted its smallest increase in years, suggesting price pressures haven't reaccelerated.

The S&P 500 is up 11% in 2024 after climbing 5.3% so far in May. The broad U.S. stock index ended the week up less than 0.1%, while the Nasdaq Composite rose 1.4%.

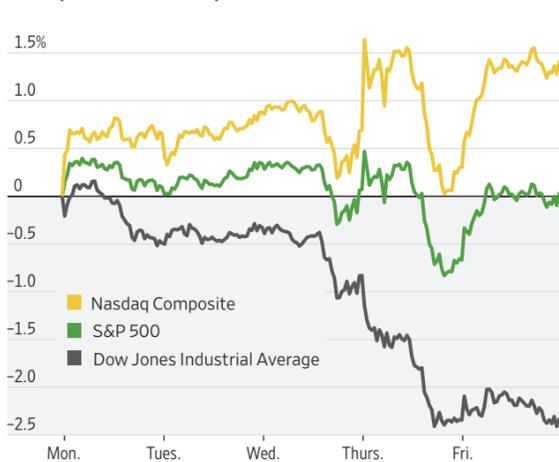
Several Dow components had a tough week. Boeing shares ended the week down 5.6% after the jet maker said it would burn billions of dollars more than anticipated in coming months. Salesforce shares declined 4.7%, weighed down Friday by concern about the outlook for enterprise software. Home Depot, 3M and McDonald's each fell more than 5%.

Looking forward, many investors are feeling upbeat. After a string of inflation reports came in hotter than expected, the report on April consumer prices helped calm investors' nerves. The economy has remained robust, defying expectations that the Fed's campaign against inflation would tip the U.S. into a recession.

And the outlook for corporate profits appears bright. Analysts expect that earnings from companies in the S&P 500 will rise 11% this year and 14% in 2025, according to FactSet.

"If the Fed stays higher for

Index performance this past week



Source: FactSet

longer, that doesn't necessarily mean that stocks won't continue to perform," said Nancy Tengler, chief executive officer and chief investment officer of Laffer Tengler Investments. "I do believe we're in a bull market and I think it's pretty early."

Some investors are bracing for the possibility of increased turbulence ahead, especially if price pressures don't steadily subside. Survey data from the University of Michigan

showed Friday that expectations for inflation edged up from a month earlier, remaining above the average from before the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We've gotten too cheerful in the expectation that inflation is just going to continue to come down and the Fed's going to cut," said Andrew Slimmon, head of the applied equity advisers team at Morgan Stanley Investment Management. "If we get inflation numbers that challenge that

thesis, I think the market is going to struggle."

Earnings reports drove big moves in individual stocks Friday. Shares of Intuit fell 8.3% after executives said the number of people using its TurboTax product for free declined. Deckers Outdoor shares jumped 14% after the maker of Uggs boots and Hoka shoes beat Wall Street's forecasts for sales and profit. Shares of Ross Stores rose 7.8% after the discount retailer reported stronger-than-anticipated earnings and sales.

Chip giant Nvidia rose 2.6%, building on a record set Thursday after a strong earnings report.

Yields on government bonds rose for the week. The yield on the benchmark 10-year U.S. Treasury note climbed to 4.471% Friday, from 4.419% one week ago. The 10-year yield ticked down slightly from Thursday. Yields rise when prices fall.

Overseas, major stock indexes mostly fell Friday. The Stoxx Europe 600 lost 0.2%, while Japan's Nikkei 225 declined 1.2%.

U.S. markets will be closed Monday for the Memorial Day holiday.

Law Firm Cleared of Conflict in FTX Case

By SOMA BISWAS

An examiner appointed to investigate Sullivan & Cromwell's role as main bankruptcy attorneys for FTX largely affirmed an earlier ruling by a bankruptcy judge that the law firm didn't have any significant conflicts of interest that should have disqualified it.

However, the examiner, former federal prosecutor Robert Cleary, recommended further investigation into another aspect of S&C's work before FTX filed for chapter 11: the law firm's role advising founder Sam Bankman-Fried on his purchase of \$500 million in Robinhood shares.

Sullivan & Cromwell "welcomes the examiner's findings to date rejecting various baseless allegations about" the firm's work for FTX, a spokesman for the law firm said.

Allegations that Sullivan & Cromwell advised Bankman-Fried personally on the 2022 Robinhood stake purchase, while characterizing its assignment as being narrower—covering only antitrust aspects of the deal—are worthy of further inquiry, according

to the examiner's report.

Conflict-of-interest claims against the law firm acting as FTX's bankruptcy counsel have dogged the chapter 11 case since the world's biggest crypto exchange filed for protection last year. Sullivan and Cromwell had worked for FTX before its collapse and was central to Bankman-Fried's decision to cede control of the company in November 2022. Lawmakers, former FTX executives and some customers have questioned if the firm could conduct an independent probe into what happened or had any prior knowledge of the fraud at FTX.

Judge John Dorsey of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Delaware declined early in the proceedings to remove Sullivan & Cromwell as FTX's counsel, and the examiner's report released Thursday affirmed his earlier ruling.

Citing findings of an inquiry by law firm Quinn Emanuel, the examiner said in his 210-page report he concluded there is no evidence Sullivan & Cromwell knew about the fraud at FTX or ignored red flags that would

have required the firm to investigate the company's statements. Quinn Emanuel had limited access to information because some communications between Sullivan & Cromwell and FTX were conducted on Signal, an app where information disappears. But still, based on the documents the firm reviewed, it found nothing to suggest

Sullivan & Cromwell knew about fraud. No facts reviewed by the examiner suggest the firm was conflicted from representing FTX, according to the report.

The examiner said Judge Dorsey had enough information to declare the firm an unbiased adviser, even though the judge may not have known at the time that its lawyers had helped FTX prepare statements to regulatory authorities that turned out to be false.

Bankman-Fried started casting doubts on Sullivan &

Cromwell's role in the case soon after the crypto exchange's collapse, accusing the firm of strong-arming him into resigning as CEO and placing the company into chapter 11. In public statements, Bankman-Fried has pointed to Ryne Miller, FTX's U.S. general counsel and a former partner at Sullivan &

Cromwell, as someone who pushed him to hand over the reins to the company and file for bankruptcy.

Other allegations against Sullivan & Cromwell by former FTX executives and other observers focused on its past roles as an outside law firm for FTX and its involvement in some of the company's regulatory applications and acquisition transactions before the bankruptcy.

Sullivan & Cromwell has said it never served as FTX's main outside law firm, and that it had a "limited and

transactional" relationship with the exchange. The examiner said he found no evidence that Sullivan & Cromwell acted improperly in connection with Bankman-Fried's decision to cede control of FTX to an outside CEO, turnaround specialist John J. Ray III. FTX's bankruptcy case is heading to a conclusion. The company's lawyers and Ray recently disclosed it expects to collect at least \$14.5 billion by selling off its remaining cryptocurrency and investments. That is more than enough to repay customers their FTX account balances as of its bankruptcy filing, though they have missed out on the subsequent crypto rally.

The examiner also recommended he be assigned to investigate potential claims FTX may have to claw back money from some former shareholders of LedgerX, a bitcoin options exchange, the company purchased in 2021 at what appears now to be an inflated price. FTX paid \$300 million for LedgerX, only to sell it last year to one of its former owners for \$50 million, according to Cleary's report.

\$14.5B

Amount expected from sales of FTX's remaining crypto and investments

The Shiba Inu That Was Dogecoin's Mascot Dies

By CAITLIN OSTROFF AND MIHO INADA

TOKYO—Kabosu, an ordinary pet, leapt to accidental fame after her owner, a 62-year-old kindergarten teacher, shared online a photo of a cute dog with a baffled, wary expression.

The internet found it and ran with it, and the Shiba Inu pooch became the mascot of the cryptocurrency dogecoin. Kabosu died in Japan on Friday. She was 18.

Kabosu didn't let fame go to her fluffy head. Her favorite pastimes were napping with three cats living with her—and sometimes messing up a trash can for fun with them when their owner wasn't home.

The dog's wide-eyed look symbolized the frenzy around speculative assets and was used as an icon for a volatile cryptocurrency worth almost \$90 billion at its peak. Kabosu garnered attention from businessmen, rappers and members of Congress.

The quickly built \$3 trillion crypto empire has stumbled. While 2021 saw dogecoin shoot to fame, 2022 was marked by crypto bankruptcies, fraud charges and eroding prices. This year has seen optimism return, pushing crypto prices higher.

Outside Tokyo, Atsuko Sato, a teacher, adopted the pooch from an animal shelter in 2008. She said she kept the name Kabosu, selected by a volunteer, because it is a type of Japanese citrus and the dog's face was round, like the fruit.

Sato posted pictures of Kabosu lying on the couch, paws crossed, on her blog in 2010.

In the snapshots, the blondish dog has an expressive Panda-like face and appears to be just waking up. Sato narrates the action in captions. Kabosu thinks it is Monday. Darn. Then, the dog learns it is really Friday, and appears perplexed, as if thinking, seriously? No way!

After the animal-loving internet found it, Kabosu's picture became a meme with users adding their own Comic Sans expressions.

Among them was Billy Markus, a developer who wanted to craft a parody cryptocurrency to poke fun at the rise of nascent tokens, including bitcoin. Unlike fiat currencies such as the U.S. dollar, cryptocurrencies aren't backed by governments and their values aren't influenced by interest rates. They can be prone to sharp shifts in value based on news headlines and other events.

Markus co-created dogecoin, centered on the internet meme of Kabosu. (The meme pretended the dog had bad spelling habits, thus "doge" instead of "dog.")

Programmers transposed Kabosu's likeness onto a gold coin as the emblem for dogecoin in 2013. They picked silly slogans such as "wow much coin."

The joke caught on. Members of Congress used the meme on Twitter to lob critiques with slapping quips such as, "Very Spending. Wow" onto Kabosu's picture. She appeared on a Nascar race



Kabosu, whose wide-eyed look symbolized the frenzy around speculative assets, died at 18 in Japan.

car at the Talladega Super-speedway in Alabama. Rappers such as Snoop Dogg tweeted Kabosu's face with captions.

Tesla chief executive Elon Musk tweeted the doge meme often in 2021. Dogecoin, previously worth a few thousandths of a penny, surged to 8 cents as people became day traders.

Interest in Kabosu, and her breed, boomed with dogecoin. There were spinoff Shiba cryptocurrencies, such as Shiba Inu Coin, Floki Inu Coin (for the Shiba Inu that Musk later adopted) and Doge Token. Dogecoin is now worth a fraction of its peak value in May 2021.

In Japan, Sato didn't follow cryptocurrency news and

only learned her pup's face was well, everywhere, when her blog's followers informed her, she told The Wall Street Journal.

"It was only happening on the internet overseas and did not affect my real life at all," she said. "I thought it was OK if everyone was having fun."

Sato was uncomfortable, though, with having Kabosu's face on merchandise, such as T-shirts or mugs, without permission. She worked with a lawyer, and has since received some fees from a limited number of businesses. Sato has never held a dogecoin or any other cryptocurrency and isn't planning to. "I don't understand how they work," she said.

But she started receiving offers from people to help turn Kabosu's images into NFT, digital assets. With the help of others, Sato auctioned off the Kabosu images that inspired dogecoin for charity and raised more than \$4 million, she said. She said she has donated most of the money to build several schools in Vietnam and some other countries.

"How lucky I am to get involved in such a thing," she added.

Toward the end, Kabosu was too weak to walk on her own and had a custom-made walker when moving around the living room.

On Nov. 2, 2023, when Kabosu turned 18, hundreds of fans from all over the world gathered at Sakura City near Tokyo and unveiled bronze statues of Kabosu and her three feline roommates.

Investors To Boost Assets in Private Credit

By ISAAC TAYLOR

Investors are looking to increase their target allocations to private credit, in some cases identifying it as the top growth asset among various strategies.

Nearly 61% of limited partners investing in private markets—pension funds, sovereign-wealth funds and insurance companies—said they plan to expand their asset allocation to private credit this year, according to a survey from data provider S&P Global Market Intelligence in January. The survey recorded responses from participants including limited-partner, private-equity and venture-capital professionals.

Credit funds are in the market to raise a total of more than \$487 billion, a first-quarter Preqin report showed. These asset managers looking to raise capital may find willing takers.

The California Public Employees' Retirement System, or Calpers, earlier this month said it would increase its private-debt allocation to 8% from 5%. That translates to roughly \$40 billion in private-credit allocation for the public-pension fund, which manages nearly \$500 billion. The return for its private-debt investments, which was established as a separate asset class in 2022, was 13.3% last year, according to Dan Bienvenue, Calpers' interim chief investment officer.

Meanwhile, the Connecticut Retirement Plans and Trust Funds, with over \$50 billion in assets under management, plans to double its private-credit allocation to 10% by 2027, as the asset class continues to surge in popularity following a historic increase in interest rates. The pension fund is primarily looking to scale up through expanding allocations with many of its existing managers, although it may back new firms over time, Connecticut State Treasurer Erick Russell, the sole trustee for the state's pension system, said. The fund has made allocations to credit shops such as HarbourVest Partners, Sixth Street Partners, Crescent Capital Group and Goldman Sachs.

Diversification and high returns are the among main reasons for increasing their allocations to private credit, investors said.

"I think private credit can provide differentiated and diversifying sources of return when compared to some of the traditional public-credit markets," Russell said. Higher returns have also made the asset class attractive, he added.

Calpers takes on a large amount of equity risk in both the public and private markets. The fund is looking to use private debt to diversify, Bienvenue said. Private debt has "a different set of risks," which makes the asset class attractive, according to Bienvenue. "It doesn't have the standard duration of fixed income. It doesn't have standard equity risks," he said. "It does have credit risks, of course. But, nonetheless, we think it's a diversifying exposure to the total portfolio."

Calpers counts Blackstone, Oaktree Capital Management and Owl Rock Capital among funds it has invested in.

The Alaska Permanent Fund, which has \$78 billion in assets under management, will hold a meeting later this month to discuss raising its private-credit allocation to 11% from 9%, according to Marcus Frampton, its chief investment officer.

The fund's private-credit category has a five-year annualized return of 8.4%. "I think of [private credit] like a return enhancer more than a fixed-income surrogate," Frampton said.

"We believe we're backing the best top-quartile managers who are structuring deals well with the right covenants," he added. The Alaska fund has backed lenders including HPS Partners, Monroe Capital, Permira and LBC Credit Partners, according to public documents.

The fund currently works with roughly 15 to 20 private-credit managers and doesn't expect to increase the number, Frampton said.

HEARD ON THE STREET

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS & COMMENTARY

Shabby Luxury Brands Are Getting Harder to Fix

The chances of making a successful comeback in the luxury-goods industry are lower than ever. That's bad news for the likes of Gucci and Balenciaga.



Gucci ran into trouble when shoppers, particularly from China, became tired of its over-the-top designs.

Mending luxury brands is harder than ever in a slowing industry dominated by Parisian giant LVMH. Fancy labels fray easily. Gucci hit the skids around 2022 when shoppers, particularly from China, became tired of the over-the-top designs the brand had become known for. Sales at the Italian label fell 18% in the first three months of this year.

Balenciaga, which like Gucci is owned by LVMH's rival Kering, is also in the doldrums. It hasn't recovered from the fallout caused by a strange 2022 ad campaign showing children with teddy bears wearing bondage gear.

Independently listed Burberry and Salvatore Ferragamo have been in trouble for longer.

Burberry, the British trench coat maker, has been in revamp mode for almost seven years, with little to show for it. Its share price has roughly halved since the company launched a major makeover in late 2017. A long run of weak sales has hit Ferragamo's stock even harder over the same period.

Brands looking for a fix tend to reach for the same tools. They hire a new creative team to come up with a fresh look and then invest heavily in advertising and store refurbishments to catch shoppers' attention.

In the background, they pull their goods from third-party retailers to stop end-of-season discounts. Department stores like Saks Fifth Avenue or Harrods can cover their costs even if they sell goods 60% below the headline price, but posh labels suffer when they end up in the bargain bin.

Brands pour resources into overhauling their handbag range, as a hit bag can help profit margins. Bottega Veneta's pouch, which went viral in 2019, is a good example. Burberry is now trying this tactic: Bags designed by the company's new creative director, Daniel Lee, are 58% more expensive than those they replace, Bernstein data shows.

Betting on luxury turnarounds is like roulette. Sometimes shareholders make a killing. Anyone smart enough to buy Kering's stock in mid-2016, right before a previous Gucci revamp ignited sales, was sitting on a 520% return including reinvested dividends five years later.

But most makeovers are disappointing, with lots of nasty snags for

shareholders. Luxury brands have high fixed costs, such as expensive rents on their flagship stores, so weak sales have a big impact on earnings. Kering recently warned that group operating profit may fall 45% in the first half of this year because of slow sales at Gucci. The need to beef up ad spending while reducing exposure to department stores compounds the pressure on margins.

It may be becoming harder for smaller brands to win back market share. LVMH mushroomed in size during the pandemic, giving it deeper pockets than ever. The company's marketing budget swelled from €6.3 billion in 2019 to more than €10 billion last year, equivalent to \$10.8 billion at current exchange

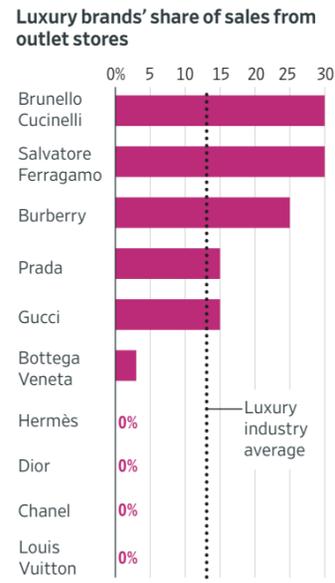
rates. That is almost three times Burberry's annual sales. The sheer weight of these ad dollars makes it almost impossible for rivals to stand out. Even though Kering is a major luxury group in its own right, it hasn't grown as fast as LVMH in recent years. This may be creating a vicious spiral as it now struggles to match its rival's marketing muscle.

Brands that rely on affluent shoppers instead of the very rich are also at a disadvantage. This part of the market is shrinking: Consumers that spend less than €5,000 on designer goods a year now account for around 60% of global luxury sales, down from 70% in 2016, according to Boston Consulting Group. Gucci, Burberry and Ferragamo all fall into this camp.

Aspirational shoppers are the first to close their wallets when the economy sours, as is happening today. Brands made the slowdown worse by alienating their core customers with aggressive price hikes during the pandemic.

Growing reliance on outlet stores is another problem. Last year, 13% of global luxury sales were made in the off-price channel, according to Bain & Co., up from 5% a decade ago. Dependence on outlets to clear unsold stock undermines brand turnarounds. Shoppers won't pay full price if they believe they will be able to buy the products at 60% off in an outlet store.

Burberry generates a quarter of its sales and more than half of group operating profit in off-price stores,



Source: Bernstein

according to Bernstein estimates. Ferragamo also has high exposure. Sales made in outlets are lucrative because rents are relatively cheap and footfall is high. Burberry can't quit this image-harming part of its business without sacrificing a huge chunk of earnings—a Catch-22.

Kering's and Burberry's stocks look particularly cheap at the moment. Their shares trade at 16.5 and 17.8 times projected earnings, respectively, compared with 27 times on average for Europe's top luxury companies.

But investors should wait for early signs that turnaround plans are working before jumping in. Social-media chatter can show whether or not runway shows are generating excitement. So far, new collections at Gucci and Burberry aren't setting the fashion world on fire.

Between earnings reports, a simple way to tell whether or not a turnaround is working is to visit a brand's flagship. "Traffic doesn't lie. If there is no one in the store, the brand isn't relevant," says Bernstein analyst Luca Solca.

Fashion history is full of top designers who lost their edge. The chances of making a successful comeback in the luxury-goods industry seem to be lower than ever.

—Carol Ryan



Ross Stores has had six straight quarters of sales growth.

T.J. Maxx and Ross Command Full Price

The off-price retailers thrive under all conditions

Off-price retailers such as T.J. Maxx and Ross Stores are like indestructible organisms: They can flourish under all economic conditions, from too hot to too cold.

The latest quarter was further proof of this resilience. Both T.J. Maxx-owner TJX Cos. and Ross reported this week that comparable-store sales rose 3% in their quarters ended May 4 compared with a year earlier as inflation-pinched consumers sought out deals. This marks the seventh consecutive quarter of comparable sales growth for TJX and the sixth for Ross.

Ross, whose consumers skew low-to-middle income, has been lowering prices to drive sales. TJX, with a higher-income clientele, has been able to raise prices selectively without much pushback. Despite diverging pricing strategies, lower freight costs helped both companies expand operating margins.

Bad times aren't required for good times at these retailers—they were growing in 2021 when consumers were feeling flush. TJX, Ross and Burlington Stores' collective share of the apparel and foot-

wear specialist market ballooned from 25% in 2019 to 31% last year, according to a Jefferies report citing Euromonitor data.

Off-price is likely stealing market share from home retailers, too. TJX's HomeGoods business saw comparable-store sales rise 4% last quarter, while Ross Stores said the home category outpaced overall company growth. That contrasts with anemic home-related sales at retailers like Target and Beyond, the company formerly named Overstock that took on Bed Bath & Beyond's website and domain name.

Can off-price retailers keep growing? Weakness at other apparel brands suggests that they can. Recognizable brands such as Nike, Lululemon and Coach owner Tapestry have hit speed bumps on sales growth.

Where there is unsold inventory, there are buying opportunities for off-price retailers. There could be a big wave of inventory from recent bankruptcies at Express and teen-focused Rue 21, too, as they close down hundreds of stores. TJX Chief Executive Ernie Herrman said on

Wednesday that there has been a "spill-off" of extra inventory from other retailers.

The wave of store closures also should help boost foot traffic at off-price retailers. Off-price historically has been the biggest beneficiary of apparel-store closures, according to a report from Evercore equity analyst Michael Binetti. In addition to bankrupt retailers, Macy's has announced plans to close 150 stores. UBS analysts estimate that more than 16,000 apparel stores could close over the next five years.

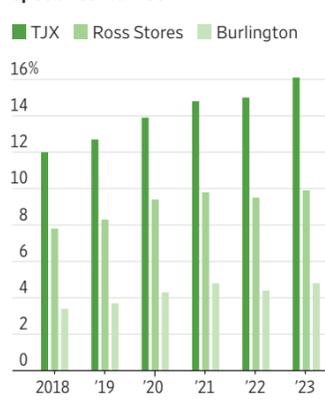
This hasn't gone unnoticed. TJX and Ross shares have appreciated 92% and 40%, respectively, over the past five years. They are now among the most expensive U.S.-listed apparel-industry stocks. They trade at forward-12-month earnings multiples that rival Nike's and recently outpaced Lululemon's.

They have also done much to please investors: TJX's return on invested capital hit 25.4% last fiscal year, while Ross's hit 19.7%, exceeding even mighty Costco's returns. Both companies also have a record of generous cash returns to shareholders.

Off-price retail stocks aren't cheap, but premium products never are.

—Jinjo Lee

Share of apparel and footwear specialist market



Sources: Euromonitor; Jefferies

Can Live Nation Keep The Band Together?

Wall Street is hopeful the concert promoter can retain Ticketmaster, but resolution won't be swift

Wall Street may be the only fan of Ticketmaster and its parent company these days. That's not proving to be enough.

Live Nation saw its share price drop 7.8% Thursday, following the Justice Department's lawsuit seeking to break the company up. Such a scenario would separate the concert-promoting business from the Ticketmaster arm, essentially undoing the 2010 merger that brought those companies together.

The government, which cleared that deal, now contends the arrangement has produced a monopolistic enterprise that has driven concert-ticket prices to nosebleed levels.

But one person's monopoly is another person's flywheel—a term frequently used by Live Nation executives to describe how the combined businesses build on each other.

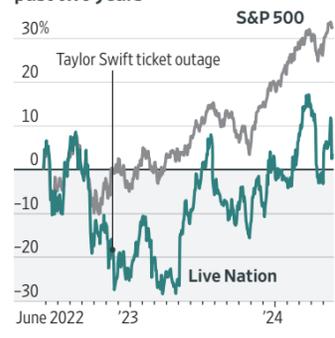
That's proven especially useful as the concert business has recovered from its Covid-era shutdown. Live Nation's revenue of \$22.7 billion last year was more than double what the company averaged annually in the three years prior to the pandemic. Its revenue per event was up 58% from 2019's level.

That's been music to Wall Street's ears. Of the analysts covering Live Nation, 87% currently rate the shares as a buy, according to FactSet, up substantially from the 61% with positive ratings in October of 2022, before the fiasco caused by the initial sales for Taylor Swift's Era's tour drew a public rebuke from the megapopular star and sparked calls for the Justice Department to investigate.

Analysts have been roundly skeptical of a breakup, but the stream of downbeat news and rare bipartisan criticism of the company have still weighed on the stock.

Live Nation's shares lagged the S&P 500's 12-month performance by about four percentage points

Share-price and index performance, past two years



Source: FactSet

prior to the Justice Department's lawsuit this week.

Wall Street is still hopeful. "Our view also remains unchanged that the DOJ does not have a substantive or winnable case (based on precedent and the facts)," Guggenheim analyst Curry Baker wrote in a note Thursday.

Jed Kelly of Oppenheimer trimmed his price target on the stock by 8% but kept his buy rating, citing "compelling arguments for no break-up."

Paul Gallant, policy analyst for TD Cowen, puts the chances of a break-up at less than 50% "because courts today are skeptical of antitrust enforcement compared with 30 years ago, largely at the behest of the Supreme Court rulings pushing them in that direction."

Still, analysts agree the fight is going to be a distraction for Live Nation's management, and likely an overhang on the stock for some time.

Gallant, of Cowen, pointed to the first quarter of 2026 as the "earliest realistic trial date" for the case.

That may prove to be a long time for the company to keep its Wall Street fans in their seats.

—Dan Gallagher



Pinball Renaissance
The game is thriving in homes, 'barcades' and official competitions **C17**

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We shouldn't be afraid to send messages to extraterrestrials **C3**



CULTURE | SCIENCE | POLITICS | HUMOR

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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Clockwise from top: Climate activists rallied in 2019 to support a lawsuit against Exxon by New York's attorney general; Miranda Kaiser, a great-great-granddaughter of John D. Rockefeller Sr., has been carrying on a fight that was her brother's dying wish; oil-well pump jacks in Midland, Texas.

Inside the Rockefeller Family's Feud With an Oil Giant

By Christopher M. Matthews

A fifth-generation heir to the Rockefeller fortune, Miranda Kaiser was busy raising her children in Florence, Italy, when her older brother presented her with his dying wish almost five years ago.

After being diagnosed with terminal brain cancer, David Kaiser asked his only sibling to become the new standard-bearer for the campaign he had started against Exxon Mobil and other oil companies over what he saw as the industry's deception about climate change and responsibility for its consequences.

The siblings' great-great-grandfather, John D. Rockefeller Sr., founded Standard Oil, the monopoly that begot Exxon. Costly and controversial, David's campaign effectively pitted the founding family against the company that had generated much of its enormous wealth.

David's request came as the effort,

The family owes its fortune to oil. But despite legal reversals, it's still trying to hold Exxon to account for contributing to climate change.

funded by the family's powerful charities, was faltering. In December of 2019, a New York state judge cleared Exxon on fraud charges in a case alleging the company misled investors about the impact of climate regulation on its business. Exxon openly attacked the Rockefeller effort as a politically motivated conspiracy between Democratic attorneys general and environmentalists.

Following the New York trial, Exxon declared victory. The future of the campaign looked precarious.

Thousands of miles away, Miranda wasn't well positioned to get it back on track. A lawyer by training, she was running a nonprofit she founded to

help immigrants in Italy and managing the end of her marriage. But she couldn't say no to her brother.

"He was smart enough to know that he had probably only months to live," Kaiser said during an interview at the family's sprawling ancestral estate in Pocantico Hills, perched above the Hudson River. "He also knew that if this was his dying wish for me that I would do it no matter what and without limits."

In July of 2020, David died at a family home in Maine. He was 50 years old.

In the years since, Miranda hasn't merely continued his campaign—she has escalated it.

The Rockefeller Family Fund, the charity she is president of, is funding litigation and other support for more than 30 lawsuits around the U.S. against the fossil fuel industry. Exxon is a defendant in all of them. Fund staffers also consult with state attorneys general, nine of whom have brought cases against Exxon. The cases aim to collect billions of dollars from Exxon and its peers for their contributions to climate change and the damages caused by it.

Inside Exxon, the efforts have prompted equal parts outrage and concern. Executives view the lawsuits as meritless, but fear juries in blue states might eagerly hand down massive penalties against Exxon, say people close to the company.

Kaiser's campaign is making a

Please turn to the next page

What started as a promise from sister to brother has become a consuming mission.

Inside

MENTAL HEALTH

Doctors couldn't explain my haunting visions, so I learned to live with them, writes Daniel Handler, a.k.a. Lemony Snicket. **C4**



POLITICS

Despite Biden's pro-labor policies, Trump could win the union vote in November. **C18**

Summer Books

Tales of solo sailors, fashion queens, unsung heroes and race-car pioneers. Plus plenty of beach reads. **C5-16**



HISTORY

A square deal: How a single president's vision shaped the American landscape. **C5**



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: JUSTIN LANE/EPH/SHUTTERSTOCK; NATALIE KEYSAR FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL; ELLI HARTMAN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

REVIEW



Exxon's polling showed that the Rockefellers' pivot against the oil giant was hugely damaging to the firm's reputation.

The company turned to FTI Consulting, a globe-spanning business consulting firm, to scrutinize the Rockefeller charities and formulate a communications strategy. By early 2016, Exxon concluded the Rockefellers were behind a politically motivated attack on the company. FTI's work was overseen by Exxon's senior-most public affairs executives and most rank-and-file staff were walled off from the effort.

As the fight became public, polling and focus groups commissioned by Exxon showed that the idea the Rockefellers had turned against the oil giant was hugely damaging to the company's reputation, people familiar with the matter said. Exxon executives concluded they had to punch back.

FTI circulated stories with reports about what it labeled a "conspiracy" by the Rockefeller charities and wrote blog posts attacking the campaign on a website called Energy in Depth. FTI helped create the site years earlier for the lobbying group Independent Petroleum Association of America, which Exxon was a member of until 2022. Since 2015, the site has published more than 200 posts critical of the Rockefeller effort.

Exxon also enlisted one of the country's most powerful law firms, Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison. Paul Weiss represents Exxon in many of the climate change lawsuits. The firm sued the New York and Massachusetts attorneys generals, asking a federal judge in Dallas to shut down their investigations into Exxon, and subpoenaed the Rockefeller Family Fund for its communications with those offices.

In a December 2016 meeting, following Exxon's rapidly amplifying response to the Rockefellers, an external adviser urged caution. Sarah Labowitz, a member of Exxon's External Citizenship Advisory Panel, warned the company a scorched-earth campaign would come with blowback, according to people briefed on the meeting.

Jack Williams, a member of Exxon's management committee composed of the company's most-senior executives, said Exxon wouldn't be bullied, according to the people.

"Even if you win this, you lose," said Labowitz, a former policy adviser at the State Department. She sent Exxon a resignation letter weeks later, citing attacks "on respected civil society organizations through the courts."

Breaking Tradition

By some measures, the Rockefeller campaign has been unsuccessful. Exxon's stock hit a record price in April, and the company netted \$36 billion in profits last year. A federal judge in San Francisco dismissed a case against Exxon in 2018, ruling that the courts are an improper place for addressing climate change; the following year, Exxon won the New York case after a state judge said fraud allegations against it had no merit.

Despite that, Kaiser believes the campaign is picking up steam. In April 2023, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to consider appeals by Exxon and other oil companies seeking to move most of the cases from state to federal court, a decision that allows the cases to proceed in venues the plaintiffs view as friendlier.

A case brought by the Massachusetts Attorney General accusing Exxon of misleading consumers and investors about its products' contributions to climate change could go to trial by 2025.

The family fund has spent about \$15 million on the campaign over the past decade, according to Wasserman. Kaiser sees the effort as a continuation of Rockefellers' longstanding support for environmental conservation.

And what becomes of Exxon if Kaiser is successful?

Kaiser sees a scenario, however unlikely, in which a contrite Exxon could redeploy its vast resources and engineering prowess into green energy.

"Some of our greatest stories are about villains who become heroes and maybe it's too late for Rex Tillerson and Lee Raymond, and their obituaries have been written," she said. "But you know, Darren Woods, he could turn around and become one of the greatest heroes of the time."

A Family Turns Against The Source of Its Fortune

Continued from the prior page

"mockery of the legal system," said Exxon spokeswoman Emily Mir, adding: "Using family wealth and status to do their personal bidding is somewhere between privileged and unethical, and even more importantly, it does nothing to lower emissions."

Exxon Chief Executive Darren Woods said the New York case, in which the company turned over millions of documents, showed the Texas-based oil giant had nothing to hide. (The Wall Street Journal last year reported on some of the documents, which showed that under Woods' predecessor executives strategized over how to diminish climate concerns.)

"You want to go back 40 years or 30 years and talk about what was said then and out of context versus what we're doing today...then I'm happy to be judged by that," Woods said in an interview.

Woods has said that Exxon is committed to reducing emissions while also providing affordable oil and gas that he says remain critical to the global economy.

The company vowed to spend \$20 billion between 2022 and 2027 on curbing its emissions and helping other companies do the same, investing in areas including carbon capture and biofuels, though the overwhelming majority of its investment remains in oil and gas.

Of the litigation, Woods said: "It's just another channel the activists are trying to leverage to change the corporation."

Flanked by portraits of her family in the estate's Abeyton Lodge, including two governors and a U.S. vice president, Kaiser described the

The litigation aspires to have a similar impact as the cases against tobacco companies in the 1990s for the harms of smoking.

campaign as a moral imperative for the Rockefellers, who derived so much wealth from fossil fuels.

"It would be unconscionable to benefit from something that you then know is harming the world and not do something about it," Kaiser said.

The Tudor-styled lodge, formerly named "the Playhouse," was commissioned in 1924 as a family retreat. Oak-paneled rooms adorned with rugs gifted by King Hassan II of Morocco connect to two bowling alleys, indoor tennis and squash courts, and an indoor pool that has since been decked over.

In addition to heading the Rockefeller Family Fund, Kaiser also sits on the board of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, a larger charity that has also funded litigation. In 2022, that fund promised to spend \$100 million to address climate change over the next 10 years.

The charities are quite active, fighting the development of major fossil fuel projects as well as under-

writing academic research into the industry's contributions to climate change. Family Fund staffers have lobbied state and federal lawmakers to pass "climate superfund" bills that would force companies to pay for damages from carbon emissions, including one in Vermont the state legislature recently approved.

The Family Fund influenced President Biden's decision in January to pause approval of new liquefied natural gas exports.

The number of climate-related cases against Exxon continues to grow. In February, the city of Chicago sued Exxon and other major oil companies alleging they deceived Chicagoans about climate change. In March, Bucks County, Penn., filed a similar suit. The Center for Climate Integrity, an environmental group the Rockefeller charities helped create, swayed officials in both places to bring the suits.

The litigation aspires to have a similar impact as the cases against tobacco companies in the 1990s for the harms of smoking.

Kaiser, who has degrees in law and forestry from Yale University, was once a cattle rancher and served as deputy counsel on the United Nations' independent committee that found massive corruption in the Iraq Oil-For-Food Program.

