"All the News That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

THE WEATHER
Today, intervals of clouds and sunshine, low humidity, high 76. Tonight, partly cloudy, low 64. Tomorrow, partly sunny, turning warmer, high 80. Weather map, Page B8.

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TAILYR IRVINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A display on the stairs of the Capitol in Helena, Mont., in November paid tribute to relatives and friends who were taken by suicide.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Macron Takes Huge Gamble After Setback

He Calls for Early Vote Amid Rise of Far Right

By ROGER COHEN

PARIS — On the face of it, there is little logic in calling an election from a position of great weakness. But that is what President Emmanuel Macron has done by calling a snap parliamentary election in France on the back of a humiliation by the far right.

After the National Rally of Marine Le Pen and her popular protégé Jordan Bardella handed him a crushing defeat on Sunday in elections for the European Parliament, Mr. Macron might have done nothing. He might also have reshuffled his government, or simply altered course through stricter controls on immigration and by renouncing contested plans to tighten rules on unemployment benefits.

Instead, Mr. Macron, who became president at 39 in 2017 by being a risk taker, chose to gamble that France, having voted one way on Sunday, will vote another in a few weeks.

"I am astonished, like almost everyone else," said Alain Duhamel, the prominent author of "Emmanuel the Bold," a book about Mr. Macron. "It's not madness, it's not despair, but it is a huge risk from an impetuous man who prefers taking the initiative to being subjected to events."

Shock coursed through France on Monday. The stock market plunged. Anne Hidalgo, the mayor of Paris, a city that will host the Olympic Games in just over six weeks, said she was "stunned" by an "unsettling" decision. "A thunderbolt," thundered Le Parisien, a daily newspaper, across its front page.

For Le Monde, it was "a jump in the void." Raphaël Glucksmann, who guided the revived center-left socialists to third place among French parties in the European vote, accused Mr. Macron of "a dangerous game."

France is always a mystery, its perennial discontent and restiveness at odds with its prosperity and beauty, but this was a surprise of unusual proportions. Mr. Macron, after a stinging defeat in which the National Rally won 31.4 percent of the vote to 14.6 percent for the coalition led by his Renaissance party, has in effect called his country's bluff, asking if its apparent readiness for the extreme right in power is real or a mere letting-off of steam.

The risk is that about a month from now Mr. Macron would

Continued on Page A9

SECURITY COUNCIL ADOPTS U.S. PLAN FOR A CEASE-FIRE

BUT CHALLENGES LOOM

Visiting Mideast, Blinken Pushes Deal Between Israel and Hamas

This article is by Farnaz Fassihi, Michael Crowley, Mike Ives and Thomas Fuller.

The United Nations Security Council on Monday adopted a U.S.-backed cease-fire plan for the Gaza Strip with only Russia abstaining, a sign of the growing frustration among the world's major powers over the war and the desire to bring it to an end.

Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, told members of the Security Council that Israel had already agreed to the deal laid out in the resolution — although Israel has so far resisted taking a public position on it — and she urged Hamas "to do the same."

"Hamas can now see that the international community is united, united behind a deal that will save lives and help Palestinian civilians in Gaza start to rebuild and heal," she said.

The 14-0 vote may strengthen the hand of Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, who returned to the Middle East on Monday to press Hamas and Israel to agree to a cease-fire.

But in a sign of the difficulties



EYAD BABA/A.F.P — GETTY IMAGES

Remnants of a Gaza home on Sunday after an Israeli attack.

facing Mr. Blinken and other mediators in achieving a final deal, Israel's representative to the U.N., Reut Shapir Ben-Naftaly, did not say Israel had accepted the terms of the cease-fire plan. She said her country's goals in the war had not changed and it would use military operations to free hostages, as it did just two days ago.

"We will continue until all of the hostages are returned and Hamas's military capabilities are dismantled," Ms. Shapir Ben-Naftaly told the Council. She said if Hamas leaders freed all hostages and

Continued on Page A10

Fighting Soaring Suicide Rate With Gun Locks and Leaflets

Grim Record Leaving Long Trail of Agony in Montana

By MICHAEL CORKERY

HELENA, Mont. — On a typical day, Ali Mullen races from her job at the county health department in Helena to pick up dinner for her three children, heads home to feed them and then goes back out for a violin lesson or a school play, crisscrossing the small city in her aging S.U.V., with a rainbow bumper sticker that reads "You Are Loved."

A big pack of gummy bears keeps her going, stashed in her handbag next to a different sort of lifesaver: a gun lock that she carries almost everywhere she goes.

In a sparsely populated state where many people own firearms, the small metal contraptions, which fit around a trigger and cost less than $10 on Amazon, are one way Montanans are trying to reduce the high rate of people who kill themselves.

For the past year, Ali, 46, has been giving gun locks away to anyone who wants one, her piece of trying to solve the puzzle of suicide in Montana.

"It's in the culture," she said one afternoon in Helena. "If you don't know someone, you know of someone who has died."

Murder rates and mass shootings make national headlines, defining the discussion over pervasive gun violence. But most gun deaths in America are self-inflicted. There were about 27,000 gun suicides in 2022. That was a record, and far higher than the 19,500 gun homicides documented that year.

There have been more gun suicides than gun homicides in the

Continued on Page A14

Democrat Crosses Aisle to Open Campaign Financing Floodgates

Ending Agency Logjam and Angering Those Seeking Reform

By SHANE GOLDMACHER

For more than a decade, America's campaign watchdog agency was a portrait of dysfunction. Divided equally between three Republicans and three Democrats, the Federal Election Commission deadlocked so often it became a political punchline as investigations languished, enforcement slowed and updated guidelines for the internet era stalled.

Now the commission has suddenly come unstuck.

In a series of recent decisions that are remaking the landscape of money in American politics, an ascendant new bloc of three Republicans and one Democrat is voting together to roll back limits on how politicians, political parties and super PACs raise and spend money.

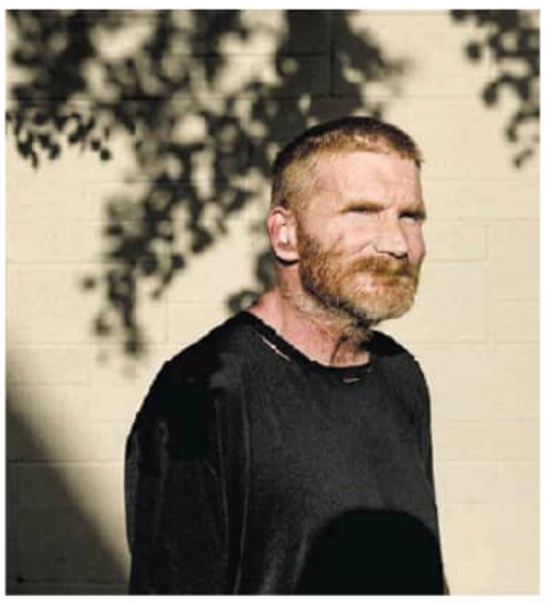
Reform groups are aghast at what they see as the swift coming apart of longstanding restraints. Conservatives who for years have dreamed of loosening restrictions are delighted, even though many of the rulings were sought by one of the Democratic Party's most prominent lawyers, Marc Elias, who was seeking political advantage and clarity for his clients.

Those on both sides of the ideological divide agree on one thing: The changes amount to some of the most significant regulatory revisions since the campaign finance law, the McCain-Feingold Act, was put in place two decades ago.

"These decisions are a monumental shift in the law at the commission," said Sean Cooksey, the Republican chairman of the Fed-

Continued on Page A13







PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADRIANA ZEHBRAUSKAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

From left, Sheila Meade, Vance Blair and Kenson John. All three have stayed at Circle the City, a respite care program in Phoenix. Respite care offers rehabilitation services to homeless people who would otherwise shuttle between hospitals and the street.

Help Is Growing for People Who Are Ailing and Live on the Street

Respite Care Provides a Place to Recuperate

By JASON DePARLE

PHOENIX — Five years on the Phoenix streets battered Vance Blair's body. His vision dimmed, his speech slowed, and his hands began to twitch. A bulging pelvis revealed the need for hernia surgery, and the vacant lot where he slept was no place to keep dressings clean.

Mr. Blair often lingered by a shaded building, and several women who worked there grew fond of the diffident man who asked permission to escape the sun. They brought him food and discovered his dilemma: Medicaid would cover his operation, but hospitals discharge patients quickly and surgeons would not proceed unless he had a place to heal.

Then they learned that a Phoenix group runs what amounts to a nursing home for the homeless. Mr. Blair has remained there since his operation six months ago and says the care might have saved his life.

"After a while of being outside, I was having thoughts of not wanting to live anymore," he said. "This place has been a great help."

Respite care for homeless people is rapidly growing, aimed at people well enough to leave the hospital but too sick for the street. Its rise reflects the aging of the unhoused population and the decade-long expansion of Medicaid, which helps cover the cost. Many programs also get subsidies from hospitals or insurance companies eager to shorten hospital stays or

Continued on Page A16

Italians Want to Tell Zelensky: Tear Down This Putin Plaque

By LARA JAKES

BARI, Italy — A small copper plaque mounted across the piazza from the Basilica of St. Nicholas in Bari, Italy, pledges "friendship and cooperation" between the city and the Russian people. It is signed by someone who, for the past two years in Europe, has pursued anything but: President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia.

The plaque is a replica of a letter Mr. Putin sent in 2003, nearly two decades before his invasion of Ukraine, and for years it drew little notice from Bari's residents or the tens of thousands of pilgrims who visit the site annually to venerate the saint, whose remains are interred there. But a growing number of people now see it as sign of Mr. Putin's hypocrisy — particularly among a diaspora of local Ukrainians who want it taken down.

The war will be among the most pressing issues that leaders of the world's largest advanced economies and President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine will discuss this week at an annual meeting of the Group of 7, which is being hosted by Italy and held just an hour down the road. For the many residents of Bari who have wanted the plaque removed since the war began, the gathering nearby is seen as a chance to enlist Mr. Putin's fiercest international critics to their cause.

"Since Putin has been declared an international criminal, to have

Continued on Page A6



SCIENCE D1-8

Finding Mysterious Fungi
What does the future hold for mushroom foraging? New tools for identifying species. PAGE D4

Little Plant, Lots of DNA
Scientists say they have found the largest known genome inside a fern on an island east of Australia. PAGE D8

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A Haitian Gang Turned Militia
Haiti's gangs have always been deadly. But now at least one group is portraying itself as a paramilitary force, with military-style weapons. PAGE A8

BUSINESS B1-6

Your Driving Data Is for Sale
The insurance industry, hungry for insights into motorists, has turned to automakers and phone apps. PAGE B1

Shopping Center Resurgence
The vacancy rate is the lowest it has been in two decades as developers shift focus from department stores. PAGE B1

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Part of Trump Case Is Struck
A federal judge tossed part of the classified documents case, involving a sensitive military map the former president is said to have shown an aide. PAGE A17

Fake Log From Fatal Dive
The federal team investigating the Titan disaster found that a detailed recounting of the submersible's descent to the Titanic was "made up." PAGE A15

Technology to Cool the Earth
A previously skeptical environmental group will spend millions to study the impact of reflecting sunlight into space as global warming worsens. PAGE A18



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Nona Hendryx's New Creation
Best known for "Lady Marmalade," her hit with Labelle, she is bringing a multimedia project to Lincoln Center. PAGE C1

Stalled on Traffic, and More
After congestion pricing was put on hold, Michael Kimmelman wonders if New York can still do big things. PAGE C1

SPORTS B7-11

From N.B.A. to Soccer Field
Dennis Schröder, a guard for the Nets, returned home to Germany to play in a regional match. PAGE B7

Cricket Comes to Long Island
A temporary stadium draws 34,000 people for a Cricket World Cup game between India and Pakistan. PAGE B11

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Lux Alptraum PAGE A20

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The Newspaper and Beyond

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VIDEO

The United States once looked to offsite construction as an efficient way to build lots of housing. Sweden has put that idea into practice. Francesca Mari broke down the process in "Behind the Reporting." *nytimes.com/video*

TRAVEL

Explore the best that Brooklyn has to offer with the Travel desk's recommendations, including a secluded oasis of art and nature, and a no-frills spot for delicious pan-fried dumplings. See the rest at *nytimes.com/travel.*

COOKING

In Times Cooking's collection of bright and beautiful summer pastas, find recipes for tahini-parmesan pasta salad, fettuccine with lobster and zucchini, smoky tomato carbonara and more. *nytcooking.com*

Quote of the Day

"He has given many French people the feeling of being inferior, and they detest that."

ALAIN DUHAMEL, *an author who has written about President Emmanuel Macron. France's leader is making a big gamble by calling elections as the far right is rising.* *Page A1.*

The Story Behind the Story



KELLY BURGESS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Susan Apel and Keith Irwin, the subject of a Times article, were unable to downsize because of a lack of affordable housing in their area.

A Column in Which Age Takes Center Stage

After 15 years, Paula Span still finds inspiration for her health column, The New Old Age.

By JOSH OCAMPO

For about 15 years, Paula Span has dedicated much of her journalism career to covering one subject: aging, and the challenges that come with it.

Ms. Span writes The New Old Age, a twice-monthly column for the Health section at The New York Times about issues affecting older Americans. Among the topics she has recently explored are the costs of growing older, the rise of robotic pets as companions and the hazards of misinformation on social media.

Ms. Span took over the The New Old Age in 2009, when it was a blog. Before The Times, she wrote for The Washington Post's Style desk and magazine, where in 2002, she reported an article about residents at an assisted-living facility in Bethesda, Md.

"At the time, people didn't really know much about assisted living," Ms. Span said. "It got me interested in spending time with older people and writing about these issues." Four years later, she began writing her first book, "When the Time Comes," about the struggles of families with aging parents.

In a phone interview from her home in Brooklyn, Ms. Span, 74, discussed how the column's audience has changed over the years and why she reads every reader comment on her articles. These are edited excerpts from the conversation.

What makes for a good column of yours?

Something that's a national trend or a development that's rooted in fact, science and research and affects people. There is no shortage of such topics when you're talking about a group as large as elder Americans. There's something like 60 million people over 65 in the United States. There are many things that this group is concerned about, like living arrangements; Medicare and other insurance and policy issues; health; end-of-life connections. It's a big canvas, which makes it enjoyable and continually interesting. When I took the column on, I thought I'd run out of material in a few years. Of course, 15 years later, there's still so much to talk about.

Where do you find ideas?

I have a press subscription to a lot of medical journals, so I'm constantly looking for what researchers are discovering about seniors and health and overdiagnosis and overtreatment. A number of advocacy groups interested in Medicare, housing, nutrition and other issues get in touch with me. Anyone who talks about aging within 20 feet of me, I am all over it.

Who do you consider your audience?

That has changed a bit over time. When The New Old Age was conceived initially as a column about aging and caregiving, we thought the audience was the adult children who were caring for and helping to make decisions about their parents and their elder relatives. Over time, we came to realize that many of our readers were older adults themselves. We were writing about them as if they weren't there. It probably helped that I was aging along with the column, so I became an older adult.

So now we see our audience as family members and adult children, but also older Americans themselves and all the people that are interested in the topic, like gerontologists, Meals on Wheels staffers, operators of long-term care facilities, advocates and elder attorneys. A group this big attracts a lot of attention from many sources.

Your article on homeownership no longer being a boon for older Americans stood out to me. What inspired it?

I think it came from Boston College's Center for Retirement Research, which had been looking at this topic. When I read more about it, it appeared that a lot of agencies and research groups had been looking at this subject because of first lower then rising interest rates, soaring rents and housing prices. Most of us grew up thinking that homeownership was your A.T.M. that funds and secures your retirement. For some people, that may no longer be the case. I think reporters have an interest in looking deeper into things that we all thought were true that maybe turn out not to be. This story was one of those.

I noticed you like to engage with readers who comment on your articles.

Sometimes I get ideas from what readers share about their own experiences. We talk a lot about the disadvantages of the way we all live online, but this is an advantage. Early in my career, if any reader wanted to get in touch with me, they had to either try to get my phone number and call me or write me a physical letter. To be able to see what people think and feel is really useful.

What's the greatest challenge of your work?

Finding older individuals who are willing to share their stories with me about things that are sometimes quite personal — health care, family relationships, finances. It's easier to delve into some of these complicated subjects when there is a human story to tell. People have been very generous with their time. But we do require that they use their real names, locations and ages. We like to take their photographs when we can, and sometimes that can be difficult.

After 15 years of writing The New Old Age, do you have a favorite column?

One example where I could actually see the impact of something that I wrote was when the Justice Department went after the operator of an upscale continuing care retirement community in Virginia for discrimination; it was barring people who lived in the assisted living and the nursing home sections of the facility, restricting the fancy waterfront dining room to the independent living residents. Residents were outraged. They were paying a lot of money for that place.

Read The New Old Age in Science Times today.

Today's Top Trending Headlines

Butterfly or Firefly: What's Your Friendship Style? You're in PJs, and a pal invites you to a party: Are you so there, or so staying in bed? Either is perfectly fine, but knowing your friendship style, courtesy of Well's new quiz, may help you better thrive in any social situation. Give it a try, then sign up for Well's 5-Day Friendship Challenge.

Sunny Days in Moscow In May, a group of Russian military students visited a snowy park in Moscow to see NATO tanks that had been seized in Ukraine. The moment was captured by the photographer Nanna Heitmann; the photo was selected for In One Image, a Times project that excavates the many meanings of a single, powerful shot.

At 17, She Fell in Love With a 47-Year-Old. Now She Questions The Story. Jill Ciment's 1996 memoir "Half a Life" described her teenage affair with the man she later married. Her new memoir, "Consent," dramatically revises some details. Alexandra Alter of the Books team interviewed Ms. Ciment over tea for this article.

How to Pack for a Two-Week Trip With One Small Suitcase What essentials should I bring? Do I roll or fold my clothing? What's the point of a packing cube? T Magazine answered these questions and more in its guide to maximizing a small suitcase, with expert advice from professional travelers. Rule No. 1: Choose the right luggage.

A Headline From History

CARDINALS' 21 HITS CRUSH REDS, 18 TO 0

June 11, 1944. Getting shut out by the St. Louis Cardinals in the 9th inning the previous day, the Cincinnati Reds put 15-year-old pitcher Joe Nuxhall on the mound, according to an Associated Press article in The Times, making him the youngest player in modern major league history. It was four days after the D-Day invasion, and professional dugouts were filled with players who were too young or old for the draft. Nuxhall returned to high school that fall, and after pitching in the minor leagues for several seasons, rejoined the Reds in 1952. He spent more than half a century in Cincinnati — first as an All-Star pitcher, and later as a broadcaster — and died in 2007 at 79. He remains the youngest player to appear in a Major League Baseball game.

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Facts of Interest

In the past two years, Peru's ranking has plummeted on a press freedom index maintained by Reporters Without Borders. It fell to 77 from 125 — the biggest drop of any country in Latin America.

A Reporter's Work Helped Topple Presidents. Now He Is Being Investigated in Peru. A11

Last fall, viewership of a cricket match between India and Pakistan, two of the great cricketing nations, reached 398 million in India alone, according to the International Cricket Council. (This year's Super Bowl had 123 million viewers.)

On Long Island, Sea of Orange, Blue And Green for Cricket World Cup B11

As many as 95 percent of the planet's fungal species have yet to be described, per a 2023 report from Royal Botanic Garden, Kew.

Searching to Identify New Fungi Species D4

New York City's street grid remained wildly unpopular from its conception in 1811 throughout the century it required to complete.

Putting Up a Roadblock to Boldness C1

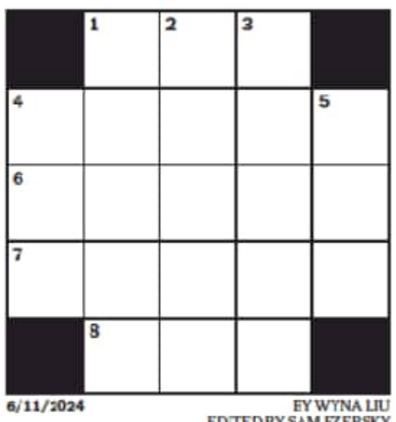
For the first time in 20 years, demand for retail space outstrips supply. Shopping center vacancy is the lowest it has been in two decades, at 5.4 percent, according to the real estate firm Cushman & Wakefield.

Shopping Centers Going From Vacant to Vibrant B1

In a study that followed more than 110,000 adults over the age of 30, researchers found that people who ate at least two servings of avocado per week had a 21 percent lower risk of coronary heart disease.

Avocados in Action D6

The Mini Crossword



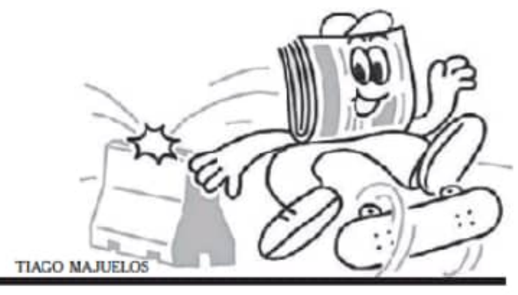
6/11/2024 BY WYNA LIU EDITED BY SAM EZERSKY

ACROSS
1 In need of some cheering up
4 City that holds an annual "Grand Prix de la baguette" contest
6 Battery life, colloquially
7 Take the wheel
8 Twice-curved letter

DOWN
1 Pan-fry
2 Ram in the zodiac
3 Cuts into small cubes
4 Attire you might wear while working from home, for short
5 Spanish verb meaning "to be"

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

S	W	E	A	R
K	O	A	L	A
A	R	G	O	N
	S	E	N	D
	T	R	E	Y



TIAGO MAJUELOS

Reader Corner

Did you apply for compensation for nuclear radiation exposure?

Catie Edmondson, who reports on Congress for The Times, has been covering efforts on Capitol Hill to expand the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, a 1990 law allowing Americans sickened by government-caused nuclear contamination apply for federal compensation. The law has expired, but lawmakers are expected to continue negotiating over whether and how to broaden the program. Ms. Edmondson would like to hear from people who have filed a claim for themselves or loved ones.

Tell us: How did you first learn about the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act? How was the claimant exposed to nuclear radiation? How did the exposure manifest? If you received assistance preparing the claim, how did you learn about those services?

To share your experience, fill out our form at nytimes.com/readers. We will not publish your response without contacting you first.

From the Feeds

What Times Journalists Are Posting Across Social Media



MICHELLE LITVIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Wentland family chose to stay put in their Chicago home and avoid a higher mortgage rate.

Many Americans who bought their starter home in the last few years have been unable to trade up, a consequence of high interest rates, record home prices and near rock-bottom inventory. For a recent article, the reporter Rukmini Callimachi spoke to homeowners and economists to better understand the state of the housing market. Ms. Callimachi shared notes about her reporting on the platform X. Read her edited thread below.

For the past two decades, home prices have soared, but the price of the lowest tier — the cheapest homes in a given market — have gone up the fastest. The lowest tier (what we call "starter homes") has soared 189 percent since 2004, while the average for all single family homes in that same period has gone up 113 percent.

Why is the bottom tier going up faster than any other category? There are at least three reasons, starting with the fact that it doesn't make financial sense for builders to build them. According to Freddie Mac, in the 1970s, some 400,000 starter homes were built each year. By 2020? Just 65,000.

But recently, two other problems have converged. One is record home prices. Nationwide, the median sales price of a single family home has now topped $433,000, "the highest of level on record," according to Redfin. So there's not enough of them, and the ones that are out there are a lot more expensive than they used to be.

Currently, around six out of every 10 homeowners have mortgages with interest rates that are at 4 percent and below. If they were to buy a new house now, any mortgage they would require would be at around 7 percent. Economists estimate that some 900,000 homes didn't change hands last year because of this.

Could someone use their accrued equity to buy their trade-up home? Yes, but given that the same wave that caused their value to go up has also buoyed the values of other homes around them, it would most likely mean the seller would need to leave their city and maybe even their state.

Retirees can do that. It's harder for people with jobs. And so a lot of people are staying put. That squeezes everyone. Normally, over 5 million homes change hands in a given year. Last year it was around 4 million, according to economists.

Follow Ms. Callimachi on X @rcallimachi.