These days, what started as a personal promise to her brother has become a consuming mission. Kaiser said she believes that there is a global climate crisis that only exists because Exxon and its peers were "so dishonest and greedy."

"Darren Woods and the others cannot have a seat at the table until they are completely honest about what they've been doing," said Kaiser.

Family Legacy

Kaiser says she didn't fully realize what it meant to be a Rockefeller as a child. Her mother, Neva Rockefeller Goodwin, was uncomfortable with being part of the iconic family and shielded her only daughter from its trappings.

"She had a lot of guilt around it," Kaiser said. At the time, there was little talk of climate change, she added: "It was more just guilt over having money when so many people didn't."

During her youth, Kaiser's mother mostly kept her away from Pocantico, which means "stream between hills" in Algonquin. The estate sits on more than 3,000 acres and at one time featured dozens of houses and a network of carriage roads. Some of it is now part of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, though the Rockefellers lease it back for gatherings.

The Rockellers are collectively worth more than \$10 billion, according to Forbes, and have given huge amounts to charity over the past decades. Rockefeller Sr. established the Rockefeller Foundation in perpetuity in 1913, and gave away about \$540 million in total to charity, more than \$10 billion in today's dollars. His charity helped curb yellow fever and created academic institutions around the country. That legacy of philanthropy has passed through generations of the family.



From top: John D. Rockefeller Sr. and John D. Rockefeller Jr. stroll down New York's Fifth Avenue on Palm Sunday in 1915; portraits of Rockefeller family members adorn the Abeyton Lodge in the Pocantico estate; David and Miranda Kaiser in 1995.

The Rockefeller Family Fund, a charity created in 1967 by John D. Rockefeller Jr.'s children, worked on environmental protection for decades but began focusing on climate change in the early 2000s.

At the family's periodic meetings at Pocantico, Kaiser keeps relatives apprised of the latest on the campaign. The meetings are so large—usually over 200 family members—that everyone wears a nametag. She says there is broad but not unanimous support for the effort, despite the unwanted attention it's brought to a family that's mostly adhered to a patrician sense of privacy.

"We have actually tried really hard to stay out of the public eye," said Kaiser. "So this is breaking that mold and we're a big family and there is a diversity of opinion on all sorts of things and diverse politics."

Kaiser says she mostly votes for Democrats, a detour from a family long synonymous with the establishment wing of the Republican party that has largely been overtaken by populism and Donald Trump.

Ariana Rockefeller, Kaiser's cousin, has spoken out against the endeavor. A model and equestrian, she has called the Exxon campaign "deeply misguided." She didn't respond to requests for comment.

For decades, Exxon and members of the Rockefeller clan kept close ties. The family and their charities held large amounts of Exxon stock. Kaiser's grandfather David Rockefeller, who ran Chase Manhattan bank for more than a decade, periodically dined with former Exxon Chief Executive Lee Raymond.

Relations started to deteriorate in the early 2000s. In a now-infamous 2006 lunch, David Rockefeller brought Goodwin—his daughter and Kaiser's mother—to lunch with Raymond and Rex Tillerson, Raymond's

successor. At a restaurant overlooking the skating rink at New York City's Rockefeller Center, Goodwin asked the two Exxon bosses why they weren't investing in green energy. Raymond responded that Exxon had, but the investments didn't work.

Goodwin found the response unsatisfying and two years later she galvanized family support for several shareholder resolutions urging change at Exxon, including addressing climate change. The resolutions failed, but many within the family had soured on Exxon over its perceived deception about climate change.

Scorched Earth

By 2015, war was brewing between the two sides. That fall, a series of stories by the Los Angeles Times and Columbia Journalism School and a separate series by InsideClimate News showed Exxon had for decades internally modeled dramatic changes to the climate due to fossil fuel use. Raymond and others had for years said publicly that climate science was unclear.

The journalism projects had been quietly funded by Rockefeller charities, which provided more than \$500,000 for the efforts. Before the stories ran, Rockefeller Family Fund director Lee Wasserman privately urged the New York Attorney General to launch an investigation into Exxon.

Meanwhile, at a Pocantico retreat in October 2015, the Rockefellers decided to accelerate the divestment of the significant fossil fuel holdings in various trusts and funds controlled by the family. After the stories ran, environmental groups launched a media blitz, attacking Exxon over the stories' findings using the hashtag #Exxonknew.

Exxon was caught flat-footed and executives were seething, according to people familiar with the matter.

REVIEW



Humanity Shouldn't Be Afraid To Say Hello to Aliens

Some scientists worry that beaming signals into space could lead extraterrestrials to conquer Earth, as in the TV series '3 Body Problem.' But wouldn't they be more interested in learning about us?

By JOHN TIERNEY

Thanks to the popularity of Netflix's new series "3 Body Problem," we have a new existential threat to worry about: humanity's urge to blab to the cosmos. In the series, based on a trilogy of novels by the Chinese science-fiction writer Liu Cixin, greetings naively sent into space doom the Earth to conquest by extraterrestrials. As sci-fi horror scenarios go, this one is quite respectable. Sociologists, game theorists and astrophysicists like Stephen Hawking have been warning for decades against transmitting signals that could reveal humanity's location to interstellar predators.

The worriers argue that there's a good reason we haven't detected signals from any other intelligent life in the universe: The only civilizations that survive are the ones smart enough to keep quiet. A species that jabbars as soon as it learns to transmit radio signals could fatally attract the attention of an older civilization with much more advanced technology, just as the European discovery of America led to the decimation of the native population.

Even a benign extraterrestrial civ-

ilization might feel compelled to annihilate us, out of fear that we would annihilate them at the first opportunity. Unable to discern our intentions because of the vast delays in communicating at interstellar distances, they would make the logical next move in what game theorists call a "sequential game with incomplete information." A character in Liu's novel "The Dark Forest" explains this idea using the title metaphor:

"The universe is a dark forest. Every civilization is an armed hunter stalking through the trees like a ghost, gently pushing aside branches that block the path and trying to tread without sound. Even breathing is done with care. The hunter has to be careful, because everywhere in the forest are stealthy hunters like him. If he finds other life—another hunter, an angel or a demon, a delicate infant or a tottering old man, a fairy or a demigod—there's only one thing he can do: open fire and eliminate them. In this forest, hell is other people."

The "dark forest" hypothesis, as it's come to be known, is one way to resolve the paradox named after the physicist Enrico Fermi: In a universe with so many potentially habitable planets much older than Earth, why haven't we heard from anybody else?

More than a dozen times in the past half-century, radio astronomers have used powerful transmitters to send signals aimed at other stars. The most recent messages were sent in 2017 from a radio transmitter in Norway by a group named METI International, founded by the American scientist Douglas A. Vakoch. METI is the acronym for Messaging Extraterrestrial Intelligence, which is also known as "active SETI" (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence).

It is vehemently opposed by some scientists who have been passively listening for signals from other civilizations. In 2016, about 30 critics, including Elon Musk, signed a statement condemning the use of "high power communications equipment on Earth to transmit various messages to unknown extraterrestrial intelligences." John Gertz, the former chairman of the board of the SETI Institute, has argued that this "reckless endangerment of all mankind" violates international law and should be subject to criminal penalties.

It's certainly possible that aliens could regard humanity as a lower

form of life, as far below them in intelligence as the buffalo were to the Europeans who slaughtered herds on the Great Plains. Our technology might seem so primitive that the aliens would consider us "savages," as the European settlers called the natives they displaced. But whatever the aliens thought of humanity, there's no reason to assume they'd want to eliminate us.

The fear of conquest by aliens rests on the dubious premise that they would greedily crave the natives' land and resources. But that's not how civilization is proceeding on Earth as our technology advances.

In the past, armies fought wars over access to scarce resources (salt, grain, oil), and 20th-century intellectuals predicted that overpopulation would lead to an "age of scarcity" with catastrophic global shortages of food and energy. But thanks to technological progress, humans today are better nourished and wealthier than ever. Over the past century, the cost of food, energy and other commodities has plummeted more than twentyfold by comparison with

Aliens could be as curious about us as we are about them.

workers' wages. Natural resources now matter less to individuals or societies seeking wealth than an intangible resource: knowledge. The modern economy is increasingly dominated by industries that traffic not in physical commodities but in information: finance, software, communications, entertainment, artificial intelligence, education and research.

Because of this economic shift, today we wouldn't react as 16th-century Europeans did to the discovery of a "new world" with less advanced technology. We'd exploit it differently. Sure, there would be oil and mining companies ready to extract resources, but they'd run into fierce opposition from scientists, politicians and activists determined to preserve and study its ecosystem and native cultures.

Why wouldn't aliens react similarly to the discovery of Earthlings? Why would a civilization with the technological ability to travel across the galaxy and conquer Earth be desperate for food or natural resources? Human engineers are already devising schemes to grow food in space, mine asteroids and "terraform" Mars into a habitable planet. A more advanced alien civilization would presumably have plenty of survival options that don't require traversing the universe to conquer another planet.

Earth's farmland and minerals would be far less valuable to the aliens than the knowledge to be gained from studying the strange new life-forms on Earth. Even if they regarded us as appallingly primitive creatures, even if they felt no moral obligation to spare an inferior species, they'd be as eager to observe us as we are to watch animals in a zoo.

In fact, aliens may already be observing us without making themselves known, a possibility known as the "zoo hypothesis." I prefer this to the dark forest hypothesis as an explanation for the Fermi paradox. In this scenario, the reason we haven't heard from aliens is that they want to observe the behavior and evolution of Earth's creatures unaffected by outside influences. METI enthusiasts like to think that aliens would generously share their advanced knowledge, enriching us with wondrous technology and miracle cures for disease. But maybe the aliens would rather preserve us in our "natural" state so as not to contaminate the data they're gathering. If that's the case, then they would ignore our greetings and pleas for friendship.

On the other hand, maybe alien civilizations have just been waiting for us to become capable of interstellar communication, and would be as curious to converse with us as we would be with them (or with an animal at the zoo). It's always possible, of course, that we've heard nothing so far because we really are alone in the universe, or because we're too far away from anyone else to communicate. But if any intelligent beings are out there in the darkness, let's not assume they're genocidal predators. It wouldn't kill us to say hello.

John Tierney is a contributing editor to City Journal and the co-author of "The Power of Bad: How the Negativity Effect Rules Us and How We Can Rule It."



WORD ON THE STREET
BEN ZIMMER

Intensity And Heat, Expressed In a Drink Or Pop Hit

IN THE ANNUAL tradition of anointing a "song of the summer" that's ubiquitous from late May to Labor Day, a front-runner for 2024 is an exhilarating shot of dance-pop: "Espresso" by Sabrina Carpenter. Since its release last month, the song has



me espresso." Writers for online outlets such as Vulture and Them have analyzed the line, with linguistic experts weighing in on whether there is an implied comma between "me" and "espresso," or whether "me" should be understood as an adjective modifying "espresso." (I favor the latter interpretation: "that me espresso" is Carpenter's slyly confident expression of her stimulating effect on the boy in the song.)

Carpenter's peculiar metaphorical take on the Italian drink with an expressive name plays on the concentrated intensity of coffee made in the "espresso" fashion. That style of coffee was originally called "caffè espresso"

'That's that me espresso,' sings Sabrina Carpenter.

meaning "squeezed out," referring to how the coffee is extracted under high pressure through tightly packed grounds. Italian "espresso," like English "express," goes back to the Latin verb "exprimere" meaning "to press out." That literal kind of pressing survives in English when "express" is used for extracting something by squeezing it out, like juice from a fruit.

The Latin root expanded in more figurative directions, playing on the idea that clay is pressed to form the image of

something. That carried over into English as well, so that "expressing" something came to mean representing or portraying it, as a sculptor uses clay.

More abstractly, the term could be used for conveying a feeling in a piece of art, or making one's opinion known. (Or as Madonna sang in an earlier pop era, "Express Yourself.")

In Latin, the related adjective "expressus" could also mean "clearly presented or articulated," which gave rise to the similar use of "express" in English. The adjectival sense evolved further to mean "for a particular purpose" or "designed with a special goal in mind."

In mid-19th century England, with the development of the locomotive, a train that ran to a particular station with no other stops along the way was called an "express train." Because direct trains run faster than those making local stops, "express" got associated with speed.

All of those different meanings came into play when "espresso" made its debut. While "caffè espresso" may have originally referred to the method of preparing coffee under pressure, it also evoked the

idea that the coffee was made to order for a customer, and that it could be made quickly—especially with the advent of espresso machines brewing cups one at a time.

Connotations of a speedy special order have been reinforced by the word being spelled as "espresso" in some languages, including French. Indeed, in an 1866 travelogue of Italy that is the earliest known source of the term in English, the journalist George Augustus Sala wrote it as "espresso": "By ordering the mighty caffè espresso, you are entitled to a positively palatable cup of coffee and four big lumps of sugar."

Since then, confusion between "espresso" and "espresso" has lingered, though "espresso" is generally held to be nonstandard or erroneous. "Espresso" is somewhat more accepted in British English, as in the 1980 Dire Straits song, "Espresso Love," in which Mark Knopfler sings, "All wired up on it, all fired up on it." Carpenter's own romantic analogy to espresso provides a new rush that has speedily catapulted it to pop-cultural success.

REVIEW

How I Learned to Live With Haunting Visions

Nothing makes you feel crazier than being tested to see how crazy you are, writes **Daniel Handler** (a.k.a. Lemony Snicket).



There's nothing more boring than someone else's dreams. "I had a dream last night," someone will say, and no matter how much you like them, you want them to shut up.

That's why I didn't tell anybody when it first happened. It was my first year in college, and terrifying figures began to appear in my sleep. Naked, hairless and powdery white, they beckoned me to witness scenes of violence and torture. I'd wake up, drink water, take some calming breaths and go back to sleep, then have the dream again. Before long I was having it every night.

By morning I would be exhausted and lost. I wasn't too worried—it was just a dream, after all, and everyone at my liberal-arts college seemed a bit exhausted and lost—but at dusk, my fingers tingled with the sense that something dreadful was about to happen.

Finally I began to tell people. When a friend asked what the dreams felt like, I explained that it was like my whole life was on cheap paper, which these figures ripped away to show what's underneath. My friend gently suggested that I walk with her to the mental health center.

I didn't mind therapy, but no matter how much I dug into my life, I did not improve. I was getting so little sleep that the daylight hours had an unsettling hue, a haze that made reality seem fragile. I was clumsy, missing classes, an unreliable friend, a disastrous boyfriend.

Something else began happening, too. No one knew what to call it: fainting, seizing, dropping. My exhausted brain would lose its bearings and I'd fall twitching to the floor. Once this happened at the house of my girlfriend's family, sending me tumbling down a flight of stairs. When I awoke, her father told me, as concerned for his daughter as he was for me, that whatever was happening, I needed to fix it.

I was referred to a widening array of experts, but "seizure" turns out to be a vague term for a brain event that can be hard to explain. Some have known causes, but my case was among the many medical

mysteries. I had several MRIs. I spent a night with electrodes all over my head and shoulders like a low-budget sci-fi movie. I stayed up all night, the better to fall asleep in an examining room while they flashed strobe lights at me.

When these experts gave up on finding a physical cause, I was sent to a mini-mall storefront to analyze ink blots and fit an assortment of wooden blocks into a framework, then blindfolded and told to do it again, an activity so senseless I ended up crying. I was hypnotized repeatedly, spelunking for repressed trauma. When a doctor used the word "schizophrenia," my mother left the room.

There is, of course, nothing that makes you feel crazier than being tested to see how crazy you are. I kept thinking the same thing everyone thinks: that there must be some mistake. These were only dreams.

A year or so into this, while walking across campus, I saw one of these naked, ghostly white figures staring right at me. No one else seemed to see what I was seeing, and I fell unconscious on the grass. I was very, very frightened, not just because of what I saw, but because I realized, there on the lawn, that these weren't just dreams after all. This was something worse.

Various experts with various plans, various drugs and various referrals, kept on failing, and the visions got worse. Sometimes the figures were so close that I had to walk through them. Shortly before graduation, while writing a final paper on H.G. Wells, I had a seizure, the biggest yet. When I woke, I could not read, write or speak. I remember the worried faces of my friends as I was sired away in an ambulance.

Nobody wants to be a medical mystery. Doctors get excited, but when a pet theory doesn't pan out, they get tired of making guesses. My brain was rescanned, awake and asleep. I was hypnotized again. In the hospital, I was afraid to sleep, and they were afraid to make me. Finally, a doctor sat on my bed and said, "I don't know, what do you think it



Daniel Handler in 2001.

is?" Heaving with sobs, I told him that maybe the reason they couldn't find the causes of my hallucinations was because they weren't hallucinations at all. Maybe the figures were real, an actual thing, actually happening.

If you say such things, there are only two places you go. My family had health insurance and money, so instead of ending up on the streets, I arrived at a place not entirely unlike my dorm, except that they took my belt and my shoes. Mostly we sat. Women with eating disorders walked around with apples and paper cups, tasting the fruit then spitting it out. Manicured young men from religious families, described as "confused," were there for attempting suicide. In my fragile state and Keith Haring T-shirt, I recall telling them that if there is a God, He doesn't care who you love.

Occasionally we took supervised walks, blinking in the sunshine within a two-block radius. On one of these walks, I heard someone call my name. It was my Nabokov professor, a middle-aged woman in a beat-up car, who seemed both surprised and not surprised to see me there. We had only a brief conversation, but it jogged something in my troubled mind.

◆ For a review of Daniel Handler's book 'And Then? And Then? What Else?' turn to page C14.

In one of my favorite Nabokov novels, the relatively obscure "Invitation to a Beheading," the hero experiences something akin to what I was feeling there with my professor. Condemned to death, the hero is hit with a clarity, "at first almost painful, so suddenly did it come...why am I here? Why am I lying like this? And, having asked himself these simple questions, he answered them by getting up and looking around."

I never quite like when someone says, "This book saved my life," needlessly imbuing a work of literature with the power of an antibiotic or paramedic. But there, in the psychiatric ward, I began to save myself, in part by living by the principles of a book I loved. To some extent, I was in a prison of my own making, and I did not want to be imprisoned any longer.

I began giving different answers to the questions put to me. I told the doctors that they were not helping. I stopped taking the antidepressants, antipsychotics and seizure drugs—drugs which, I should add, work wonders for many people. I did not stop seeing things, but I changed how I talked about them. They were certainly not real. They were hallucinations, of course, and I was going to live with them, not in a hospital, where they would be a constant occupation, but in the world, in "reality"—a word Nabokov said meant "nothing without quotes"—where talking

about these visions would send me away again.

I would hate for anyone to infer that I was "cured" by a passage in a novel, or to believe that mental health is largely a question of attitude. I still, to this day, see these figures, frequently but no longer frighteningly. Nobody else has ever said they see them too, and there is still no medical explanation as to why. My seizures are now rare. I've more or less pinpointed their cause, never suggested to me by any medical professional: I get them when I don't get enough sleep. I've also learned to anticipate them. I've also learned to look away, to keep walking, to move through the figures I see, as if they are merely inappropriate, staring strangers. To the bafflement of people who've known me for years, I hardly mention them.

I'm not a crazy person. If I were a crazy person, babbling about visitations from ghostly figures, I would not be allowed to run around loose, writing books for your children. Everyone has bad dreams, and talking about dreams is boring, so I stay quiet and I stay in the world.

Sometimes I think of something that happened in the hospital. What I remember is sitting in a chair while two women, nurses or technicians, took a small tool, almost a can opener, and poked two small slits in my arm, between my elbow and my wrist. Then they sat, chatted with each other and let me bleed. When it seemed like my blood was clotting—if clotting is the word—they scraped off the hardening blood with an index card.

Could this have happened? Am I misremembering some essential part of this procedure? The time I spent in the hospital was so confusing and scary that I'm tempted to think this didn't happen at all, but I have two tiny scars on my arm. They are hardly visible but sometimes, when I tell the story, people lean in close to see the little lines—real scars, but so faint they might as well be a dream.

Daniel Handler is best known for his books as Lemony Snicket, including the 13-volume "A Series of Unfortunate Events." This essay is adapted from his new book "And Then? And Then? What Else?" published this week by Liveright.



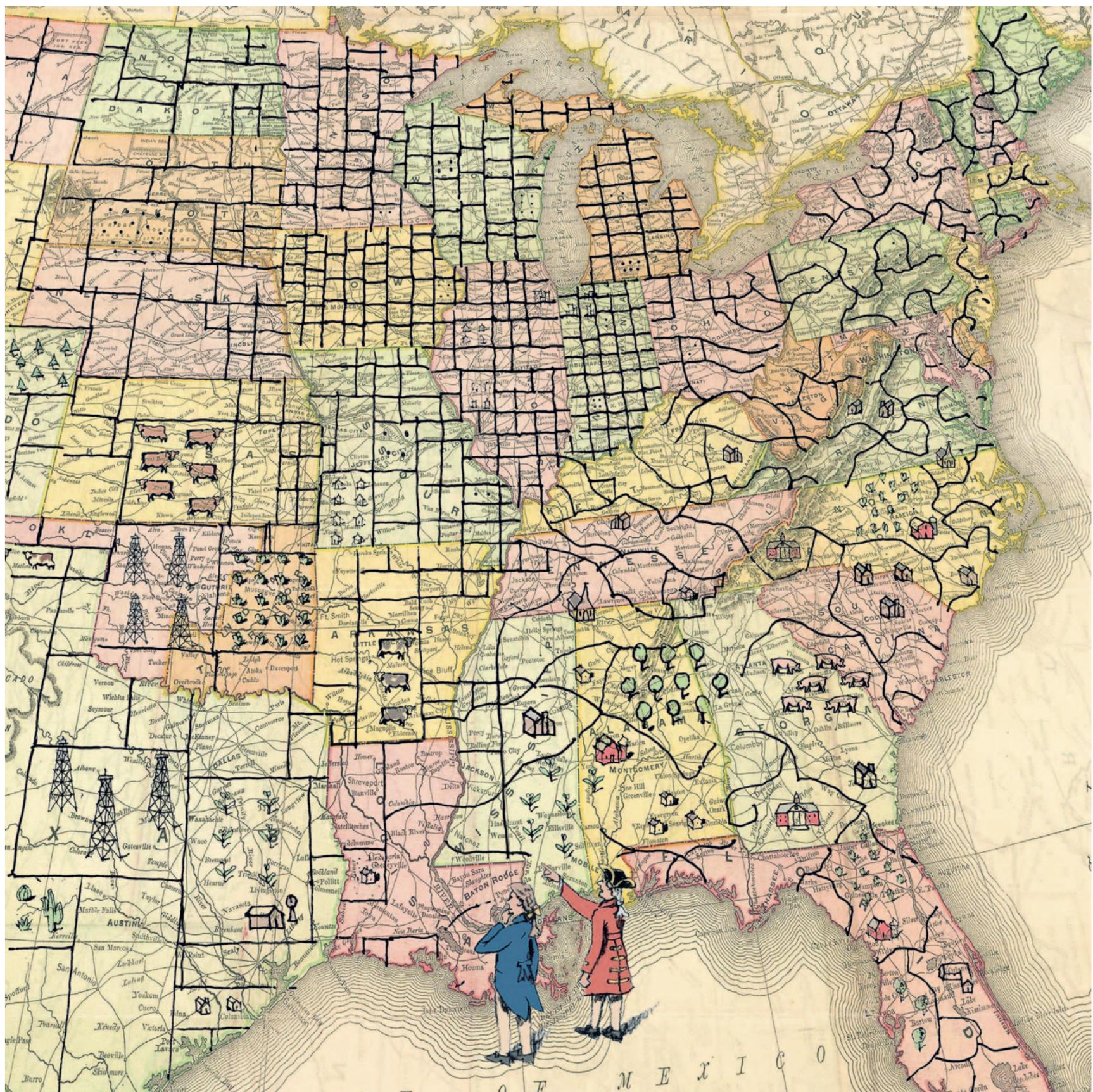
SUMMER BOOKS



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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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DANIEL BAXTER

A Plan That Crossed a Continent

American dreamers, starting with Jefferson, sketched out expansion according to an imagined order that defied the facts on the ground. 'The land is not square,' complained one critic.

Liberty's Grid

By Amir Alexander
Chicago, 304 pages, \$30

By STEPHEN BUDIANSKY

THE ROMANS constructed rigidly rectilinear army camps and arrow-straight roads that unfolded mile after arrogant mile in haughty disdain for local topography; feudal Japan and the Dutch lowlands were marked by cultivated fields laid out in straight lines and right angles; the streets of the ancient cities of Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley oriented to the points of the compass and delineated blocks and city quarters of roughly equal size.

But no nation in the history of civilizations ever attempted, much less succeeded, in

imposing abstract geometrical order on the natural world as completely as the young United States of America. As Amir Alexander observes in "Liberty's Grid," his fascinating account of the mathematical grid that defines not only most American cities and towns but two-thirds of the entire land area of the continental U.S., it is hard for Americans who have grown up with the familiar sight of mile after mile of checkboard squares of farmland stretching from Ohio to California, Minnesota to Mississippi, "to appreciate just how strange and unlikely a landscape it is."

The largely overlooked history that gave rise to this "grand, ambitious, and uniquely American" endeavor in remaking the world to its own purposes is a remarkable lesson in the power of abstract ideas to trump practical experience and ideology, and even to overcome common sense. Along the way Mr. Alexander

evokes the ways this audacious experiment in American exceptionalism has shaped our thoughts, feelings and perceptions of the natural and built world around us.

As Mr. Alexander points out, his fellow historians have for the most part ignored the phenomenon of the Great American Grid altogether, or simply chalked it up to convenience and practicality. Yet there was nothing practical about it. Contemporary critics saw this from the start, pointing out how absurd a project it was to divide land into rigidly equal squares without any consideration of local terrain and conditions. Employing an abstract grid of Cartesian coordinates resting upon the geographic meridians, the government surveys of the unsettled Western territories begun in 1796 created "artificially equal plots out of inherently unequal locations," Mr. Alexander writes.

George Washington, who had worked as a surveyor, was among those who objected in vain. "The land," Rep. John Nicholas of Virginia pointed out, "is not square." One 640-acre grid square might be rich and level farmland perfectly suited for cultivation, with a creek along its edge providing a reliable source of water and power for a mill; another mathematically identical square might be an inhospitably rocky and barren hillside unsuitable for human habitation, much less for generating a livelihood.

Traditional English and American surveying techniques developed over hundreds of years acknowledged this obvious fact, laying out tracts according to "metes and bounds"—natural landscape features such as rivers and other easily identifiable points of local geography—and taking into account the inherently

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Grand Tour

One man's perilous trek across the Grand Canyon **C10**



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Joseph Kanon on diasporas **C6**

The engineers who kept victory in World War II on track **C7**

The daring deeds of solitary sailors **C11**

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Becoming Lemony Snicket **C14**

The art of the snack **C15**

Look Book

The golden age of Fifth Avenue fashion **C12**



SUMMER BOOKS

'Exiles see double, feel double, are double. When exiles see one place they're also seeing—or looking for—another behind it.' —ANDRÉ ACIMAN

FIVE BEST ON DIASPORAS

Joseph Kanon

The author of 'Istanbul Passage' and the forthcoming novel 'Shanghai'



Out of Egypt

By André Aciman (1994)

The diaspora of André Aciman's Sephardic Jewish family was not atypical: Escaping Spain in the 16th century, they landed in Italy, moved on to Constantinople, then finally, in 1905, to Egypt. "Out of Egypt," Mr. Aciman's affectionate memoir about their time there, is at once a family portrait and an elegy for the cosmopolitan city that harbored them. Its scenes have an almost Dickensian vitality—people fall in and out of love, business schemes go awry, a 100th birthday celebration becomes as animated as a French farce. Most of all there's the city of Alexandria, the sensual feel and smell and bustle of it. Few books have captured so vividly the sense of family life as haven, a substitute for the larger, often hostile society outside. After the Suez crisis of 1956 and the rise of Gamal Abdel Nasser's Arab nationalism, Jews were no longer welcome in Egypt. In 1965 the Aciman business was taken over by the state and the clan was once more forced to move. But "Out of Egypt" is about an earlier, vanished time, in a city of jasmine and salty sea breezes and people of all sorts living side by side. Until they didn't.

The Hare With Amber Eyes

By Edmund de Waal (2010)

The Ephrussi family was rich. Rothschild rich. Ashkenazi Jewish grain merchants from Odesa, the Ephrussis went into banking, opening branches in the major European capitals. They collected rare books and Old Master paintings. And then, in 1938, the Nazis swept it all away. The only pieces that survived the Anschluss were the netsuke: 264 Japanese miniatures carved from wood and ivory. Edmund de Waal was the fifth generation to inherit the collection, and his book follows the netsuke from one heir to the next to give us a dazzling account of art and wealth and the fragility of assimilation. Part of the appeal of "The Hare With Amber Eyes" is undoubtedly the knowing picture it paints of these privileged lives, such as great-grandmother Emmy, who changes her clothes three times a day (and lovers almost as frequently). But Mr. de Waal, a cele-

brated ceramicist who brings the same careful polish to his prose, never loses his sense of the more important story: the enduring value of art, the horror of the Holocaust that looms over everything, the ephemeral nature of our lives. A book as exquisite as the netsuke that inspired it.

The Kindness of Strangers

By Salka Viertel (1969)

Salka Steuermann was a budding actress in the German theater when she was swept off her feet by director Berthold Viertel. When Berthold joined the stream of German filmmakers heading to Hollywood in the 1920s, Salka became a writer at MGM and played hostess to the German émigré community at her house in Santa Monica. The Viertels had known everybody in Weimar Berlin and they knew a lot of people in California, so this book could easily have become a gossipy celebrity memoir. What makes it something more is Salka's role as den mother and confidante to the diaspora of European intellectuals who came fleeing the Nazis: Arnold Schoenberg; Bertolt Brecht; the brothers Mann, Thomas and Heinrich; Aldous Huxley; Christopher Isherwood (who lived in the Viertels' garage apartment); Alma Mahler; Franz Werfel, and on and on. This may be the most intimate portrait we will ever have of the European intelligentsia in this improbable world of palm trees and swimming pools—with Salka at the center of it all, slicing her chocolate cake.

The Warmth of Other Suns

By Isabel Wilkerson (2010)

Between World War I and 1970 some six million black people left their homes in the American South to resettle in the North and West. Though one of the largest migrations in history, it had gone largely unchronicled until this landmark book. Isabel Wilkerson's "The Warmth of Other Suns" focuses on three individuals and tells their stories in detail. Her accounts of life in the Jim Crow South—the daily humiliations, the constant violence—still have the power to shock, and her portrayals of the more hyp-



CATCH A RIDE Refugees attempt to board a helicopter after a supply drop northeast of Saigon in 1975.

ocritical racism of the North still to dismay, but the mood here is not despair. Ms. Wilkerson, for all the sad history she has to tell us, revels in the determination of her characters to find better lives. When one of her subjects endures an endless drive to California (during which no motel would give him a room), he not only stays awake but buoyant: "He drove alone with only the radio to keep him company, stations moving in and out like guests at a party." Until finally, "he drove into the white sun. Everything was wide open and new."

The Sympathizer

By Viet Thanh Nguyen (2015)

"I am a spy, a sleeper, a spook, a man of two faces. Perhaps not surprisingly, I am also a man of two minds." Like every good spy thriller, "The Sympathizer" is about betrayal—but we know from the start who's betraying whom and why. In this razor-sharp look at the South Vietnamese refugee community in Los Angeles, our spy, who notices everything, shows us the conflicted loyalties, the boredom and the petty squabbles of

exile. His boss, the General, made a dramatic escape from Saigon in 1975 but now sits in a modest bungalow on the "city's flabby midriff, Hollywood adjacent." Another character, the major, is now "a gas station attendant in Monterey Park, paid in cash so he could qualify for welfare benefits." Mr. Nguyen sees it all: the noodle shops in strip malls with their greasy Formica tabletops; the back rooms where, inevitably, the powerless plot a return to power; the hangers-on; and above all, the folly of a war that has damaged everyone, even a man of two minds.

Carving Up the Continent

Continued from page C5

differing productive value of soils and topography when a large tract was subdivided for sale. Laying out a survey line tied to abstractions like points of the compass and the Earth's meridians was, by contrast, an arduous scientific and technical endeavor that stretched the limits of late 18th-century skill, as well as an extraordinarily physically challenging one. Mr. Alexander describes how survey crews inched over the land, teams of axmen leading the way, felling trees and brush to create a clear sight line and a path for 22-yard-lengths of chain—1/80th of a mile—to be stretched along. The task was repeated over and over as they attempted to hold true to a compass point through a trackless wilderness.

Just as the surveyors of the grid were impelled by the tyranny of geometry to traverse creeks, hills and other obstacles without the option of sensible detours, so the result of their labor imposed equally absurd burdens on the generations who were stuck with the product of this monumental feat. No provision was made for roads, which to this day follow the north-south and east-west boundaries of the 640-acre survey plots. Since these roads "entirely disregard the geography," Mr. Alexander observes, "they repeatedly go straight up hills and down valleys, turning a drive in even seemingly level terrain into a roller-coaster ride." Worse, streams that could with a small adjustment have

been crossed by a single bridge instead are crossed and recrossed, or traversed at narrow angles that require lengthy and needlessly expensive spans.

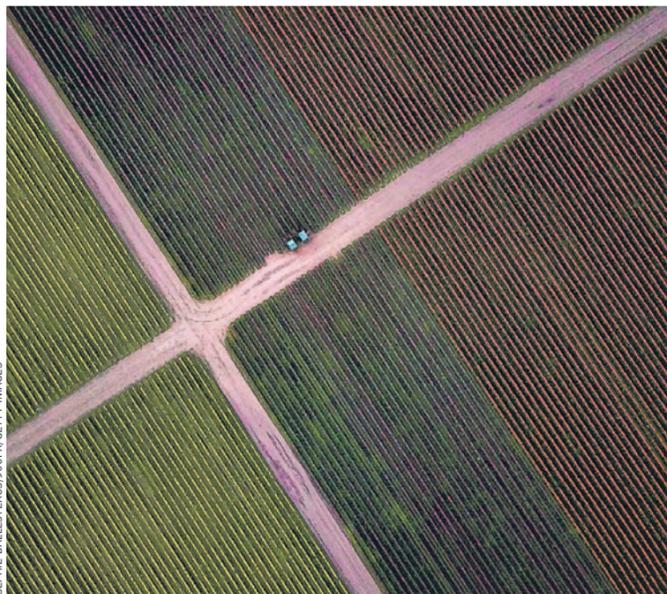
The force behind this exercise in mathematical abstraction was—no surprise here—Thomas Jefferson. Despite his intense interest in the natural history of the West, Jefferson never personally traveled west of the Mississippi. Making a continuous mathematical grid the basis of the Western surveys was not only a reflection of his Enlightenment ideals, exaltation of reason and order and lifelong fascination with mathematics, but was for Jefferson a means, as the author puts it, to transform "the complex landscape of the American West into simple agricultural land, without history, tradition"—or native inhabitants. The superposition of abstract Cartesian space on the unsettled lands of the New World was above all a perfect physical manifestation of Jefferson's idealistic vision of America as a new land free from all constraints of the past, a blank slate free to become whatever it willed itself to be.

There are interesting parallels to Jefferson's eminently more practical attempts to apply mathematical order to human affairs in his advocacy of decimal coinage and measurement. America's narrowly missed opportunity to adopt the world's first decimal measurement system is a fascinating side story: Jefferson's scheme would have replaced our eccentric (and apparently ineradicable) system of fractional inches and 5,280-foot miles with a standard mile of 10,000 feet and an inch divided into 10 lines, a line into 10 points. (As an amateur woodworker, I can personally attest to both the enduring arithmetical nightmare of computing in fractional inches and the awkwardly spaced units of the metric

system. One of Jefferson's "points" would work far better than the millimeter as the smallest practical unit of everyday measure.)

Jefferson's disdain for towns and cities and his exaltation of the yeoman farmer had another odd consequence: There was no provision at all for towns in the Jeffersonian grid. As a

eminently humane plan that would have developed New York City into a series of smaller grids, in town-like enclaves interconnected by larger thoroughfares, is one of the saddest missed opportunities in the history of urban planning. The relentless ideology of the grid by this point was unstoppable, however.



CROSSROADS Aerial view of an agricultural field in Washington state.

result, Mr. Alexander notes, the towns that inevitably arose in the wake of settlers "simply accommodated themselves to the realities on the ground," with their main streets the north-south and east-west lines of one grid-square, the minor streets following in rectilinear order.

The imposition of such a street grid on the once steep hills and valleys and meandering creeks of Manhattan repeated the story of the Cartesian conquest of the West. A visionary and

Mr. Alexander highlights the pointed words of the New York Street Commissioners' 1811 report, which exalted a uniformly homogeneous grid as a reflection of the true American spirit and dismissed circles, diagonal boulevards, or intersecting plazas (in the manner of Pierre L'Enfant's famous plan for Washington, D.C.) as so much European fluff. As in the wide-open west, survey crews on Manhattan laboriously slogged through swamps and thickets to extend their survey lines, with a

blind eye to history, topography and humans (except when they were occasionally set upon by angry residents, who pelted them with cabbages, stole their surveying stakes and on at least one occasion managed to have them jailed by the sheriff for trespass).

Mr. Alexander offers a less well-developed account of what he terms the "anti-geometry" counterreaction that arose in the 19th century, embodied in the naturalistic parks and urban designs of Frederick Law Olmsted. And he fails to acknowledge some of the

Jefferson's idolization of yeoman farmers had an odd result: There was no provision at all for towns in the Jeffersonian grid.

undeniable advantages of the traditional street grid, which, embraced by the traditional neighborhood design movement in recent years, has produced far more lively and livable communities than the sterility of the ultimate "anti-grid" of suburban cul-de-sac developments.

But this is a deeply informed and illuminating look at something so familiar as to be almost invisible, and a wonderful cautionary tale of the havoc that a brilliant man like Jefferson can wreak out of misplaced idealism and a "habit of thinking in broad abstractions rather than getting bogged down in practical details."

Mr. Budiansky is the author of "Journey to the Edge of Reason: The Life of Kurt Gödel" and the forthcoming "A Day in September: The Battle of Antietam and the World It Left Behind."

SUMMER BOOKS

'The Allies won the Second World War because they turned their economic strength into effective fighting power.' —RICHARD OVERY

Keeping Victory on Track

The Liberation Line

By Christian Wolmar
Hachette, 368 pages, \$34

By JAMES S. HIRSCH

WAR lends itself to cinematic grandeur—a platoon of tanks rumbling across the windswept desert, fighter jets streaking in formation toward their target, battleships slicing through the ocean.

Then there are the trains, plodding, monotonous, carrying troops and supplies onward. The most famous military train in movie history is not an asset but a casualty, plunging from a bridge on the Burma Railway into the River Kwai.

In "The Liberation Line," Christian Wolmar rescues military railways from obscurity, highlighting their decisive role in the Allies' march across Western Europe that began 80 years ago next month. The dramatic battles of the European campaign only partly explain why the Allies defeated the Nazis, Mr. Wolmar contends—wars are won, in his view, by the tyranny of logistics.

A British author and commentator, Mr. Wolmar has written widely on transportation, and "The Liberation Line" reflects his passion for junction switches and coaling stations. His writing is methodical, like a locomotive traveling steadily across the prairie, and authoritative, drawn heavily from official U.S. Army sources, among other archival materials.

Essential to the Allies' success, as Mr. Wolmar describes in full, were the supply chains, transport facilities and railways that moved troops and materiel across dangerous terrain, and it was the anonymous railway men who made victory possible. The conductors, engineers, mappers and mechanics, mostly from the United States and Great Britain, repaired the tracks, laid the new signal systems and replaced the bridges.

The Allies' stunning triumph on the beaches of Normandy in June of 1944 was only a prelude to their daunting drive through France and the Low Countries (Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands) to reach the German heartland. Therein lies the central tension of the book.

The Allied forces were led by U.S. Gen. George S. Patton, the headstrong former cavalryman who ignored his superiors in accelerating the advancement of his troops. He believed that static armies were useless, and he wanted the glory of liberating seized territories. He moved his Third Army so quickly that it overstretched its supply line; in particular, he needed gasoline for his trucks and tanks.



OFF THE RAILS Repairing a destroyed railway bridge in France, ca. 1944.

Only the railways could carry that much fuel to the front, but many of those had been badly damaged. After the Germans took over France in 1940, some French railway men joined the Resistance and sabotaged the railroads to complicate the occupation. Prior to the Normandy invasion, Allied bombers, in a massive and deadly campaign, strafed the French rail system to limit the movement of German soldiers. In an operation called Chattanooga Choo Choo, Mr. Wolmar notes, "on the first day alone, 67 locomotives were destroyed and a further 91 damaged."

And as the Germans began to retreat, the rail system suffered even more. The withdrawing Wehrmacht booby-trapped lines and blew up bridges to thwart their pursuers—apparently, they understood railroads' importance better than Hitler. Obsessed with roads and his autobahns, the Führer underestimated the Allies' ability to use the rails to restock their advancing armies.

By that point, the U.S. Army Transportation Corps' Military Railway Service had begun to operate out of Cherbourg. These men—about 44,000 of them by the end of the

war—had "the status of combatants, but in reality they were simply railway workers in military uniforms," Mr. Wolmar writes. Even though "fighting was not their primary objective," they needed courage and resilience, along with the ability to improvise. At night, standing at isolated locations and vulnerable to enemy fire, signalmen used flashlights and burning cigarettes to direct traffic. Hidden mines beneath bridges were another hazard. So too were aerial attacks and German sharpshooters—one railway worker killed a sniper with a bayonet.

But perhaps the greatest dangers were the trains themselves.

Even in peacetime, railway accidents were common, and under wartime stress, collisions, derailments and fatal crashes were unavoidable. In January 1945, an overloaded train carrying 2,000 troops to the coastal city of Saint-Valery-en-Caux careened out of control and slammed into a wall. "Numerous men," Mr. Wolmar writes, "suffered spontaneous amputations as, on impact, the doors slid shut so fast that they were, according to the French newspaper report, 'acting as a guillotine.'"

Not all the railway men were heroic. Some were brazen thieves, stealing K-rations, shoes and coffee—all intended for soldiers at the front—and selling them on the black market. A staggering 66 million packs of cigarettes "disappeared in a single month," probably diverted to Paris, or as the historian Antony Beevor has called the postliberation city, "Chicago-sur-Seine."

After taking Normandy, the Allies sought to repair rail lines to aid the final push into Germany.

But the Railway Service's achievements were monumental. Two months after D-Day, to complete his breakout from Normandy, Gen. Patton issued an order to rebuild 135 miles of railway track, including reconstructing seven bridges and laying out miles of new lines, upgraded to carry heavy military loads. The job would normally take "weeks if not months." Ten thousand men were put to the task: They completed it in three days.

While Mr. Wolmar tells us much about the service's collective achievements, "The Liberation Line" never truly humanizes the heroes themselves or brings to life one person for us to care about. The writing also has some lapses—the redundant phrase "completely destroyed" is used five times.

But the book satisfies as a paean to the unsung workers whose trains not only carried fuel to the front but delivered mail from home, provided hospital care to the injured and were essential in repatriating the remains of soldiers who were killed in battle. These were disinterred from graveyards in Europe, placed in metal coffins and taken on "mortuary trains"—their windows darkened, their military escorts practiced in the etiquette of loss—to ports bound for home.

Mr. Hirsch is an author whose books include "Two Souls Indivisible: The Friendship That Saved Two POWs in Vietnam."

Flying Over the Himalayas

Skies of Thunder

By Caroline Alexander
Viking, 496 pages, \$32

'THE HUMP" was the nickname for the aerial route over the Himalayas,

from northeast India to southwest China, which was vital to the delivery of supplies to Allied forces—including Chiang Kai-shek's nationalist army—that were battling the Japanese during World War II. This was an arduous journey, with dangers as grave as those in any front in the war. The travails of the Army Air Corps' Air Transport Command are well-detailed and engagingly told in "Skies of Thunder" by Caroline Alexander, the author of "The Endurance" (1998).

Unlike the bombing missions over Germany, the threat to the aircraft in the China-Burma-India theater wasn't fighters or anti-aircraft gunfire, but the elements. "Winds of forty to seventy miles per hour prevail most of the year," an early test flight reported. "In clear weather flights would have to be at altitudes of twelve thousand to fourteen thousand feet. To the west and north of the course, but within seeing distance or about one hundred miles, are peaks and ranges more

than seventeen thousand feet in height."

By early 1943, pilots were averaging more than 100 flying hours a month, "or one round trip over the Hump about every other day," we are told. "As many as forty-five men a month were bailing out over the Hump route."

If the mountains didn't get them, the jungle often did. There were "leeches—brown ones, green ones, tiger-striped ones" that "sniffed for blood, stretching, even propelling themselves toward their prey." There were larger predators, too. A British patrol "was ambushed by a wild boar"; an American pilot "was shadowed over two days by a tiger." Thankfully, it "was merely curious about him." Others were "gored by water buffalo" and "impaled and thrown by an elephant."

Early missions were flown in the C-47, a military version of the DC-3 that could only carry 3 tons of cargo. To meet mission goals, they would have to fly 55 flights a day over the mountains. In January 1943 the cargo version of the B-24 bomber began arriving. The C-87 could carry four times the cargo of the C-47, but was more difficult to fly because of its four engines; its sleeker wing design also tended to ice over more quickly at altitude.

Thanks in part to the C-87 and the supply lines it maintained, the Allies were able to deliver vital supplies to troops in China and, more importantly, to engage Japanese troops who would have otherwise been deployed against the Allies in other parts of the Pacific. The Hump was one of the vital, but often forgotten, theaters of World War II.

SHORTCUTS: MILITARY HISTORY

BY MARK YOST



HORNET'S NEST B-25 bombers on the deck of the USS Hornet preparing for the Doolittle Raid in April 1942.

A Plane's Secret Mission

Vanishing Act

By Dan Hampton
St. Martin's, 320 pages, \$30

THE DOOLITTLE RAID was the first major strike against the Japanese homeland in World War II.

Launched on April 18, 1942, four months after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the mission saw 16 B-25 Mitchell medium bombers take off from the wooden flight decks of the aircraft carrier USS Hornet, some 600 miles east of Honshu, the main island of Japan. After dropping their bombs in and around Tokyo, 15 of those bombers headed west for China. The 16th flew north on a secret mission to the closer shores of the Soviet Union.

"For over eighty years the reason given was lack of fuel, which is technically true," Dan Hampton writes in "Vanishing Act." It's a tale that has been told before, most notably in "Guests of the Kremlin" (1949) by Robert G. Emmens, who was the co-pilot on that 16th bomber, known as Plane 8. But Mr. Hampton, himself a former Air Force pilot, sheds new light on the mission. "Plane 8 never flew within fifty miles of intended Tokyo—and never intended to do so."

Its true purpose, Mr. Hampton reveals for the first time, was to

land at a small airfield outside Vladivostok, on the north coast of the Sea of Japan, and assess what aviation assets and infrastructure the Soviets had in the maritime territory, less than 700 miles from Tokyo. Would it be feasible to stage American bombers there for regular attacks against Japan? "With America now in the war, would the Soviets join the Allies? If so, would they abrogate their nonaggression pact with the Empire? No one knew the answer," Mr. Hampton writes, "but Washington was certain that Moscow would act solely in its best interests."

Once they landed in Russia, the pilot, Edward J. York—the only man who knew the true nature of the mission—and his crew were treated cordially. They suffered some deprivations, including restricted contact with the American embassy, but they were fed and housed. It was a much better fate than that suffered by the crews of the aircraft that landed in China, some of whom were captured by the Japanese and tortured. Ultimately, the Soviets treated Capt. York and his crew as pawns in the larger game of negotiating aid from the U.S. to fight the Germans, not the Japanese.

"The horrible chances these men took provided valuable, indirect intelligence of Joseph Stalin's priorities and mind-set, as well as a window into Soviet strategic intentions," Mr. Hampton writes. "This extraordinary mission categorically reveals a tale of personal fortitude and courage and of returning home with honor."

Mr. Yost writes about military history for the Journal.

SUMMER BOOKS

‘What seemed inevitable in Jakarta remained incomprehensible in The Hague.’ —DAVID VAN REYBROUCK

Asia’s Forgotten Revolution

Revolusi: Indonesia and the Birth of the Modern WorldBy David Van Reybrouck
Norton, 656 pages, \$32.50

By TUNKU VARADARAJAN

‘WITHOUT BAMBOO there wouldn’t have been an Indonesian revolution,” writes David Van Reybrouck—a sweeping assertion of the type that most present-day historians, overspecialized and unadventurous, would rather die than make. Bamboo, says Mr. Van Reybrouck, grows in great profusion on the Indonesian archipelago. “The wood combines an incredible range of qualities: it is light as a feather and as strong as iron.” It can be used to build houses, transport water and make music. “But you can also use it to commit murder.” Sharpen a stem and skewer the human body.

The bamboo spear (or *runcing*) would become “the mythic weapon” of Indonesia’s guerrilla war of independence, waged against the Netherlands in 1945-49. In “Revolusi: Indonesia and the Birth of the Modern World,” Mr. Van Reybrouck, a Belgian historian, gives us an electrifying narrative of that bloody conflict.

More than 100,000 Indonesians were killed, along with roughly 4,000 Dutch soldiers. It will come as a shock to modern readers that several hundred British troops died, too—most of them soldiers of the British Indian Army. They had been sent into Indonesia in 1945 to establish order. The Battle of Surabaya, fought late that year between the British and the Indonesian rebels, was the deadliest battle in the entire war, sparked by the shooting dead of a British brigadier-general. And to think that the intended role of Britain in Indonesia had been that of humanitarian peacekeeper.

And yet hardly anyone pays heed to the Indonesian war of independence today outside the countries that fought it. Even in the Netherlands, the author tells us, a staggering proportion of people are unaware of its gory details. These include the widespread commission of war crimes, for which scarcely any Dutch soldiers paid a price.

Mr. Van Reybrouck is right to ask why the war has been forgotten and right, in fact, to be astonished by the near-vanishing from our modern historical consciousness of the “Revolusi.” This is the Indonesian word for the “youth revolution,” which was carried out by “a whole generation of fifteen- to twenty-five-year-olds who were willing to die for their freedom.” The Revolusi, says Mr. Van Reybrouck, “was once world history”—that is, “every region of the globe was touched” by it. But as he researched and wrote his book, he found himself pilloried in the Netherlands for his project.

Why was he, “a Belgian, of all people,” raking up the past? Indonesians, by contrast, were more receptive; and the strength of Mr. Van Reybrouck’s chronicle lies as much in the hundreds of interviews he conducted with very old participants in (and witnesses to) the war as in his impressive command of historical detail. Indonesia is not an ethnic monolith. It is a true archipelago of Babel, and he pursued his interviews not just in Indonesian (the



OUT WITH THE OLD The portraits of Dutch governors being removed from the governor’s residence in Jakarta the day before independence in 1949.

state-mandated lingua franca) but in Javanese, Balinese, Ambonese and Buginese—to name but a few of the local languages—as well as in Dutch and Japanese. A native Dutch speaker, he was assisted throughout by linguistic intermediaries. “Translators and interpreters are the quiet heroes of globalisation,” Mr. Van Reybrouck writes. (His own book, first published in Dutch, was translated into English by David Colmer and David McKay.)

Modern Indonesia was born with a bang—a bloody rebellion against the Dutch that triggered a series of postwar bids for independence.

To most Americans—and citizens of the wider West—Indonesia is the elephant that isn’t in the room. Is there a country in the world as massive with a profile as low-key? Mr. Van Reybrouck lists the superlatives of Indonesian heft. It has the world’s fourth-largest population, with the largest Muslim populace on earth. Its economy is Southeast Asia’s biggest, and it is the world’s largest insular realm: “Officially, it is made up of 13,466 islands, but it could also be 16,056. Or 18,023. No one knows exactly.” Superimposed on a map of Europe, Indonesia would sprawl from Ireland to Kazakhstan.

But of course there is more to the Indonesian CV than geography and demographics. Modern Indonesia was born with a bang. It was the first country to declare its indepen-

dence after World War II, in a “Proklamasi”—proclamation—made on Aug. 17, 1945, two days after Emperor Hirohito announced Japan’s capitulation. The Proklamasi was made by Sukarno, the storied leader of the independence movement who had 11 wives in his eventful life but used only one name. (He ceded power in 1967 to another one-named strongman, Suharto, who had the backing of the CIA.)

The Japanese had taken Indonesia by force in 1942, meeting no resistance from the Dutch, whose imperium in the Indies had begun in the early 17th century. By the time the Dutch departed for good in 1949, the Netherlands had ruled over Indonesia for more than three immensely profitable centuries. Dutch Indonesia had been a rigorously segregated society, with people from the Netherlands (and other Europeans) on top, on Deck 1; the “Indos” (the mixed-race offspring of Dutch men and native women, seldom vice versa) were on Deck 2; and native Indonesians languished on Deck 3. Mr. Van Reybrouck employs, to great metaphorical effect, this taxonomy of passengers on Dutch-owned steamships, in which the different races were strictly confined to their own decks.

The Japanese had ruled over Indonesia with the cruelty that was their wartime wont. No less than four million Indonesians—6% of the population—died of starvation and deprivation; and 99.7% of the dead, Mr. Van Reybrouck tells us, were civilians. And yet the Japanese also empowered the Indonesians, especially the *pemuda*, the ideologically driven urban youth, dangling before them the prospect of independence from the Dutch at some date in the future. When the war ended, many Japanese units handed their weapons and

munitions not to the Allied victors but the Indonesian rebels, enabling the latter to wage war more effectively against the Dutch, who returned—with unseemly haste—to resume their role as colonial overlords.

For four years, a brutal war was fought, the rebels often as callous as the Dutch, especially in their treatment of the Indos and local Chinese minority, both seen as collaborators in colonialism. Remarkably, given the intensity of the fighting and the intransigence of Dutch colonial hardliners, a political process ran in parallel with the war: The Dutch government entered into negotiations and political treaties with Sukarno and his team. The two sides killed and talked to each other at the same time. When the end came, the Dutch departure was incongruously amicable. The new state of Indonesia even agreed to assume all debts of the Dutch East Indies, money that went a long way to pay for the postwar reconstruction of the Netherlands.

Why do we not remember this war more vividly? Mr. Van Reybrouck suggests that one reason may be modern Dutch insignificance. The Netherlands isn’t quite the postcolonial demon that Britain is, or France, in the eyes of progressive activists and historians. Indonesia, too, has charted a quieter course in world affairs than have countries of similar size. Indonesians are not a people with bluster. Theirs is not a strutting, showy culture. In this they are, perhaps, more like the modern-day Dutch than they’d like to acknowledge.

Mr. Varadarajan, a Journal contributor, is a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and at NYU Law School’s Classical Liberal Institute.

Sowing The Seeds Of Civil War

The Demon of Unrest

By Erik Larson
Crown, 592 pages, \$35

By HAROLD HOLZER

THE ARRIVAL of a new Erik Larson book is a genuine event, a feast of historical insight and narrative verve even when it focuses on a twice- or thrice-told tale. America’s secession winter, the period between Abraham Lincoln’s election in November 1860 and his inauguration the following March, is surely such a theme, having been explored by writers such as W.A. Swanberg, David M. Potter, Richard N. Current, William W. Freehling, and in more recent years Ted Widmer (and myself). Mr. Larson graciously acknowledges this “core library” at the end of “The Demon of Unrest,” his latest work of popular history.

The book arrives at a moment when many Americans seem consumed with anxiety—fearful that current political discord might provoke the kind of violence that broke the Union apart in late 1860, cascading into civil war and ultimately costing 750,000 lives. Mr. Larson, the author of previous works like “The Devil in the White City” and “The Splendid and the Vile,” confides in an opening “Note to Readers” that he was “riveted” by the Jan. 6, 2021, assault on the U.S. Capitol, struck by

“the eerie feeling that present and past had merged.” Ultimately, he decided to explore the suspenseful moments that got out of hand in 1860, when “the country lurched toward catastrophe, propelled by hubris, duplicity, false honor.”

Interestingly, the process of counting Lincoln’s electoral votes in February 1861 proved unexpectedly calm in comparison to the fracas following Donald Trump’s 2020 defeat. Perhaps that’s because the commanding general of the army, Winfield Scott, ordered artillery to Capitol Hill and made clear he would blow dissenters across the Potomac River if they misbehaved.

Mr. Larson promptly identifies the one and only cause of disunion: Southern slavery. Using vivid and harrowing examples of injustices small and great, the author contends that slavery’s intractability made it almost inevitable that the election of anyone but a pro-Southern Democrat in 1860—a “doughface” in the manner of James Buchanan and Franklin Pierce—would have triggered Southern states to secede and take up arms in rebellion. The Southern fire-eaters got what they feared in the victory of Lincoln, though the Republican nominee had pledged not to interfere with slavery where it had long been tacitly protected by the Constitution.

This tragic story is not new. But in Mr. Larson’s talented hands, the drama of that distant moment becomes fresh and real. The author’s signature technique is simple: He writes in short, explosive bursts, encapsulating incidents in surprisingly brief (sometimes two- or three-page) chapters. He incorporates many of the memorable quotations of the period—outgoing President James Buchanan worried that, if he

ordered Fort Sumter abandoned prematurely, he could “travel home . . . by the light of my own burning effigies.” The author also mines unexpected recollections from his cast of heroes, villains and misfits.

Like a police detective eager for a confession, Mr. Larson turns a glaring spotlight on neglected figures like the



SURRENDER Fort Sumter after its capture by the Confederates in 1861.

elderly, flamboyant, peripatetic Edmund Ruffin, who journeyed from state to state to ignite secessionist sentiments among equally dedicated racists. Ruffin claimed to have fired the first shot aimed at Fort Sumter in April 1861. When the ensuing Civil War ended in disaster for the Confederacy, Ruffin lived a gun at himself, unwilling to live in a Yankee-dominated country.

Mary Chesnut is also given pride of place. She was an optimistic pro-secession diarist who encouraged both slavery and political intrigues—mainly to keep her husband in good standing in the new Confederacy—while laboring to establish her own sphere of influence in the new government, a daring move for that era.

Then there is the truly horrific James Hammond, who not only fathered children with his enslaved women (a routine exploitation from the days of Thomas Jefferson and earlier), but also engaged in sexual activity with his underage nieces, all while maintaining a stranglehold on his huge population of black slaves. His base behavior

by a margin of two-to-one and earned New York state’s electoral votes only by triumphing with lopsided numbers in the northern parts of the state.

Mr. Larson’s great gift is his uncanny ability to spin a chronological story whose ending we already know—secession, rebellion, victory, emancipation and assassination—yet keep the narrative as crisp and suspenseful as an Anthony Horowitz suspense novel.

Flamboyant, peripatetic figures journeyed from state to state to ignite secessionist sentiments.

Agile turns of phrase abound in “The Demon of Unrest.” Lincoln’s giant frame on a sofa is “like a ship’s mast on a barstool, poised in an uneasy equilibrium between relaxation and structural collapse.” The volatile Ruffin feels as if he is “stranded on an atoll of ignorance.” Fort Sumter’s thin, harbor-facing wall (the one subject to attack from Charleston) is “about as impregnable as one of the beachside cottages across the bay.” And the pacific oratory emanating from the futile “Old Gentlemen’s” peace convention in preinaugural Washington amounted to “a ceaseless grind of words having all the verve of a glacier.” This is Erik Larson at his best, enlivening even a thrice-told tale into an irresistible thriller.

Mr. Holzer’s latest book is “Brought Forth on This Continent: Abraham Lincoln and American Immigration.” He is the director of Hunter College’s Roosevelt House.

SUMMER BOOKS

'My greatest strength is that I have no weaknesses.' —JOHN MCENROE

Finding Zen With a Racket

The Inner Game of Tennis

W. Timothy Gallwey

Random House, 192 pages, \$28

By EDWARD KOSNER

WERE THERE a Shelf of Fame for sports books, "The Inner Game of Tennis" would occupy a prominent slot. W. Timothy Gallwey's handbook has been holy writ for generations of hackers and better players as well. Now it's been reissued in a special 50th-anniversary edition as sleek as a Roger Federer backhand up the line.

Like all sports, tennis is a test of muscle and mind. For the hacker (like me), muscle mastery can be the problem. But for the gifted player, the difference between winning and losing a match can be a mind game.

Tennis is a game of muscle and mind. The key to crisp backhands and swift forehands is getting out of one's own censorious head.

The author plays mind games with his readers, too, especially those mediocre players whose forehands and backhands have minds—and trajectories—of their own. Mr. Gallwey, a one-time pro in Southern California, now 86, is essentially antipro. His theory is that the body, when freed from the pressures exerted by the censorious mind, can effortlessly hit crisp serves and winners. "Let it happen" is his credo. Indeed, the book might be called "Zen and the Art of Playing Tennis."

Mr. Gallwey has painstakingly worked out theories that owe a lot to two intellectual titans of the 20th century—Sigmund Freud and Jean-Paul Sartre. Readers with even a passing familiarity with the patriarch of psychoanalysis will recognize how Mr. Gallwey's Self 1, the busy brain, and Self 2, the instinctive body, resemble Freud's concepts of the superego and ego. And Mr. Gallwey's admonition to live in the moment is a hallmark of Sartre and his fellow existentialists.

Mr. Gallwey reasons that, unimpeded, the player's body will instinctively learn to watch the spin of the ball, calculate the bounce and hit a solid return or a powerful serve deep into the corner of the box. It's when the busybody, hypercritical brain chimes in with a checklist of dos and don'ts that the server double faults and the returner hits a rocket . . . into the net.

The "outer game" is the actual match against the opponent. "The Inner Game," Mr. Gallwey writes, "is an encouragement to keep in touch with the Self 2 learning process you were born with while avoiding getting caught up in trying too hard to make



SWING KING Roger Federer in action against Alejandro Falla during the second round of the 2006 French Open.

your strokes conform to an outside model."

He even suggests a dirty trick of sorts to confirm his theory: "The next time your opponent is having a hot streak, simply ask as you switch courts, 'What are you doing so differently that's making your forehand so good today?' If they take the bait—and 95 percent will—and begin to think about how they're swinging, telling you how they're really meeting the ball out in front, keeping the wrist firm and following through better, the streak invariably will end. They will lose their timing and fluidity as they try to repeat what they have just told you they were doing so well."

"The mind of a player who is 'unconscious' . . . is so concentrated, so focused," Mr. Gallwey writes, "that it is still. It becomes one with what the body is doing."

At this point, the reader is certain to wonder how to achieve this magical state, and Mr. Gallwey has an

answer of sorts. "The first skill to learn is the art of letting go of the human inclination to judge ourselves and our performance as either good or bad. Letting go of the judging process is a basic key to the Inner Game. . . . When we *unlearn* how to be judgmental, it is possible to achieve spontaneous, focused play."

He tells the story of Jack, who came to him to improve his backhand after the ministrations of five teaching pros had failed to do the job. Jack's problem—as the five pros had told him—was that he took his racket back too high before hitting the stroke. Instead of becoming the sixth pro to tell him the same thing, Mr. Gallwey took him over to a nearby window and asked him to perform his backstroke motion in front of his own reflection. That's when Jack finally realized, "I really do take my racket back high! It goes up above my shoulder!" The author writes: "Despite all those lessons, he had never *directly* experi-

enced his racket going back high. His mind had been so absorbed in the process of judgment and trying to change this 'bad' stroke that he had never perceived the stroke itself. . . . Looking in the glass which mirrored his stroke as it was, Jack was able to keep his racket low quite effortlessly as he swung again."

Mr. Gallwey's method invites the obvious question: How does a seasoned hacker or gifted player escape the cerebral and physical habits of decades? He counsels: "Be clear about this: Letting go of judgments does not mean ignoring errors. It simply means seeing events as they are and not adding anything to them. . . . Judgmental labels usually lead to emotional reactions and then to tightness, trying too hard, self-condemnation, etc. This process can be slowed by using descriptive but nonjudgmental words to describe the events you see."

Mr. Gallwey's gauzy nostrums must work on the court or his book would

not have survived for a half century and been spun off into similar works on golf, skiing, music and the workplace. The special edition is even hailed in a new introduction by Bill Gates and in a foreword by the pro-football coach Pete Carroll.

So Mr. Gallwey's earned the last word: "The key to spontaneous, high-level tennis is in resolving the lack of harmony which usually exists" between Self 1 and Self 2. This requires "letting go of self-judgments, letting Self 2 do the hitting, recognizing and trusting the natural learning process, and above all gaining some practical experience in the art of relaxed concentration."

Translation: Don't call faults on yourself.

Mr. Kosner, the retired editor of Newsweek, New York magazine, Esquire and the New York Daily News, has been trying to improve his tennis game for 44 years.

Sisyphus With a Curveball

The Last of His Kind

By Andy McCullough

Hachette, 400 pages, \$32

CLAYTON Kershaw of the Los Angeles Dodgers is one of the greatest pitchers of his generation—and one of the greatest ever. Since joining the majors in 2008, the imposing left-hander has won three Cy Young Awards and led the National League in strikeouts three times. He has made 10 all-star teams, and in 2014 was named the league's most valuable player, a rarity for a pitcher. His career earned-run average of 2.48 is the lowest for anyone with 1,500 innings pitched in the live-ball era that began in 1920.

In "The Last of His Kind," a biography of Kershaw, Andy McCullough writes about what he calls his subject's "burden of greatness," notably the expectation that regular-season prowess means nothing without playoff success. Kershaw has had his struggles in October. The Dodg-

ers have been a perennial playoff presence for the past decade and a half, but the team finally broke through against the Tampa Bay Rays in the World Series following the Covid-shortened 2020 season. Kershaw, putting his demons to rest, was crucial to the victory, scattering three runs across two wins on the mound in the series.

Mr. McCullough, who covered Kershaw as a reporter for the Los Angeles Times, traces the arc of the pitcher's time with the Dodgers since he was drafted in 2006 as a high schooler out of Dallas. The author, who spoke extensively with Kershaw for the book, sensitively portrays his subject, a devout Christian who finds comfort in the Bible and an only child affected by his parents' divorce. Mr. McCullough narrates Kershaw's development as he refines his devastating curveball and bristles at team brass who insist he throw a changeup.

In spite of the playoff disappointments before 2020, Mr. McCullough writes, Kershaw "had never seen himself as Sisyphus. But it did feel nice to leave that boulder atop the hill." The pitcher, now 36, recently underwent shoulder surgery and is angling to return to the mound this season. However many years he has left, Clayton Kershaw will enter the Hall of Fame recognized as an all-time transcendent talent—and a world champion.

SHORTCUTS: DODGERS

By BENJAMIN SHULL



SOUTHPAW Clayton Kershaw throws in the bullpen at Dodger Stadium in 2022.

Slackers And Sluggers

Work, Fight, or Play Ball

By William Ecenbarger

Temple, 212 pages, \$25

IN 1918, Shoeless Joe Jackson of the Chicago White Sox announced that he had taken a job as a painter with a shipbuilding subsidiary of Bethlehem Steel. It wasn't that uncommon for professional ball players to take jobs during the off-season, but this was the spring. Shoeless Joe, one of the greatest hitters in baseball history, was taking a job in an essential wartime industry in order to avoid the draft during World War I. He was not the only player to do so. In "Work, Fight, or Play Ball," William Ecenbarger describes how many others stayed out of the trenches and remained on the diamond as part of industrial baseball leagues.

The author, a former reporter for the Philadelphia Inquirer, focuses on the Bethlehem Steel League and, to a lesser extent, the Delaware River Shipbuilding League. The centerpiece of the book is the 1918 season of the six-team BSL, which Mr. Ecenbarger

calls "the best independent baseball circuit of all time." Shoeless Joe, "the undisputed star," would finish his season with a .393 batting average. Joseph P. Kennedy, the father of the future president, was an assistant general manager at Fore River, a shipyard in Massachusetts owned by Bethlehem; its team finished in last place. Babe Ruth played very briefly in the BSL. After his Boston Red Sox defeated the Chicago Cubs in the 1918 World Series, he took a job with the Bethlehem mill in Lebanon, Pa., and played in a single exhibition game for the team.

Those who opted to play in the industrial leagues were heavily criticized. When America entered the war in 1917, baseball's leaders didn't want players to seem like "slackers": that "fast-growing pejorative," explains Mr. Ecenbarger, "applied to men of draft age who were trying to avoid military service or otherwise not 'doing their bit' in the war effort." The BSL disbanded after the Armistice, but players returning to the majors continued to face moral censure. In the author's portrayal, the controversy almost seems like a dress rehearsal for the following season's Black Sox Scandal, which saw eight players on the White Sox, including Shoeless Joe, accused of throwing the World Series and banned from baseball for life.

Mr. Shull is a books editor at the Journal.

A Treacherous Trek Below the Canyon Rim

A Walk in the Park

By Kevin Fedarko
Scribner, 512 pages, \$32.50

By DAVE SHIFLETT

AMONG THE numberless dreams animating the world's numberless bucket lists, there surely lurks a desire to walk the entire length of the Grand Canyon. Anyone so afflicted would be well advised to read "A Walk in the Park" prior to departure.

Kevin Fedarko, who has made the trek, is a fan of the world "below the rims." But his passionate, detailed and somewhat lengthy telling of the tale strongly suggests that most of us would be better off finding something else to do, perhaps taking a Caribbean cruise or wrestling alligators. While the Grand Canyon is a place of life-changing beauty, it can kill you.

In the previous century and a half, Mr. Fedarko informs us, some 800 people have died in the canyon, including more than 200 hikers—falling off cliffs, running afoul of snakes, succumbing to heatstroke. A few visitors, looking down from above, have swooned at the

A place of staggering beauty, but also mountain lions, snakes and lots of cliffs.

canyon's immensity and toppled over the edge. In 1989 two such unfortunates perished over a period of three days, one of them not going quietly into the void. "Those on the rim," Mr. Fedarko writes, "could hear her screams as she fell."

The author's fascination with the canyon began around age 11, when his father gave him a copy of Colin Fletcher's "The Man Who Walked Through Time" (1968), which chronicled Fletcher's canyon traverse. It told of a magical place far removed from Mr. Fedarko's home territory of Pittsburgh, whose pollution problem at the time had earned it a memorable sobriquet: "Hell with the lid off."

Mr. Fedarko's first Grand Canyon experiences had a charming bouquet, too. He commanded a latrine boat—called the Jackass—for a white-water tour provider that took customers down the Colorado River (and through the canyon) and their waste back out. Soon after, as a reporter and feature writer, he met National Geographic photographer Pete McBride, who pitched an ambitious story to his editors: He and Mr. Fedarko would mimic, in their own way, the exploits of Kenton Grua, the first person in recorded history to have walked the entire canyon in an unbroken push. Only eight people had followed suit since Grua's 1977 feat. The launch date was set for Sept. 25, 2015.