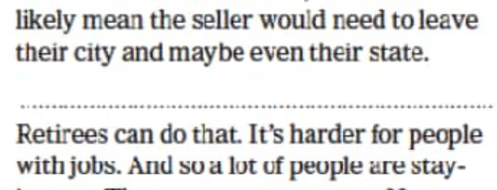
Here to Help

A Recipe for Farro With Salmon, Cucumber, Radicchio and Dill

Salmon steams right over toasty farro, saving you from having to wash an extra pan. The silky fish and chewy grains get a refreshing lemony salad of cucumbers and radicchio on top, which is prepared while the farro cooks. **GENEVIEVE KO**

TIME: 40 MINUTES
YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

- 5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more as needed
- 1 onion, finely chopped (1 cup)
- Kosher salt (such as Diamond Crystal) and black pepper
- 2 cups farro (12 ounces), rinsed and drained
- 1 lemon
- 3 mini (or Persian) seedless cucumbers (7 ounces)
- 1 small head radicchio (5 ounces)
- ⅓ cup packed finely chopped dill
- 4 boneless salmon fillets (4 ounces each, and about 1-inch thick)



JULIA GARTLAND FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

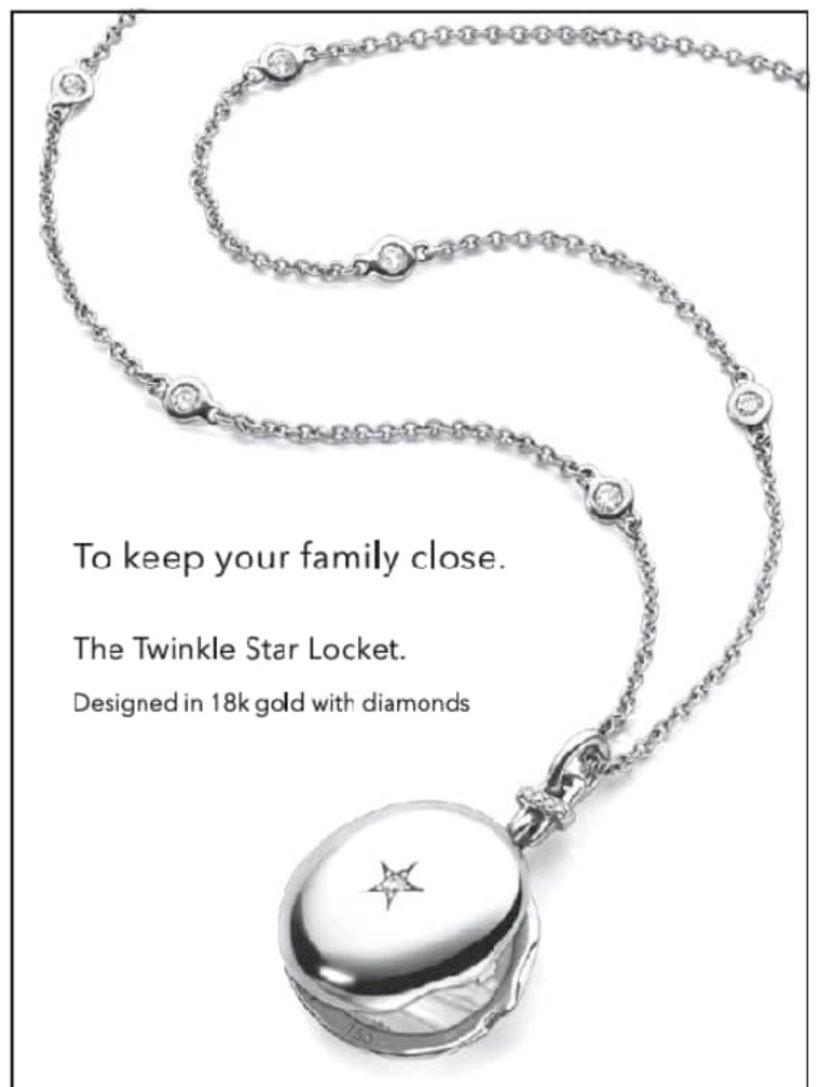
1. Heat 3 tablespoons of oil in a large straight-sided skillet with a lid over medium heat. Add onion, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring often, until starting to turn clear, about 3 minutes. Add farro, sprinkle with salt, and cook, stirring, until the pan is dry and the farro smells toasty, about 2 minutes. Stir in 2½ cups water. Bring to a boil, then cover skillet, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer for 20 minutes.

2. Zest the lemon into a large bowl, then squeeze in its juice. Cut the cucumbers in quarters lengthwise, then slice into ½-inch slices crosswise (about 2 cups); add to the bowl. Quarter and core the radicchio, then thinly slice into ¼-inch strips (about 3 cups); add to the bowl. Add dill, remaining 2 tablespoons oil and a pinch each of salt and pepper, and toss until evenly coated.

3. When the farro is done, season the salmon with salt and pepper. Uncover the farro. Most of the water should be absorbed and the grains should be al dente. Set the salmon on top of the farro in a single layer, skin side up if applicable. Cover and steam to desired doneness, 6 to 7 minutes for medium-rare. Remove from heat. If your salmon has skin, grip a corner with a paper towel and peel off and discard; repeat with the remaining fillets. The skin should come off easily in a single piece.

4. Divide the farro and salmon among bowls, flaking the salmon into pieces if you like, and top with the cucumber salad. Drizzle with olive oil, and season with salt and pepper to taste.

For more recipes, visit New York Times Cooking at nytcooking.com.



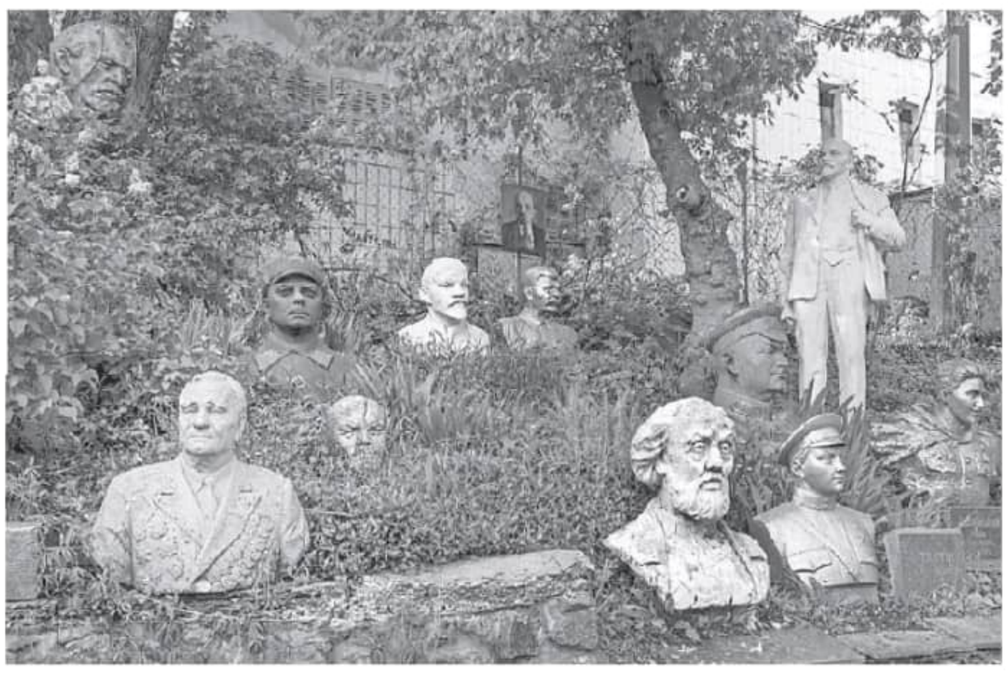




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International

The New York Times





Left, statues and busts of Lenin, Stalin and other Communist Party figures from the Soviet era at an informal outdoor museum in Kyiv. The struggle to favor native Ukrainian traditions over colonial ones is a popular subject in political discourse, playing out in bookshops like Sens, a large new space on Kyiv's main avenue, right.

THE GLOBAL PROFILE MARIAM NAIEM

Encouraging a Cultural, Not Just Political, Shift Beyond Russia

By CONSTANT MÉHEUT

KYIV, Ukraine — On a recent afternoon in Kyiv, a professor of literature and a stand-up comedian got together to talk about Russian colonialism, a subject that has become a preoccupation among Ukrainian activists, cultural figures and bookstore owners.

The moderator, which was recorded for a new podcast for Ukraine's national public broadcaster, was Mariam Naiem, a graphic designer and former philosophy student who has become an unlikely expert on the topic.

"This war is just the continuation of centuries of Russian colonization," said Ms. Naiem, 32, referring to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. "It's the same playbook."

Russia's long cultural and political domination of Ukraine, first through its empire and then the Soviet Union, had left an indelible mark, the guests agreed, as they lamented being more fluent in Russian poems and films than in their own nation's cultural treasures.

The goal of the podcast, Ms. Naiem said, was to solve this problem and "talk about our personal and social path of decolonization."

It may have seemed an odd moment of cultural introspection in a war-battered country with urgent problems like how to repel Russian troops advancing along the front line.

But Ms. Naiem and many Ukrainians say to understand Russia's war in Ukraine — and its trail of razed cities, displaced children and looted museums — it is key to examine how Russia has long exerted its influence over their country.

The daughter of a Ukrainian mother and an Afghan father, Ms. Naiem is emblematic of a generation of Ukrainians who, since Moscow invaded in February 2022, have been trying to rebuild their identity free of Russian influence. Much of this effort has focused on examining Russia's history and its colonial imprint.

They have read famous theorists of decolonization like Edward Said and Frantz Fanon, talked of "decolonizing Ukraine" in Harvard lecture halls and gone on book tours around Europe to press their case.

Ms. Naiem has emerged as a leading voice in this movement. She studied philosophy at the Kyiv-based Taras Shevchenko National University and was also a researcher with Jason Stanley, a professor of philosophy at Yale University.

Last year, she hosted an award-winning podcast on the theoretical foundations of Russian colonialism. In addition to the new podcast she is currently recording, she is writing a book to help Ukrainians "decolonize" themselves, she said.

"She has seriously influenced me intellectually," Mr. Stanley told Babel.ua, a Ukrainian online news outlet, last year. He added that she convinced him that Ukraine's post-colonial history was not being studied enough and that "it should be changed."

That is not an easy task. To call Russia a colonial empire is to challenge decades of scholarship that has shied away from viewing Russia's history through a colonial prism. Russia's shared history with Ukraine is less marked by relations of racial hierarchy and economic subjugation typical of colonialism, many have argued.

But Ms. Naiem and others say Russia's centuries-long efforts to impose its language on Ukraine, occupy its territory with settlers and rewrite its history from Moscow's perspective are all hallmarks of colonialism.

Ms. Naiem said it took the war for Ukrainians to take stock of this legacy and finally begin to "decolonize" themselves. She cited the example of the many people who have switched from speaking Russian to Ukrainian.

"This is exactly a decolonial act," she said.

While many Ukrainians have devoted their time to raising money for the army or rebuilding destroyed houses, Ms. Naiem's activism has focused on deconstructing Russian influences, including those that shaped her.

She was born into a Russian-speaking family in Kyiv in 1992. Her father was an education minister in Afghanistan who left Kabul after the Soviet invasion in 1979. She has two brothers: Mustafa, a leading figure of Ukraine's 2014 Maidan revolution, and Masi, who lost an eye fighting Russian troops in 2022.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRENDAN HOFFMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

'This war is just the continuation of centuries of Russian colonization. It's the same playbook.'

When she grew up in a newly independent Ukraine in the 1990s, the country's cultural scene was dominated by Russian music, TV shows and books.

At school, classes were in Ukrainian, but "it wasn't cool" to speak it in the playground, she said. Russian literature was also "cooler" than Ukrainian literature, she recalled thinking, "more mysterious, more complicated." Some of the novels she read belittled Ukrainians as uneducated people.

"Turgenev pushed me to consider myself more Russian than Ukrainian," Ms. Naiem wrote on Instagram two years ago, referring to the 19th-century Russian novelist. "Because I didn't want to be that funny Ukrainian."

It took Ms. Naiem many years, and many books, to shake off these views.

During the pandemic, she buried herself in "Imperial Knowledge: Russian Literature and Colonialism," a book by the Polish American scholar Ewa Thompson that argues that writers like Pushkin and Tolstoy helped legitimized Russia's colonial ambitions.