Mr. McBride promised Mr. Fedarko that "we can do this thing *off the couch*"—meaning that no physical preparation was needed—yet soon after hitting the trail Mr. Fedarko's feet "felt as if they were marinating in battery acid." Mr. McBride suffered similar ills. An emergency extraction from the canyon and monthlong "reboot" allowed them

to resume a segmented journey, sometimes assisted by experienced trekkers; it would take about a year to complete their adventure.

Why so long? Mr. Fedarko explains that there is no established trail for more than 95% of the distance on the north side of the river and none for 80% on the south side. Much weaving, horizontal and vertical, is required. Their route covered 750 miles.

Mr. Fedarko describes a void containing multitudes, including rock formations "a third of the age of the planet." At another level are 167 types of fungi, 195 of lichen, mountain lions, snakes and a mouse that eats scorpions and howls at the moon.

And lots of cliffs. Readers susceptible to phobic sweats over the mention of heights may shed a few pounds turning these pages. Mr. Fedarko is amazed to find himself in his socks "three thousand feet above the shoreline in the middle of winter, struggling to figure out how to force my feet into a pair of frosted bricks"—that is, ice-cold shoes. The possibility of sudden death was a constant companion. "She had fallen almost four hundred feet to her death," Mr. Fedarko writes of a trekking friend's earlier demise, "bouncing off the cliff at least once" before crashing onto the rocks below.

Sooner or later a question arises: Why do this? Mr. Fedarko waxed poetic about the transforming connection to "a landscape like no other," one that nurtured a migratory humanity that arrived 13,000 years ago and left behind still-vibrant cave art. "I knew that we wouldn't have lasted more than seventy-two hours in the world that these people had, in one fashion or another, occupied for millennia," he writes.

Messrs. Fedarko and Mr. McBride greatly benefited from cellphones, satellite tracking and food drops dependent on all-terrain vehicles, though other aspects of modernity were less pleasing. They counted 250 sightseeing helicopter overflights one day. Sections of the canyon are under constant development pressure. Mr. Fedarko writes, despite opposition by tribal descendants and their supporters (including, long ago, Sen. Barry Goldwater). While clearly on the conservationist side, Mr. Fedarko recognizes a philosophical equilibrium as he contemplates the canyon today: "You spend less time thinking about what's been lost or taken away, and more time focusing on what's handed to you—and you treat those gifts with reverence."

Mr. Fedarko left a short gap in his final stretch, thus ensuring that "my time in the canyon is a story that would always be unfolding because its ending is not, and will never be, complete." He offers readers memorable writing, describing one stretch of rock as "a honeyed brown with a hint of toasted orange that suggested what might happen to sunlight if it were barreled and aged" while elsewhere presenting the arresting image of a water-bearing depression "coated, inexplicably, with dead tarantulas."

All life-affirming, in various ways, though for many best experienced from the commanding heights of an easy chair, perhaps parked midlevel on a cruise ship.

Mr. Shiflett posts his writing and original music at daveshiflett.com.



Mr. Shiflett posts his writing and original music at daveshiflett.com.

The Long Road To Paris

The Race to the Future

By Kassia St. Clair
Liveright, 384 pages, \$29.99

By SARA WHEELER

ON JUNE 10, 1907, five automobiles stuttered out of the French Legation parade ground in Peking to embark on a race to Paris. According to Kassia St. Clair in "The Race to the Future: 8,000 Miles to Paris—the Adventure That Accelerated the Twentieth Century," the trumpeted contest was "a grand experiment that would push the boundaries of a fledgling technology."

Ms. St. Clair, the author of "The Secret Lives of Color" (2017), sets the scene as the five participating vehicles gunned the line: a 6-horsepower French Contal, two 10-horsepower French De Dion-Boutons, a 15-horsepower Dutch Spyker and a 40-horsepower Itala made in Turin. The Itala, co-driven by Prince Scipione Borghese, was the most solidly built of

the group—not an insignificant feature when negotiating the unpaved roads that snaked across the first 80% of the route.

Two or three goggled men travelled in each car—the driver, his navigator or mechanic, and sometimes a news reporter. Jean du Tailлис, a journalist from the Paris-based Le Matin newspaper, transferred from the Spyker to one of the De Dion-Boutons when another reporter left. These journalists' accounts, oral and written, fostered disputes and myths that would congeal around the race.

The French teams hired 150 men and some mules to push and pull their cars up and down the Nankou Pass, just days out of what is now Beijing. Temperatures in the Gobi Desert rose to 122 degrees Fahrenheit. North of Urga (now Ulaanbaatar) in Mongolia, rains turned the terrain into a bog—hundreds of miles of it. There were no gas stations, so teams had to arrange depots, sometimes transporting the fuel in advance by camel. Northern Mongolia was effectively unmappped. The Itala fell through a bridge: "With a sickening lunge," Ms. St. Clair writes, "the car heaved off the track just as the train roared past with an indignant blast of its whistle." Wheels shattered and gearboxes caught fire. Sometimes, though, the open-topped cars reached speeds as high as 30 miles an hour.

Meanwhile the world's press couldn't get enough of the epic con-

test. "Although there had been races and rallies before," Ms. St. Clair tells us, "they had been far shorter." Russia's oldest newspaper, Vedomosti, informed readers that the competition "has worldwide economic and social significance." Le Matin was the project's sponsor; Ms. St. Clair notes that because the race "was conceived as a spectacle by a newspaper, the Peking-Paris was as much a creature of the fully fledged telegraph age" as it was a product of the nascent automobile era.

The newsmaking 1907 contest, won by an Italian aristocrat, took place at the dawn of the automobile age.

"The Race to the Future" is more than an account of a fabled contest. Ms. St. Clair places the event in historical context by alternating chapters of the motorists' week-by-week progress with other chapters filling in the background. Topics include "China's Troubled Foreign Relations," "Russia Between Revolutions" and "Automobiles in the First World War." The author also makes a spirited attempt to round out the story with a chapter on "Women and the Automobile," in which Dorothy Levitt features as an

early racing driver—she is pictured behind the wheel of a Napier at England's Brooklands circuit in 1908.

Ms. St. Clair notes that the Peking-to-Paris rally represents a "parable" of a world "teetering on the very edge of the most consequential century in human history." She positions 1907 as one of the final years "when the automobile would be considered an experimental novelty rather than a practical form of transport." Karl Benz patented his Motorwagen—widely considered the first car—in 1886, and only 22 years later the first Ford Model T rolled out of a Detroit plant.

The three-wheeled Contal was disqualified not far from the Chinese capital after its driver and navigator loaded it onto a train. They carried on with the race anyway, only to run out of fuel in the Gobi Desert. The two men walked to safety, but the machine was never seen again. That left four cars in contention. The Spyker also had problems in the Gobi, but managed to catch up later under disputed circumstances.

Ms. St. Clair sometimes resorts to weak general description and at other times to cliché. But overall her prose is clear, her narrative drive controlled and she uses some nice imagery: "The Italians entered Moscow like the spume on a cresting wave." She has mined a range of sources, from published reports by race participants to those of near-contemporaneous travel-

ers. Aficionados will appreciate the care the author takes to disentangle disagreements and inconsistencies among firsthand accounts.

The Itala drew up outside the offices of Le Matin on Paris's Boulevard Poissonnière on Aug. 10, "its rump bulbous with roped-on luggage." Thousands lined the route, cheering. The vehicle beat the other three finishers by almost three weeks, having been in the lead from the start. Its driver, the aristocratic Borghese (one ancestor was a pope) had taken along a set of leatherbound miniature books, including "Gulliver's Travels." Soon restaurants in the French capital were serving Bombe Borghese with Barzini wafers (named for the journalist who accompanied him).

Did the race really "accelerate" the 20th century, as the book's subtitle suggests? Of course not—everything that happened would have happened anyway, probably at much the same speed. But that couldn't matter less. The first decade of the 20th century was undubitably a pivotal time in the astonishing history of the internal combustion engine. More than 100 years later, we continue to await the arrival of a viable alternative.

Ms. Wheeler is the author, most recently, of "Mud and Stars: Travels in Russia With Pushkin, Tolstoy, and Other Geniuses of the Golden Age."

Dreams Of Fable And Fortune

Paradise of the Damned

By Keith Thomson
Little, Brown, 400 pages, \$32.50

By GERARD HELFERICH

AROUND 1530, conquistadors in South America began to hear rumors of El Dorado. Spanish for "the golden one," the term originally referred to an indigenous ruler who covered his body in gold dust, but later it came to stand for his gold-studded kingdom, thought to lie in the eastern Andes. European treasure hunters combed the highlands near Bogotá, to no avail. Then a Spanish soldier named Juan Martin de Albuja claimed on his deathbed to have visited the golden city in the basin of the Orinoco River, in current-day Venezuela. Among those galvanized by Albuja's story was the English courtier, author and explorer Sir Walter Raleigh. As Keith Thomson relates in "Paradise of the Damned," Raleigh would gamble his fortune and

his life in an obsessive, decadeslong quest for gold.

Raleigh (or Raleigh, as he spelled his name) was born about 1552, in Devon, in southwest England. The youngest of five sons in a once-prominent family, he attended Oxford University for a time, then joined the English army. In 1580 he parlayed his military experience and family connections into a place at the court of Queen Elizabeth.

Dashing, well-spoken, ambitious, Raleigh became the sovereign's favorite and was awarded properties, a knighthood and lucrative posts. In 1584 he received permission to establish the first English colony in the Americas, which he named Virginia in honor of "the Virgin Queen." Though he burned "to seek new worlds for gold, for praise, for glory," as he later wrote, Elizabeth insisted that he remain at court. In 1585 and 1587, he dispatched settlers to Roanoke Island (in present-day North Carolina), but one company returned to England and the other, the so-called Lost Colony, vanished.

A few years later, Raleigh fell in love with and secretly married a lady-in-waiting—Elizabeth "Bess" Throckmorton—without the requisite royal permission. When the queen discovered the deceit, she imprisoned the couple in the Tower of London. Recounting this and other episodes, Mr. Thomson ably sketches Raleigh's

back story and untangles the aristocratic intrigues and international rivalries of the period. But "Paradise of the Damned" is above all a breezy adventure tale starring an audacious hero.

Released from prison and desperate to restore his sagging finances and win back the royal favor, Raleigh staked everything on an expedition to a region known as Guiana, in north-eastern South America, in search of El Dorado. In February 1595, Raleigh left England with eight ships and 300

Raleigh risked his fortune and life in a quest to find gold-rich El Dorado. Things did not go well.

men, though four vessels disappeared en route when their crews decided to try their luck at privateering. The others landed at Trinidad, off the coast of Venezuela, and easily captured the island's Spanish fort. Then Raleigh and about 100 men steered a flotilla of small boats into the maze-like delta of the Orinoco River, over muddy water teeming with electric eels, piranhas and crocodiles and through rainforest inhabited by anacondas, jaguars, vampire bats and clouds of mosquitoes.

Captain, Crew, Cook— And No Companions

Sailing Alone

By Richard J. King
Viking, 512 pages, \$35

By BILL HEAVY

ANN DAVISON was nobody's idea of a successful solo transoceanic sailor. In 1949 she set out from England with her husband in an old boat to cruise the world, one step ahead of their creditors. They never made it out of the English Channel. Buffeted by gales, they wrecked on some rocks in the middle of the night. Clinging to an open raft, Davison watched as her husband, overcome by the waves and the cold, drowned. Davison barely survived herself. But, as Richard King writes in "Sailing Alone: A Surprising History of Isolation and Survival at Sea," Davison "knew even then that she would have to go back out to sea."

Three years later, she set out again, this time in a 23-foot wooden sloop. Her bilge pumps quickly clogged. Having forgotten a foghorn, she resorted to banging on a frying pan to alert oncoming boats. She was nearly run down by a merchant ship. "After that," she later wrote, "there was no more sleep." Then, on Jan. 24, 1953, eight months after setting off, Davison became the first woman to sail alone across the Atlantic Ocean.

In his profiles of Davison and other single-handers, as they are known among sailors, Mr. King proves a knowledgeable and engaging writer. He is a visiting associate professor of maritime history and literature at the Sea Education Association and the author of "Ahab's Rolling Sea" (2019) and "The Devil's Cormorant" (2013). In 2007 he soloed the Atlantic himself.

Among the dangers solo mariners face are ferocious storms, rogue waves, unimaginable loneliness and chronic lack of sleep. The payoff for such journeys is often a new sense of confidence and a deep integration of the self. But the unimaginable isolation and the need for constant vigilance mean that even the most veteran single-hander "sails on the thin edge of sanity." Some triumph. Some go mad and commit suicide. Some simply vanish, never to be heard from again.

The first solo transoceanic sailors were undoubtedly indigenous people whose identities are lost to us. For centuries, Inuit paddlers were recorded landing in Scotland and the Azores. By the late 18th century, European explorers were already reporting the "stunning skill" of Pacific Island navigators, who found their way over vast distances without charts, sextants or compasses. They often navigated chiefly by the shapes of swells, a vanishing and closely guarded skill. To Western eyes, it looks like sorcery.

Mr. King writes of Tevake, a master navigator from the Solomon Islands, who tried in the 1960s to teach a visiting scientist to recognize the three swell patterns. As an old man, Tevake, after making "something in the nature of a formal farewell," disappeared with his canoe on a passage he regularly sailed without difficulty. Among his people, such a death at sea is known as a "sweet burial."

Mr. Heavy is the editor at large of *Field & Stream* magazine.

The other stories and characters in this book are just as gripping. Joshua Slocum, widely hailed as the greatest of all solo sailors, a man of "near-mythical" abilities, was the first to solo the world. His memoir, "Sailing Alone Around the World" (1900), has been continuously in print since its publication. He was also a curmudgeon. "You'd want to learn from him," Mr. King writes. "But you get the sense that he'd make you feel a fool in the process."

By the 1890s, well before his solo voyage and after being involved in a succession of mutinies and accidental groundings on commercial ships, Slocum was no longer trusted to command a ship. Nearly bankrupt, his reputation in tatters, he set out from Boston in April 1895. He weathered rogue waves, faced nighttime raids by natives in the Strait of Magellan and wrote, movingly, of feeling at one with the universe. But no one was there to greet him when he returned home three years later and he never really found his footing after the voyage. In November 1909, he set out, possibly for the Amazon, and was never heard from again. It's believed that he was

Among the dangers solo mariners face are storms, rogue waves and almost unimaginable loneliness.

run down by a steamship off the coast of Haiti. For a sailor who never felt at home in the new world of steam power, it was a poetically fitting end. As one commentator put it, Slocum was "murdered by modernity."

Then there's Donald Crowhurst, who in 1968 entered the Golden Globe—a round-the-world yacht race sponsored by the Sunday Times of London. Insufficiently prepared and suffering from technical problems, Crowhurst began keeping a false logbook, hoping to avoid the shame and financial ruin of dropping out. But the hoax was evidently more than he could bear. On or about July 1, 1969, on a calm, sunny day in the North Atlantic, he is believed to have walked off the deck of his boat and drowned.

Bernard Moitessier, a "blend of Edmund Hillary, Henry David Thoreau, John Lennon, and Jacques Cousteau," as Mr. King describes him, was about to embark on the same race as Crowhurst when his wife, quite understandably, wept. Moitessier comforted her by saying, "don't give me the blues at a time like this."

Moitessier was in a good position to win when he decided that trophies weren't what he sailing was about. Rather than cross the finish line, he decided to sail on to Tahiti, more than half a world away. Using a slingshot, he launched a message aboard a passing ship addressed to the Sunday Times "The Horn was rounded February 5," it read, "and today is March 18. I am continuing nonstop towards the Pacific Islands because I am happy at sea, and perhaps also to save my soul."

Mr. Heavy is the editor at large of *Field & Stream* magazine.

the king acquiesced, with the impossible proviso that Raleigh do nothing to provoke the Spanish.

In June 1617, the sexagenarian Raleigh departed Plymouth with 13 ships and 1,000 men. On the Orinoco, one of his officers led an attack on the Spanish garrison, and Raleigh's son, known as Wat, was killed. "My brains are broken," Walter wrote Bess. "God knows I never knew what sorrow meant until now." Facing the Spanish, hunger and the death of more than a third of his force, Raleigh again went home empty-handed. In England, he was arrested for violating the king's orders; the stay of his execution was vacated; the great Elizabethan adventurer was beheaded on Oct. 29, 1618.

"Incidentally," Mr. Thomson adds in an ironic coda to his engaging chronicle, Raleigh "was also right about the gold." The search in Guiana went on, and in the 1850s a German prospector discovered a 15-pound nugget near the present-day city of El Callao, Venezuela, close to the area that Raleigh had scoured 250 years earlier. The world's leading gold source for a time, the mine produced a staggering total of 200,000 pounds, offering a belated vindication of Sir Walter Raleigh and the thousands of men who died searching for El Dorado.

Mr. Helferich's books include "Stone of Kings: In Search of the Lost Jade of the Maya."

SUMMER BOOKS

‘I never think that people die. They just go to department stores.’ —ANDY WARHOL

Where to Look for the Look

When Women Ran Fifth Avenue

By Julie Satow
Doubleday, 320 pages, \$32.50

By KATRINA GULLIVER

I GREW UP at the tail end of the department-store era, seeing them only as the gloss was rubbing off. There were still uniformed doormen to let you in, and on the walls hung framed photos of glamorous store scenes taken decades earlier: black-and-white images of shoppers in hats and gloves, which only emphasized the downward slide to acrylic sweaters strewn across display tables and dance music piped through the speaker system. Worse were the stores in suburban malls, with their fluorescent lighting and vinyl floor tiles amid the smell drifting in from Cinnabon.

In their heyday, department stores loomed large in daily life, especially for women. For many men, the stores were a place to pick up a tie or a pair of shoes. Menswear was often on the entry floor, near the door, for this reason: There was no expectation for a male shopper to linger. For women, however, the stores were often social destinations but also, at a time when retail was among the few options available to women entering the workforce, places of opportunity.

In “When Women Ran Fifth Avenue: Glamour and Power at the Dawn of American Fashion,” Julie Satow recounts:

In the early twentieth century, department stores were a land of glamour and possibility. In a single afternoon, you could have the details of a wedding (or funeral) planned; find out the dates for the civil service examinations; send a telegram at a Western Union outpost; drop your baby at the nursery to have a leisurely lunch at the tearoom, followed by an appointment at the hair salon; arrange for the express delivery of an ermine fur wrap to your home; buy refrigerated steaks; or order a pair of rare green parakeets from the Seychelles Islands.

Given how much department stores focused on female consumers, it is perhaps surprising that there have not been more women in charge of such businesses.

Here Ms. Satow, a journalist and the author of “The Plaza” (2019), recounts the careers of three who were: Hortense Odum, who took charge of Bonwit Teller in the 1930s after her financier husband purchased the store as a distressed asset; Dorothy Shaver, who was president of Lord & Taylor in the ’40s and ’50s; and Geraldine Stutz, a generation younger, who took the helm of Henri Bendel in 1957 and ran it for three decades.



FASHION FORWARD Geraldine Stutz (right), the president of Henri Bendel from 1957 to 1986.

Each woman turned a struggling store into a success. Ms. Satow details precisely how they made it work: Odum used her familiarity (as a customer) with high-end stores to create a venue that better reflected

women’s needs; Shaver and Stutz adapted to the fashion market, discovering new designers and creating new ways of marketing clothing.

Ms. Satow’s carefully researched book is compulsively readable: I

found myself dashing through it like a novel. She portrays the women with verve; we get a glimpse into their lives, as well as a sense of what it was like at each of these retail meccas.

It was a period when stores were becoming corporate properties, lurching further and further away from their origins as family businesses. Although their stores pitched themselves at different markets, the trio faced similar challenges. Economic downturns and the ever-changing trends of fashion; shoppers moving to the suburbs; the globalization of production; the conglomeratization of retail as stores were sold for their real-estate value. All three department stores Ms. Satow discusses would eventually run aground on one of these shoals.

Nevertheless, the women in charge demonstrated nimble choices, succeeding against expectations. Odum changed Bonwit Teller’s offerings to respond to customer needs—and spending power—showing sales growth even through the Great Depression. When much “affordable” clothing was of poor quality, she pushed for simplicity. Her basic but well-cut and tailored outfits found a

Bonwit Teller, Henri Bendel, Lord & Taylor: Each store had unique clothes and attracted a different customer.

ready market. A decade later, Shaver championed American designers at Lord & Taylor, moving away from selling Parisian fashions (or Seventh Avenue Chanel knock-offs). She introduced the “handwritten” logo and the store’s cheeky advertising style.

In the case of Henri Bendel, Stutz turned the store’s small West 57th Street footprint into an asset. It would be a boutique department store, unashamedly limiting its market to women who could wear the “Bendel look” (i.e., petite and slender) and taking exclusivity to an extreme. In one case, Ms. Satow recounts, the store ordered some new shorts from a designer, buying only six pieces: two each of small, medium and large (and a Bendel large was a small anywhere else).

Stutz was also a pioneer of vertical integration, introducing a manufacturing arm for Bendel in a leased warehouse across the street. Bendel Studio produced collections exclusive to the store, from designers including Karl Lagerfeld, Jean Muir, and John Kloss. In the process Henri Bendel went from being a client of the Garment District into a competitor.

But you know how this story ends. All three stores are gone, along with the retail culture of which they were the center. Today we are all left alone with our screens, scrolling through search results, in the department store in the cloud.

Ms. Gulliver is writing a history of crime and police.

When True Crime Gets Too Close

MYSTERIES
TOM NOLAN

Looking into a cold case attracts the attention of a still-active killer.

KATE SUMMERLIN, the protagonist of Harry Dolan’s “Don’t Turn Around” (Atlantic Monthly, 384 pages, \$27), has written a pair of true-crime books about murdered women. What should be the focus of her third book? The choice seems obvious: the death by strangulation, 18 years ago, of a college student in upstate New York. Melissa Cornelle was the first victim of a still-at-large serial killer known as Merkur, a fiend who has since murdered at least 10 more people in various states. It was an 11-year-old Kate who discovered Melissa’s body.

Now Merkur has returned to the town of the original crime and killed another college student. “As tragic as it is,” Kate’s literary agent says, “it’s an opportunity for you.” Write about both cases, she urges, and connect them. An undecided Kate returns to the town and begins to accumulate information while she stays with her retired father in the house where she grew up. She encounters Lee Tennick, a blogger and podcaster whose original coverage of Melissa’s death had made him famous in the true-crime milieu.

Lee is eager to collaborate, but others discourage Kate’s investigation. The recent victim’s father warns that he may sue. The town’s police chief urges her

to drop “this girl-detective thing you’re doing.” Instead, Kate doubles down on interviews, goes on reconnaissance trips with Lee and tries to imagine the killer’s motive. “If you can’t find a pattern with Merkur,” Lee suggests, “maybe we just have to admit we don’t know why he does what he does.”

The impulsive Kate, whose childhood secrets are released one shocking segment at a time, puts herself in danger as her snooping draws the attention of the killer she’s chasing. “Don’t Turn Around” mixes police procedural, small-town scandal and childhood terror in ways that will keep you reading straight until the dawn.

Lyla Santiago, the London-based medical researcher who narrates Ruth Ware’s “One Perfect Couple” (Gallery/Scout, 400 pages, \$29.99), seems an unlikely candidate to star on a reality-TV show. She describes herself as “a thirtysomething scientist with fingers stained purple from protein gels, and a permanent frown line from squinting into a microscope.” But her boyfriend, Nico, an actor with “big brown eyes” and a “gym-toned body,” begs her to audition with him for a 10-week series on a brand-new streaming channel: “Five couples on a desert island. . . . It’s kind of *Love*

Island meets *Survivor*.” Nico intends to “melt everyone’s hearts” and “come home as the abs that launched a thousand TikToks.”

For Nico’s sake, Lyla agrees, and they are indeed chosen. But the show’s fast-talking producer, Baz, is vague about the details of

THIS WEEK

Don’t Turn Around

By Harry Dolan

One Perfect Couple

By Ruth Ware

The Main Character

By Jaclyn Goldis

the series, shot in an empty resort off the coast of Indonesia. How much is the prize money? “Those details are still confidential.” What’s the format? “All you need to know is five couples go in, one couple comes out. And it could be you!” Lyla is displeased to learn that the partners of those voted off the show are expected to recouple with one of the remaining contestants.

On the first day of shooting, Nico is given the boot, a fate he does not take gracefully. He accuses Lyla of having deliberately sabotaged his big break.

Worse luck: Once the staff (and Nico) have left the island for the night, a mammoth storm destroys the facilities and cuts off electrical power. The staff plane fails to return. The nine contestants are on their own, in a real-life struggle for survival.

Ms. Ware, the author of several bestsellers, knows well how to fashion stories that catch and sustain a reader’s attention. Strange and frightening events—one survivor’s increasing despotism, two violent deaths, the theft of a diabetic woman’s insulin—cause the communal spirit to shatter. Lyla is forced to conclude: “We were on an island with a murderer.” Ms. Ware shifts from romantic satire to adventure novel to psychological thriller with a skill that cannot be denied.

The moving force behind Jaclyn Goldis’s “The Main Character” (Atria/Emily Bestler, 336 pages, \$28.99) is Geneva Ex, an Italian writer whose popular mysteries are inspired by the real lives of paid interview subjects. To write such books, we are told, Geneva “needed her ready-made characters fanned out before her, and she needed a grand twist.” Her latest prototype is Rory Aronov, a former TV news anchor who receives \$100,000 for allowing Geneva to build a novel around her.

Based on her interviews with Rory, Geneva has written a novel called “The Cabin on the Lake,” which also features Rory’s brother, her longtime boyfriend and her best friend. To reward these real-life characters for letting her use them in fiction, Geneva arranges for them to travel aboard the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express: “a behemoth, glossy navy train meticulously restored to replicate its early-twentieth-century predecessors that traversed Europe in unfathomable luxury.”

The absent Geneva makes sure her guests receive advance copies of her just-completed work. Rory and co. are anxious to see how they’ve been portrayed in print, and what secrets or scandals the author may have spilled. But the books are stolen before they can be read. Then, during a coastal stopover, a boulder crashes down a hill, narrowly missing Rory. Was this an attempted murder? Is it possible that “The Cabin on the Lake” is still a work in progress, and that the manipulative Geneva is putting her paid puppets through a few more real-life twists? Ms. Goldis’s book features an abundance of plot and perhaps one grand twist too many, but “The Main Character” is rollicking good fun nonetheless.

SUMMER BOOKS

'I'm not supposed to be playing, the music is supposed to be playing me. I'm just supposed to be standing there with the horn, moving my fingers.' —SONNY ROLLINS

The Last Giant of Jazz

The Notebooks of Sonny Rollins

Edited by Sam V.H. Reese
NYRB, 176 pages, \$17.95

By DOMINIC GREEN

SONNY ROLLINS is, as the title of his 1957 album says, a "Saxophone Colossus." Indefatigable in improvisation, uncorrupted in artistry, and always swinging and melodious, Mr. Rollins (b. 1930) is the last of the tenor giants. As he hung up his horn in 2014, his "Notebooks" might be his last word; they are as valuable in creative insight as Emerson's journals, van Gogh's letters and Baudelaire's "Late Fragments."

In his music, Mr. Rollins is a master of the strategic silence, as you can hear in the breaths between his paragraph-like phrases. He also went suddenly silent in mid-career, disappearing from the scene in 1959, just as he was at a peak. As his 1956 album "Tenor Madness" had shown, only John Coltrane could challenge him in the Hard Bop heavyweight division. But, like Coltrane, Mr. Rollins was too talented and ambitious to stay still.

When J.M.W. Turner wanted to paint the Romantic sublime of the cloudscape, he tied himself to the mast of a ship in a snowstorm. During Mr. Rollins's self-imposed exile from the scene, he practiced for up to 15 hours a day on the Williamsburg Bridge, come rain or come shine. He returned to live performance in 1961, sounding more like himself. This is the hardest thing to do in jazz, next to making a living.

Mr. Rollins's "Notebooks" pick up during the pre-1961 interlude with technical observations and professional reflections for a "Possible Book" that might be called "First Rules for Saxophone." That book, like jazz itself, goes unfinished. The notebooks, edited by Sam V.H. Reese, however, are full of memorable riffs and insightful soliloquies.

Music is about physics and physicality: sound waves and their making. Mr. Rollins hears the world as a "constant din of sound." We differentiate a "musical wave" or tone from noise by "the regular frequency of the waves," he writes. "We must be constantly alert for the sounds which will release the music," exhorts the hermit of the Williamsburg Bridge, sounding not unlike Thoreau. Mr. Rollins's goal is "the instantaneous creation of music—an unbroken link from thought to thing—immediately—at once—intelligently—but with emotion." A fluent weaver of other people's melodies into his solos, he admits his debt, in thought as in the dash-heavy style, to Emerson's "inspiring postulations."

"The order has been whispering to me at just such times as I would lose vision," Mr. Rollins reflects, shifting into the key of William Blake. To sharpen his inner ear, Mr. Rollins commits to daily exercise and a healthy diet. His work on breath control leads him to take up yoga. He wonders if buying a "life-size skeleton" would aid his visualization of good posture and resolves to exhale whenever the car in which he travels stops ("Reason?—fumes"). When he stops smoking ("physically and mentally wrong"), he misses the service the little ritual provided to "the soul." As Sartre and Camus noted, cigarette breaks create meaning through the management of time. Musicians call that "rhythm."



PRACTICE Sonny Rollins plays his saxophone on the Williamsburg Bridge in New York in June 1966.

Sartre's pipe is "independent" and "indifferent" until he picks it up and puts it in his mouth. "It is only when I pass beyond my objects toward a goal, when I utilize them, that I can enjoy their possession," Sartre wrote.

Rollins dreamed of 'the instantaneous creation of music—an unbroken link from thought to thing'

"Sax Men," Mr. Rollins writes, are made when they take up "that curved shiny beautiful-looking piece of metal." The struggle for technical mastery is the premise of his Transcendental flight as a soloist.

"In playing B major scale left pinky must move from B to C# without any right-hand movement," he advises. "This will not interfere with the accentuation and mental image of C when making C#." That sort of exploration of harmonic overtones and auxiliary fingerings reveals the invisible architecture of sound: "Could the rule be that since D produces an F# in its 5th partial, an F## (fingered) produces a D?"

These calculations resemble the algebra-covered blackboard that appears behind atomic scientists in the movies. The viewer doesn't need to understand the equations, only that a brilliant mind has done its homework. Mr. Rollins's goal is the unification of musical styles through the saxophone. Invented by a Belgian in the decade when Thoreau took to Walden, Mr. Rollins's "mystical hybrid of an instrument"—played with a reed like a woodwind, but made of brass—is the perfect jazz instrument.

Jazz, Mr. Rollins writes, embodies "the American Ideal." It is "a vigorously hybrid product which is All American." The "Negro race" produces most jazz "artists and innovators," but this "in no way contradicts" jazz's "quasi-racial nature," because "the greatest of any music is of a one-ness which transcends period, style, country, etc." Listen to your inner melody like that, and "the Musings of Miles is then the Bouncing of Bach both played against each other."

T.S. Eliot, writing on the Metaphysical Poets of the early 1600s, defined "metaphysical" as "elaboration" to "the farthest stage to which ingenuity can carry it." When Mr. Rollins returned from the bridge, his solos became as prolific in variation as they are prolix in

elaboration. When musicians "hear our note" amid the chaos, Mr. Rollins writes, they "let pure music take over and allow the higher more perfect language of creation to lead us into further avenues of harmony with those around us who do the same passive act of musical execution."

One night in 1963, bright lighting in a small auditorium caused "after-images and sensations" as Mr. Rollins performed. The "thought" and the "thing," intuition and technique, aligned: "I dreamed with the music." Every improviser knows that feeling. Few sustain it for decades in what Mr. Rollins calls "Musical Physics" or "Logical Music."

One afternoon in August 1996, I was walking down Broadway when I heard a saxophone from several blocks away. Through the noise of the traffic, I knew it was Mr. Rollins. It turned out to be the soundcheck for his open-air concert outside Lincoln Center. His music came out of the chaos around us, attuned to its setting and somehow beyond it. "To create—on the spot—intelligently—intuitively—and with feeling and emotion: this then is man in his finest hour—portraying nature."

Mr. Green is a Journal contributor and a fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

The Fruits of Violence



FICTION
SAM SACKS

Rising up—and switching sides—in a long war spurred by a profitable fruit.

URABÁ, THE SETTING of Alan Grostephan's "**The Banana Wars**" (Dzanc, 280 pages, \$27.50), is a region in northwest Colombia prized for having, in the author's words, "fertile soil and a deep enough gulf where ships could anchor and head north with the most ordinary and profitable thing the country had ever made." This is the banana, the cultivation and sale of which spurs the ever-evolving (and still continuing) armed conflict portrayed in this stark and memorable novel.

Mr. Grostephan's previous work, "Bogotá" (2013), was about family life in an enormous slum outside the Colombian capital, a neighborhood filled with refugees from the fighting in the countryside. "The Banana Wars" locates itself in the heart of the violence, following its ebb and flow during the 1990s, and if the characters in this book are slightly less vivid than those in "Bogotá," the scope of the story is broader and the country's brutal political realities are more fiercely emphasized.

The story alternates among a varied cast, from rural laborers to a war widow to an adventuring American businessman, but the most illustrative figure is a poor farm employee known, for his big ears, as Orejas. A bit of a layabout and ladies man, Orejas joins the guerrilla movement that opposed the plantation owners in the 1990

workers' revolt and strike that opens the book, during which he shows an uncommon talent for sabotage. But the fall of the Iron Curtain and the opening of new markets for bananas brings in interest from American corporations, and the Colombian government decides to buy off the guerrillas, a policy that put Orejas and those like him in a position of power. The fragile peace ends once European trade quotas undercut the economic boom, and in the ensuing chaos ruthless local paramilitary groups ally with foreign investors to keep control of production. Now Orejas is on the side of the plantation bosses and the book finds him, bewildered by the course of events, hunting down the workers he once fought beside.

The novel's scenes are compact and eventful, and its sentences direct and percussive. The hardboiled depiction of extreme lawlessness invites comparisons to Graham Greene. And like Phil Klay's outstanding novel "Missionaries" (2020), also about America's interventions in Colombia's civil unrest, the realistic story doubles as a kind of allegory of modern war, in which alliances and rationales are fluid, money is primary and violence generates more violence. "It was transgression to be alive," Orejas thinks in a particularly infernal scene, and there is a sense in this powerful

novel that freedom from sin is only truly granted to the dead.

Historical sins lie beneath the surface of Yael van der Wouden's tensely composed debut, "**The Safekeep**" (Avid Reader, 272 pages, \$28.99), set in the Netherlands in 1961. The novel's peculiar main character is Isabel den Brave, who lives alone in a

THIS WEEK

The Banana Wars

By Alan Grostephan

The Safekeep

By Yael van der Wouden

The Lady Waiting

By Magdalena Zyzak

large rural house near the German border. Isabel, with her mother and siblings, moved into the unoccupied yet fully furnished house in 1944 to escape wartime Amsterdam, and since then she has tended to the place with a strange, solitary obsessiveness that she nourishes at the cost of love or friendship. So she's horrified when her brother, who technically owns the property, insists that his girlfriend, Eva, move in while he travels for work.