"I realized that centuries of colonialism had seeped into my mind," she said.

After the Russian invasion, she wrote about her research on her Instagram page, which is followed by 22,000 people, arguing Russia's efforts to erase Ukrainian culture and identity are rooted in a history of colonialism.

Her posts attracted attention and persuaded her to spread the word further. In addition to her podcasting, she has given interviews to Ukrainian media on colonialism and filled her Instagram page with more posts, questioning, for example, the place of Mikhail Bulgakov, a Kyiv-born Soviet writer who ridiculed Ukrainians, in Ukrainian school curricula.

The response has been overwhelmingly positive.

On a recent afternoon at a music festival in Kyiv, a passer-by thanked her for her efforts, one of several people that day who told her they had learned a lot from her podcasts.

Still, much of her time remains spent trying to convince people that talking of Russian colonialism is relevant.

Volodymyr Yermolenko, a Ukrainian philosopher, said the topic had long been viewed with skepticism.

Unlike Western colonies, which were often far-distant, overseas places, Russian colonies were adjacent territories, he said. Russian colonialism also never made racial exclusion a core policy, he added. Instead, it was based on the no-less violent "idea of sameness," meaning that the colonized should surrender their identity and adopt the norms of the colonizer.

Mr. Yermolenko said colonial motives were evident in President Vladimir V. Putin's claim that Ukrainians and Russians were "one people."

"People long didn't want to hear about Russian colonialism," Mr. Yermolenko said. "Only now are we kind of seeing the first steps of intellectual debunking."

Since Russia's invasion began, some scholars have described it as a "colonial war" or one of recolonization. President Emmanuel Macron, who himself has had to confront the legacy of French colonialism, has accused Russia of being "one of the last colonial imperial powers."

Ukrainian authorities have also launched efforts to break free of Russian influences, such as toppling Soviet-era statues and banning Russian place names. But they have stopped short of calling it a process of "decolonization," to Ms. Naiem's frustration.

"We're doing the cake without the recipe," she said. "We need the recipe."

Still, she is pleased that a discussion about Russian colonialism has began.

On a recent afternoon in central Kyiv, Ms. Naiem stepped into a large bookstore and stared at a long table covered with recently published books.

"Let's see how many are about colonialism," she said.

"This one, this one," she said, as she grabbed book after book — one on Russia's dominance of Ukrainian cultural life, another about rebellious Ukrainian writers of the 1960s — and piled them up on a corner of the table.

After a few minutes, the pile had grown to 21 books.



A statue of Nikolai Gogol, a Russian writer of Ukrainian origin. Russia's cultural domination has left an indelible mark.

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War in Ukraine



A divine liturgy in the crypt of St. Nicholas. Residents have raised objections to a nearby plaque of a letter from Mr. Putin.

Italians Want to Tell Zelensky: Tear Down This Plaque From Putin

From Page A1

that plaque and to have his signature and his name on it, and display it proudly in front of the church, is offensive," said Alessandro de Biase, a local businessman.

"If it was down to me, I would bring Zelensky here himself and ask him for help to take down the plaque," Mr. de Biase said.

Bari has long maintained spiritual ties with Russia, Ukraine and other Slavic and Eastern Orthodox cultures through St. Nicholas, who is revered as a miracle worker, the patron saint of travelers and children and, among some, the original Santa Claus.

While St. Nicholas is originally from Myra, in modern-day Turkey, relics associated with him — primarily his bones — were moved to Bari in the late 11th century to protect them from tomb raiders. The relics are believed to have healing powers and to this day seem to excrete a watery liquid known as manna, and their transfer is celebrated each May by Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians alike.

After his 2003 letter, which accompanied a statue of St. Nicholas that he gave to the city, Mr. Putin personally paid homage to the relics, housed in the crypt of the Roman Catholic basilica, in 2007. Two years later, Bari officials returned the gesture by transferring to Russia ownership of a local Orthodox church, also named for St. Nicholas.

In the decade that followed, Bari and the surrounding, picturesque Puglia region, on the Adriatic Sea, became an increasingly popular destination for Russian tourists and vacation-home owners. Just five years ago, Russians were among the top 10 nationalities to visit Puglia annually, according to the region's tourism board. They are now not even in the top 20, due to travel restrictions that officials said stemmed at first from the pandemic in 2020 and then from the invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

At the same time, more Ukrainians have begun to move to Puglia — either to escape the war or to join family members who were already there, said Fortunato Fortunato, a state police inspector who has lived in Bari for most of his life. As of Jan. 1, about 3,200 residents of Puglia identified as Ukrainian, compared to 860 Russians, according to the Italian National Institute of Statistics.

And that, he said, has led to more people demanding that the copper plate bearing Mr. Putin's name be removed.

"The voice has become bigger," Mr. Fortunato said.

Previous campaigns to have the plaque removed have failed. Shortly after Russia invaded Ukraine, about 12,000 people signed an online petition to have it taken down, but were rebuffed. Part of the problem is that it is not clear even to some local officials who is responsible for making that decision, although the basilica's rector, Giovanni Distante, said the piazza where the plaque is mounted "falls under the direct responsibility" of the city government.

Bari's mayor, Antonio Decaro, did not respond to multiple requests for comment. In 2022, he defended the plaque, saying, "I'm not in favor of canceling a piece of history," local news media reported at the time.

In an interview, Father Distante tried to navigate the dispute by instead focusing on the history of "promoting and re-establishing Christian unity" that St. Nicholas espoused, and pointedly noted that it was the Russian Orthodox church in Kyiv, Ukraine's capital, that in 1095 established the commemoration of the relics now housed in Bari. It was a subtle acknowledgment of the rupture between the Orthodox Church in Ukraine and the traditional Russian patriarchy, led by an ally of Mr. Putin, that followed the 2022 invasion.

But, Father Distante said, St. Nicholas's legacy of promoting "justice, truth, love, peace" also serves as an appropriate backdrop for the G7 meeting.

Last month, around 1,000 Orthodox pilgrims attended the annual services celebrating St. Nicholas at the Bari basilica, including some visitors from Russia, Ukraine and other former Soviet states, but mostly from the local population. In years past, officials said, the celebration drew more than 10,000 people, about one-third of them from Russia.

Hosting the G7 gathering on the heels of what had long drawn Russian pilgrims to the area presents "two events that look sort of contradictory," said Luigi Narbone, a former diplomat and geopolitics analyst at Luiss Guido Carli University in Rome. But, he said, Mr. Putin's plaque was a symbol of an era of warmer diplomacy, and warned against anything that could upend Puglia's place as "the bridge between the West and the East" among private citizens.

"It's very important to keep those channels open," Mr. Narbone said, "because the people-to-people dimension is what will make them facilitate, in the long run, resolutions to conflict when the right time comes."

At the basilica, few of the pilgrims or other visitors during the Orthodox celebration last month noticed the plaque or stopped to look at it. But among those who did, many took pictures that focused tightly on Mr. Putin's name in the lower right-hand corner.

Ivan Kristian Zheliznyak, 21, a Russian who lives in Germany and has family in Ukraine, said he was aware of the copper plate before he arrived, but thought little of it.

"Maybe they can divide us with ideas, but nobody can divide our souls," he said. "Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian are one man, one soul. So they can do all the things they want, the elites, but nobody will destroy our souls."

Father Distante said that the plaque's message reflected "a tangible sign of hope and universal brotherhood." The push to have it removed, he said, was "an opinion expressed by private individuals which, however respectable, still remains a personal opinion."

"Do you know what is the virtue of the one who has the ecumenical responsibility?" he asked with a smile. "Patience."



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GIANNI CIPRIANO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A statue of St. Nicholas, donated by Russian President Vladimir V. Putin, in front of the Pontifical Basilica of St. Nicholas in Bari, Italy.



Orthodox Christian pilgrims come from afar to touch the altar containing the relics of St. Nicholas.

Official Quits, Saying Rebuilding Aid Is Mismanaged

By ANDREW E. KRAMER

KYIV, Ukraine — A Ukrainian official with a long record of anticorruption advocacy resigned on Monday from a government agency overseeing mostly Western-financed reconstruction work in Ukraine, citing poor management of funds. His departure highlights the tension inside the government of President Volodymyr Zelensky over the allocation of wartime aid.

The official, Mustafa Nayyem, who had been director of the State Agency for Restoring Ukraine, did not allege any outright embezzlement. But his claims of abuse and mismanagement risked setting back efforts by the government to assuage concerns among the United States and other allies about providing billions in aid to Ukraine's war effort.

He was the second top official involved in Ukraine's reconstruction effort to depart in the last month, following the firing in May of Oleksandr Kubrakov, the minister of infrastructure. Mr. Kubrakov's ministry oversaw the agency Mr. Nayyem headed.

Mr. Kubrakov was perceived in Kyiv political circles as a figure aligned with the United States on spending priorities for rebuilding aid — a stance that grated on other leaders in the government who resented what they viewed as intrusive American oversight. Both he and Mr. Nayyem had spoken out against bribery in the construction business.

The Agency for Restoring Ukraine was established to streamline and safeguard funding for reconstruction, which is expected to draw in tens of billions of dollars in foreign aid eventually, given the scale of destruction in the war. Ukraine and some allies are promoting the seizure of Russian assets to finance the work.

Preventing abuse has been a priority of American policymakers, and it was a concern raised by members of Congress while a $61 billion military and financial aid package was debated earlier this year. That package was eventually approved in late April.

The reconstruction agency that Mr. Nayyem had headed oversaw a budget last year of about $2.5 billion, largely financed, like most nonmilitary spending in Ukraine, by foreign aid.

Its projects were wide-ranging. The agency financed efforts to construct physical barriers to protect vulnerable electrical equipment at power plants, in cases when air defense systems failed to protect sites. The agency repaired water mains, bridges and roads.

In a telephone interview, and a letter explaining his resignation posted on Facebook, Mr. Nayyem cited no specific instance of corruption. Instead, he listed what he claimed were a slew of bureaucratic obstacles thrown in the way of the agency's work, delaying project approvals and payments of contractors. Salaries for the agency's staff were cut, he said, in what he called an effort to undermine its work.

"Since November last year, the agency team faced constant confrontation, resistance and artificial obstacles," he wrote in his Facebook post.

Mr. Zelensky's office did not immediately respond to a query about the resignation or Mr. Nayyem's allegations of mismanagement.

Despite setbacks, Mr. Nayyem said, most projects were completed.

Last fall, Mr. Nayyem reported two members of Parliament to the anti-corruption authorities over accusations they had tried to pay a bribe. Those cases are in court now.

Foreign aid has been a fraught issue in Ukraine for years, predating the war, with Ukrainian leaders pushing back on Western efforts to leverage funding as a way to steer personnel policies or back overhauls in government that threaten vested interests.

Mr. Nayyem described bureaucratic foot-dragging seemingly intended to sideline the work of the reconstruction agency.

"Transparency and predictability on this issue is crucial because the money is from taxpayers," Mr. Nayyem said in the interview. "The biggest asset we have now is trust. And at this moment, those who tried to make this system transparent and accountable had to leave."

Mr. Nayyem's resignation made for awkward timing, coming a day before a major donor conference on reconstruction in Berlin. The Ukrainian authorities had excluded him from the delegation, upending meetings he said he had set with foreign officials about donations for reconstruction.

By Monday evening, Mr. Nayyem and the government were in open disagreement about why he had been excluded from the delegation. Government officials told the Ukrainian media that the prime minister had scheduled a meeting with Mr. Nayyem for Wednesday, while Mr. Nayyem said he had never received such an invitation.

Despite the urgent need to repair damage to electrical plants, roads, bridges and waterworks hit by Russian missile attacks, contractors went unpaid for months, Mr. Nayyem said in the interview. Some projects bogged down because of nonpayment, he said.

The agency had financed some military fortification works in the Sumy region, in northeastern Ukraine, and the Donetsk region, in eastern Ukraine. Mr. Nayyem wrote in a letter explaining his resignation that payments for these contracts and others had been "delayed for months."

"All of this negatively affects the country's defense capability," he wrote.

The projects that were completed, he said, included building protective barriers around electrical equipment at 103 sites, to safeguard machinery from shrapnel. The barriers helped protect against missile strikes in three regions, he said, allowing engineers to restore electricity more quickly.

Given the tangle of government permits and deals with construction companies needed to repair war damage, some setback are inevitable, said Tymofiy Mylovanov, a former Ukrainian economy minister. "It's a wartime environment, so not everything is working smoothly. You are troubleshooting all the time."



JORDAN PETTITT/PA IMAGES, VIA GETTY IMAGES

Mustafa Nayyem resigned as the director of the State Agency for Restoring Ukraine, which oversees reconstruction projects.

Female Prisoners Released By Russia to Join the War

By EKATERINA BODYAGINA and ANATOLY KURMANAEV

Russia released a group of women from a prison in late May to join the fighting in Ukraine, according to two former inmates who maintain contact with those still there, potentially signaling a new phase in the Kremlin's use of criminals in its war effort.

Military recruiters collected several women from a prison outside St. Petersburg, said the former inmates, whose names are being withheld to protect them from possible retaliation. It is unclear if their release represents an isolated case, a pilot program or the start of a larger wave of recruitment of female inmates.

About 30,000 women were serving time in Russia at the start of the invasion.

Military recruiters began touring prisons for women across the European part of Russia last fall, more than a year after the country's forces started offering convicted men pardons and salaries in return for combat service. Until now, however, convicted women who had enlisted remained incarcerated without an official explanation, according to interviews with former and current inmates of four Russian prisons for women.

Tens of thousands of imprisoned Russian men have taken up the military's call, replenishing the country's invasion force at a crucial moment in the war and helping it regain its military advantage over Ukraine. Thousands of them have been killed in Ukraine. Some who survived their military services and were discharged have since committed serious crimes, including homicide.

The recruitment of female convicts comes as the Russian government has resorted to increasingly unorthodox schemes to attract volunteers from the margins of Russian society, trying to avoid another round of unpopular conscription. Apart from prison inmates, these recruitment schemes have targeted debtors, people accused of crimes and foreigners.

Russia's defense ministry and prison service have in the past left unanswered all requests for comment on the country's prison recruitment program.

It is also unknown what roles the recruited women would assume at the front. The military recruiters who visited their prison near St. Petersburg last year offered inmates contracts for serving as snipers, combat medics and frontline radio operators for one year, a significant departure from the largely auxiliary positions occupied by most Russian servicewomen. About 40 of the prison's 400 inmates signed up at the time.

They were offered pardons and the equivalent of about $2,000 a month, about 10 times the national minimum wage.

Two women who witnessed the recruitment at the prison last year told The New York Times that fellow inmates signed up despite the dangers outlined by the visiting military officers.

The former inmates said the strict conditions in Russia's prisons for women had contributed to the decision of some women to enlist. Inmates at the prison near St. Petersburg had to remain silent at all times and spent up to 12 hours a day doing compulsory labor at the jail's sawing workshop, even in subzero temperatures in winter, the women said.

Convict soldiers are also being used by Ukraine. After long deriding Russia's prison recruitment, the government in Kyiv authorized a similar scheme last month amid increasingly acute troop shortages. Ukrainian officials have said that thousands of convicts have applied to enlist since.

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One Gang Rattling Haiti . . .



YOUTUBE



TIKTOK

Top, one of Haiti's most powerful gangs, 5 Segonn, which has promoted itself for years with brash rap videos. But clips posted on TikTok show a shift toward organized security, above.

. . . Is Now Calling Itself A Militia

Group Joins TikTok Showing Off Guns, Drones and Vehicles At Its Disposal

This article is by Christiaan Triebert, Maria Abi-Habib and John Ismay.

For years, one of Haiti's most powerful and best armed gangs, 5 Segonn, promoted itself with brash rap videos posted on social media.

But videos and photos recently posted by the gang to TikTok show a shift: It's trying to present itself as an organized security force.

The gang members are now uniformed and wielding more powerful weapons. One is the Belgian-designed FN FAL rifle. It's typically carried by militaries and hasn't been seen in the hands of 5 Segonn before.

The group now appears to be more capable at a time when a Kenyan-led multinational police force is set to arrive in Haiti.

Since the 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, the security situation in Haiti has deteriorated and gangs have stepped in to fill the void. They now control or exert their influence across most of the capital, Port-au-Prince.

The recent transformation of 5 Segonn coincided with the unification of several rival gangs in late February. Days later, the allied groups orchestrated a prison break, plunging the country into further chaos and prompting Prime Minister Ariel Henry, the country's de facto leader, to resign.

Together, the gangs have commandeered key roads that crisscross Haiti and enter neighboring Dominican Republic, and have occupied several strategic police stations, according to an analysis by The New York Times.

The Kenyan-led deployment, aided by U.S. supplies and funding, could face a far more volatile situation than past international United Nations peacekeeping missions. This month, 5 Segonn's leader took to social media to taunt and threaten the incoming security force, which will be based at the capital's airport.

The United States is investigating whether European and American weapons, made exclusively for militaries and sold in Latin America, are being smuggled to 5 Segonn and other Haitian gangs, according to two senior Justice Department officials who were not authorized to speak publicly.

5 Segonn's promotion of its new image began with the creation of a TikTok account, shortly after the rival gangs united. Posts display the gang's military appearance and weaponry.

Although the account was suspended after just 11 posts, The Times archived and analyzed the contents, along with hundreds of media files posted by gang members, to track how 5 Segonn's capabilities have evolved.

5 Segonn's name is Creole for Five Seconds. It is thought to be one of Haiti's biggest cocaine traffickers, according to Western diplomats and a regional intelligence official.

Its leader is 27-year-old Johnson André, known as Izo, the subject of U.S. sanctions in December for the kidnapping of U.S. citizens, assassination, possession of illegal firearms, hijacking and documented cases of sexual violence.

On social media, Izo often posts videos of himself dancing and drinking.

But starting in March he added a new persona, declaring himself a cartel leader and the head of a new "tactical corps."

Its logo bears the corps' name: Unité Village de Dieu, or Unite Village of God, the name of Izo's neighborhood.

Videos show Izo using live drone feeds to direct attacks against police officers.

And he's seen in highly choreographed footage overseeing men in tactical gear.

Their vehicles' appearance was once inspired by the notorious Los Angeles Crips gang.

Now their vehicles are wrapped in camouflage and organized with sequential license plates.

And 5 Segonn's actions are growing bolder, attacking targets deeper in government-held territory.

The group has taunted security forces by destroying one of their vehicles near the National Palace, a major government symbol.



The gang's leader, known as Izo, often posts videos of himself drinking and dancing.



Starting in March, he declared himself a cartel leader and the head of a new "tactical corps."



Gang members with FN FAL rifles, Belgian weapons used by militaries.



Uniforms and vehicles once brandished the colors of the Los Angeles Crips.



Now vehicles are wrapped in camouflage and organized with sequential license plates.

And in April, members hijacked a cargo ship, moored it at a gang-controlled dock and plundered some of the rice it carried.

The weapons that historically fueled Haiti's violence were usually stolen from the Haitian Army and police forces or purchased from stores in the United States and smuggled to the Caribbean.

But the FN FAL rifles seen with the 5 Segonn gang, for instance, are a newer model than the version acquired by the Haitian Army in the 1980s, a former high-ranking Haitian official told The Times, raising questions about their origin.

The group's possession of the weapon was first publicly identified by Michael Deibert, an author focused on Haiti.

The new weapons could be coming from Colombia, where President Gustavo Petro announced last month that millions of bullets, thousands of grenades and other weapons were looted from military warehouses. They were sold to armed groups, like cartels, he said, and on the international black market, including to Haitian gangs.

The Justice Department officials say the sources may be more widespread, with weapons coming from other militaries in South America and Central America. Brazil is one of the largest weapons makers in the world, they note, manufacturing some of the military weapons that are used by Haitian gangs.

Still, U.S. officials say they have limited insight into what is happening in Haiti as the dire security situation means they have insufficient personnel on the ground to monitor gang activity.

The growing lethality of the gangs' arsenals may also indicate a strengthening tie with cartels in Latin America, said a senior regional intelligence official and two diplomats who spoke on background to discuss sensitive information. They pointed to Haiti's growing importance as a cocaine trafficking route to Europe.

Izo is now working with one of the key suspects in Mr. Moïse's assassination: Dimitri Hérard, the one-time chief of the president's security detail, according to the intelligence official, a senior State Department official, and a third Western diplomat based in Haiti who was not authorized to speak publicly.

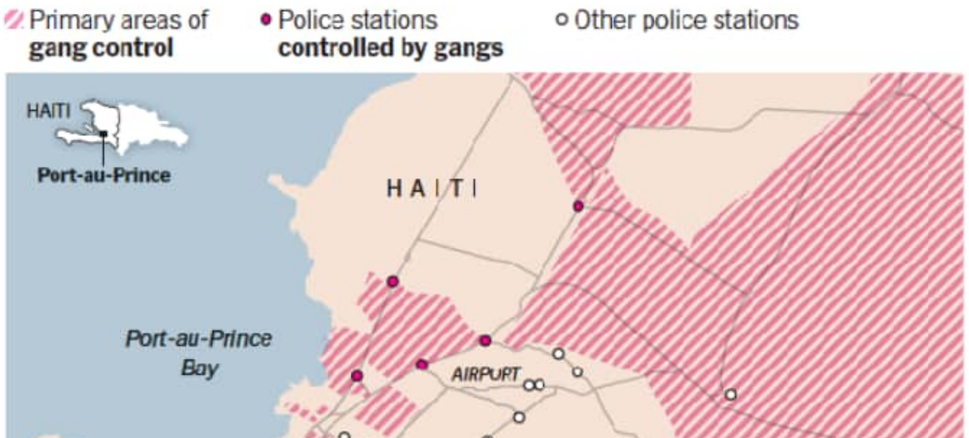
Mr. Hérard was among the inmates freed during the February prison break, according to Haitian officials.

The sources said Mr. Hérard seems to be helping organize and advise Izo's gang to look beyond local turf battles and pursue more strategic goals tied to drug trafficking and national politics, and that he may be a link to larger criminal organizations in the region, including drug cartels.

The rise of Haitian gangs started a few decades ago. The armed bandits were used by politicians to suppress voter turnout or anti-government protests and by the business elite to secure land for industrial purposes or to attack rival businesses.

But like many things in Haiti, that has now all been upended.

Andre Paultre, Adam Entous and Julian E. Barnes contributed reporting. Sheelagh McNeill contributed research.



Sources: Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime; Human Rights Watch; Mekyavel Studios via X; the National Human Rights Defense Network (RNDDH); the United Nations Human Rights Office; U.N. Integrated Office in Haiti | Notes: These are estimates, and the situation is fluid. Areas of control change frequently, and gangs may operate outside their main territory.

ELENA SHAO/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Center Holds In E.U. Vote, But Shocks Jolt Some

By MATINA STEVIS-GRIDNEFF

BRUSSELS — Voters in the 27 European Union member states sent a stern warning to mainstream political powers, wreaking havoc on French and, to a lesser degree, German politics and rewarding hard-line nationalist parties in a number of countries.

Even so, the radical right-wing wave dreaded by the European political establishment did not fully materialize; the center of European Union politics held.

Here are the most important emerging trends.

Conservatives dominate

The mainstream center-right group, the European People's Party, performed strongly and finished first, not only maintaining its dominance in the European Parliament but adding a few seats to boot. It was a sign that its strategy over the past two years — integrating right-leaning policies to stop voters from abandoning it for further-right rivals — delivered.

Over the past five years, the group spearheaded the Green Deal, one of the world's most ambitious climate change policies. But more recently, under pressure from farmers, an important constituency, it watered down some policies adopted at the E.U. level.

It also led a significant tightening of the bloc's migration policy, going some, but not all the way, in assuaging voters' concerns about irregular migration.

Far-right disruption

The conservatives' thunder was somewhat stolen by a blockbuster performance by Marine Le Pen's ultranationalist National Rally in France. It scored twice the support of a centrist coalition led by President Emmanuel Macron's Renaissance party, prompting him to dissolve the National Assembly and call for snap legislative elections.

The Alternative for Germany, an ultranationalist party that has been designated a "suspected" extremist group by the German authorities, soared to second place there, although trailing far behind the winner, the conservatives. It trumped Chancellor Olaf Scholz's Social Democrats, leaving him further weakened as he struggles at the head of a shaky coalition.