The women's time together is marked by barely withheld malice, as small household possessions begin to go missing, evidence either of Eva's devious-

ness or Isabel's paranoid delusions. But soon the sense of menace transforms into conflicted passion, as the pair fall under the sway of a startling mutual attraction. Throughout, a humid, claustrophobic atmosphere dominates the reading. Pages of strangled dialogue ("Isabel. Isabel. It's—I promise, I—") sow a palpable feeling of discomfort.

What one guesses, if one has spent any time reading contemporary fiction, is that the tormented behavior is a symptom of some repressed secret. Here the buried wrongdoing turns out to be about the house and the Holocaust. But while the novel's journey from trauma to redemption is formulaic, its ending is nevertheless satisfyingly cathartic. Ms. Van Der Wouden knows how to wring real emotion from her readers, and "The Safekeep" is the uncommon book that one experiences in an almost physical way.

Magdalena Zyzak's novel "**The Lady Waiting**" (Riverhead, 352 pages, \$28) takes to deception in a comic spirit, telling the story of Viva, a lonely and jobless Polish immigrant in Los Angeles who becomes the disciple of a seductive con artist, a woman named Bobby. After a chance meeting—Viva first encounters Bobby hitchhiking in a blood-stained evening gown—she takes a job as Bobby's live-in assistant, a position whose

perks include an encouraged intimacy with her employer's attractive film-director husband, Sebastian. Bobby, "a sleeper agent for the Committee of Chaos and Marital Disorder," as one character affectionately puts it, ropes Viva into her latest plot, which is to steal a stolen Vermeer from Bobby's Russian mobster ex-husband and make off with the millions in official reward money.

The heist, which immediately goes sideways, takes the characters to Venice and Poland, unfolding a perambulatory plot with lots of sex, manipulation, high fashion, funny quips and the occasional slow stretch (this is a very entertaining book but it could be shorter and punchier). "Sure, there is no fate, but a certain kind of woman in one's life can act a lot like fate," Viva thinks of Bobby, and the novel sets her devotion to this endlessly exciting scam artist against the growing desire to surpass her teacher in chicanery.

Ms. Zyzak constructs a nicely entangled web of secrets and undeclared loyalties, while periodically remembering to return to the drama of the stolen Vermeer. "Would someone really pay millions for this distressed piece of painted fabric?" Viva wonders when she finally gets her hands on it. Such is Bobby's spell that even the genius of the Old Masters pales in comparison.

SUMMER BOOKS

'Fate is like a strange, unpopular restaurant, filled with odd waiters who bring you things you never asked for and don't always like.' —LEMONY SNICKET

A Series of Influential Events

And Then? And Then? What Else?

By Daniel Handler
Liveright, 240 pages, \$26.99

By JAMES KENNEDY

THE EARLY 2000S were a heady time for children's literature. The Harry Potter boom emboldened publishers to take chances, and lots of oddities got through the cracks. Many millennials fondly recall "A Series of Unfortunate Events," a sequence of tales that kicked off with 1999's "The Bad Beginning." The novel introduced a trio of children whose misadventures begin when their parents die in a fire, and things go downhill from there. Droll, tinged with a Gothic aura and slyly literate, the series' secret weapon was its chatty narrator, Lemony Snicket, whose arch asides developed into a metafictional persona. Such quirky books might've ended up as mere cult favorites, but they caught the cresting kidlit wave, and the author—Daniel Handler—hit the jackpot. He went on to write many books for kids and adults, as well as work in film, television and theater.

Now Mr. Handler is back with "And Then? And Then? What Else?" This book is billed by the publisher as "part memoir, part inspiration for aspiring writers." Happily, Mr. Handler doesn't inflict many writing lessons beyond the usual chestnuts (read widely, carry a notebook), and his entertaining anecdotes feel like the well-honed yarns your colorful friend tells when he's three drinks in. The real treats of this book are Mr. Handler's infectious delight in literature and the peculiar sensibility through which he sees the world.

In 13 essays, Mr. Handler takes on different ideas—truth in melodrama, being wrong, how canonical art is often stranger than its reputation—and explores them through personal stories and close readings of his favorite books. He likes to meander: One essay starts with his encounter with a singing bus driver, describes how he fell in with a bad crowd in high school, detours into Jim Jarmusch films, reminisces about a college writing mentor, recounts his valiant attempt to read Gertrude Stein, reveals the genesis of the name "Lemony Snicket" and concludes with an appreciation of the songwriter Stephin Merritt. One bobs along merrily on the surface of this apparent free-association before realizing how it all coheres (it's about how ennuï can be pretty great, actually). We've seen such points made before, but the charm is how Mr. Handler gets there, and his stops along the way.

Throughout Mr. Handler reveals the inspirations for his books. He often refers back to Charles Baudelaire's poetry collection "The Flowers of Evil," which he first encountered as a tween (the orphans of "A Series of Unfortunate Events" are "the Baudelaires"). Mr. Handler has read widely and adventurously,



INVITATION Daniel Handler, aka Lemony Snicket, in 2004.

and he shares excerpts from his favorites, from now-obscure children's authors like Zilpha Keatley Snyder to major poets like Elizabeth Bishop to niche gems like the transgender author Lou Sullivan. Great imaginative writing has, he says, "beneath its printed sur-

Lemony Snicket's literary idols—from Nabokov to Gertrude Stein to Zilpha Keatley Snyder.

face, something wild and deranged that's not quite digestible in the culture." Mr. Handler may announce his little-known favorites with the fastidiousness of a '90s record store clerk, but, thanks to his purehearted joy in literature, he rarely comes across as pretentious. I came away with a list of new titles to hunt down.

Mr. Handler nails the child's-eye perspective, especially its gaps and confusions. I enjoyed his youthful misinterpretation of an 18th-century painting of a boy being rescued from a shark attack and the account of his adolescent encounter with P.G. Wodehouse—in which initial befuddlement

gave way to admiration. It's rewarding to do a ridealong with someone who responds this intensely to art. Of Nabokov he says "the world felt more magic, more elaborate in detail and experience, just taking a walk or looking at ordinary items after spending time reading him." Same here.

There are also revelations. In college, Mr. Handler nightly dreamed of people outside his window—naked, hairless and "powdery white"—who ushered his sleeping self into scenes of shocking violence. He then began hallucinating these phantoms in waking life, following him around campus. Mr. Handler soon suffered seizures, lost the ability to read, and was briefly committed to an institution. (He still hallucinates the figures sometimes.) The account is harrowing, as is his retelling of the sexual abuse he suffered when he was a child, and the looming but strangely detached effect that the experience has on him now. These startling anecdotes are narrated with matter-of-fact restraint. When Mr. Handler mentions how he, at 18, spent a summer in a secret affair with a man in his 30s, it is a brisk admission on his way to a larger point. The lack of theatricality is bracing.

That said, Mr. Handler knows how to be theatrical. He has been celebrated

for his provocative antics, even though they've occasionally backfired. He describes how, when giving a talk at a conference for librarians in 2012, he read aloud a racy passage from an Oscar Hijuelos novel (his point: this is the kind of stuff boys really want to read). At least one librarian felt uncomfortable, and Mr. Handler recounts how she brought it up in an online thread six years later, in the era of #MeToo, in which a number of children's authors and librarians made accusations in which they complained about risqué quips Mr. Handler had made at professional events. (The tricky thing about being edgy is that it's easy to fall off the edge.) Mr. Handler makes clear he does not share the same interpretation of his past comments as his critics, but elsewhere he returns to his beloved "Flowers of Evil," quoting from its opening: "We sustain our affable remorse / the way a beggar nourishes his lice." He admits he doesn't understand the phrase "affable remorse"—neither do I—but I do think that if he exhibited more remorse, he'd come across as more affable.

Certainly, he has had occasion to do so. While hosting the 2014 National Book Awards, Mr. Handler made a bizarre watermelon-related joke about one of the winners, Jacqueline Wood-

son, who is black. Mr. Handler later admitted the remark was "monstrously inappropriate and yes, racist," apologized and donated money to the non-profit organization We Need Diverse Books—but he omits the entire episode from this book. Nobody writes a memoir to dwell on his most mortifying moments, but Mr. Handler addresses similarly fraught topics with such sensitivity and nerve that it feels like a missed opportunity.

Still, Mr. Handler gives a lot here, in a baggy, generous style that is comfortable with ambiguity. You get a sense of his personal canon, from Ralph Ellison's "Invisible Man" to a one-liner from the comic strip "Cathy"—some things stick in our minds, whether hifalutin or humble, and they mold us regardless of quality.

Was anyone asking for a Daniel Handler memoir? Not really, but it's not bad that the author has chosen to use his success as a writer for children to give us a collection of eccentric essays that might otherwise be overlooked. This erudite, vulnerable, funny and idiosyncratic book ranks among his best. Grown-up fans of Lemony Snicket will enjoy discovering the rest of the story.

Mr. Kennedy is the author, most recently, of "Bride of the Tornado."

Never Rich Enough For Mom

Lies and Weddings

By Kevin Kwan
Doubleday, 448 pages, \$29

VALENTINO. Sevrès. Chanel. Armani Privé. Frette. Lamborghini Urus. Carlo Bugatti.

The oeuvre of Kevin Kwan represents nouveau riche voyeurism at its finest. Mr. Kwan knows (or seems to know) how the ultra-wealthy, specifically the Asian and Eurasian ultrawealthy, toss around their dough and how they disport themselves in assorted world capitals.

It should go without saying that they travel to those world capitals by private plane—and only by private plane. One character in Mr. Kwan's "Lies and Weddings" apparently suffered a bout of trauma on the one dreadful occasion he flew commercial. And not just commercial but—grab the Xanax—business class. That same character was banned from Switzerland for bad behavior.

"Lies and Weddings," like Mr. Kwan's wildly successful first novel, "Crazy Rich Asians" (2013), focuses on lovers impeded by an ambitious parent: Viscount Rufus

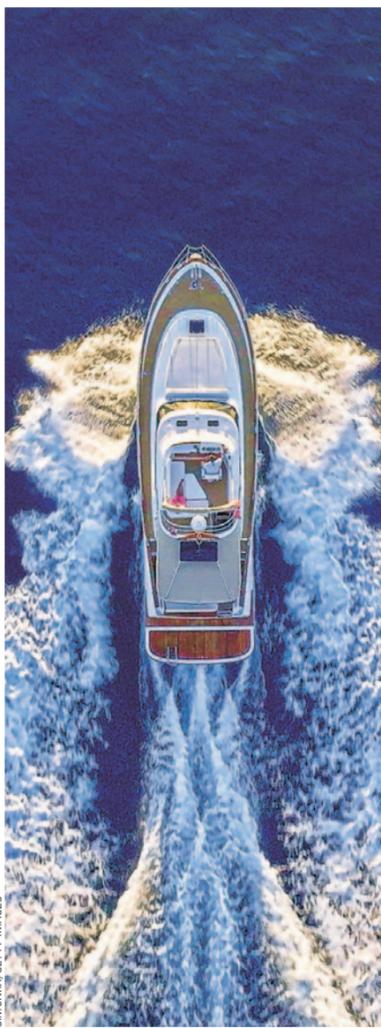
St. Ives, the divinely handsome, artistically inclined heir to Greshamsbury Hall, the venerable family seat; and beautiful, brainy Eden Tong, a doctor who since childhood has lived with her father in a grace-and-favor cottage on the Greshamsbury grounds. They're clearly meant for each other—down-to-earth, well-mannered and horrified by the conspicuous consumers that surround them. But Rufus's overweening gorgon of a Mummy, Arabella (she lies, she pitches expert fits, she connives, she attempts to blackmail), has a different bride in mind for him. As another character observes, she wants her offspring to marry up, no matter the cost.

Mr. Kwan delivers his shaggy, soap-opera-ish satire partly through itineraries, gossip columns, menus, epigraphs and text messages. Footnotes explain the difference between a superyacht, a megayacht and a gigayacht, and shed light on the social mores of Los Angeles: "Complete strangers will give you a full-body hug upon meeting you for the first time. . . . These strangers may also say 'Love ya' . . . and 'Let's get together soon.' You will never, ever see them again."

In a running joke, principal and minor players alike are introduced with a parenthetical academic CV, as in: "(Brimmer and May/Groton/Williams/UC Berkeley/Four Winds Shaman School)." Even more on point are Mr. Kwan's character-defining jabs: "He's a WASP. They all behave like they're penniless."

SHORT CUTS: BEACH READS

By JOANNE KAUFMAN



SNOWNER/GETTY IMAGES

Her Own Worst Enemy

Same As It Ever Was

By Claire Lombardo
Doubleday, 512 pages, \$30

BRACKETED by a birthday celebration and a wedding, "Same As It Ever Was" is a character study and an account of an often fraught marriage. Moving back and forth in time, Claire Lombardo's astute and often moving second novel charts the life of the breathtakingly self-sabotaging Julia Ames.

After experiencing a childhood pock-marked by financial instability and emotional hurly-burly (she's the product of her mother's affair with a married man), Julia seems to have found a safe haven in marriage to big-hearted, slightly dorky Mark. But nothing is easy for Julia, who craves connection yet repels it (and is repelled by it), who'd like to find happiness but doesn't trust it, and who is, at best, ambivalent about the prospect of parenthood. Mark points out that her immediate default is negativity. Julia would argue that things could hardly be otherwise: There's "a little nugget of misery

that's been lodged within her forever."

After countless missteps—engaged if slightly frustrated readers will be muttering some variation of "Please don't say that, please don't do that. Not again"—Julia, now in her late 50s, the long-married, carefully happy mother of two and a skilled, confident dinner-party host, lives in an affluent Chicago suburb.

Finally, it seems, she has a grip. But it's a tenuous one. Julia learns just how tenuous when she gets shocking news from her adored son while simultaneously dealing with her daughter's imminent departure for college. Add to this upheaval the sudden reappearance of Julia's long-estranged, spectacularly difficult mother.

But perhaps just as threatening to Julia's equipoise is a chance meeting at the grocery with Helen, the woman who for a time, 20 years earlier, had been a mother stand-in and confidante, and an ambassador from the world of old money and refinement. Now Helen serves only as a ghostly reminder of Julia's ability to gum up the works.

Julia's to-ing and fro-ing, her determination to detonate, grow a bit wearisome layered over 500 pages. But Ms. Lombardo's psychological acuity and her compassion for her characters amply reward attention.

Ms. Kaufman regularly reviews fiction for the Journal.

SUMMER BOOKS

‘If ants are such busy workers, how come they find time to go to all the picnics?’ —MARIE DRESSLER

Feasts Fit for a Toothpick

By RIEN FERTEL

THE SMALL-PLATES trend in restaurants may be over, so the culinary cognoscenti prophesize, but publishers continue to hope that small bites can find big audiences. Take Stef Ferrari’s charming cookbook “**Stuzzichini: The Art of the Italian Snack**” (Voracious, 272 pages, \$30). *Stuzzichini* are Italian finger foods, often served alongside *aperitivo* drinks, that tease an upcoming meal. (The delightful coinage likely derived from the words for toothpick, *stuzzicadenti*, and to tease, *stuzzicare*.)

For the simplest of stuzzichini, think skewers of olives, tomatoes or mozzarella cheese balls. The majority of Ms. Ferrari’s recipes, though, come unpierced: Aperol-glazed nuts, baked farfalle with Parmigiano cream, brown butter polenta crackers, anise-candied chickpeas. The book’s most alluring chapter extensively covers the varieties of toast known as *crostini*: anchovy and butter spritzed with lemon, sardines swimming with peach and fennel, a swish of fava-bean pate. A final chapter on aperitivo cocktails should get you started on pairing and sharing at home, though I wished the author, a certified beer sommelier, had included more recommendations for her favorite Italian stuzzichini spots.

Like stuzzichini, the small-bite *pintxos* of northern Spain’s Basque provinces likely originated at the business end of a toothpick. Derived from the Spanish verb *pinchar*, meaning to prick or poke, *pintxos* should not be confused with *tapas*, according to Marti Buckley, the author of “**The Book of Pintxos: Discover the Legendary Small Bites of Basque Country**” (Artisan, 312 pages, \$30). Smaller but more elaborate than the more famous Spanish appetizer, *pintxos* are customarily eaten before dinner, at a bar, standing up—two bites max, goes the unofficial rule. “The idea behind the *pintxo* is to keep moving,” Ms. Buckley writes: one bar, one drink, one or two *pintxos*.

“The Book of Pintxos” is the rare cookbook that is compelling to read cover to cover. Ms. Buckley performs a standout job of charting the history of this Basque nibble from its nebulous origins to its recent avant-garde era, with recipes included for every step along the way. Likely born in the 1920s, *pintxos*, then known as *banderillas*, named for the colorful barbed sticks used in bullfighting, were humble and hearty fare like boiled eggs and potatoes. Then a toothpick-stacked snack of *guindilla* pepper, anchovy and green olive known as the *Gilda*, named after the 1946 film noir, took San Sebastián by storm.

By the 1970s, *pintxo*-dedicated bars were popping up throughout the Basque Country, with bread replacing toothpicks as the preferred delivery service for cured ingredients: peppers, cheese, charcuterie and fish. From



FRITTI An assortment of stuzzichini, including crispy polenta cubes, beer-battered sage leaves and fried sardines.

there, the *pintxo*’s possibilities proliferated: mayonnaise-based salads, croquettes, pastries, desserts and modernist innovations extending into the far reaches of the epicurean universe—parsley mousseline-slathered toast paired with smoked cod delivered via a clothespin, anyone?

Stuzzichini are Italian snacks. Pintxos come from the Basque Country. Making them at home may create an urge to travel.

Though Ms. Buckley even provides advice on choosing the perfect toothpick—4 inches long with a single pointed end—I remain unconvinced that *pintxo* parties will soon become a home-cooking trend. “The Book of Pintxos,” however, does triple duty as a guidebook to San Sebastián—a compelling incentive to splurge on a flight to *pintxo*-land.

Small bites can feed but they have long functioned as inspiration for writing about food—the *amuse-bouche* essay. In “**How Would You Like Your Mammoth?: 12,000 Years of Culinary History in 50 Bite-Size Essays**” (The Experiment, 256 pages, \$19.95) Uta Seeburg serves up a culinary tour through history, beginning back when

the “unremarkable moochers” known as *Homo sapiens* fed on scraps left behind by hyenas and saber-tooth tigers. From there our ancestors harvested proto forms of wheat like einkorn and wild emmer (ca. 5500 B.C.), made ricotta and grape-filled bread into “the soul food of antiquity” (around 700 B.C.), turned the first diet handbook into a bestseller (16th-century Italy) and popularized the pastrami sandwich (turn-of-the-century New York).

“How Would You Like Your Mammoth?” quickly reveals itself to feel both familiar and familiarly Eurocentric, but might appeal to novice students of culinary history. Several interesting entries detail Ms. Seeburg’s native German cuisine—an outlier in the annals of gastronomy—from the revolutionary spirit of Weimar student canteens of the 1920s to Bauhaus canapé parties and the post-World War II popularity of Toast Hawaii: buttered toast topped with sliced ham, tinned pineapple and processed cheese—a Germanic *pintxo*!

Ms. Seeburg leaves little room for women in these pages, beyond their appearances at English afternoon tea, Tupperware parties and other brief mentions. She presents a predictable menu of men: François Pierre de la Varenne, Ferran Adrià, Jamie Oliver, René Redzepi. Give us something new! The origins of baby formula. The genesis of the global refrigerated produce industry. A brief history of the toothpick!

Aimee Nezhukumatathil’s “**Bite by Bite: Nourishments and Jamborees**” (Ecco, 224 pages, \$26.99) is an entirely different sort of culinary tour: personal, imaginative and immensely readable. A sequel of sorts to “World of Wonders” (2020), her collection of memoir-minded nature essays, “Bite by Bite” offers 40 vignette-style windows into her gastronomic world. “Noticing food means being aware of the scent and ooze, the sizzle and slip. The peck and the puff,” she writes. “Taking stock of *all* your senses.”

Rambutans, the tangle-haired tropical fruit, remind her of a lifetime of efforts to tame her own fierce tresses. “No one asks the rambutan about its messy hair,” she writes. “They just know that if you want a rambutan, you’re gonna have to deal with the wild and unruly spinterns.” Mangos conjure memories of her parents’ ceaseless debate over which country produces the sweetest variety: the Alphonso from her father’s native India or the Carabao from her mother’s Filipino homeland (she champions the former, while admitting that The Guinness Book of World Records recognizes the latter). Late summer blackberries help the author’s sons keep what they call “fruit time,” preceded by June peaches and followed by September persimmons.

Ms. Nezhukumatathil’s prose is frequently, and at its best, poetic—she is also the author of four books of verse.

A lychee’s interior “bounces us glimmer-glimmer and lusters lamplight into moonlight on our walls and floor.” Apple orchards fill with the “whir of wasps slow-swirling drunk.” Her sons’ first experience with sugar cane has them “chomping away on the stalks like little ponies. Giggling at the burst of each first crunch and crunch.”

But too often her essays lean into the prosaic, embellished with bland information dumps. Sugar cane “is comprised of stalks, leaves, and a root system,” she writes, as if composing a Wikipedia article. “Stalks can reach about thirty feet high and are broken up in segments called joints.”

Still, fans of the personal essay will find much to savor. The strongest and most confessional of entries is the author’s meditation on the traditional Filipino spring rolls known as *lumpia*. “This is not an essay that stays small,” she writes. This story dives deep into the complicated relationship we all have with some food, typically a family or community dish. Some foods remind us of the culture we come from, but at the same time remind us that we are no longer entirely part of that culture—they define not only who we are but who and what we are not.

An essay this monumental is no small bite.

Mr. Fertil is the author of four books, including, most recently, “Brown Pelican.”

Turning Eyes to the Heavens

Enlightenment

By Sarah Perry
Mariner, 384 pages, \$28

By ANNA MUNDOW

SARAH PERRY’S novel “Enlightenment” is a story of hopeless love, tested faith and wondrous science, all bracketed by two comets. The first of these, Hale-Bopp, appears in 1997 and the second 12 years later, while a celestial precursor in 1889 illuminates a mystery that seeps into the present. There is a great deal, then, going on in the heavens. In the English town of Aldleigh, by contrast, all is calm at the end of the 20th century, at least on the surface. “Late winter, bad weather, the town oppressed by cloud as low as a coffin lid,” sums up the unremarkable place.

Here Thomas Hart, 50 and solitary, writes a newspaper column in which he ruminates—in his distinctive, old-fashioned style—on literature, ghosts and local customs. When his editor suggests that he report on Hale-Bopp, Thomas predictably replies, “I have no interest in astronomy.” Nevertheless, both the comet and fate contrive to disrupt his orderly and secretive life. Fate arrives first, in the form of a newly discovered letter written in 1887

by the mistress of the nearby Lowlands House, long derelict and reputedly haunted. “I wonder if we have named the Lowlands ghost?” a historical curator named James Bower jokes when he and Thomas meet to examine the writing of Maria Văduva Bell. “A strange woman, suddenly vanished,” James continues, “a statue drowned in the lake—what more could we ask.” A great deal more, Thomas thinks, the first sight of James having pierced his heart. In an instant, for him at least, love’s course is irretrievably set. Where it will lead, however, remains tantalizingly uncertain in this absorbing and affecting narrative of emotional turmoil and astronomical discovery.

Thomas’s is not the only vulnerable heart. A more youthful, though equally vexed, passion afflicts the novel’s other

The arrival of a comet unravels mysteries that reach backward more than a century.

main character, Grace Macaulay, a young woman to whom Thomas has felt an almost parental connection since he was present at her christening. Grace’s chance encounters with love—in the form of a local boy named Nathan—seem farfetched but on this terrain are entirely credible. “It was all unbelievable—it was all inevitable,” Grace observes of these coincidences, and we have to agree. For Ms. Perry’s characters—and this circumscribed place—are so convincingly and subtly



SKY LIGHT The comet Hale-Bopp, seen over Germany in 1997.

drawn that no plot twist seems outlandish and no sentiment hackneyed. We never doubt, for example, that Thomas and Grace were inexplicably bonded 17 years earlier when her infant eyes, “with their newborn luster of oil on water,” fixed on the stranger who was offering condolences to her widowed father. Meeting Grace’s stare, Thomas experienced “a pain in his heart, as if it had acquired a new chamber to contain her, and so all his life he’d be carting her about.”

Raised by her Baptist minister father and an aunt, Grace is a child of the strict Bethesda Chapel, to which Thomas also belongs. “He survived... by dividing his nature from his soul,” we learn of a double life that accommodates both hidebound religion and illicit sexual desire. And Grace, too, discovers forbidden pleasures that cause her to stray from the grim chapel so memorably described by Ms. Perry as a “sealed container for God.”

Add to this the Lowlands ghost that begins to shadow Thomas and

you have a romance worthy of Emily Brontë. When the long-lost journal of Maria Văduva reappears, revealing her longing for a mysterious soul mate, its extracts interrupt the present-day narrative and infuse the novel with the fumes of slow-burning passion. But “Enlightenment” is far more than an accomplished pastiche. Ms. Perry not only revisits events of the 19th century—as she did in “The Essex Serpent” (2016)—but endows her modern characters with an ardent and eccentric sensibility more suited to that distant era. Thomas and Grace are misfits who seem ill-equipped for the modern world; Thomas by temperament and Grace by upbringing. They endure heartbreaks, a betrayal that shatters their friendship and a public denunciation that drives them farther apart.

We become increasingly anxious for them, but thanks to the economical grace and emotional force of Ms. Perry’s writing, we are also held fast by other crises, inserted like tiny detonators in

her narrative. Death and desolation, though all too familiar, are freshly affecting. When Thomas writes to James, “since you’ve been gone I’ve moved through a world with no warmth in it,” there is no more to be said.

“Enlightenment” is a novel of ideas, however, as well as one of emotion. Here, too, the view of creation unfolded by astronomy emerges as startlingly new when viewed through Thomas’s eyes. “It takes eight minutes for the light to reach us from the sun,” he tells Grace. “If it ever went out, darkness would spread out from it like a stain... we’d have no idea all life was coming to an end.”

Only Bethesda Chapel seems immutable, “as fixed in time’s flow as a boulder in a river.” Ms. Perry writes that “Aldleigh ran past it, and around it, and could never change it,” and her evocations of the austere edifice and congregation are some of the finest moments in the novel. Indeed, it is hard to think of another modern novelist who portrays religious faith with such intelligent sympathy. There is pain, she convinces us, not triumph, in liberation from belief. And consolation only in the sense that, as Thomas concludes, “everything that would ever happen had happened, and was happening... every part of it remarkable, essential to the whole.” With Grace once more at his side and the mystery of the Lowlands ghost finally solved, he raises his gaze to a comet that is “indifferent to every kind of every kind of doctrine and legislation... its universal light is neither sacred nor profane.”

Ms. Mundow is a writer in Massachusetts.

SUMMER BOOKS

'In winter I get up at night / And dress by yellow candle-light. / In summer, quite the other way, / I have to go to bed by day.' —ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Sandcastles and Stormy Seas



SUMMER vacation is about beaches, rambles in the country, visits to museums. Children's books can make all those good things better.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

MEGHAN COX GURDON

"Good Night, Good Beach" (Gecko, 28 pages, \$18.99) exudes the satisfactions of a salt-sprayed holiday. With simple

phrases, Joy Cowley evokes the delights of hot sun, sandy feet and waves "hush-hushing on the shore." Hilary Jean Tapper's delicate, sherbet-colored pictures, meanwhile, depict five young children (seemingly from several families) who are bunking together in a beach house supervised by a smattering of parents. Sea breezes seem to blow through the pictures, giving readers ages 2-6 a low-key sense of vicarious pleasure as the children in the book toddle along the rocks, crouch in the surf, and hunt for shells and sea glass—before snuggling into bed: "Good day, good sea, good sand, good night."

Sam Usher's **"Found"** (Templar, 40 pages, \$17.99) covers much the same terrain, which is to say a lovely day at the beach, though with more conspicuous excitement. Here a boy and his grandfather—favorite subjects for Mr. Usher—enjoy an epic day building a sandcastle (we see it, at right, as the child imagines it, towering over them both) and enjoying what the boy calls "the best ice cream I'd ever eaten." The two are drawn into more dramatic events when they find a seal pup tangled in a net. What follows is a series of heroic, impossible feats as the boy and his grandfather brave stormy seas to restore the baby seal to its family in this joyful picture book for children ages 5 to 9.

For those headed inland, the non-fiction pleasures of **"There's a Mountain in This Book"** (Thames & Hudson, 48 pages, \$19.95) include lift-up flaps and fold-out panels. Rachel Elliot is jaunty and conversational in describing how mountains are formed. "Not all mountains are the same. OK, they're big and hard to climb, but there is more than one way to make one," she writes. "Most mountains are created when something happens inside the Earth to push rocks upward." Later she tells of the ecosystems and animals that mountains sustain and of how we can tell how tall or high they are. "Tall," we learn, refers to the span from base to summit; "height" refers to the distance from sea level to summit.

The text consists of short paragraphs set among the illustrations so that readers will need to hop about, as it were, as they go. Muted colors and a slightly abstracted illustrational style bring an appeal-



ing sense of majesty to the mountains that Genevieve Lacroix depicts: the Alps, the Rockies, the Himalayas and Africa's Kilimanjaro.

THIS WEEK

Good Night, Good Beach

By Joy Cowley
Illustrated by Hilary Jean Tapper

Found

By Sam Usher

There's a Mountain in This Book

By Rachel Elliot
Illustrated by Genevieve Lacroix

The Art Book for Children

By Amanda Renshaw, Gilda Williams Ruggi and Ferren Gipson

Animal Tales From India

By Nikita Gill
Illustrated by Chaaya Prabhat

A "climbing calendar" near the end allows author and illustrator to sneak in mention of other celebrated high points, such as Denali in Alaska, Pico de Orizaba in Mexico and Khan Tengri in Kazakhstan.

Taking children to art museums can be thankless and demoralizing if

the little wretches complain of boredom; gratifying and even thrilling if the little darlings are engaged and interested. One good way for parents to lay the groundwork is to show their children lots of pictures before they enter a gallery. For almost 20 years, the two volumes of "The Art Book for Children" have served this scaffold-building purpose. In lively text, the two-book series conceived by Amanda Renshaw and Gilda Williams Ruggi explores the work of 60 artists and invites children ages 7-12 to consider and respond to what they see.

The original books introduced great artists of the past (Rembrandt, Degas et al.) and gave a showing to playful or esoteric moderns (Andy Warhol, Wayne Thiebaud, Jeff Koons). Now the two books have been worked into a single volume, **"The Art Book for Children"** (Phaidon, 192 pages, \$29.95), which has allegedly "expanded" though in fact, in important respects, it has contracted. Here, as in many a museum, identity politics and an apparent desire to dilute the aesthetic claims of traditional painting seem to have guided curation. Rembrandt is gone, as are Gainsborough and Fragonard and La Tour. Gone too are Degas, Jan van Eyck and Vittore Carpaccio.

Some of the moderns have been cleaned out as well: Thiebaud and Mr. Koons, Marcel Broodthaers and Gerhard Richter, the duo Gilbert & George. In their place, the new volume elevates the work of black and female artists, as well as non-European figures such as Cuban-born Félix González-Torres, Iranian-born Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian and South Korean-born Nam June Paik.

There is, of course, nothing wrong with encouraging children to look at all kinds of art, and, in the most generous interpretation, that is what this revamped book seeks to achieve. Its creators—Ms. Renshaw, Ms. Williams Ruggi and Ferren Gipson—are self-evidently seeking to widen the canon as young people experience it. Alas, in many cases they have replaced scenes of warm humanity with comparatively chilly abstract and conceptual images. Families heading museum-ward will want to ensure that this is not the only book collection they give their children to browse before they go.

More than 2,000 years ago, a scribe in South Asia compiled a series of animal fables in a collection known as the Panchatantra. Nikita Gill supplies a sparkling retelling of 10 of its stories, vividly

illustrated by Chaaya Prabhat, in **"Animal Tales From India"** (Nosy Crow, 96 pages \$19.99), a volume for children ages 5-11 that is far more scintillating than its sedate title might suggest. Each story is narrated in a confident and confiding manner, such as a grandparent might use with a grandchild. (Ms. Gill first heard Panchatantra stories from her grandmother.) "The Lion and the Talking Cave" begins: "As I have said before, lions are the kings of the jungle. . . . But it's also true that lions are not always known for their cleverness, as you will see in this story."

After the indolent hero of the tale gets his comeuppance from a wily bear cub, the narrator returns with a moral—these are fables, after all—that applies as much in the modern world as in a fictional jungle: "It just goes to show that it is important to keep your wits about you. And it is never good to be lazy. Hard work and careful thinking always pay off!" There is a strong echo of Aesop in several of these stories, particularly in "The Mice Who Freed the Elephants" ("the smallest can often be the mightiest of all") and great read-aloud enjoyment to be had for families at the end of a summer visit to, say, a beach or a mountain or a museum.

Secrets Of Social Creatures

The Well-Connected Animal

By Lee Alan Dugatkin
Chicago, 264 pages, \$29

'ONLY connect," wrote E.M. Forster. Lots of animals already do, writes Lee Alan Dugatkin, a professor of biology at the University of Louisville. Mr. Dugatkin's "The Well-Connected Animal" combines accessible prose with solid science as he details the social networks of nonhuman animals. "These networks," he writes, "stand as a tribute to the complexity, depth, and wonder of life in animal societies."

Until recently, students of animal behavior pooh-poohed complex social networks in animals, believing that their mental capacities didn't allow for elaborate patterned relationships. But "researchers have come to discover that being embedded in social networks plays a critical role in almost every aspect of animal life: what they eat, how they protect themselves, whom they mate with, the dynam-

ics of parent-offspring relations, power struggles, navigation, communication, play, cooperation, culture, and more." Networking, it turns out, isn't merely a cliché for 21st-century social-media climbers. Many animal species—perhaps most—do it just fine without Facebook, X or cellphones. It's noteworthy that even as loneliness in our own species has been increasingly recognized as a modern problem, network analysis among animals has revealed that deeper, stronger bonds generally result in longer lifespans.

These networks cover a range of activities, including dominance interactions, vocal communication, migration, food-finding, alarm-calling, gesturing, mate selection and cultural transmission—pretty much anything that animals do, most of which have deep resonance for the lives of human beings as well.

Drawing on research in animal behavior, anthropology, computer science, evolution, genetics, neurobiology, psychology and sociology, "The Well-Connected Animal" explores social networks in dolphins, elephants, field crickets, giraffes, honeybees, manta rays, Tasmanian devils, vampire bats, whales and more. An additional payoff, beyond insights into the critters, is being introduced to the scientists conducting each fascinating research project.

Reader, I connected with this book and I think there's a good chance you will, too.

SHORTCUTS: FLORA & FAUNA

By DAVID BARASH



Learning To Think Like a Plant

The Light Eaters

By Zoë Schlanger
Harper, 304 pages, \$29.99

'LET there be light." Indeed! Without it there would be no plants, no animals, no us. Although the unique capacity of plants for photosynthesis has long fascinated biologists, it was assumed that they were, let's face it, downright stupid. Not any more. In "The Light Eaters," Zoë Schlanger, a science journalist, sheds light on how these previously underestimated creatures have been enjoying their newfound place in the scientific sun.

Are plants intelligent? Can they have minds without a brain, or even neurons? We typically assess intelligence by what an organism does, in which case the underlying hardware should be irrelevant. And Ms. Schlanger points out that plants do a whole lot.