Continuity in centrist groups

The center-right's strong performance was not replicated in the two other major European Parliament centrist groups. The Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, traditionally the second-biggest power in the house, maintained its strength and, more or less, the number of its seats. But the Liberals lost big, weakening the informal centrist coalition of pro-European Union powers that underpins the passage of legislation in the European Parliament, despite their differences.

Together, the three will control more than 400 seats in the new Parliament, which will be inaugurated on July 16. That seems a comfortable majority, but discipline in political group voting can at times be weak, and tactical alliances may be necessary down the line to ensure laws are passed. The first test of the new, weaker parliamentary majority will be the confirmation of the European Commission president, the bloc's top official, penciled in for July 18.

From a policy perspective, the electoral resilience of the centrist powers will translate into some continuity, particularly in preserving the European Union's support of Ukraine.

Greens crater but still matter

The Greens were the night's biggest losers, losing a quarter of their seats. This was largely foreseen: Environmentally minded voters found that the Green agenda had been largely integrated in other bigger parties. In a way, the Greens had lost their unique selling point.

But other voters felt the green agenda has gone too far, hurting farmers and more rural voters.

Even so, the Greens could emerge as a reserve pool of support for the centrists.

Kingmaker no more?

The conservatives had floated the idea of roping in the European Conservatives and Reformists, a further right-wing group dominated by Italy's prime minister, Giorgia Meloni. This would have been a big no-no for the conservatives' centrist allies, especially those who view the group and Ms. Meloni as radicals in mainstream clothes.

With the centrist majority holding, the need to turn to her and the members she controls seems to have mostly evaporated.

That said, Ms. Meloni has an outsize presence that has influenced the political landscape and already pulled many policies her way. She performed very well at home, quite unlike the leaders of the other major E.U. countries, reasserting her dominance.

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NEWS ANALYSIS

After Setback, Macron Takes Huge Gamble Amid Rise of the Far Right



FOOL PHOTO BY HANNAH MCKAY

President Emmanuel Macron has called early legislative elections, a move that a center-left leader described as "a dangerous game."

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have to govern with Mr. Bardella, 28, who represents everything he abhors, as his prime minister. If the nationalist, anti-immigrant National Rally wins an absolute majority in the 577-member National Assembly, an unlikely scenario, or merely emerges as by far the strongest party, which is more plausible, Mr. Macron may be obliged to swallow hard and do that.

Ms. Le Pen, with her eye on winning the presidency in 2027, would almost certainly defer to Mr. Bardella, who led the party's European election campaign, for the post of prime minister.

France would then be confronted with the consecration through high political office of the extreme right, an idea held unthinkable ever since the Vichy government ruled France in collaboration with the Nazis between 1940 and 1944.

Why play with fire in this way? "It's not the same election, not the same form of ballot, and not the same stakes," said Jean-Philippe Derosier, a professor of public law at the University of Lille. "Macron apparently feels it's the least bad choice to have a possible National Rally prime minister under his control, rather than a Le Pen victory in 2027."

In other words, Mr. Macron, who is term limited and will leave office in 2027, may be flirting with the notion that three years in office for the National Rally — turning it from a party of protest to a party with the onerous responsibilities of government — would stall its inexorable rise.

It is one thing to rail from the margins, quite another to run a heavily indebted and polarized country so angry over the level of immigration, crime and living costs that many French people seem driven by a sentiment that "enough is enough."

As in other Western societies, including the United States, a widespread feeling of alienation, even invisibility, among people outside the wired cities of the knowledge economy has led to a broad feeling that the prevailing system needs blowing up.

Ms. Le Pen on Sunday announced the end of "the painful globalist parenthesis that has made so many people suffer in the world." Given that mainstream pro-European parties won about 60 percent of the vote in the European Parliament election, despite the far-right surge, that appeared to be a bold prediction.



LEWIS JOLY/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Marine Le Pen, leader of the National Rally, with Jordan Bardella, its top candidate in the European Parliament elections.

A "cohabitation," as the French call it, between a president from one party and a prime minister from another, is not unknown — most recently, Jacques Chirac, a center-right Gaullist, governed with a Socialist prime minister, Lionel Jospin, between 1997 and 2002. France survived and Mr. Chirac was re-elected.

The election could result in a National Rally prime minister.

But never before has there been such an ideological gulf, going to the very conception of French values and the core importance of the European Union for the continent's liberty, as there would be between Mr. Macron and a National Rally prime minister.

For Mr. Macron, a Europe already severely tested by the war in Ukraine will only count in the 21st century if it unites and pools its military and industrial resources. He considers this struggle existential for the continent, at a time when the Russian threat has grown.

For the National Rally, it is time for nations to reassert themselves against European federalism and against globalization. It wants to control frontiers strictly, resist the "punitive" ecological measures emanating from Brussels that it says drive up prices, and prevent what it sees as the dilution, or even disappearance, of nationhood through immigration.

Mr. Macron, in calling the election, made clear his view that France stands at a crossroads.

"To be French is to rise to the challenge of the epoch when necessary," he said. "It is to know what a vote is worth and how liberty feels. To act, whatever the circumstances, with responsibility is fundamentally to write history rather than be its victim. That moment is now."

These were ringing words with a distinct echo of Charles de Gaulle, who dissolved Parliament in 1968 after the civil unrest that coursed through the country in May of that year. De Gaulle emerged strengthened as the French people chose order.

But after seven years in power, during which he has practiced a highly centralized and hierarchical form of government, Mr. Macron, who is often criticized as aloof and who has shunned coalition-seeking in Parliament, looks isolated.

Both the center-right Republicans and the center-left Socialists have shown no inclination for now to join with Mr. Macron's centrist Renaissance, even if such a coalition were to be the only way to keep the far right from power.

The Socialists are instead part of efforts to revive an alliance stretching to the extreme left for the election. Of course, in the breach, they may change their minds but Mr. Macron cannot count on this.

"France is a country of the discontented, but Mr. Macron has provoked an acute form of personal resentment," Mr. Duhamel said. "He has given many French people the feeling of being inferior, and they detest that."

Such is the animus that Mr. Macron may have encountered, he might well have been forced to dissolve a Parliament where he does not have an absolute majority in the fall anyway.

Standard & Poor's, the American rating agency, downgraded France's debt rating last month and the government is looking for more than $20 billion in budget cuts. Having raised the age of retirement to 64 from 62 last year over fierce protests, Mr. Macron now wants to rein in unemployment benefits. All of this would have provoked fierce resistance in Parliament.

Instead, after a debacle that was more than a defeat, Mr. Macron has seized the reins, forced all parties into a scramble to prepare for the two-round election on June 30 and July 7, dictated the agenda, disoriented everyone and made perhaps the biggest gamble of his political career.

He believes that a certain France is still unprepared to risk handing power to Ms. Le Pen. It was the French author Jean Cocteau who wrote: "Since these mysteries overtake us, let's pretend to be their organizer."

What a Surprise Vote Could Mean for France

By AURELIEN BREEDEN

PARIS — President Emmanuel Macron threw French politics into disarray on Sunday when he unexpectedly called for snap elections.

The move came after his party was battered by the far right in European Parliament elections. Mr. Macron dissolved the lower house of France's Parliament and said the first round of legislative elections would be on June 30.

France now finds itself in unpredictable territory, with the future of Mr. Macron's second term potentially at stake. With just weeks to go before the poll, parties are scrambling to field candidates, hone their messaging and, in some cases, forge alliances.

Here is what you need to know about the snap election.

What happened?

France's far-right, anti-immigrant National Rally party, led by Marine Le Pen and her wildly popular protégé, Jordan Bardella, surged to first place in elections for the European Parliament on Sunday with about 31.4 percent of the vote. The centrist coalition led by Mr. Macron's Renaissance party came in a distant second with about 14.6 percent.

Mr. Macron acknowledged the crushing defeat in a televised broadcast to the nation that night. "France needs a clear majority to move forward with serenity and harmony," Mr. Macron said, explaining his call for legislative elections.

That involved taking the extremely rare move of dissolving the 577-seat National Assembly, a presidential prerogative in France. He is the first president to do so since 1997.

Why did he do it?

When Mr. Macron was elected to a second term in 2022, his party failed to win an outright majority. The centrist coalition he formed has since governed with a slim majority but struggled to pass certain bills without opposition support.

Mr. Macron was under no obligation to dissolve Parliament, even if the European vote left him a reduced figure with three years left in his presidential term. Analysts are still debating his motivations, although many suspect that he believed a dissolution had become inevitable: Conservative lawmakers were threatening to topple his government in the autumn. A sudden election could also be a way for Mr. Macron to prevent his opposition from organizing — and to present voters with a stark choice between him or the far right.

The move is seen as a gamble: If the National Rally repeats its performance in national elections, France could become nearly ungovernable, with Mr. Macron confronting a Parliament hostile to everything he believes in.

Ms. Le Pen expressed confidence that her party could muster a majority. "We are ready to turn the country around," she told cheering supporters in Paris on Sunday.

What's at stake?

The presidency is France's most powerful political office, with broad abilities to govern by decree. But the approval of Parliament, and especially the National Assembly, is required on most big domestic policy changes and key pieces of legislation, like spending bills or changes to the Constitution.

Unlike the Senate, France's other house of Parliament, the National Assembly is elected directly by the people and can topple a cabinet with a no-confidence vote. It also has more leeway to legislate and challenge the executive, and typically gets the final word if the two houses disagree on a bill.

Mr. Macron's party and its centrist allies hold 250 seats in the National Assembly, short of the 289 required for an absolute majority. The National Rally holds 88 seats, while the mainstream conservative Republicans have 61. A tenuous alliance of far-left, Socialist and Green lawmakers holds 149 seats. The rest are held by smaller groups or lawmakers not affiliated with any party.

How will the vote work?

The elections for the National Assembly will be held in two rounds: on June 30 and July 7.

France's 577 electoral districts — one for each seat — cover the mainland, overseas departments and territories, as well as French citizens living abroad. Unlike many of its European neighbors, France awards seats to candidates who get the most ballots in each district, not based on a proportion of the total vote across the country.

That means there will be 577 separate races, with local dynamics and quirks — unlike the European parliamentary elections, where each party fielded a single, nationwide list of candidates.

Any number of candidates can compete in the first round in each district, but there are specific thresholds to reach the second round. While in most cases the runoff will feature the top two vote-getters, on rare occasions it might feature three or even four candidates. Whoever wins the most votes in that runoff wins the race. (Under some conditions, a candidate who gets more than 50 percent of the vote in the first round wins outright.)

What happens next?

Despite its triumph in the European elections, it is unclear whether the National Rally can capture a significantly larger number of seats in the lower house.

"It's hard to project the results of the European elections onto the legislative ones," said Luc Rouban, a senior research fellow at the Center for Political Research at Sciences Po in Paris. "It's not sure that the National Rally will have the same success."

With little time to campaign, parties on the left are scrambling to unite as they did in 2022 by avoiding competing candidacies in each district. But unity on the French left can be elusive, and it is unclear whether the parties will be able to strike such a deal.

If Mr. Macron is unable to muster a strong parliamentary majority, he could find himself in a rare "cohabitation" scenario — where the presidency and the National Assembly are on opposing political sides.

In that case, Mr. Macron would be compelled to choose a prime minister of a different party — which could potentially block much of his domestic agenda. Foreign policy, a presidential prerogative, would theoretically remain mostly untouched.

In Germany, Far-Right Party Shows Strength in European Parliament Elections

By SARAH MASLIN NIR and CHRISTOPHER F. SCHUETZE

BERLIN — The right-wing Alternative for Germany party won a record number of votes in European Parliament elections on Sunday, in a sharp rebuke to Chancellor Olaf Scholz's governing three-party coalition in Germany and a sign of the rightward political shift across the continent.

The party, known as AfD, captured 16 percent of the vote, placing second behind Germany's conservative Christian Democrats, which won 30 percent. AfD performed nearly five percentage points better than it did in the 2019 elections and drew more voters than each of Germany's three coalition parties. It was AfD's strongest showing in a nationwide election, and it came as Mr. Scholz's coalition has reached record-low levels of popularity in the country, according to polls.

On Monday, Alice Weidel, one of the AfD's leaders, demanded that Mr. Scholz call new parliamentary elections, just as President Emmanuel Macron of France did after his party's dismal results. A spokesman for Mr. Scholz previously ruled out early elections.

Calling her party's showing a "major success," Ms. Weidel said at a news conference in Berlin that the government was working against, not for, Germany. "People are tired of it," she said.

The results could have far-reaching consequences. Europe's plans for a series of environmental initiatives called the Green Deal may lose traction, and adversaries of Mr. Scholz have begun to question the legitimacy of his government. If the results of the E.U. elections are borne out, they argue, it could indicate that just a third of Germans support his governing partnership.

Once a fringe group, the AfD is being watched by Germany's domestic intelligence agency on suspicion of being "extremist." Three-quarters of Germans say they believe that the party poses a threat to democracy. But outrage over the recent killing of a police officer in Mannheim, Germany, just days before the E.U. election, and the arrest of an Afghan immigrant suspected in the stabbing may have reignited the fears on which the AfD routinely capitalizes.

The AfD also had stronger results than in the past despite its two top candidates for E.U. posts having been forbidden to campaign after a series of public scandals. On top of that, millions of people took to the streets this year to protest the party's anti-immigration stance, which includes a meeting attended by AfD members that had a discussion of the mass deportation of immigrants.

"It's remarkable that the party sort of rose again from the ashes," said Sudha David-Wilp, regional director of the Berlin office of the German Marshall Fund. But discontent with the government, a robust base in eastern Germany (the AfD took the lead in all five states there in the E.U. vote) and the recent attack on the officer most likely propelled AfD forward, Ms. David-Wilp said.

Though the numbers fell short of the polling highs predicted months ago, when it seemed that the party might capture close to 25 percent, AfD members celebrated the results on Sunday night.

Ms. Weidel attributed the outcome to disgust with the status quo. "People are fed up with the amount of bureaucracy they get from Brussels," she told a German public broadcaster after the first projected results were announced on Sunday night.

Results are a pointed rebuke to a struggling governing coalition.

As the results rolled in, Mr. Scholz made an appearance at his Social Democratic Party headquarters in Berlin. Asked by reporters if he wanted to comment, he responded, "Nope," according to the German magazine Der Spiegel.

The AfD's fortunes seemed to have risen in concert with the fall of those of the Greens. The environmentally focused party saw its vote share drop by nearly half, to about 12 percent, according to the preliminary results, from a high of more than 20 percent in 2019.

Emilia Fester, a Green party member of Parliament who is one of its youngest elected officials, said: "Although the AfD has made gains, it is also clear that few young people have switched from us Greens to the AfD. Instead, many have voted for smaller parties that often have programs close to the Greens and are more focused on individual issues."

She added, "This gives me hope."

This election was also the first time that 16- and 17-year-old Germans were permitted to vote, and AfD had major wins in the under-30 demographic, increasing its share of that electorate significantly. The Greens, once supercharged by the activist Greta Thunberg and student protesters against climate change, saw a drop-off of those voters.

"Younger voters tended to be more left-leaning and progressive in the past," Florian Stoeckel, a professor of political science at the University of Exeter in England, said in an email. "However, this time, they turned right."

Ultimately, the results could be more of a symbolic victory for the AfD than one that will change the dynamics of the European Parliament. Last month, the party was expelled by the Identity and Democracy Party, a far-right group in the European Parliament, after Maximilian Krah, the AfD's top E.U. candidate, made comments in May equivocating on just how evil the Nazis were.

On Monday, AfD members voted to oust Mr. Krah from its E.U. delegation. In the end, the party will send 14 people to Brussels — up from nine — whose power will be limited, excised as they are from any other far-right bloc in the Parliament.

Tatiana Firsova contributed reporting.

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War in the Middle East



JEHAD ALSHRAFI/ASSOCIATED PRESS

The aftermath of an Israeli operation that freed four hostages and killed scores of Palestinians on Saturday in central Gaza.



AMIR LEVY/GETTY IMAGES

Benny Gantz, the leader of Israel's centrist National Unity party, resigned from the prime minister's war cabinet on Sunday.



MARKO DJURICA/REUTERS

An image of Shlomi Ziv, one of the Israelis rescued after eight months in Hamas captivity, was shown in Tel Aviv on Monday.

Security Council Adopts U.S. Plan for Cease-Fire as Blinken Pushes Deal

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turned themselves in, "not one shot would be fired."

Hamas, in turn, said it welcomed elements of the resolution, but did not endorse the plan as a whole. "Hamas emphasizes its readiness to cooperate with the mediators to engage in indirect negotiations," it said in a statement.

A shift in Israeli politics over the weekend could complicate Israel's position in the cease-fire talks. Mr. Blinken met with the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, whose emergency wartime government was jolted over the withdrawal of the centrist National Unity party and its leader, Benny Gantz, from Mr. Netanyahu's wartime government.

The move emboldened the far-right parties in Mr. Netanyahu's coalition that are opposed to a cease-fire.

It was also unclear whether an Israeli raid in Gaza on Saturday, which freed four hostages from Hamas captivity but killed scores of Palestinians, might have set back the chances that the militant group would agree to a deal.

It was not clear until the Security Council vote on Monday whether Russia and China, which wield veto power, would allow the latest cease-fire resolution to pass. In the end, China voted in favor and Russia abstained.

The United States has vetoed three previous cease-fire resolutions since the war in Gaza began in October. Russia and China then vetoed American resolutions because they did not call for immediate cease-fires. In March, the United States allowed a cease-fire resolution to pass, abstaining rather than vetoing it.

Last month, a U.S. official said that the United States planned to block a draft resolution from Algeria that described Israel as an "occupying power" in Gaza and called for an immediate stop to the Israeli military offensive in the city of Rafah.



ISRAEL'S GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK

Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday in a photo released by Israel's government.

The proposal approved on Monday by the Security Council was based on the three-phase plan laid out by President Biden in May. It would begin with an immediate, temporary cease-fire and work toward a permanent end to the war and the reconstruction of Gaza. The plan also calls for the release of more than 100 people held captive in Gaza, though how many are still alive is unclear, and of a much larger number of Palestinians held in Israeli prisons.

Mr. Blinken, making his eighth Middle Eastern trip since the Oct. 7 Hamas-led assault on Israel, stressed in his meeting with Mr. Netanyahu that the proposal "would lead to an immediate cease-fire in Gaza, the release of all hostages and a significant and sustained increase in humanitarian assistance for distribution throughout Gaza," Matthew Miller, a State Department spokesman, said afterward.

"The secretary underscored the United States' ironclad commitment to Israel's security, including through ensuring October 7 can never be repeated."

More than two weeks have passed since Israel presented the deal to Hamas through intermediaries, yet Mr. Netanyahu's government has not formally embraced it. And until Monday, there had been no official response to the proposal from Hamas.

One major sticking point is whether a deal would leave Hamas, which governed Gaza before the war, with the power to exert some control over the territory. Mr. Netanyahu has described that as a red line.

Another issue concerns the precise timing and logistics of a cease-fire. Mr. Netanyahu has said publicly that the Israeli offensive in Gaza must continue until Hamas's military and governing capabilities are destroyed. But Hamas has made any progress on a hostage deal conditional on an Israeli commitment to a permanent cease-fire and the full withdrawal of its troops from Gaza.

A shift in politics in Israel may complicate the nation's position.

A statement by the U.S. mission to the United Nations on Sunday alluded to Gaza's postwar future by saying the cease-fire deal would lead to "a road map for ending the crisis altogether and a multiyear internationally backed reconstruction plan." The statement did not provide further details or explain how Mr. Blinken plans to sell the plan to Israel and other parties in the region during his trip to the Middle East.

The politics of hammering out a cease-fire, among the warring parties and at the U.N., have been extraordinarily complex.

Mr. Blinken plans to visit Qatar, which, along with Egypt, has been mediating between Israel and Hamas, which do not talk to each other directly. Qatar hosts Hamas's political leaders.

Mr. Blinken's efforts come a few days after inconclusive visits to Egypt and Qatar by the C.I.A. director, William J. Burns, and Brett McGurk, the top White House official for Middle East affairs, in pursuit of a cease-fire deal.

In Jordan, Mr. Blinken will attend a conference on Tuesday on humanitarian aid for Gaza cohosted by Jordan, Egypt and the United Nations.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Gantz's Departure From Government Brings Netanyahu a New Battle at Home

By ISABEL KERSHNER

JERUSALEM — Still fighting Israel's outside enemies on multiple fronts, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu woke up on Monday to a new political battlefield at home.

The departure this weekend of Benny Gantz and his centrist National Unity party from Israel's emergency wartime government is unlikely to immediately sever Mr. Netanyahu's grip on power. The prime minister's governing coalition still commands a narrow majority of 64 seats in the 120-seat Parliament.

But Mr. Gantz's move means that Mr. Netanyahu is now totally dependent on his far-right and ultra-Orthodox coalition partners as he prosecutes the war in Gaza in the face of mounting international opprobrium, leaving him increasingly isolated and exposed at home and abroad.

Mr. Gantz and Gadi Eisenkot, another powerful member of National Unity, also left Mr. Netanyahu's small war cabinet. They are both former military chiefs who were widely viewed as key voices of moderation in the five-member body, which was formed in October after the Hamas-led assault on Israel prompted the Israeli bombardment and ground invasion of Gaza.

The two centrist politicians raised public confidence in the government's decision-making at a time of national trauma. They also lent the war cabinet an aura of legitimacy and consensus as Israel fought Hamas in Gaza, as well as its archenemy Iran and its other proxies, including the powerful Hezbollah militia across Israel's northern border with Lebanon.

Mr. Gantz accused Mr. Netanyahu of "political procrastination," suggesting that he had been putting off critical strategic decisions to ensure his political survival. His decision to quit the wartime government ushers in a new period of political instability and has left many Israelis wondering where the country goes from here.

Describing the political shakeup as "incredibly consequential," Yohanan Plesner, president of the Israel Democracy Institute, a nonpartisan research group in Jerusalem, said that Israelis had already been giving low grades to the government on a host of wartime issues. That included the handling of the fighting and relations with the United States, Israel's crucial ally, he said.

"With Gantz's absence, I expect those grades to become even lower," Mr. Plesner said.

Mr. Gantz had issued an ultimatum three weeks ago, warning Mr. Netanyahu that he would break up the emergency government unless the prime minister came up with clear plans, including on who would replace Hamas as the ruler of a postwar Gaza and how to bring back the scores of hostages still being held in the Palestinian enclave.

Mr. Gantz joined the government last October to foster a sense of unity at a time of crisis. He joined forces with his political rival, Mr. Netanyahu, despite a deep lack of trust between the two and a history of betrayal. The last time Mr. Gantz went into a government with Mr. Netanyahu, in 2020, it also ended badly after Mr. Netanyahu broke their power-sharing agreement.

The influence of Mr. Gantz and Mr. Eisenkot, whose son, a soldier, was killed in December while fighting in Gaza, has waned in recent months, leading many Israelis to ask why they had not left the emergency government and joined the opposition earlier. Mr. Gantz has called for early elections this fall.

Mr. Netanyahu's formal partners remaining in the war cabinet are his defense minister, Yoav Gallant, a rival within his conservative Likud party whom Mr. Netanyahu tried to fire last year; and Ron Dermer, a seasoned Netanyahu confidant with more diplomatic than political experience. It is unclear if the war cabinet will continue to function.



MARKO DJURICA/REUTERS

A poster in Tel Aviv. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu still holds a parliamentary majority.

A separate and broader security cabinet includes two ultranationalist party leaders: Itamar Ben-Gvir, the minister for national security, and Bezalel Smotrich, the finance minister. Both want to resettle Gaza with Israelis.

Mr. Ben-Gvir and Mr. Smotrich have both vowed to bring down Mr. Netanyahu's government if he proceeds with an Israeli proposal for a deal involving a truce and a swap of hostages for Palestinian prisoners, which, as outlined by President Biden over a week ago, would effectively wind down the war.

At least two potentially destabilizing challenges now loom over Mr. Netanyahu's government, analysts say.

The first is the prospect of a deal with Hamas. Israeli and American officials say they are waiting for a formal response from Hamas to the truce proposal. A positive response could well force Mr. Netanyahu to stop obfuscating and choose between a deal and the survival of his government.

The other challenge is the deeply polarizing issue of the wholesale exemptions from military service that are granted to ultra-Orthodox men enrolled in religious seminaries.