To read "The Light Eaters" is to be astounded by the complex behaviors of these ostensibly lower life-forms. Ms. Schlanger's

prose is precise yet loving: "Plants are the very definition of creative becoming: they are in constant motion, albeit slow motion, probing the air and soil in a relentless quest for a livable future." It's not their fault, but ours, that they have been "mostly relegated to the margins of our own lives, the decoration that frames the theatrics of being an animal."

There are lots of gee-whiz moments here. "Several species of plants," we learn, "have been found to identify a caterpillar's species by sensing the compounds in its saliva, and then synthesize the exact compounds to summon its predator. Parasitic wasps then obligingly arrive to take care of the caterpillars."

Here's another. A flowering plant in the Peruvian Andes is visited by pollinating bumblebees. So far, so passive. But there's a kicker: Somehow, the plant remembers the time intervals between these visits, and prepares its starburst-shaped flowers in advance so the pollen is perfectly ready to be distributed each time.

Fertilize your brain with "The Light Eaters" and you'll never look at your favorite, or least favorite, plants the same.

Mr. Barash is an evolutionary biologist and professor of psychology emeritus at the University of Washington. His most recent book is "Oops! The Worst Blunders of all Time, From Pandora's Box to Putin's War."

REVIEW

Welcome to the Pinball Renaissance

With more than 10,000 competitive events worldwide, the classic game is enjoying a post-pandemic resurgence.

By PETER FUNT

In “Pinball Wizard,” one of the show-stopping numbers in the Broadway revival of “The Who’s Tommy,” Ali Louis Bourzgui belts out, “Ever since I was a young boy, I’ve played the silver ball.” The line resonates among a growing number of devotees, as the vintage game with flashing lights and push-button flippers undergoes its own revival, making pinball, by some measures, more popular than ever.

The Covid pandemic had an unexpected impact on pinball. Arcades and restaurants that closed or were financially squeezed sold off their machines to private individuals, spawning new interest in having them as home entertainment. Now commercial venues have returned and flourished, most notably breweries and drink-and-play establishments known as “barcades.” The result is a robust market for pinball manufacturers, led by Stern Pinball, which has opened a new factory outside Chicago to keep up with demand.

Back in 2006 when the International Flipper Pinball Association began tracking professional players, there were 52 sanctioned events worldwide. Within 10 years the total reached 2,000, and today it exceeds 10,000. While participants, both professional and recreational, hope the ascent is long lasting, pinball has endured decades of ups and downs.

Loosely traceable to a game played by French aristocracy in the 1700s known as bagatelle, in which a cue stick was used to shoot balls into holes to score points, it caught on among Americans in 1871 with the addition of a spring-loaded plunger that propelled the ball into play. Improved pinball games grew in popularity through the Depression, a time when a penny bought precious moments of amusement and distraction.

In 1933 the Pacific Amusement Company introduced the first electric pinball game, known as “Contact,” whose battery-powered gates and kick-out devices added new levels of complexity. Pinball’s surge in popularity ended in the ‘40s as the games were linked to gambling and organized crime, resulting in bans in major cities. In New York, Mayor Fiorello La Guardia famously smashed machines with a sledgehammer for the benefit of press photographers.

The ban remained in effect until 1976, when New York’s City Council debated the matter. “On the surface it appears to be an innocent sort of device, but it will bring rampant vice and gambling back to the city,” said Brooklyn Democrat Leon A. Katz, sounding very much like Prof. Harold Hill railing against pool tables in “The Music Man.” But the vote turned against Katz when a magazine writer and pinball aficionado, Roger Sharpe,



Pinball expert Roger Sharpe predicts the game will one day be an Olympic event.

conducted a live demonstration to prove the game required skill.

Legalization in New York and other major cities led to a pinball boom, with the emergence of mall arcades like Aladdin’s Castle, which grew to 450 locations by 1982. Then videogames came along and pinball again fell out of favor, hitting bottom in 1999 with the closing of a major pinball factory in Illinois owned by WMS Industries. That prompted the New York Times to write what amounted to an obituary for pinball, in which historian Russ Jensen lamented, “With only one company left, there’s the possibility that pinball may not live into the next millennium.”

But that remaining company, Stern Pinball, flourished, along with an array of smaller pinball manufacturers. In 2013 under the headline “Pinball Bounces Back in New York City,” The Wall Street Journal covered the opening of Modern Pinball, a retail gaming establishment in Manhattan, aimed at “turning New York City into a Mecca for the game it once

banned.” When Covid hit in 2020, the venue closed and many of its machines were sold to loyal customers for as much as \$10,000 a unit.

Today, pinball is again at a crossroads, riding what might be just another wave of nostalgia—or perhaps entering a new era that combines professional competition, live online



coverage of major events and widespread recreational play.

Two pinball-loving families, the Sharpes and the Zahlers, are working to steer the industry to greater prominence. Roger Sharpe, the journalist who dazzled New York lawmakers nearly 50 years ago, is profiled in a current film, “Pinball: The Man Who Saved the Game,” available on streaming platforms. One of his sons, Josh, is president of the International Flipper Pinball Association (IFPA); the other, Zach, is head of marketing for Stern Pinball. All three are accom-

plished players and collectors.

Steven Zahler, the former owner of Modern Pinball, is developing a television project to promote the game. His son, Jason, 19, is currently the world’s highest-ranked pinball player. Surrounded by 40 machines at the family home in New Jersey, Jason spoke recently about his love for the game, which he began playing at age 2 by standing on a wooden crate to reach the controls. “Pinball is like a videogame plus physicality,” he explains. “You’re standing up, and there’s a physical ball, and you get to hit stuff. That definitely has a lot of draw for the younger generation.”

Newcomers to pinball might be surprised to discover the game’s commonalities with golf. Top players plan several shots ahead and put spin on the ball to direct it. While the basic game is uniform, each “course” is different. Even the act of pushing the machine—known as “nudging”—requires considerable skill to affect the ball’s path while not exceeding the machine’s limits, resulting in a “tilt.”

Three years ago Stern added a new wrinkle with an app called Insider Connected. “You scan in on the bottom margin of the machine,” Zach Sharpe explains, “and the game knows you. You can get in-game achievements. There’s a global leaderboard, so you can compete with your peers in a fun kind of bragging rights way.” The technology also allows Stern to update and repair machines remotely, without an on-site visit.

A privately held company that does not release financial data, Stern says it has seen its business increase

20% or more annually over the last 12 years, with machines selling for between \$6,000 and \$12,000. During Covid, “The consumer side really exploded,” Zach told me, “because a lot of people were investing in their homes, not going on vacations, building their casual rec rooms, and it really helped get more people involved in pinball than ever before. Now that we’re through the pandemic, commercial sales are picking right back up.”

Steven Zahler notes that pinball is heading in two directions. New games are increasingly complex because “manufacturers want to appease the tournament players. They want to keep things interesting.” But a large segment of the recreational market must be able to enjoy the machines, he says, “even if they don’t know what the heck they’re doing.”

I asked Roger Sharpe, arguably the nation’s foremost pinball expert, what he sees in the future. He mentioned live TV coverage of pinball competition, which already exists to a limited extent. “Who ever thought that watching people play poker on TV would be attractive?” he mused, before surprising me with an even bolder prediction. “Did I ever think skateboarding would be in the Olympics? Or flag football? I’m assuming pinball will be there somewhere down the road.”

Based on the current wave of popularity, all that’s needed, according to Sharpe and pinball’s many enthusiasts, is a little nudge.

Peter Funt is a journalist and TV host and the author, most recently, of “Playing POTUS: The Power of America’s ‘Acting Presidents.’”



Above and below: Pinball is the draw at Walt’s Bar in the Eagle Rock neighborhood of Los Angeles.



‘Barcades’ like Walt’s Bar in Los Angeles are helping to drive the pinball revival.

REVIEW



Donald Trump talks to union workers at a construction site in New York, April 25.

Why Trump Could Win The Union Vote

Despite President Biden's pro-labor policies, many working-class Americans feel the GOP better represents their values.

By MATTHEW SCHMITZ
AND SOHRAB AHMARI

On the eve of the 2020 election, Joe Biden vowed to be “the most pro-union president you’ve ever seen.” Since taking office, he has followed through on that promise, nominating a former union official as secretary of labor, filling the National Labor Relations Board with pro-union appointees and becoming the first sitting president to join a picket line.

Yet Biden’s support from union members—and workers more generally—is remarkably weak. An October New York Times/Siena poll of six swing states found Donald Trump and Biden tied among union members (the same voters said they had favored Biden in 2020 by eight points). Far from being limited to the white working class, this disaffection is spreading to working-class people of color. As Trump himself said at a rally in Waukesha, Wis., on May 1, “We’ve become the party of the worker. We’ve become the party of the middle income.”

What accounts for Biden’s weakness with such voters? Despite the president’s pro-union policies, many working-class voters believe that the Democratic Party does not understand, or is even hostile to, their cultural priorities and economic interests. In the minds of many of them, Trump’s GOP simply takes these con-

cerns more seriously.

The recent bestseller “White Rural Rage,” by Paul Waldman and Tom Schaller, offers a different explanation for why much of the working class has defected to the GOP. They argue that the political shift among non-metropolitan Americans is primarily motivated by resentments against immigrants, minorities and city dwellers. Another theory is that these voters have been fooled by online disinformation. As New York magazine put it in the wake of the 2016 election, “Trump won because of Facebook,” which had failed to police “hoax or fake news.”

To be sure, voters of all stripes—including the urban and the educated—harbor various resentments. And there is no denying that social media is awash with false claims. What these accounts tend to ignore is the substantive reasons for this political shift: Many workers don’t endorse the wider agenda of the Democratic Party and are attracted to Trump’s policy priorities.

In “Rust Belt Union Blues,” their 2023 study of blue-collar workers in western Pennsylvania, Lainey Newman and Theda Skocpol describe how, in the past, “voting Democrat was not just about particular issues for unionized workers; instead, it was in large part about socially embedded identities and mutualities—about who they were.” Unions did more than promise better wages and benefits. They also organized bingo

nights, sports leagues and holiday parties, giving an all-encompassing social meaning to being a “union man.”

Today, however, union membership no longer holds the same social and cultural significance. Much of what remains of the labor movement, moreover, acts as an adjunct to the Democratic Party and channels the outlook of its dominant professional class. In the AFL-CIO’s May Day message this year, for instance, concerns about climate change and the welfare of migrants competed with the defense of workers’ rights. These views aren’t necessarily shared by rank-and-file union members, much less by the working class as a whole.

As Newman and Skocpol observe, voting is “driven in large part by social identity: by how people see themselves within their communities and their perceptions of who is (and who is not) on their side.” Today’s Democratic leaders package pro-union measures and rhetoric within a larger worldview—on issues like religion, patriotism, gender and law enforcement—that many working-class Americans find alienating. Trump’s GOP better reflects the social identity of lunch-bucket Americans. It is also more at-

tentive to their material interests on two crucial issues: immigration and energy.

The Democratic establishment often sees Americans who reject the free movement of immigrant labor as animated solely by xenophobia. But this view fails to reckon with the fact that a majority of Hispanics favor tighter restrictions, with 42% supporting a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border and more than a third backing the deportation of all illegal immigrants, according to a recent Axios poll.

A better explanation for workers’ skepticism is that unskilled migration puts downward pressure on their wages. As the Nobel Prize-winning economist Paul Krugman observed almost two decades ago, “many of the worst-off native-born Americans are hurt by immigration.” Because such newcomers “have much less education than the average U.S. worker, they increase the supply of less-skilled labor, driving down the wages of the worst-paid Americans.”

In addition, low-wage migration strains the welfare safety net that native-born workers rely on—a fact underscored by the Clinton-era U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, which found that the migration of unskilled workers squeezes state and

One poll found Biden and Trump tied among union members in six swing states.

HUMOR

Dear Hotel Customer: Please Stop Kicking the Front Desk

Maybe the toilet-paper roll didn’t explicitly say that it cost \$5. But it didn’t say ‘free,’ either.

By IVAN EHLERS

OUR TEAM WOULD LOVE to assist you with any charges you wish to dispute on your hotel bill. We are thrilled you chose to stay with us and we’re certain there is a perfectly good explanation as to why your visit ended up costing “five times as much” as you thought it would. Our amenities program is in place to ensure you have an extraordinary experience, and as you know: The best things in life don’t come free.

As a valued member of our hotel family, you are entitled to understand that our Resort and Destination Fees cover an array of services by our gourmet chefs, personal trainers and massage professionals. These were available to you around the clock. It is certainly not *their* fault that you didn’t pay them a visit, or in fact

know that they existed.

I understand it is upsetting you, but the daily \$16 Wi-Fi Fee could have been avoided by signing up for our hotel’s loyalty program, which includes access to our lobby and complimentary Wi-Fi at the low rate of \$17 a night.

As for the Minibar and Snack Charges, it doesn’t matter that you didn’t *eat* the snacks. According to our sensors, the food items were repositioned and are thus considered consumed. That is not “weird.” What’s “weird” is moving snacks around in the refrigerator and not eating any.

I’m going to request that you stop yelling about the In-Room Cocktail Station Fee. Yes, the In-Room Cocktail Station *could* be called a “regular table,” but its intended use is to create craft cocktails. We unfortunately can’t



force you to enjoy your vacation to the max, but we can charge as if you did.

To maintain our exemplary standards, we must incorporate a Personal Care and Toiletries Charge. While the toilet-paper roll didn’t explicitly say that it cost \$5, it didn’t explicitly say “free,” either. I disagree with your characterization of our business practices as “garbage,” but I will point out that refuse services are *not* included in the Personal Care and Toiletries Fee.

If you would stop kicking the front desk for just a moment, I

can give you more information about the In-Room Bag Storage Fee. The initial cost was for access to the hotel room—this fee ensures the safeguarding of personal belongings in the room when you step away from your “home away from home.” If you don’t think that is worth a measly \$57 a day, then you must not value your possessions as much as we do.

I feel your pain, but there is no way that we can waive the Shared Walkway Fee, especially considering the amount of luggage you transported to and fro.

Oof—did you take the stairs? No? Then we’re going to have to tack on the Elevator Upkeep Charge. That is an additional \$8 a day.

We take negative reviews on travel advisory sites seriously and we don’t doubt your influence among the 30-odd family members, friends and former co-workers on your Facebook page. We must insist that we’ve been completely transparent

about our pricing, including the fee for the Room Circulation Device (yes, “the window”), and the other charges. Just look where it says, “Other.”

We sincerely thank you for paying the amount due and are truly saddened to hear that you intend to never return. To make up for this experience, we wish to offer you 10% off another stay at our hotel. We hope you will take the time to enjoy the In-Room Cocktail Station, of course.

Ivan Ehlers is a writer, cartoonist and illustrator.

PLAY

NEWS QUIZ DANIEL AKST

From this week's Wall Street Journal

1. Actress Riley Keough said fraudsters were trying to sell off Graceland, Elvis Presley's house. How is she related to the King?



- A. The Bronx
B. Brooklyn
C. Queens
D. Staten Island

6. The U.S. came out against a proposed global wealth tax—on whom?

- A. Corporations
B. Billionaires
C. NGOs
D. Americans

2. Iran's president died in a helicopter crash. Which other official was killed along with him?

- A. The Foreign Minister
B. The Defense Minister
C. The Minister of Justice
D. Governor of the Central Bank

3. U.K. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, a Tory, called a snap election for July 4. Who leads the Labour Party?

- A. Jeremy Corbyn
B. William Beveridge
C. Theresa May
D. Keir Starmer

4. Pro- and anti-independence groups clashed in the French territory of New Caledonia, a group of islands that is home to vast reserves of what?

- A. Zinc
B. Lithium
C. Molybdenum
D. Nickel

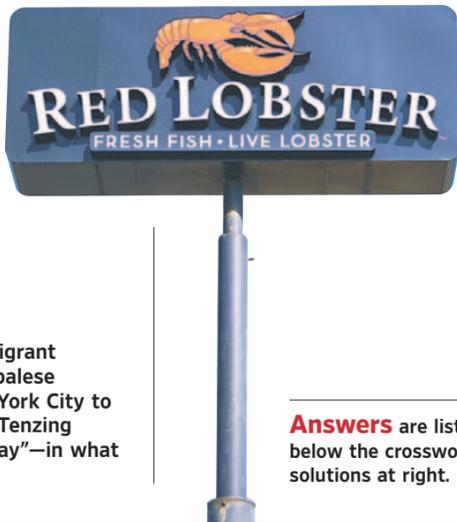
5. A growing immigrant community of Nepalese Sherpas led New York City to rename a street "Tenzing Norgay Sherpa Way"—in what borough?

7. The potential sale of a U.S. ammo maker to a foreign buyer has opponents in Congress. Where's the buyer based?

- A. Canada
B. China
C. Czech Republic
D. Qatar

8. Red Lobster filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. Which of these phrases is associated with its downfall?

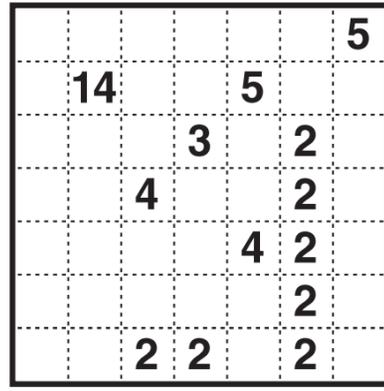
- A. "Do you serve crabs?"
B. "More shrimp please."
C. "You can't claw back losses."
D. "Vegan lobster."



Answers are listed below the crossword solutions at right.

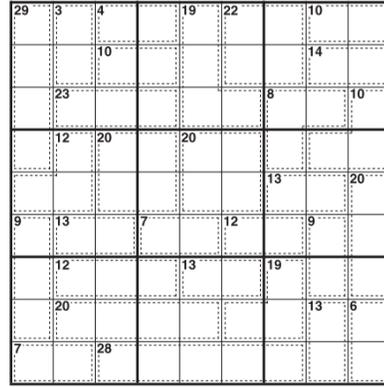
NUMBER PUZZLES

Cell Blocks



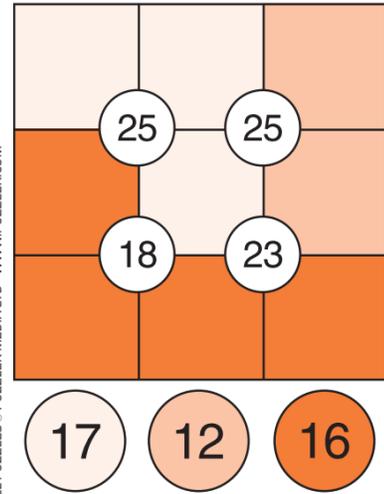
Divide the grid into square or rectangular blocks, each containing one digit only. Every block must contain the number of cells indicated by the digit inside it.

Killer Sudoku Level 3



As with standard Sudoku, fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

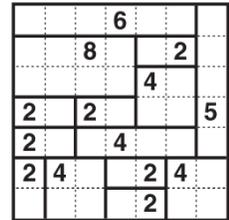
Suko



Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each color total is correct.

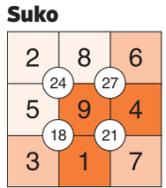
SOLUTIONS TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLES

Cell Blocks



For previous weeks' puzzles, and to discuss strategies with other solvers, go to WSJ.com/puzzles.

Killer Sudoku Level 2



Let Me Spell It Out



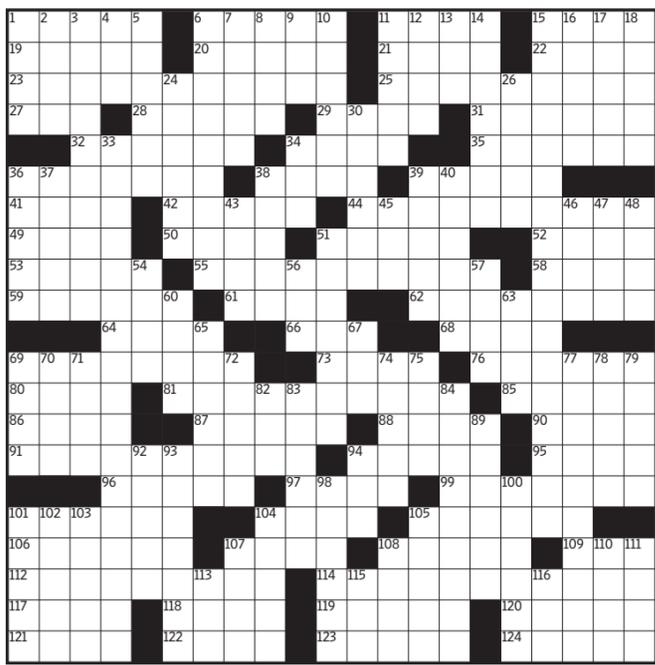
Acrostic

Carl Sagan, "Broca's Brain"—"Barnum and Mencken...made the...observation that no one ever lost money by underestimating the intelligence of the American public... But the lack is not in intelligence, which is in plentiful supply; rather, the scarce commodity is systematic training in critical thinking."

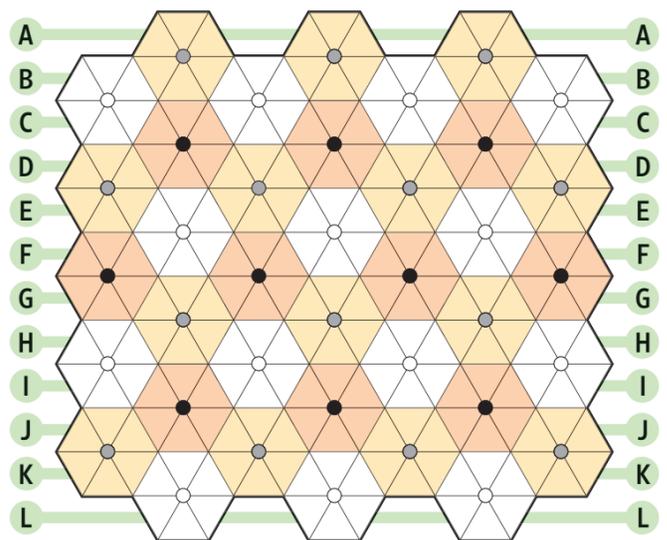
- A. Cosmic string; B. Alphabet City; C. Return trip; D. Leann Rimes; E. Schenectady; F. Aluminum siding; G. "Gimme Shelter"; H. Atlantis; I. Nannies; J. Betty White; K. Run riot; L. "Oppenheimer"; M. Cognitive science; N. Ad infinitum; O. Samuel Beckett; P. "Bikini Beach"; Q. Roll call; R. Anton Chekhov; S. Identity theft; T. Nanotechnology

THE JOURNAL WEEKEND PUZZLES edited by MIKE SHENK

Answers to News Quiz: 1.C, 2.A, 3.D, 4.D, 5.C, 6.B, 7.C, 8.B



- 38 Thin cookie
39 Culture collection
40 Recently
43 Really small
45 Recharge, perhaps
46 "Fiddlesticks!"
47 Slightly
48 Cravings
51 Thorny trees
54 1975 Wimbledon champ
56 Grp. for physicians
57 Much-mocked car of the 1980s
60 Bagpiper's garb
63 Carvey of "Wayne's World"
65 Deemed acceptable
67 Antlered animal
69 NSFW content
70 Course of action
71 Stress, perhaps
72 Frontiersman Daniel
74 Nurse
75 Fresh
77 Boardwalk treat
78 Boiling mad
79 Gets together
82 Assn. kin
83 "The Addams Family" uncle
84 1973 Eagles ballad
89 Four-time NBA MVP James
92 Swiss mathematics great
93 Korean subcompact
94 Place of refuge
98 Sharp scolding
100 Hardly ever
101 Made manageable
102 Greek marketplace
103 Crisp up, perhaps
104 Never existed
105 Blow up on X
107 Overseers of co. coffers
108 Smooth
110 Mets catcher Narváez
111 Finger-painting byproduct
113 Big name in nail varnish
115 Hoppy brew letters
116 Parched



Rows Garden | by Patrick Berry

Answers fit into this flower garden in two ways. Row answers read horizontally from the lettered markers; each Row contains two consecutive answers reading left to right (except Rows A and L, which contain one answer reading across the nine protruding spaces). Blooms are six-letter answers that fill the shaded and unshaded hexagons, reading either clockwise or counterclockwise. Bloom clues are divided into three lists: Light, Medium and Dark. Answers to Light clues should be placed in hexagons with white centers; Medium answers belong in hexagons with gray centers; and Dark answers belong in hexagons with black centers. All three Bloom lists are in random order, so you must use the Row answers to figure out where to plant each Bloom.

Rows

- A Green sauce traditionally served with lamb (2 wds.)
B Character brought into the story for the sake of romance (2 wds.)
C It involves kids getting high in the backyard (2 wds.)
D Doomed fishing vessel in "The Perfect Storm" (2 wds.)
E Visiting journalist's ID card (2 wds.)
Found time for a bit of sleep, informally (3 wds.)

- F Time-traveling hero who made his debut in a 1929 comic strip (2 wds.)
Hunting hat associated with Sherlock Holmes
G For the most part (2 wds.)
Infant conceived in vitro, slangily (2 wds., Hyph.)
H Novel set in a fictional Long Island village called West Egg (3 wds.)
Up on deck
I What professors preoccupied with their subjects are described as (Hyph.)
Early use for arsenic and cyanide (2 wds.)
J Finishing touch
Document giving one person authority to act for another (3 wds.)
K About to lose one's temper (2 wds.)
Attractive option in public education? (2 wds.)
L Stereotypical food fight locale

- ___ projection (out-of-body experience)
Very nearly
Gets clean in the tub
Vocal quality
Hybrid eating utensils
Medium Blooms
Senators represent them
Globe-trotting socialites (2 wds.)
Shamelessly cater (to)
Feed to make bigger
Striped Serengeti roamers
"Our Man in Havana" author Graham
Odoriferous
Mickey's partner
Dances to jazz music
Rash soother
Bellyached
Feat for Houdini
Tennis champ Andre
"___ Tunes" (Warner Bros. cartoon series)
Dark Blooms
"Death on the Nile" detective
Rising to the third power
More massive
Danish establishment?
Bowful at breakfast
Show remorse for one's sins
___ wire (hay bundle securer)
Says aloud
Mexico's national flower
Worn away

Get the solutions to this week's Journal Weekend Puzzles in next Saturday's Wall Street Journal. Solve crosswords and acrostics online, get pointers on solving cryptic puzzles and discuss all of the puzzles online at WSJ.com/Puzzles.

World on a String | by Annemarie Brethauer & Katie Hale

- Across
1 Margherita pizza topping
6 Pic-sharing app
11 Spot for a speaker
15 Grub
19 Decide one will
20 Has no use for
21 Gross
22 Triumphant whoop
23 Astronaut's experience
25 Con
27 Lionizing lines
28 Cut off
29 Doily material
31 "The Elements" singer Tom
32 Avoids a return envelope?
34 Team rooted on by the Bleacher Bums
35 Formally certify
36 Glossy cotton fabric
38 Development site
39 Early alternative to FORTRAN
41 Traditional Easter dish
42 Drifter
44 1963 hit for the Chiffons
49 Cookies-and-cream milkshake addition
50 Relieved cry after a hard week
51 In the least
52 Kaplan of "Welcome Back, Kotter"
53 Seafaring Disney character
55 "The Bald Soprano," e.g.
58 Amused look
59 With nose to the grindstone
61 "___ la Douce" (Shirley MacLaine movie)
62 Dorm fillers
64 XXX
66 Star pitcher
68 "Yowser!"
69 Site of out-of-this-world experiments
73 Rick's ex, who walked into his gin joint
76 Captured, in a way
80 Nativity trio
81 Pair
85 Jazz clarinetist Shaw
86 Western nation
87 Front parts
88 Spa treatment
90 Wasp nest site
91 1999 wartime heist movie
94 Search for water
95 Got down from a horse
96 Entirely
97 Many a first-time voter
99 "Reading Rainbow" network
101 ___ rasa
104 Gradually ease off
105 Mother sainted in 2016
106 Concurs
107 See 117-Across
108 Flynn of swashbucklers
109 Choice for mère et père
112 Clear choices for car buyers
114 Bygone store
117 With 107-Across, Kiss drummer
118 "Once ___ a Mattress"
119 Flip over
120 Marine predators
121 Wide valley
122 Market helper
123 Old pal of Han
124 Mike of "Wayne's World"
Down
1 Doofus
2 Parroted
3 Food truck offering
4 Olympian Midori
5 Enters a password, perhaps
6 "Ta-ta!"
7 Basilica areas
8 What not to do to Bond's martini
9 Vietnamese festival
10 Safe haven
11 Checkers, e.g.
12 Massage target
13 1952 campaign nickname
14 Class handouts
15 2002 monster comedy movie
16 Plugged in
17 Big books
18 Hagar's dog
24 Ease up
26 Reveal
30 ABC's "___ Elementary"
33 Number series found in patterns in nature, and in order in the starts of 23-, 44-, 55-, 81-, 91- and 114-Across and 15-Down
34 Fish with a barbel
36 Sportscast staple
37 Judge who's infrequently on the bench

REVIEW

EXHIBIT

Homes That Bring Nature Indoors

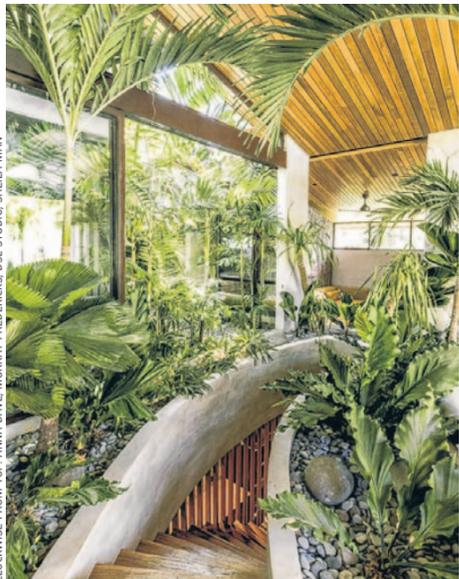


LIKE THE EPIC HERO ODYSSEUS, who built his marriage bed around a pre-existing tree, contemporary architects are experimenting with bringing nature into the home. The new book "The House of Green" (Gestalten) collects examples from around the world, including Casa Orgánica in Naucalpan de Juárez, near Mexico City. Designed by Javier Senosiain and completed in 1984, the "Organic House" is built into a hill and entered via a tunnel; much of the living space seems buried, Hobbit-style. Everything in the structure is curved, including the windows and the oval hollows that serve as closets.

Other homes bring nature into the big city. Plants grow out the windows of the Welcome to the Jungle House in Sydney, Australia, built by architect Clinton Cole for his family in 2019.

Left: Casa Orgánica in Naucalpan de Juárez, Mexico. At Thang House in the Vietnamese port of Da Nang, designed by Vo Trong Nghia Architects and completed in 2019, a lavish fruit garden spills over a rooftop, reflecting the client's childhood dream of a country house overflowing with greenery.

In Parma, Italy, Carlo Ratti Associates and Italo Rota followed Odysseus' example more literally in creating The Greenery, a renovated farmhouse that incorporates a 33-foot-high ficus tree. (The building's name combines the words "green" and granary.) A high glass wall uses technology to adjust the level of sunlight and fresh air coming into the house. "Building with nature means listening to it," Ratti writes in the book, adding, "Architects must take nature as a partner." —Peter Saenger



Homes from 'The House of Green': above, Aquas Perma Solar Firma in Sydney, Australia; far left, Cala Blanca in Bali, Indonesia; left, The Greenery in Parma, Italy, which incorporates a 33-foot ficus tree.

MASTERPIECE | THE COLLEGIO DEL CAMBIO FRESCOES (1500), BY PERUGINO

A Sumptuously Painted Room

By JUDITH H. DOBRZYNSKI

IN THE LATE 1400S, when the powerful moneychangers of Perugia, Italy, were decorating their new guild quarters in the Palace of the Priors, the city's ultimate political center, they entrusted the frescoes in the Audience Hall, where they transacted business, to Pietro Vannucci. Perugino—as he was called—was considered by many to be Italy's master artist. Pope Sixtus IV had hired him to oversee the work of Botticelli, Ghirlandaio and Signorelli, among others, in the Sistine Chapel, where he painted six of the many wall panels himself (three survive). His frescoes for the guild, the Collegio del Cambio, proved to be a capstone of his career, thrusting him to greater prominence.

One look reveals why. In arched wall spaces complementing the room's vaulting, Perugino painted lyrical, allegorical images of the cardinal virtues, ancient pagan heroes, and religious figures from both the Old and New Testaments, a kind of thematic magic reconciling disparate worlds. Along with sheer beauty, he infused them with a harmony and a rhythm uncommon for the time. As for the ceiling—seven deep blue medallions depicting the planetary gods, surrounded by lavish embellishments (painted with the help of assistants, probably including Raphael)—Edith Wharton, in "The Decoration of

Houses," described it as one of the "three perfect ceilings of the world."

Perugino (c. 1450-1523) came to this task in 1496, when he was commissioned to paint the room for 350 large gold ducats. He was instructed to employ an iconographic scheme that was developed for the Collegio by Francesco Maturanzio, a Perugian humanist—a charge likened to expressing a libretto in paint.

Near the door, Perugino placed a finely modeled, full-length portrait of Cato the Younger, the conservative Roman senator, alone in his own archway, dressed in red. A Stoic known for his incorruptibility, Cato looks away and down, not quite overseeing the men making decisions in the room, but subtly urging them to ignore their own interests in exchanging currency and adjudicating commercial disputes. In the two adjacent lunettes, Perugino portrays Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance, with identifying props (scales for Justice, shield and sword for Fortitude). Near each, he painted a deep-blue plaque inscribed in gold with moral lessons (the one near Justice reads in part, "When I am honored, the people flourish, in peace and in war, and without me, what had been great a short time before falls into ruin").

Below these allegories, Perugino created a parade of "illustrious men" against an unobtrusive horizon. Only a few of these ancients may be recog-

nizable today—Socrates, Trajan, Pericles—but the moneychangers likely knew them, though Perugino inscribed their names below and gave each distinctive garments and often elaborate headgear. To modern eyes, some—like the curlicued helmets worn by the rebel Roman plebeian Lucius Sicinius and the Spartan king Leonidas—border on comical, and perhaps they delighted the guild members, too. Nevertheless, their exquisite renditions reinforce Cato's message exhorting fair, practical decisions.

On the back wall, Perugino had narrower arched spaces to work with,

and there he depicted two scenes from the life of Christ. In one, he shows the adoration of the shepherds at the Nativity. In the other, the Transfiguration, Christ reveals himself as a radiant, divine figure to the apostles Peter, James and John in the presence of Moses and Elijah. Though they manifest Perugino's marvelous sense of color—the yellows of the Transfiguration and the blues of the Nativity, for example—they fittingly lack the sweetness for which Perugino was sometimes criticized.

Opposite the illustrious men, Perugino had just one panel to decorate, because half of the wall is occupied by an elaborately carved judges' bench. He used it well. Near the top, he painted God the Father holding a globe in a light-filled medallion, at-

tended by angels. Below, six Old Testament prophets congregate on the left. They are mirrored on the right by six sibyls, the ancient female seers who were said to have predicted the coming of Christ. These 12 figures—painted into the same space as six men opposite them—look neither crowded nor cramped, just engaged.

There, as in all the lunettes, the spare, earthly background distinguishes them from the intensely colored celestial ceiling, enhancing the scenes' connection to guild members.

In lesser hands, the Audience Hall could have looked staged. With Perugino, everything fits. The symbolism and the message never seem heavy-handed. The images exhibit balance, grace, finesse. The room's overall richness gives visitors the feeling of being inside a jewel box. Aside from conservation measures, it has never been altered and is reputedly the finest 15th-century secular room in Italy.

Perugino completed the Collegio project in 1500, and for years enjoyed strong demand for his talents—perhaps too much. He sometimes repeated himself, drawing mockery from some younger artists, especially those in rival Florence. But at the Collegio, in a touch that may indicate how he felt about his work, he painted a small, realistic, unsmiling self-portrait into the plaster dividing his illustrious men. It's as if he knew this effort was one for the ages.



The artist created lyrical images of ancient and religious figures.

Ms. Dobrzynski writes about art for the Journal and other publications.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: ANNA DAVE; MURRAY FREDERICKS; DSL; STUDIO; SHEILA MAN



'Linoleum' Chicken
Actor Harry Hamlin's recipe is tastier than it sounds **D8**

OFF DUTY

Virtually Possible
The look of VR headsets comes to sunglasses **D3**



FASHION | FOOD | DESIGN | TRAVEL | GEAR

**** THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Saturday/Sunday, May 25 - 26, 2024 | **D1**

Think This Looks... 'Effortless'?

Spoiler: It's not. From just-so messy hair to precisely slovenly cuffs, perfectly 'unbothered' style is trending. But you *can* achieve reasonably relaxed looks without contrivance. Here's how.

BY EMILY CRONIN

WHEN CELEBRITIES and CEOs ask stylist Allison Bornstein for help with their image, many reach for the same word: "effortless." "All my clients say, 'I want to look styled and put-together, but I don't want to look like I tried,'" said Bornstein, who has helped craft looks for women such as actress Katie Holmes and who splits her time between New York and Los Angeles. "Everyone wants to be effortless." It is up to her to break the hard truth to her clients. "When you see someone whose style looks really easy, that usually means they put a lot of work into it," she said. That said, certain shortcuts and strategies can help women achieve a reasonably relaxed look, even when they don't have time to meticulously

Please turn to page D2



Tousled, Not Tangled
These wavy, windblown tendrils appear naturally chic. They took our hairstylist over an hour to achieve.

Weighted Trench
Stella McCartney's coat is heavy on style and also rather heavy. The extra heft helps it hang "just so," but it can feel like an added workout during a hectic morning commute.

Screw-On Bracelet
This coveted Cartier style jangles with easy glamour—but you need a special "key" to take it on and off the wrist.

Pre-Ripped Jeans
They might suggest years of carefree wear, but these Citizens of Humanity jeans were shredded before they hit the sales floor.

Cuff Over the Sleeve
Don't be fooled by this pushed-up sleeve's rakish charm. It took two stylists and seven minutes to perfectly tuck these cuffs.

'Haphazardly' Open Purse
This Tory Burch bag appears to hang open, but hidden clasps inside secure your black card. Add dangling charms for extra insouciance.

Jelly Flats
The Row's elevated take on the casual summer-camp staple cost a cool \$890.

WHAT, THESE OLD THINGS?
Earrings, \$690, CharlotteChesnais.com; Coat, \$3,200, StellaMcCartney.com; Shirt, \$475, NiliLotan.com; Belt, *Stylist's Own*; Denim, \$258, CitizensOfHumanity.com; Bracelet, \$7,350, Cartier.com; Sunglasses, \$265, GentleMonster.com; Shoes, \$890, TheRow.com; Bag, \$1,098, ToryBurch.com; Duck Bag Charm, \$65, StringTing.com; Cherry Bag Charm, \$60, SusanAlexandra.com; Strawberry Key Chain, \$36, BonBonWhims.com; Hair Clip, \$495, Balenciaga.com; Sneakers (In Bag), \$100, Adidas.com; Baseball Cap (In Bag), \$590, Celine.com

MARIA BE FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL; STYLING ASSISTANCE BY CHRISTINA MIDDLETON; HAIR & MAKEUP BY KAROL RODRIGUEZ; TALENT: ISABELLA CARR FOR MUSE MANAGEMENT; LOCATION: THE LUDLOW NEW YORK CITY

Inside



STOP SPREADING THE NEWS
A diatribe against the 'spread' shirt collar. More-flattering options exist! **D4**



RENOVATION INSPIRATION
Find it in these cozy-posh hotels that occupy historic buildings **D10**



ONTO A GOOD SWING
How to get the hang of high-status patio decor **D6**



THE SOUND OF NON-SILENCE
EVs can seem eerily hushed. This Hyundai hatchback 'wails' and 'roars' **D11**

STYLE & FASHION

'Easy?' Not Quite.

Continued from page D1

tousle their hair or fuss their shirt cuffs into a masterpiece of rumpledness.

The look is certainly trending. Among the fashion elite, not always known for being reasonable, "effortless"—or, as TikTok sometimes puts it, #unbothered—has replaced "chic" as the ultimate sartorial compliment. Hollywood super-stylist Kate Young has used the term to characterize the looks she has built for clients like Dakota Johnson and Sienna Miller. Luxury-fashion designers from Chloé's Chemena Kamali to Michael Kors have invoked it to describe recent collections. Makeup artist Mario Dedivanovic even called the Met Gala beauty look he created for Kim Kardashian effortless, despite having used nearly a dozen products to create it.

'When you see someone whose style looks effortless, that means they've put in a lot of work.'

Unlike a craze for specific items like Tibi denim skirts or Alaïa ballet flats, this trendy look is harder to pin down, capturing a sense of stylish harmony that at least appears to be easy, cool and, above all, unfussy.

As it happens, such apparent indifference can require a lot of fuss.

"Everybody loves the idea of just rolling out of bed and looking amazing," said Melissa Morris, 41, the London-based founder and designer of Métier, whose slouchy, oversized handbags are often associated with effortless style. "But actually [achieving that look] is the hardest thing to do." A seemingly easy styling trick—rolling one's shirt cuffs just-so over the sleeves of a trench coat, for instance—can take 15 minutes. Breezy hair requires just the right amount of styling product to give it volume without weighing it down. And the "easy" drape of an unassuming long coat often relies on weightier fabric, which can feel like an

added burden during one's morning commute.

In Bornstein's words, "The simplest looks are usually the hardest to pull off because it's all about small details, and there's really nothing to distract you."

Bornstein wishes more people would acknowledge the work that goes into effortless style, even when it's not particularly excessive. She surmises that women hesitate to admit to investing time and effort in their wardrobes because they assume that true style must be innate—an error, in her opinion—and she bristles at the implication that women should hide the effort and skill that often goes into self-presentation. "Why should it matter if I took half an hour to get ready?" she asked. "That means I care."

Actress and director Katie Holmes, 45, raised a perfectly brushed eyebrow when asked about her own fashion proclivities, including her fondness for urbane brands like Khaite and A.P.C., the Parisian label that's a paragon of easy cool. "You think my style is effortless?" she replied with a smile. "Well, I wouldn't say that. I mean, that's your interpretation."

In recent seasons, plenty of fashion labels have been eager to cater to a demand for more effortless looks. To fill it, they've released purposefully relaxed pieces that appear nonchalant—often with prices that are anything but easy. Balenciaga sells totes that intentionally emulate grocery bags like those from FreshDirect but that are slyly made of calfskin leather instead of canvas and retail for \$2,900—if you can get one, that is. They're mostly sold out.

The Row's jelly sandals, also nearly sold out, resemble the most luxurious version of summer-camp shower shoes. Premium denim from AG Jeans and Khaite comes pre-ripped at the knee and shredded at the hem to give the illusion that the jeans have already been dragged all over town. Even the usually polished Tory Burch has a new handbag, the Radziwill, that appears to have a broken clasp. Its actual clasp, hidden in the fold, works just fine.

The bag is named for Jackie O's older sister, the late Lee Radziwill, a one-time executive for Giorgio Armani known for her re-



One-Touch Clasp Bag

An inner magnetic closure allows this roomy leather tote to snap open and closed in mere seconds. Its smartly folded sides add a pleasant shape, too. Purse, \$1,390, similar styles available at [BOYY.com](#)



Slip-In Leather Shoes

Classic loafers exude sure-footed confidence and shield feet from puddles and sidewalk grime. Bonus: They're as welcome in the office as they are on a Sunday Starbucks run. Jeans, \$260, [StillHere.nyc](#); Shoes, \$175, [GHBass.com](#)

laxed style. French singer Jane Birkin, the namesake of Hermès' famous Birkin bag, is also often referenced as an "effortless" muse. Recently, fashion publications and online mood boards have embraced modern avatars of the look, including the actresses Jennifer Lawrence and Zoë Kravitz, models such as Kate Moss, and

Holmes herself.

But the ultimate totem might be Carolyn Bessette Kennedy. The late fashion executive's easygoing allure has captivated a new generation of women on platforms such as TikTok, where over 10 million people have viewed videos about her influence. Gen Z vloggers study her clothes—crisp



Sculptural Wrist Cuff

This bracelet may appear complicated, but it slides onto the wrist like a simple bangle. Pair it with a classic watch for a subtle, cool contrast. Bracelet, \$1,575, [CharlotteChesnais.com](#); Watch, \$13,000, [Cartier.com](#)



Slightly Oversize Sweater

Stylist Sarah Adams recommends going a size larger with a sweater so it flows down the back. Sweater, \$395, [SoftGoat.com](#); Oxford Shirt, \$148, similar styles available at [RalphLauren.com](#); T-Shirt, \$15, [Uniqlo.com](#)

white shirts from Calvin Klein, tortoiseshell-print headbands from C.O. Bigelow and Parisian bias-cut slip dresses—like a fashion catechism.

"People are drawn to her style because it doesn't seem contrived," said Sunita Kumar Nair, author of "CBK: Carolyn Bessette Kennedy, A Life in Fashion," which currently ranks first on Amazon's bestseller list of books about fashion models and muses. "At the moment, 90% of public figures or celebrities have a very engineered, curated look. It doesn't read as authentic. When you look at pictures of Carolyn, you get a sense of her personality, and she looks comfortable, both in the clothes and in herself. Those are the components of [true] effortless style."

Handbag designer Morris sees the craving for effortless style as a reaction to "hyper-produced beauty ideals and imagery" saturating social media and reality TV. Her empirical example of the unbothered look is one that requires relatively little orchestration: Lemaire's wide-leg linen trousers worn with an oversized linen shirt from French label Cristaseya, with the sleeves rolled up and top three buttons undone. These pieces convey ease, but thanks to their meticulous tailoring and high-quality fabrics, they still maintain a degree of knowing formality.

Restaurateur and Berlin native Solynka Dumas, 33, recommends identifying "hero" pieces you can always rely on to deliver a feeling of insouciance. She likes matching sets from Bode and Stella McCartney for busy nights zooming between the kitchen and front-of-house at July, her new restaurant in London's tony Fitzrovia neighborhood.

A slip-on leather shoe that adds formality to an

otherwise laid-back outfit and a sculptural bracelet (like those from Balenciaga alum Charlotte Chesnais, which you don't have to wrestle with just to slide onto your wrist) can also do the trick.

The filmmaker and actress Fuschia Kate Sumner, 42, employs similar tactics when getting dressed. On a recent night out in London, she eschewed a predictable cocktail dress for a silky ivory trench coat and white cotton T-shirt from the Row, plus white H&M jeans. A day-old blow-dry conferred the desired degree of polished tousle. Sumner admitted she "felt effortless" in the outfit—an achievement, given that she was in her second trimester of pregnancy—but thinks that much of the appeal of the unruffled look lies in less-superficial values.

"I think when we praise or admire women who can pull off effortless style, it has more to do with their lifestyle than their ability to put together an outfit," Sumner said. "It is so much easier for me to dress effortlessly when I'm feeling strong, healthy, well-rested, fulfilled in work and life and generally good. The times I lean more heavily on clothes and makeup are when I feel tired and stressed. So there is something about a woman that seems to have her life together that is always inspiring and appealing."

To be sure, a relaxed attitude does wonders to foster a chic yet uncomplicated aura. Brooklyn designer Ulla Johnson insists she is less concerned with an aesthetic of ease than an actual commitment to keeping her closet, and by extension her life, as uncomplicated as possible.

"Anything can feel effortless," Johnson said, "if you feel powerful, comfortable and confident in it. The parameters are quite wide."

Blithe Spirits | Some celebrities are celebrated for their loose elegance and rumpled cool, with Pinterest mood boards and Tiktok videos dedicated to deconstructing their outfits.



THE BREEZY BRIGADE Clockwise from top left: Gabrielle Union, Katie Holmes, Jennifer Lawrence, Jane Birkin, Zoë Kravitz, Tracee Ellis Ross, Carolyn Bessette Kennedy with her dog, Friday, and Eva Longoria.

STYLE & FASHION

OFF BRAND / RORY SATRAN



Look Carefully: Those Jeans Might Be...Sweatpants

IN 1938, Elsa Schiaparelli and Salvador Dalí collaborated on “The Tears Dress,” a gown with a print designed to look like the fabric had been ripped away from the body in tatters. It was a clever use of trompe l’oeil, the technique coined by artist Louis-Léopold Boilly in 1800 to describe “trick of the eye” paintings that look like one thing but are in fact something else. Over the decades, fashion has employed this sleight of hand extensively, from Bottega Veneta’s verisimilitudinous denim-printed leather pants to less convincing gift-shop tuxedo T-shirts.

The latest trompe l’oeil sensation to have us all doing a double take is the curious case of the jeans-printed sweatpant. A descendant of the infamous 1980s joggling, these Frankensteined pants are soft and loose but printed to

At a Rag & Bone store, I had to touch the pieces to figure out what was a sweatpant, and what was actual denim.

look like a pair of jeans. An instant hit, they’ve emerged as an athleisure-denim hybrid comfy enough for WFH-spoiled waistlines and presentable enough for airports and even certain workplaces.

“They’re such a great conversation starter,” said Samantha Zhang, 36, a San Diego social-media manager who owns a pair. “Everyone is legit shocked they’re actually sweatpants.”

The sweatpant jean par excellence is from the Rag & Bone “Miramar” line. The American sportswear company, known for its midrange (real) jeans and T-shirts, first launched a sweatpant jean in 2013. Felicitously, a new take on the style was in the works right before Covid and then—bam! A viral hit was born, and a cash cow for Rag & Bone. Since then, the Miramar line has expanded to include “jean” jackets, jorts, popover tops and wide-legged pants. Fleece is in the works. Rag & Bone’s chief design and merchandising officer, Jennie McCormick, said that nearly 200,000 units of the line had been made this year. The most coveted style at the moment is the \$225 “Sofie” pant, which has wide legs and a real button fly.

“It’s the Gen-Z joggling,” said Rachel Spencer, a 30-year-old content creator in Vancouver, who finally



DENIM TRICKERY

Left: Actress Cate Blanchett dressed up her ‘denim’ joggers in 2023. Above: Miramar trompe l’oeil jean top and shorts by Rag & Bone

tracked down a pair of the Sofies this year after much searching. “I’m a millennial, and I never thought I’d be wearing any sort of faux denim again, but here we are.”

Now, type “denim sweatpants” into Amazon or Shein and thousands of results for both men and women appear. But the Miramar remains the gold standard because of its realism, from the denim printing to the slouchy fit. McCormick explained that, at the company’s factories outside Hong Kong, a real pair of jeans is washed and worn, then scanned to be printed precisely onto the sweats, with the seams lining up just so—not a simple feat. Walking into a Manhattan Rag & Bone store recently, I was met with a sea of light denim. I had to touch the pieces to figure out what was a sweatpant, and what was actual denim.

That fake-out quality means that the Miramar’s fans delight in wearing them out and about, without anyone realizing just how obscenely comfortable they are. Many people cite them as great airplane pants. At the Rag & Bone store I visited on the Upper East Side, the employees mentioned that several older couples had bought matching pairs to wear out on walks. (No men’s Miramar exists at the moment, but a similar style is in the works for fall, and men do buy the women’s pants.)

Maddy Chang, 24, who lives in New Jersey and works in finance, has even worn them to her corporate office. She said “no one mentioned that they looked like sweatpants.” Then she showed them to her father, who in turn bought a pair and wore them to his own office.

The uncanny nature of these pants gives some people “the ick,” as they say online. Zhang, the San Diego social-media manager, said that it “grossed her out” that her front pockets were real, but when she went to put her phone in the back pocket, that one was just printed on.

Others just find them too slovenly. “They look somewhat odd to me,” said Connecticut attorney Tara Johnson. For her, dressing down would mean a real pair of jeans worn with a crisp button-up. She said wearing non-sweatpants outfits helps her feel more productive.

These days, Johnson and her ilk are in the minority, as sweatpant jeans sweep the nation. Although market-research group Circana reported that the U.S. jeans market experienced single-digit declines in the past year, it found that “there are some bright spots with growth, and much of it has to do with looser styles.” Sales of loose-fit jeans—like the Miramar Sofie—are up three times what they were one year ago.

With summer on the horizon, it looks like the craze for sweatpant jeans is going to shift to sweatpant jorts. Or it already has. “We’ve actually almost sold out of the shorts,” said Rag & Bone’s McCormick, adding that the company was on the case trying to produce more pairs.



Ready, Player One

A vision of trendiness, the look of Apple’s Vision Pro headset (above) is coinciding with a vogue for giant, similarly bug-eyed aviator shades.



REVENGE OF THE LIGHT-SENSITIVE NERDS Clockwise from top left: Wire-Rimmed Aviators, \$142, Ray-Ban.com; Studded Sunglasses, \$105, QuayAustralia.com; Loewe Chunky Mirror Shades, \$520, Fwrd.com; Gucci Oversize UV Blockers, \$785, MyTheresa.com; Diff Granite Shield Sunglasses, \$90, Nordstrom.com



GETTY IMAGES (BLANCHETT); RAG & BONE

FWRD (CLOEWE); MYTHERESA (GUCCI); NORDSTROM (DIFF)

STYLE & FASHION

An Off-Collar Joke

Men's shirts with splayed 'spread collars' are...everywhere. They can be sexy, but more often they're just unflattering and cheesy. Free yourself from their grip with this guide to better options.

By HAMISH ANDERSON

LAST MONTH, Ruari Mahon, 40, was re-watching "Gossip Girl," the 2000s drama about elite Manhattan teens, and laughing about the clothes worn by self-serious heartthrobs Chuck Bass and Nate Archibald. As its name suggests, a spread collar is splayed, with lots of space between its squat-looking ends, which roughly point to 8 o'clock and 4 o'clock. The gap between them is more stout pyramid than narrow triangle. The style "is so cheesy and...feels so outdated," said Mahon, a New York consultant for design and fashion brands.

A few days later, the joke was on Mahon. Shopping for a wedding look, he scoured Manhattan for a matte-black shirt with a "traditional collar." But almost every option he found, at stores including Suitsupply and Reiss, featured the dreaded spread. It was as if he'd entered Chuck Bass's walk-in wardrobe. "What should have been a simple task turned into this huge undertaking," said Mahon, whose quest eventually ended at Bonobos, which offered more-classic col-

SAD SITUATION
Spread collars, which can slump on the chest and stick out 'like wings,' are enough to make any man weep.



A TEXTBOOK SPREAD

Shirts with spread collars have become 'the generic go-to for men in business, finance or property.'

POINTS TAKEN / SPREAD ALTERNATIVES THAT WILL IMPROVE YOUR LOOK



Striped Oxford Shirt With Button-Down Collar, \$200, GitmanVintage.com



Shirt With One-Piece Collar With Hidden Snap Buttons, \$565, 100Hands.NL



100% Cotton Shirt With Point Collar, \$295, *Similar styles available at US.Drakes.com*

lars—and lots of spreads.

Though they're often unflattering and can make faces look wider due to their relatively horizontal planes, these collars have spread like a stain in menswear in recent years. You'll find them tainting everything from polos to summery linen button-ups to office shirts. "They've become the generic go-to for men in business, finance or property," said Charlie Casely-Hayford, a London designer and tailor.

Fokke de Jong, founder of SuitSupply, a Dutch menswear brand with more than 100 stores globally, said spread-collar sales have been growing for several years, especially among younger customers. Mark Cho, founder of the Armoury, a tailoring brand in New York and Hong Kong, echoed that. While roughly half the shirts it sells have

spread collars and the other half button-down collars, he noted that spreads are a hit with "younger, more inexperienced customers."

Spreads do have their positives. They work well with a tie, "which holds [the collar] in place," said Casely-Hayford. He likes to pair a spread collar with a tie in a half-Windsor knot, noting that the knot's "delicacy...complements the negative space created by the collar." Other collars can cramp and overpower the knot. And when worn undone, a spread collar can be sexy, said Casely-Hayford. It reveals plenty of chest—and, due to its shorter, almost-horizontal ends, it makes that chest look broader. "It's going to give you a little more pep up there," noted Sid Mashburn, a menswear designer in Atlanta.

Even so, a collar should frame

the face nicely, with sharp upright angles that echo your neck's thrust. A spread, meanwhile, can literally fall flat. Without a tie, it often slumps on the chest and "sticks out [to the sides] like a pair of wings," said de Jong. Plus, if you wear this corporate cliché at work you look "homogenized," and if you sport one off-duty, "you look like you've come from the office," said Casely-Hayford.

Those unready to shed the spread should track down a "one-piece" version, he said. (Ask a clerk for help.) With no seams between the collar and the body of the shirt, a one-piece collar "holds itself up" (no slumping!) and has a "soft, sinuous curve," said Casely-Hayford. (One-piece collars come in myriad styles, from button-downs to spreads, and are always worth

searching for.) Another sensible step: Pick a semi- or modified-spread collar, like the ones Mashburn sells. These less-extreme takes retain some of the chest-broadening appeal of a spread but are better at standing to attention.

Better yet, avoid the spread situation entirely and grab a button-down. Cho favors this collar style—as do "the menswear nerds [who are] at the leading edge of fashion and were probably wearing the spread collar 10 years ago," he said. "A button-down has some softness and a little more flamboyance to it," said Cho. The versions by Drake's, a cool British label that Cho co-owns, "are longer and narrower," he said, while "the typical Italian ones tend to be very flamboyant, like 4 inches long, with a very deep [collar] roll." Seek out a

collar whose ends form an appealing, S-shaped curve—or "roll." This happens, Cho noted, when the buttons are mounted high enough that the collar has to almost double over on itself to be fastened.

Perhaps coolest of all is the classic point collar, whose ends extend sharply downward, with little space between them. It's "making a comeback...on the higher-fashion side," said de Jong. A fan, Casely-Hayford notes that point styles "stand on their own and frame your neck in a much crisper way than a spread," with or without a jacket and tie.

That's the collar Mahon, the "Gossip Girl" jokester, went with. And just as well. He said friends at the wedding remarked on his outfit—and not because it looked like he'd come straight from work.

SKEPTIC'S CORNER

Catch of the Season?

All the cool men's brands are selling fisherman sandals. Should you buckle on a pair?

IF TASTE-MAKING BRANDS have their way this summer, trendy guys will be channeling schoolboys, or perhaps grizzled French seadogs, from the ankle down. Prada, Thom Browne, Loewe and specialist shoemakers such as Danish label Vinny's are pushing fisherman sandals, the latticed, closed-toe leather kicks. Though the design dates back centuries, "this is the biggest they've been in capital F fashion in years," said Brandon Mahler, head of visual merchandising for menswear brand Aimé Leon Dore, which sells a lug-soled pair.

It's certainly a look, but is it charming or just childlike? We're a little skeptical—and we have questions.

What's the appeal? Unlike most sandals, they're somewhat dressy. Beyond exuding a European charm, they hide toes, and so are more appropriate for many situations than, say, beachy flip-flops. "They're loafers with built-in A.C.," said Justin Kay, 43, a Brooklyn creative director who's worn his fishermans, by

French brand Paraboot, almost daily for years. Kay, who's "very warm-blooded," likes how they combine keeping cool with looking sharp. He even wears them to work meetings (not recommended unless you're a creative director in Brooklyn).

Why are these a thing now?

Mahler traces the sandals' rise to pandemic-era lockdowns and folks' subsequent desire to escape. "Everyone started dressing like they were going on vacation," he said. Fishermans align with other trendy, out-of-office-style items such as camp-collar shirts and summery crocheted knits. They're also a popular "post-sneaker" option, said James Harris, co-host of menswear podcast Throwing Fits. Young men who collected Air Jordans a decade ago, then moved onto loafers, have now landed on the eye-catching sandals, he said.

How can I ensure I look like a sophisticated adult—rather than, say, Christopher Robin?

Go for black or dark-brown leather (skip any plastic or rubber versions). And seek out thicker, sturdier soles, said Harris and Mahler. Big bases feel modern, are generally comfier and work with a range of outfits. Mahler generally recommends teaming the sandals with unflashy clothes, since "the shoe itself gets attention." A casual suit or roomy, non-cuffed jeans that graze the shoes but don't drown them would work well. Shorts are OK, too. Harris advises styling them as you would a loafer.

The biggest head-scratcher of all: socks or no socks?

Either can work, depending on context. Going barefoot often reads as more low-key and effortless; pairing your sandals with socks is more of a look. To make that route (somewhat) sophisticated, pick a "dressy, thin sock," said Mahler. Darker shades are safest; since white socks contrast sharply with the leather, they remain a more-advanced move. Or perhaps, for true skeptics, an appalling move. If you're tempted to try out your fishermans in a fairly out-conservative work setting, please stick to socks. "The less foot seen in the office," said Harris, "the better." —Sami Reiss



LOOK GOOD IN LEATHER Dark-Brown Fisherman Sandals, \$320, VinnystheVibe.com



DON'T THROW THESE BACK! / THREE OF THE BEST-LOOKING FISHERMAN SANDALS ON THE MARKET

From top: Paraboot Black Sandals, \$505, ToddSnyder.com; Leather Sandals, About \$522, HereuStudio.com; Leather Sandals, \$1,170, Church-Footwear.com

ALEX FINE (ILLUSTRATION); MARIA BE FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL; PROP STYLING BY CATHERINE CAMPBELL PEARSON (SHIRT)

DESIGN & DECORATING



CURL UP WITH A CUPPA
Playful patterned pillows, stacks of books and cozy seating invite relaxation.

ALEXANDER JAMES

BE STRATEGICALLY SNUGLY

Peake's overall goal was to dispel the home's former dreariness, and in the beam-bedecked sitting room she leaned into cozy comfort. On the walls, a rosy backdrop of Pink Ground by Farrow &

Ball adapts beautifully to the ever-changing light conditions, Peake says, and sets up the room's understated-yet-enveloping tone. "If we had gone for patterned upholstery and [dramatic] walls it would've felt like too much," she explained. Other

charms include a candy-striped rug from Peter Page and roll-arm seating likely to tempt readers and nappers alike. For bird-watchers, a custom-built window seat provides a cushy perch for gazing at the garden and its inhabitants outside.

**TAKE ARTISTIC LICENSE**

At the core of the Arts and Crafts movement was a celebration of the artisan. In the dining room, Peake pays homage to that ethos by spotlighting the work of contemporary British craftsmen, including an Alfred Newall table and linen curtains from textile firm Titley and Marr. Atop a sideboard from Oka, a swirly hand-painted lampshade from Bloomsbury Revisited tops a sea-green Penny Morrison table lamp. A coat of pale green paint on the beams overhead suits the space's soft new scheme. "It makes them feel so much higher," she said.

MINGLE OLD AND NEW

In the primary bedroom, where the windows were long and low, Peake pitched the ceiling to enlarge the space, then applied a lemony expanse of textured paint to brighten the dim. Shades of leaf green on the bed and area rug extend to the fabric that curtains closet doors en route to an en suite bath. Made by English firm Soane, the seaweed-lace motif material hangs in a manner that reminds Peake of her granny's bedroom—"old fashioned in a lovely and nostalgic way," she said.

**HOUSE TOUR**

The Manor Reborn

How one clever designer created English 'country house' magic for a modern family

By CHRISTINA POLETTO

WHEN London interior designer Sarah Peake first eyed this turn-of-the-century estate in England's bucolic Surrey Hills, decades of heavy-handed, humorless renovations had undermined it. Gray walls, overbearing timber beams and heavy wood furniture conjured a "dark and medieval" atmosphere "completely at odds with the cottage vibe it deserved," she said.

Instead, to give her clients' countryside getaway a cheery about-face, Peake took inspiration from the home's Arts and Crafts-era pedigree—particularly that style's emphasis

on both usefulness and beauty. Her first moves: modifying the doors and windows to maximize glowing natural light and rolling garden views for the active family of four. Next, Peake reimagined the home's underloved spaces with an eye to fun and function, creating a sunny boot room, expansive en suite bath and other pleasures like plush, pillow-topped living room window seats. She forged a fresh connection to the scenery outside by hanging contemporary floral wallpapers and sticking to a lighthearted palette: greens, yellows and pinks. Infused with new energy, the decor still evokes a timeless sense of place.

Here, how to bring "English countryside" charm inside, even if you live in a condo.

**LEAN INTO LUXURY**

Moderation has a place, but sometimes grand gestures pay off. Consider this decadent bath and dressing room carved from a disused guest room. Green and blush Pierre Frey wallpaper lines the pitched ceiling and walls to give "the feeling of bringing the garden around you," explained the designer. At center, a clover leaf ottoman from Dudgeon invites rest and provides a convenient surface for a coffee tray or morning paper. But the most surprising element may be the herringbone wall-to-wall carpet. Though an anomaly for a bath, "it feels so cozy in a country house," Peake said. "It's quite an English thing to do."

**MAKE FUNCTIONAL FRESH**

To counteract the cramped vibe that squat ceilings can create, Peake enlarged the kitchen windows to offer unobstructed views of the garden. Freshly whitewashed walls also keep things light,

as do milky, wall-to-wall limestone pavers underfoot. A slick of minty-hued paint on the lower cabinets and island keeps white surfaces from veering too cold, while neutral, patterned tiles make utilitarian niches into clear punctuation points. To encour-

age easy teatime entertaining, Peake paired a custom banquette with a modern Bibbings and Hensby farm table and a gang of orange-leather Howe chairs. "It's great to be able to seat everyone around the table," she said.

DESIGN & DECORATING

Your Five-Star Patio

Want your backyard oasis to transport you to another world—maybe the outdoor terrace of a swanky resort? These seven decor additions are a start.

By CATHERINE ROMANO

WHAT IS IT that makes a resort's patio feel so fabulous? Yes, you're likely there on vacation, relaxed and receptive to beauty. But decor choices also set hotels' plein-air spaces apart from plain old backyards. Taylor Abess, founder of Miami's Parlor Interiors, considers towering greenery, for instance, key to these premium patios' appeal. Massive plants in grand pots help delineate areas where guests dine, lounge or soak up sun. Even in modest backyards, you can ape the technique and, as Abess puts it, "create vignettes for each experience." Furnishings that let you kick back uninterrupted also conjure a sense of luxury, said Paul de Andrade, principal of Studio Kestrel in New York. "If you have to run back to your kitchen for each set of cocktails, that takes away from the resort feel." An ice bucket and bar trolley help.

Here, seven products to upgrade your outdoor spot.

1 Take the Air Finally, a stand-alone outdoor heater that doesn't look like the robot in "Lost in Space." Via infrared technology, this graceful 8-foot-tall number warms people and objects, not the air, which can blow away (along with your money). You will, though, need an electrician to jack the 220-volt fixture into your system. Eclipse Smart Heat Electric Portable, \$4,345, Bromic.com

2 Grand Planter Ritzy hotels don't waste effort on puny pots and plants. A few sky-reaching specimens in statement containers like this 30-inch-tall urn in finished fiberglass (lighter than ceramic or terracotta) add separation and aesthetic dimension rarely seen on private patios, said Abess. Sienna Fiber Stone Outdoor Planter, \$599, PotteryBarn.com

3 Bliss Out The double-wide lounge at a hotel pool is *always* occupied. Hang this swing version from a pergola or overhang at your house and you'll never leave it, barring a thunderstorm. The powder-coated aluminum, polyester rope and weather-resistant cushion fabric come in hundreds of color permutations. Tidelli Drop Swing, from \$8,500, Pacific Design Center, 424-335-0711

4 Art That Works This teak table by San Francisco designer Jiun Ho, inspired by a renowned temple in

Kyoto, Japan, does double duty. Its 9-foot breadth can handle sizable dinner crowds while it weathers into a silvery gray masterpiece. "Resorts always have sculptures!" said Abess. Kiyomizu Outdoor Dining Table, \$29,934, New York Design Center's Access to Design, 212-679-9500

5 Brash Brolly This British parasol, an exuberant patchwork of waterproofed vintage fabrics, not only gives those underneath it a delightfully patterned view, it supplies the sense of enclosure that hospitality designers conjure so well. "You feel sort of sheltered, which is quite nice," said de Andrade of the effect. Sunbeam Jackie Solea Vintage-Cotton Parasol, \$4,050, Abask.com

6 Haute Chiller This ice bucket and stand literally elevate tipping. "You don't need the butler," said Abess. Barcelonian designer Isabel Franco's gothic-tinged design, of aluminum coated with pigmented micro-cement, raises the humble server to objet status. Pedro, About \$2,053, IsabelFranco.com

7 Top Shelf Server Another stand-in when you lack a pool-side wait staff: a damp-rated bar cart that doubles as a dimmable, rechargeable light. The upper shelf detaches for serving. Fat Boy Jolly Trolley Lamp, \$899, 2Modern.com



HECK OF A DECK
The luxe patio of interior designer Taylor Abess's Miami home.



NICOLE FRANZEN (DECK)

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matouk.com

HOW TO LIVE WITH A ROOM YOU HATE

In It for the Long Hall

If you decorate a dark, dead alley purposefully, getting there can be half the fun



REWRITE OF A PASSAGE Architects Anna and Eugeni Bach found a bookish raison d'être for their Barcelona hallway.

Lend it to the library. A wide-enough hallway can accommodate built-in bookshelves. "We love our books, and this way we always pass by them," said architect Anna Bach of the corridor-turned-library in her Barcelona apartment. "They aren't perfectly organized, so books disappear and appear. You discover things." An unexpected acoustical benefit: "Now there is no echo," she said.

Light the way. When ceiling height allows, New York interior designer Gideon Mendelson finds "a rhythm of pendants can be beautiful." In her book-lined alley, Bach factored in practicality, hanging a series of light fixtures with flexible arms. "I can orient

them to look at something," she said. When ceilings are too low for drama that dangles, some designers prefer a line of sconces to the glare of recessed overhead lights. Mendelson likes creating rectangular wall panels with panel molding and perching sconces between them. A table light, if there's room, combats some of a hall's "just passing through" vibe, says Los Angeles interior designer Alex Yeske.

Curate the space. Don't let your hallway become a landing pad for random, stray decor, warns Liz Caan, an interior designer in Newton, Mass. Its theme should dovetail with your home's. "I think

of the hallway as a mini room," said Yeske. At the end of her own, she hung a mirror over a petite vintage table to create a focal-point vignette (below). All the details cohere—botanical-theme wallpaper, the looking glass frame's floral touches and a vase of blooms—to enliven a potentially dead stretch.

Counter gloom with color. In a colonial home in Wellesley, Mass., Caan leaned into a hallway's lack of light, painting walls dark purple that she then offset with bright white wainscoting below. A multi-colored striped Missoni Gianni rug cheerfully draws your eye down its colorful path. Scenic wallcovering or a mural could also help a long passage, said the designer, making you feel like you're truly traveling from one place to another. To brighten a dark hall, Mendelson likes to slick ceilings or walls with lacquer paint to reflect light and add drama.

Create a little Louvre. Hallways can be great galleries for meaningful photos and mementos, either hung or leaning on a narrow ledge. Caan placed framed art by the couple's three children alongside work of well-known artists. For one client's home, Mendelson plans to display historic documents and letters against a dark-navy textured wall to lend the collection a moody seriousness. It's an "opportunity to stop for a moment and enjoy," he said.

—Antonia van der Meer



A happy endpoint by Los Angeles designer Alex Yeske.

ANNA & EUGENI BACH; JESS ISAAC

EATING & DRINKING

AT MY TABLE

Harry Hamlin

The actor and avid cook invited us over for a glimpse into the way he feeds friends and family: with generosity and zero pretension

SOME READERS will recognize Harry Hamlin as the guy who played Perseus in 1981's "Clash of the Titans"; others, from his breakout television role on "L.A. Law." Perhaps you caught his two seasons on "Mad Men" or his turn as Cortland Mayfair on the series "Anne Rice's Mayfair Witches." Frequent cameos on "The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills" have shown Hamlin at home, gardening or making lunch for his real-life wife, Lisa Rinna, the actress and entrepreneur. Now, the septuagenarian heartthrob's cooking gets the spotlight on AMC's "In the Kitchen with Harry Hamlin," which he hosts with his niece, chef Renee Guilbault.

That show was filmed at his and Rinna's house in Beverly Hills, but over the last several months Hamlin has been in New Orleans and Ireland, shooting the second season of "Mayfair Witches"—until a few weeks ago, that is, when the gas in his temporary apartment went out. "I only like to cook with gas," he said. "So I came home." While there, he signed off on a deal with a production facility for his forthcoming line of sauces. He also found time to discuss how he's fed friends and family through the years. Exhibit A: his recipe for Linoleum Chicken, a classic, golden-skinned, juicy-fleshed roast that you, too, will want to make for everyone you love.

What were family dinners when you were growing up in Pasadena? We had a protocol. We had dinner every night, and when I was very young, we had to put a tie on. My brother and I revolted against that. Our father did most of the cooking. It was not long after the war, when everything was rationed, so they got used to eating the organs of beasts and fowl. That was our Sunday thing: tongue and oxtails.

How did you learn to cook? My family had a cabin up in Canada that we still go to in the summers, and up until maybe 10 years ago there were no restaurants on this lake. So, you learn how to cook. And then when I was in acting school in San Francisco, I met a girl who taught me how to cook a lot of things. One [recipe] I call rosemary chicken, but really it's chicken thighs à la Karen. Just chicken thighs with rosemary and white wine and a few other things. A great dish.

What's the dish you make most often for your own family? Every Sunday [when the kids were growing up] we did bolognese. I cooked it when they were here last Sunday. So, yeah, they still come back.

Is there anything else your kids request? [My daughter] Amelia likes me to cook artichokes for her. I just boil them, that's it, for 40 minutes. But it's the dipping sauce that kind of makes the artichoke. Ursula [Andress], my son's mother, taught me how to make that. It's a classic honey-Dijon vinaigrette with balsamic and garlic.

Do you cook more complicated dishes for special occasions? The beef bourguignon we did for the Christmas episode. It was quite complicated to get that recipe right. I've made it for Christmas for about 10 years. I think the kids are done with it at this point.

How often do you entertain guests? In the summer, at the

cabin, it's two or three times a week. We're very social there. I do a lot of barbecue. I have a big friend group that goes back 50 years. The dining table is a simple thing I think my father built, back in the '60s, maybe. It's a pine table, and I can seat 10 people around it.

What about when you're home in L.A.? It's a table in the corner of the kitchen with a banquette around it, and it's where everybody gathers. I can put about seven people around it. We rarely have seven, but when the kids are here with their boyfriends, and we have neighbors over...

What do you cook when you're filming away from home? I've been cooking all my food in New Orleans. I'll cook a Linoleum Chicken and



Essentials Chez Harry Kikkoman Soy Sauce; Maldon Salt; Kerrygold Butter; Tony Packo's Pickles & Peppers; his own sauces (including his marinara, pictured here)

then I'll make soup out of it. So, if I come back from the set at midnight, I can have a bowl.

As a cook, are you more methodical or improvisational? Definitely more of the latter. When I started cooking the beef bourguignon, I used Julia Child's recipe. Now I tweak it. If I taste something extraordinary, I'll try to figure out what's in it. I went to Matsuhisa, chef Nobu Matsuhisa's first restaurant here in L.A., and he cooked a Kobe steak for me with a special sauce. I



COOKING WITH GAS Harry Hamlin dines on Linoleum Chicken, his own recipe (with a good story attached), at home in Beverly Hills.

was able to break it down, and now I make a similar one when I'm barbecuing steaks.

How has growing your own food affected your cooking? It was the pandemic that got me to do the gardening. I said, "Well, I better grow some food." Tomatoes were my big thing because I wanted to make sauce. And I have to say, it was much better. Store-bought tomatoes don't have much flavor. But if you grow them in your backyard, they have a lot.

What makes that Linoleum Chicken recipe so special? They say chicken is edible at 160 degrees, and if you cook it longer than 160 it's going to get tough. But the way I cook it in wine, I can cook it to 180 and it's fine—very aromatic because of all the spices and stuff cooked together, and the skin is crunchy. It's also really easy to carve because everything separates easily. Ted [Danson] and Mary [Steenburgen] were here for dinner the night I made that chicken on the show. It was cooked to 160, and I went in to carve off a leg for Ted, and I couldn't get the fricking thing off. The cameras are on me. I'm trying to figure out how I'm going to cut this without taking out a hatchet. It didn't taste like my chicken. It was a disaster. They edited around that.

—Edited from an interview by Charlotte Druckman

Harry Hamlin's Linoleum Chicken

For the full story on how this chicken got its name, watch episode 2 of "In the Kitchen With Harry." (Let's just say he picked the bird up off the floor and his guests were none the wiser.) Hamlin prefers heirloom carrots, which tend to be smaller. If yours are large, use 4-6 and split them horizontally, then cut them into pieces around 1½-inches long.

Active Time 20 minutes
Total Time 1½ hours

Serves 4-6

1 whole chicken (3-5 pounds)

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

1 lemon, washed and halved

2 sprigs fresh rosemary

2 cloves garlic, smashed

1 small onion, peeled and quartered

6-8 small-to-medium carrots, stems removed, halved

2 stalks celery, washed and cut into 3-4 pieces each

1 pound baby potatoes, washed

1 cup dry white wine

1 cup low-sodium chicken stock

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.

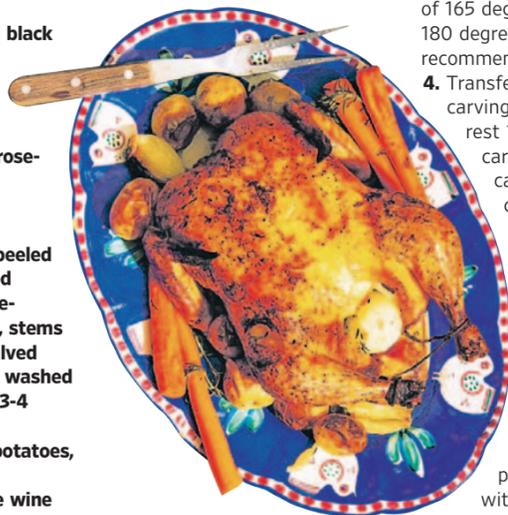
2. Pat chicken dry and remove giblets. Place chicken in a roasting pan. Season exterior and cavity with 1 teaspoon kosher salt per pound and 1½ teaspoons pepper. Place both lemon halves, rosemary, garlic and ¼ onion into cavity. Scatter remaining onion quarters, carrots, celery and potatoes around chicken in pan and pour in ½ cup white wine. Place chicken in oven

and lower temperature to 350 degrees.

3. Make basting liquid by combining chicken stock and remaining wine in a bowl. Season with ½ tablespoon salt and 1½ teaspoons pepper. After chicken has roasted 30 minutes, pour basting liquid over chicken and vegetables and baste. Continue to roast, basting every 15 minutes for the next 45 minutes or until chicken's skin is golden brown and a meat thermometer stuck into the thickest part of the thigh reads a minimum of 165 degrees and up to 180 degrees, which Hamlin recommends.

4. Transfer chicken to a carving board, and let rest 10 minutes. Discard aromatics in cavity. Carve chicken and transfer to a platter, arranging vegetables around it.

5. Pour liquid from roasting pan into a gravy separator, season to taste with salt and pepper, and serve with chicken.



POWER TOOL

Why Not Make a Meal of It?

With precision and personality, this versatile rice cooker can turn out full meals when the pressure is on (and off)



FOR AN APPLIANCE to claim countertop space as well as its own electrical outlet, it must not only earn its keep; it needs to look handsome doing it. The matte-white 6-Cup IH Twin Pressure Rice Cooker from Korean company Cuckoo offers good looks and personality too.

It talks, with a Dora the Explorer chirpiness that just manages to stay endearing. It also literally chirps when a cooking task is done and, when cooking under pressure, makes locomotive sounds right before it releases a dramatic gush of steam.

Theatrics aside, it handles the workaday task of rice cooking with versatility and quiet competence, of-

◀ This Korean rice cooker does far more than simply simmer grains.

fering a suite of settings for making the world's most popular grain more speedily, say, or sticky, or perfectly fluffy. More than a mere rice cooker, it excels at cooking multiple grains or beans and rice together. It's also a whiz at making GABA rice, which is brown rice soaked in warm water until it germinates and releases gamma-aminobutyric acid, said to lower anxiety and blood pressure, among other benefits. There is even a setting for nurungji, or scorched rice, in which the bottom layer is intentionally browned and crisped, and the nonstick pot makes removal and cleanup easy.

This model also has settings for preparing baby food and porridge (both thick and thin), as well as slow cooking a variety of other

foods. A large dial on the lid controls whether you're cooking under pressure or not, while induction heating facilitates precise temperature control and even distribution, essential for delicate tasks such as the aforementioned rice germination or holding cooked food at an optimal temperature until you're ready to eat it.

Curiously, some sections of the manual were left largely untranslated to English. But that's a problem easily solved with your smartphone's translation app, and you'll definitely want to: An appliance with this many functions demands to be put through its paces. Turbo-scorched rice, anyone? \$550, CuckooAmerica.com

—Matthew Kronsberg

EATING & DRINKING



ON WINE / LETTIE TEAGUE



Is Vermentino the New Chardonnay?

The second in a two-part series on Italian winemaking traditions in Sonoma, Calif.

THE GRAPES most often associated with California's Sonoma Valley are French—from Cabernet Sauvignon to Chardonnay—despite the fact that many of the region's winemaking families have Italian roots. But thanks to the efforts of a new generation of producers, Italian varieties like Falanghina, Arneis, Ribolla Gialla and Vermentino are showing up more and more often on the labels of sought-after Sonoma wines.

On a recent trip to Sonoma, I met with talented winemakers and growers who are particularly keen on these grapes, among others. Just don't call their wines Cal-Ital.

Far From Tuscany

A few decades ago some Californians focused on Italian varieties like Sangiovese. But their "Cal-Ital" wines, unlike their Tuscan peers, were often less than appealing, tannic and austere. The term Cal-Ital and the many unsalable wines asso-

ciated with it quietly faded away.

Some of the talented winemakers trying their luck today with Italian grapes (though not so much with Sangiovese) have only started doing so recently; others, like Duncan Meyers and Nathan Roberts of Arnot-Roberts winery, have been doing so for well over a decade.

Working out of a nondescript building on the outskirts of Healdsburg, Meyers and Roberts produce a range of reds and whites from grapes both French and Italian. When I visited them there, I tasted the terrifically vibrant 2023 Arnot-Roberts Russian River Falanghina (\$30) and richly textured 2022 Arnot-Roberts Ribolla Gialla Vare Vineyard Napa Valley (\$45).

"With Vermentino and Falanghina you can grow a pretty good crop and retain acidity," Meyers said. So why aren't more growers cultivating them? "People are reluctant to plant varieties that won't command a higher price," Roberts said. "We pay \$4,000 a ton for this fruit. Napa Cab sells around \$8,800." But that gap may be closing.

Grapes Gaining Ground

When David Drummond, then an executive at Alphabet, bought his Russian River property in 2018, it was planted to Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel and Petite Syrah. In 2019 there was a glut, and he found no buyers. Then he met Sam Bilbro, winemaker and owner of Idlewild Wines in Healdsburg, who specializes in wines made from Italian grapes, specifically from the Piedmont region.

Bilbro, who had recently grafted a vineyard in Mendocino over to Italian varieties, proposed doing the same on a few acres of Drummond's vineyard to see what kind of wines it might produce. Bilbro went to work trying to figure out which grapes to plant in which location, studying the vineyard's slope, the movement of the sun and the wind. "It was like a game of Tetris," he said.

Bilbro began by grafting over 25 acres, placing Italian cultivars on the existing rootstock. With the support of Drummond, he later grafted more vines. Now almost 73 acres of Las Cimas vineyard (previously known

CIN CIN! Ryme Cellars in Forestville, Calif., offers tastings by appointment.

as Rancho Coda) are planted to an array of grapes—mostly Italian but also some Riesling, Pinot Noir and Sauvignon Blanc—and there is a waiting list for the fruit.

For his own wines, Bilbro sources from Las Cimas and two other vineyards, both in Mendocino: Lost Hills and Fox Hill. He makes a range of reds and whites from Piedmontese grapes such as Brachetto, Erbaluce and Arneis. His 2021 Idlewild Lost Hills Arneis (\$35) was one of my favorites this trip, mineral and saline with delightful floral aromas.

Vermentino Victorious

Although Bilbro did not graft vines over to Vermentino at Las Cimas, he is keen on the grape. "I think Vermentino, from a price point perspective, should be one of the main white grapes of California," he said. He makes wine from Favorita, the Piedmontese version of Vermentino.

Megan and Ryan Glaab of Ryme Cellars in Forestville are also quite keen on Vermentino, their largest-production wine and signature grape. "It's relatively easy to grow," noted Megan as we sat in her rustic Forestville tasting room. The husband-and-wife team have been producing "His" and "Hers" Vermentinos since 2010, with grapes sourced from Las Brisas vineyard in Carneros. "Hers" is a fresh, crisp white fermented in stainless steel and neutral oak, while "His" is a skin-contact orange style.

At first the Glaabs made Ryme Cellar wines on the side while they both held other jobs. By 2015 they were successful enough to work together full-time at the winery, and they've added more Italian grapes to their repertoire. They make two terrific Fianos from Las Cimas vineyard, the 2023 Ryme Fiano Rancho Coda (\$38) and the 2023 Ryme Fiano "Skins" Rancho Coda (\$42). As the Glaabs' portfolio of Italian grapes has expanded, so has the number of fellow winemakers interested in doing the same, according to Megan. "Now you see Ribolla Gialla everywhere, going from 'no one knows about this variety' to so many expressions," she said.

Two of those producers, the Glaabs' good friends Sarah and Chris Pittenger, founded Gros Ventre Cellars in 2009 and now produce various wines under the label, including

three made from Italian grapes. The label is a family project for the Pittengers. Sarah Pittenger handles sales and marketing while Chris Pittenger makes the wine. He is also the full-time winemaker at Limerick Lane winery, outside Healdsburg.

We tasted the Gros Ventre wines overlooking the old vine Zinfandel vineyards of Limerick Lane as Pittenger professed his love for Italian grapes: "I always come back to their freshness and vibrancy." The crisp, savory 2022 Gros Ventre Cellars Rancho Coda Sonoma Coast Fiano (\$36) certainly merited that description, as did the 2022 Gros Ventre Cellars High Country White (\$30), a blend of Chenin Blanc, Grenache Blanc, Fiano and Arneis marked by appealing notes of citrus and pear.

A Bright Future

Pittenger noted the durability of Italian grapes in heat and drought—a good bet not just in Sonoma, but in places such as Lodi and El Dorado too. Mick Unti, winemaker and co-founder of Unti Vineyards Winery in Dry Creek Valley, is similarly optimistic. He founded the winery with his father, George Unti, and now runs it with his wife, Danae Unti. The Untis have been championing

Italian grape varieties have been showing up more often on the labels of sought-after Sonoma wines.

Italian varieties in Sonoma since the 1990s; they were one of the few to plant Sangiovese successfully.

Like Bilbro and the Glaabs, Mick Unti is particularly enthusiastic about Vermentino. He calls himself "the poster child for Vermentino," which he first planted in 2004. Seven years later, he added Fiano, and his wonderfully tangy 2022 Unti Dry Creek Valley Fiano (\$38) shows that he has a way with that grape too. (I was unable to taste his Vermentino as it was sold out.)

"They have oceans of vineyards in Monterey County. If you converted any of [them] to Vermentino, you'd be printing money," Unti said. A bold claim, perhaps, but if he's right, Vermentino could give "Cal-Ital" a new life.

► Email Lettie at wine@wsj.com.



Winemaker Sam Bilbro at Las Cimas vineyard, in the Russian River Valley.

TEST KITCHEN / COOKING GEAR WORTH THE INVESTMENT

The Best Thing to Slice Bread

A copiously crusty loaf, beautiful bagel or delicate layer cake deserves a knife that moves through it elegantly

TAKE A LOOK at your knife block. Chances are you have one basic bread knife, serrated and about 9 inches long—the kind that comes with every set. Maybe it does the trick. But be honest: How often do you find yourself aggressively sawing, maybe mangling those beautiful round sourdough loaves, or shredding the inside of a baguette when you try to slice it lengthwise? And that's to say nothing of bagels. Just ask any ER doctor, and you'll hear about the ubiquitous Sunday-brunch injury requiring stitches. What if you want to cut a loaf of brioche into thin slices for tea sandwiches without smushing its delicate crumb? Or slice a cake into perfectly even layers?

The question of what bread knife (or knives) should be in your arsenal is worth revisiting. Con-

sider, first, what kind of bread you make or buy most often. If it's an artisanal number with a nice thick crust, you may want to splurge on a blade that is not only razor-sharp but also long enough to extend past the diameter of the loaf. If you're a bagel lover, consider an offset knife that provides an extra degree of steadiness. If you worry about your grip, a textured handle is the way to go. The following four were selected and tested with safety, form, function and beauty in mind.

The Upper Crust

4 High-Performing Bread Knives

1 | The Splurge
Zwilling Bob Kramer Damascus Steel Bread Knife 10-inch This work of art was designed by bladesmith Bob Kramer and handcrafted in Seki, Japan's

cutlery capital. For the connoisseur who wants a knife to last generations, this micro-carbide-powder stainless-steel blade has been ice-hardened for lasting sharpness and boasts a Rockwell-scale hardness of 63. In plain English, it's wicked sharp and will stay that way. The protective Damascus pattern is both functional and beautiful. \$440, Williams-Sonoma.com

2 | The Steel Steal
Global Classic Bread Knife 8½-inch This affordable option is made entirely of stainless steel and cuts well above its pay grade. The handle is textured to provide a safer grip, and the weight is well balanced between blade and handle, making it a pleasure to use. It's the easiest to care for as, unlike wood, stainless steel isn't adversely affected by water and doesn't

need to be so carefully dried. Consider it for long loaves as well as round ones, ideally with a diameter under 8 inches. \$90, Williams-Sonoma.com

3 | The Beautiful
Shun Hikari Bread Knife 9-Inch This gorgeous, handcrafted knife is designed with microserrations that reduce friction as well as wide serrations for a clean, nearly crumb-free, crush-free slice. It has the power to cut through the thickest, crustiest loaf with ease and also the delicate precision a layer cake requires. With a lovely birch handle and hornet's-nest pattern on the blade, it is a beauty to behold and to hold. \$330, Williams-Sonoma.com

4 | The Small But Mighty
Shun Classic Offset Bread Knife 8¼-inch Handcrafted in Japan with 68 layers of forged stainless Damascus steel, this offset knife is the best choice for bagels, providing all the leverage and knuckle clearance required. Its size is also ideal for sandwiches, baguettes, rolls and ciabatta. \$206, Shun.Kaiusa.com
—Aleksandra Crapanzano



WITH TEETH Of all the bread knives we tested, these four made the cut.

ADVENTURE & TRAVEL

Posh Rooms With Past Lives

Old-home buff? These artfully updated historic hotels are the stuff of fixer-upper fantasies, from a gilded age New England seaside mansion to a quirky California wine-country manor



By SARAH KARNASIEWICZ

SOME TRAVELERS seek out sleek new hotels with spalike amenities or proximity to world-class golf. Not I. An old-house admirer and serial renovator who's watched more hours of HGTV than I care to disclose, I geek out about accommodations with a past. Give me original molding and handmade tile.

I'm hardly alone. "The most magical hotels I've visited in my life, like Chiltern Firehouse in London and J.K. Place in Florence, are all historic buildings that have been dressed up for today and given a new life," said San Francisco interior designer Jay Jeffers, who opened his own vintage inn, the Madrona (see below), in 2022. "I think guests are traveling for more than a place to sleep," said Rob Blood, founder of Lark Hotels, a 23-property hospitality group with a focus on historic locales throughout California, North Carolina and New England. "There's something special about staying in a home or a building that's lived many lives—the past incarnations become part of the experience."

For the style-minded, such stays can also yield unexpected "souvenirs." For instance, a few years back, I booked a sojourn at the Greyfield Inn, an enchanting hotel off the Georgia coast that was once the island getaway of Thomas Carnegie. When checkout time came, I consoled myself with the thought that while I might never own a robber-baron mansion, I could take a bit of the place home with me—in the form of the scarlet-paisley Morris & Co. wallpaper that lined the bar where I'd enjoyed a nightly old-fashioned. Before I even unpacked my carry-on, I'd tracked down three similar rolls. I'm pleased to report that my drinks closet has never looked chicer.

More good news for kindred spirits? In the past few years, a slew of artfully restored hotels have opened in historic homes and estates, in every corner of the States, as well as abroad. From the rolling plains of Waco, Texas, to the stately squares of London, we've rounded up a few of the best. Visit for your own renovation inspiration—or just to luxuriate in the fantasy for a few days, minus the mess.

1 | THE COASTAL RETREAT

Set just steps off Newport, R.I.'s storied Cliff Walk, the Cliffside Inn began life in 1876 as a seaside residence for Maryland governor Thomas Swann. In the 1900s it passed to Beatrice Turner, a gifted but reclusive artist who, after the death of her father, infamously painted every inch of the mansion's exterior jet black. Now a part of the Lark hotel group, the property was

updated in 2019 by Boston designer Rachel Reider with an eye to translating Turner's eclectic style for a contemporary clientele while still maintaining the home's Victorian architectural integrity. Each of the 16 luxurious rooms and suites is unique and features details like carved soapstone mantels, heart-pine floors, claw-foot slipper tubs and even some original artwork by Beatrice herself. *From \$169 a night, LarkHotels.com*

2 | THE ANGLOPHILE'S ESCAPE

Private, playful and oh-so-posh, At Sloane—one of London's most stylish new boutique hotels—caused a gasp of delight among antiques aficionados when it opened its doors late last year. Poised discreetly in London's affluent Chelsea neighborhood, the 1889 red brick townhouse has been meticulously updated by French designer and art collector François-Joseph Graf. Though undeniably grand, the place projects a low-key *fin-de-siècle* opulence. Nothing shouts. Rendered largely in an understated palette of ivory, fawn, terracotta and black, furnishings include pieces by Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Josef Hoffmann, stained-glass windows, reproduction 1800s Benson light fittings, mosaic-tile bathrooms, cashmere Loro Piana curtains and dozens of custom made carpets. *From about \$764 a night, AtSloane.com*

3 | THE CELEBRITY PROJECT

In the past decade, former "Fixer Upper" superstars Joanna and Chip Gaines have parlayed the runaway success of their shiplap-happy renovation series into their own Magnolia media and home decor empire. With the launch of Hotel 1928—a glamorous 33-room inn set in what was a Shriner's temple during the art deco era—the Waco, Texas-based team is now dipping its toes in the hospitality market. Fans on pilgrimage can expect to encounter an atmosphere equal parts polished Roaring '20s salon and Texan gentleman's club.

Think: crystal chandeliers illuminating distressed-leather chesterfields. *From \$375 a night, Hotel1928.com*

4 | THE CAPTAIN'S NEST

What happens when a premier New York interiors firm gets its hands on an original Greek Revival captain's house a stone's throw from Nantucket's historic wharf? Spot-on New England nautical charm. The design team of Roman & Williams, also known for their stylings of Manhattan's Ace Hotel and the Standard, takes an intimate, col-

like the foyer's stained glass cupola and original bookshelf-lined library have been lovingly restored, subtle in-room updates like limewashed walls, modern stone sinks and Kelly Wearstler lighting keep the mood from veering twee. Cocktail service in the parlor or veranda overlooking the leafy Boylan Heights neighborhood further sweetens the deal. *From \$299 a night HeightsHouseNC.com*

6 | THE CALIFORNIAN DREAM

Before its sophisticated update by Jeffers, the Madrona, an eclectic 19th-century manor in the heart of Healdsburg, Calif., had been through myriad incarnations, from working ranch to Victorian family estate to sleepy wine country B&B. This latest form liberates the property—which includes the mansion, a carriage house, bungalows, saltwater pool and citrus orchard set on eight verdant acres—from its prim painted-lady past. Rather, says the designer, the new revamp draws inspiration from the hedonistic "beauty for beauty's sake" ethos of its Aesthetic Movement roots. Modern luxuries like toiletries by Flamingo Estate mix with reupholstered period furniture and original slate and tile fireplaces in nearly every room. Guests itching to own their own slice of the Madrona magic can scan QR codes to learn more about the hotel's extensive art collection, curated by San Francisco's Dolby Chadwick Gallery—every piece of which is available for purchase. *From \$595 a night, TheMadronaHotel.com*

Forget spa services—give me original molding and handmade tile.

lected approach here, with common spaces and luxe rooms decked out in handmade Portuguese tiles, 19th-century seascapes, block-printed bedding by John Robshaw, rattan tables and gracefully worn Caucasian rugs. *From \$305 a night, GreydonHouse.com*

5 | THE LOCAL LANDMARK

"We wanted to treasure the old pieces but never wanted it to feel like grandma's bed-and-breakfast," Sarah Shepherd said of Heights House, the renovated 1858 Italianate mansion in Raleigh, N.C., that she and her husband opened as a nine-room boutique inn in 2021. Mission accomplished: While striking details



READ MCKENDREE (CLIFFSIDE INN); DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN (GREYDON HOUSE); CODY JURICH/HOTEL 1928; CATHILIN ANTJE (HEIGHTS HOUSE); MATTHEW WILLMAN (THE MADRONA)

GEAR & GADGETS



OCTANE DREAMS The Ioniq 5 N has been engineered to re-create and virtualize the feral edginess of high-performance gas guzzlers.

There is a lot of value-added titillation aimed at the next generation of rubber fetishists. Among the frolicsome tech: the NGB, or “N Grin Boost” button on the steering wheel, unleashing 10 seconds of additional 40 hp (to 641 hp) with the e-motors redlining at 21,000 rpm. Do you miss your time with the circus, being shot out of a cannon? Press that button.

Over on the touch screen display, drivers have more options than Timothée Chalamet at a Hollywood afterparty. Example: The N

The Ioniq 5 N comes with an epistemological argument as standard equipment: Is what you are experiencing real?

Drift Optimizer. This codeware helps drivers pitch the car sideways under power and control the “drift” with counter-steering inputs as if they had been practicing all their young and misguided lives. The hardest part was finding an unattended parking lot that I could graffiti in peace.

To an extent I found surprising, the N team used software to dial out compromises that are typical in EV platforms. EVs typically weigh more than the comparable gas versions, with most of the extra mass in a floor-mounted battery pack that extends to the vehicle’s perimeter. As a result, they can feel a little sluggish turning into a corner, with a high moment of inertia resisting the rotation. This is why EVs tend to feel late and lazy in transient handling.

Hyundai’s fix is called N Pedal, a block of code that knows to sharply ramp up regen braking going into corners (up to 0.6 g deceleration), increasing weight transfer and helping the front tires bite and turn in.

Maybe it does—hard to tell. The initial turn-in and rotation is vital enough to sling phones and cameras out open windows. But there’s not a lot of feeling to feel. Both e-assisted steering and brake systems use force-feedback systems to approximate some tactility, but it only amounts to some proportional weight to push against.

Without the N’s deeply bolstered sport seats holding drivers in place, many of the car’s g-loading antics would be hard to execute.

The Hyundai is certainly dressed to party. The N is about 3 inches longer than the standard Ioniq 5, mostly due to the diffuser element jutting from beneath the rear bumper. Wider wheel arches enclose 21-inch forged aluminum wheels slathered with Pirelli P Zeros (275/35R21). The aero trim, rocker panels and front/rear fascia are all kissed with the N brand’s orange lipstick.

You may think you can tell the difference between what is real and what is the Matrix. Perhaps so. But ask yourself, do you hear better than a poodle?

RUMBLE SEAT / DAN NEIL



A Hyundai Hatchback That Cosplays As a Feral Gasser

EVERY TIME I walk out the door, my dog Viggo is thrown into a major depression. He stares out the window, watching and waiting...and listening. He associates the sound of a powerful car in the neighborhood with the return of the king.

The other day I came home in a 2025 Hyundai Ioniq 5 N, a futuristic mop bucket of tire-murdering outrage over-sloshing with 641 hp. With seating for five adults, 26 cubic feet of cargo space behind the seats and a starting price of \$66,100, this over-functioning family hatchback is about as quick as a Lamborghini Urus in the quarter-mile and faster than an early-2000s Porsche 911 GT2 around the Nürburgring Nordschleife (7:45 minutes). This is one angry appliance.

My kids reported that Viggo started wagging his tail while I was still a block away. Except that—like the dog who heard His Master’s Voice coming out of a gramophone—Viggo was fooled, mistaking the EV’s artificially generated bluster for the real thing.

When it comes to fidelity, RCA Victor has nothing on Hyundai.

What’s it all mean? The N badge is Hyundai’s performance imprimatur, signifying a tweaked-to-the-gills version of a production car—in this case, the company’s mannerly hatchback, now dressed as a cosplay pageant winner. As the South Korean giant’s product portfolio increasingly turns electric, the N brand’s youthful troublemakers are studying ways to replicate, re-create and otherwise

2025 HYUNDAI IONIQ 5 N



Suggested retail price \$66,100
Propulsion All-electric AWD. Front and rear permanent-magnet motors (223/378 hp, f/r) with two-stage inverter; 84 kWh battery with 800V charging; rear-biased AWD with limited-slip rear differential.
Max power/torque 641 hp/568 lb-ft
Length/Wheelbase/width/height 185.6/118.1/76.4/62.4 inches
Curb weight 4,861 pounds
Range 221 miles
0-60 mph 3.25 seconds
Charging Up to 238 kW, 10%-80% capacity in 18 minutes
Cargo capacity 26.1/59.3 cubic feet, behind 2nd row/1st row

virtualize the feral edginess of high-performance gassers—the very sense-data of enthusiast driving—with electronically derived experientials.

The most provocative of the car’s illusions are the N e-Shift and N Active Sound + functions. The first does a dead-on impersonation of a dual-clutch, paddle-shifted, multimodal transmission, including rifle-crack upshifts, wailing redlines and rev-matched downshifts complete with engine braking—YUNGGGG! YUUUUNG-GGG! No engine, no gearbox.

Helping drivers traverse the uncanny valley is the N Active Sound + system, which fakes the aural and subaural effects of a high-strung engine so well its

mother couldn’t tell the difference. By way of 10 speakers—two of them on the outside—the Ioniq 5 N roars, it snores, it flatulates on a trailing throttle like it’s rolling into a corner at Mid-Ohio. Again, no gasoline, no exhaust pipes.

The Ioniq 5 N is thus the first car that comes with an epistemological argument as standard equipment: Is what you are experiencing real; and if you can’t tell, what difference does it make?

I’ve always thought that complaints about EVs being emotionally arid and unfulfilling were just kvetchings, an easy way for Boomers to dismiss the superior technology. Fitted with a pair of huge electric motors (223 hp in front, 378 hp in the rear), extra-gnarly

two-stage inverters and rear-biased all-wheel drive, the Ioniq 5 N accelerates like a runaway belt sander. But, as skeptics point out, fast is not the same, emotionally/experientially, as fun.

I have to admit, the N’s lurid, time-attack soundtrack—called “Ignition”—makes things pretty damn jolly. I also like the fact that drivers can shut off the rumble and wail. With a press of a button the hooligan can go into hiding.

If you’re not in the mood for classic rock, the Hyundai has two other fanciful soundscapes, one that sounds like Harry Potter’s favorite Quidditch broom and the other like a temporal vortex.

It’s not all about replacing what’s been lost to electrification.

Clean Up Your Scrolling

Tips to make screen time more meaningful

WE DON’T ALWAYS realize how many hours we’re spending on social media, racking up excessive screen time, and how it’s affecting us. Yet the act of online scrolling through news or other content that makes one feel sad, anxious, angry or worse, has become so common, it’s been given a name: doomscrolling.

Even if you’re not ready to delete your social media apps, you can take control of how you use them. Instead of just simply letting yourself track catastrophes on X, feel FOMO while watching your friends hang out without you on Instagram, compare your bodies to those of dancing TikTokers, or feel professional jealousy toward former co-workers on LinkedIn, try these tips.

1 Change How You Engage Michelle Mouhtis, a licensed therapist and social worker based in Red Bank,

N.J., who specializes in counseling millennials, says passive scrolling can quickly land you in a “compare and despair” trap. Her advice: Be more deliberate with your content consumption. Rather than doomscrolling to avoid emotions, or put off sleep, devote screen time to learning a new skill via YouTube, more information about a topic you care about or connecting with a new community.

2 Curate Your Content Carefully consider how the accounts you follow affect you. If the content you’re seeing triggers envy or a sense that you don’t measure up, know that most social media apps allow you to mute people and certain topics, stopping them from appearing entirely or a lot less frequently. You don’t even have to unfriend someone to avoid their content.

3 Track Your Timing Get familiar with your phone’s “Screen Time” features. Most phones will provide data on how you use them, including the number of times you pick them up each day. Both Apple and Android users can set limits on your screen time for

specific apps in the settings. Although you can override the prompt that pulls the plug and keep scrolling, Mouhtis said the alert still helps. “Having that added step, where you have to manually allow another 15 minutes slows you down.”

4 Delete, Delete, Delete Just because you’ve downloaded an app once, doesn’t mean it has to be on your home screen forever. If you find that using any given app at specific times of the year (like the holidays) triggers unhealthy thought loops,

delete it from your phone. You can always download it again. For apps you decide to keep, Mouhtis recommends turning notifications off. Your “likes” will still be there even if you aren’t notified of them in real time. You can also turn off all notifications by using the “Do Not Disturb” function.

5 Put the Phone Down Much of social media engagement—Instagram “likes,” LinkedIn shares and the ping of a DM notification—cause our brains to produce dopamine. The chemical is associated with temporary bursts of pleasure, says Mouhtis, unlike serotonin, which is linked to longer-lasting feelings of happiness. To avoid the chase of that high, take on things that make it physically impossible to scroll. Offline activities like cooking, crocheting, biking and rollerblading suit this purpose, but even an episode of a TV show, Mouhtis points out, ends eventually, unlike your TikTok or Instagram feeds’ infinite scroll.

—Rae Witte