The ultra-Orthodox exemptions have long been a divisive issue in Israeli society, but tolerance for the decades-old policy has worn thin in a country where most 18-year-olds are drafted for years of compulsory military service, and even more so during this war. The same pool of reserve soldiers find themselves repeatedly called back for long stretches of duty in Gaza as the campaign grinds into a ninth month, with no clear plan, experts say, for where it is headed.

On Monday night or early Tuesday, the Israeli Parliament was expected to vote on a recruitment bill that would essentially keep the ultra-Orthodox exemption system intact. Though it is being pushed by Mr. Netanyahu to mollify his ultra-Orthodox coalition partners, even some members of his conservative Likud party — including Mr. Gallant, the defense minister — object to it, particularly during a war when the country needs more soldiers.

On the recruitment issue, Mr. Netanyahu finds himself in a bind, said Mr. Plesner. "There is an inherent conflict there between his own political base and his most precious alliance with the ultra-Orthodox parties," he added.

If it passes this first reading, the bill will go into committee before the second and third, final, votes. But even if it fails to pass, said Mr. Plesner — who is himself a former lawmaker from a now-defunct centrist party — that won't necessarily presage the dissolution of Parliament or collapse of the government.

Mr. Netanyahu's critics accuse him of prolonging war to stave off elections and a public reckoning for the government and military failures leading up to the attack of Oct. 7.

Riffing off Mr. Netanyahu's stated war goal of "absolute victory" over Hamas, which many experts say is a vague and unattainable notion, Mr. Gantz said in his resignation speech on Sunday that a "real victory" would be one that combined military success and diplomatic initiative.

"Real victory," he said, means "changing national priorities, expanding the circle of service and those serving, and ensuring Israel is able to contend with the challenges it faces."

"Unfortunately, Netanyahu is preventing us from reaching a real victory," he added.

Mr. Netanyahu responded in a social media post addressing Mr. Gantz, saying, "Israel is in an existential war on several fronts. Benny, this is not the time to abandon the campaign — this is the time to join forces."

Now, analysts say, Mr. Netanyahu is likely to be mainly focused on keeping his narrow coalition together for the short term.

The summer session of Parliament ends in late July and the legislature will only reconvene after the Jewish High Holy Days in late October or November.

"Netanyahu has only one thing in mind," said Gayil Talshir, a political scientist at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. "Maintaining his own power as prime minister."

"His main aim is to drag this coalition just far enough into the autumn," she said, so that the next Israeli election could only take place after the presidential election in the United States.

Mr. Netanyahu, she said, was likely hoping that Donald J. Trump, the candidate he views as most sympathetic to his causes, might then be elected.

That would mean that if he can get through the next six weeks, Mr. Netanyahu could live to fight another day.

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War in the Middle East

The Search in Gaza For Israeli Hostages

Joint Effort by Jerusalem and Washington

This article is by Julian E. Barnes, Ronen Bergman, Eric Schmitt and Adam Entous.

The hostages in Gaza are being moved around, with Hamas shuttling some from one apartment to another to obscure their whereabouts, while others are believed to be in tunnels underground.

All the while, at a "fusion cell" quietly formed in Israel last fall, American and Israeli intelligence and military analysts share imagery from drones and satellites, along with communications intercepts and any other information that comes their way that might offer a hint to the hostages' locations.

More than one war is being waged in the Gaza Strip.

For the most part, the world sees the airstrikes and the ground invasion, which Israel says are aimed at dismantling Hamas and have reduced much of the territory to rubble, setting off a humanitarian crisis. But the rescue on Saturday of four hostages was a reminder that Israel and Hamas are engaged in another, less visible battle:

The militants are determined to hold on to the hostages they seized during their deadly Oct. 7 attacks on Israel, for use as human bargaining chips. The Israelis are determined to bring them home.

For more than eight months, the militants have had the upper hand.

Israeli and American officials say they do not know where many hostages are being held. And even when they do, in many cases, a rescue mission is simply not possible.

To date, Israel has rescued a total of seven hostages, but the stark reality is that since the war began, more hostages have died, either in the fighting or at the hands of Hamas. Israel has recovered far more bodies than living hostages.

For all the rejoicing Saturday's rescues set off in Israel, Israeli and U.S. officials say the complexity of the operation itself and the violence that accompanied it underscored the challenges of finding and extracting hostages. One rescuer died; Israeli commandos killed many Hamas fighters; and hundreds of civilians were killed in the crossfire. Hamas also said that three other hostages were killed by Israeli airstrikes, an assertion denied by an Israel Defense Forces spokesman.

And it is not clear how many more opportunities for rescue raids there will be, at least aboveground. The hostages who have been saved to date have been rescued only from apartments. Now, current and former Israeli and American officials say, Hamas is likely to change tactics, seeking to move more hostages into tunnels and potentially out of reach of commando forces.

The reality, American and Israeli officials say, is that rescue operations will be the exception. Only through diplomatic means will the majority of remaining hostages be brought home. American officials are pressuring Israel and Hamas to agree to a deal that would return hostages as part of a truce.

"One must remember that the release of the four hostages is ultimately a tactical achievement that does not change the strategic aspect," said Avi Kalo, a lieutenant colonel in the Israeli reserves who once led a military intelligence department that dealt with prisoners of war and missing people. "Hamas still has dozens of hostages, the vast majority of whom, if not all, will not be released in operations but can be rescued only as part of a cease-fire deal."

Though freeing the hostages has been a concern since the war began, some American officials say the level of Israeli focus on that goal has varied. The unintentional killing of three hostages in December, when Israeli troops shot them after they escaped their captors in Northern Gaza, made clear that Israeli troops have not always been attuned to the hostage hunt. The military learned from that mistake, Israeli officials say.

Israeli officials have said that 251 people were believed to have been captured during the Oct. 7 terrorist attacks. An agreement between Israel and Hamas last November led to the release of 105 of them.

Since then, 43 of the remaining hostages have been officially declared dead; many of them, though not all, are believed to have died in captivity. Privately, Israeli officials have said they think fewer than 60 are still alive. American officials have said there are five dual citizens in Gaza who are still alive, and three bodies of Americans being held by Hamas.

Throughout its history, Israel has gone to great lengths to bring home hostages. The long-established principle is to use military force as the first option in trying to rescue an Israeli. If rescue is impossible, Israel will make a deal — sometimes giving up more than a thousand Palestinian prisoners for a single captured Israeli soldier.

Tracking the hostages' movements, an operation in which Britain also plays a role, is not just about establishing location. Military and intelligence officials are also hunting for patterns, trying to learn how long Hamas holds people in one place before moving them to another. If they can discern a pattern, they can better determine the window of time for a rescue operation to be carried out.

The intelligence gathered is often piecemeal. A hint that a particular hostage is still alive, or a clue about what group might be holding the captive, may not reveal an exact location but can give a hint about what part of Gaza to intensify information collection efforts. Though no one can be sure how good that information is, once the Israelis fix a location with a degree of confidence, and believe a hostage may be there for some time, intense planning begins.

Early in the war, some intelligence officials believed most hostages were being held in tunnels. But it appears that living underground has proved tough for Hamas commanders and that keeping hostages in the apartments of the organization's supporters has turned out to be easier.

As the war has dragged on, Israeli intelligence on the hostages has improved, aided by captured documents and the interrogation of captured Hamas fighters, as well as American and British assistance.

Israeli and American officials believe some hostages may be moving now more than at the beginning of the war. But given the devastating Israeli barrage on the tiny territory, the areas in which Hamas can hide hostages has shrunk, and the opportunities to detect them have grown, U.S. and Israeli officials said.

Beyond that, as movement in Gaza has become more difficult, communications between Hamas brigades and their central leadership have broken down, according to U.S. officials. As a result, some hostages have remained longer in hiding places.

While American officials believe Hamas has a hand in the treatment of all the hostages, some are not being held by the group and are instead in the control of allied militant organizations, including Palestinian Islamic Jihad. Because of that, Hamas leadership has seemed unsure how many hostages are in Gaza, according to American and Israeli officials.

Israeli and American officials are increasingly worried about the health of the hostages, who have been subjected to mental and physical abuse over their long captivity.

"You have hostages who are in a very degraded state, mentally and physically, from almost nine months of captivity, and their rescuers may not be able to even recognize them," said Gen. Richard D. Clarke, a retired head of the U.S. Special Operations Command.

As hard as Israel is looking for the hostages, Hamas leaders are working to keep them hidden — aware that they offer their best leverage in the cease-fire talks.

But they also serve another role. A small group of hostages are believed to be held near Yahya Sinwar, Hamas's leader in Gaza. They are human shields and make it harder for Israel to target him.

The Americans and the Israelis have had trouble fixing the precise location of Mr. Sinwar and those hostages. He has moved around Gaza, including hiding below Rafah for a time, and is now probably back under Khan Younis, Gaza's second-largest city, American officials say. The tunnel network there is vast, and neither the United States nor Israel has been able to fix his precise location, a U.S. official said.

Hamas leaders have also given standing orders to its fighters holding hostages that if they think Israeli forces are coming, the first thing they should do is shoot the captives, according to Israeli officials. If hostages were killed on Saturday, as Hamas says, it might have been at the hand of the militants, not because of an Israeli airstrike. But for now, Israeli and American officials can neither confirm nor refute the Hamas claims.

Since the earliest days after the attacks on Israel last October, the U.S. military has flown surveillance drones over the Gaza Strip to help aid in hostage-rescue efforts, American officials said. At least six MQ-9 Reapers controlled by Special Operations forces have been involved in flying missions to monitor for signs of life, officials said.

A senior Israeli official said that British and American drones had been able to provide information that Israel's drones do not collect. The American surveillance drones have largely the same sensors on board as British and Israeli drones, American military officials said, but the sheer number of American aircraft means that more territory can be surveilled more frequently and for longer.

The drones cannot map out Hamas's vast subterranean tunnel network — Israel is using highly classified ground-based sensors to do that — but their infrared radar can detect the heat signatures of fighters or other people going into or out of tunnel entrances on the surface, officials said.

Intelligence sharing between the United States and Israel related to the war in Gaza initially focused on hostage-recovery efforts, but over time the collaboration expanded, three current or former senior U.S. officials said.

Adam Goldman contributed reporting.



AVISHAG SHAAR-YASHUV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A shrine, above, to those killed and abducted on Oct. 7 at the site of the Nova music festival in Israel. Left, Andrey Kozlov and Almog Meir Jan, who were rescued from Gaza over the weekend. Officials estimate that fewer than 60 hostages are still alive.



TOMER APPELBAUM/ASSOCIATED PRESS



TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Israeli soldiers at a tunnel near a border crossing. Some fear captives will be sent to similar sites.

A Reporter's Work Helped Topple Presidents. Now He Is Being Investigated in Peru.

By GENEVIEVE GLATSKY and BIANCA PADRÓ OCASIO

LIMA, Peru — One of Latin America's most celebrated journalists, whose work has toppled presidents and set off criminal investigations into government wrongdoing, was recovering from an aggressive bout of chemotherapy when he got more bad news: A Peruvian prosecutor was investigating him for bribery.

The journalist, Gustavo Gorriti, 76, the top editor at an investigative news media organization in Peru, is no stranger to trouble.

In the 1990s, he was kidnapped by members of a secret death squad that Peruvian investigators later determined was headed by former President Alberto Fujimori. Mr. Gorriti had spent years reporting on corruption and human rights violations by Mr. Fujimori's government.

More recently, he helped expose an enormous bribery scandal known as Operation Carwash that has led to the arrest and resignation of government officials across Latin America.

Now, Mr. Gorriti himself is facing imprisonment.

Peru's attorney general has accused him of bribery, claiming that he provided positive coverage in exchange for government leaks. Mr. Gorriti denies the charges.

Journalists and free-speech supporters say the accusation is politically motivated, meant to punish Mr. Gorriti for his investigations.

The case against him is among a number of attacks on independent news media outlets in Peru, according to press freedom groups, and part of a wave of efforts to censor journalists in countries in Central and South America.

"More and more politicians are stigmatizing journalists and the media in their speeches," according to Reporters Without Borders. "Political actors employ disinformation campaigns, abusive prosecutions and state propaganda that openly fosters distrust of the press and encourages polarization."

In Peru, the targeting of journalists reflects a broader democratic backsliding, analysts say.

A conservative coalition in the Legislature has sought to consolidate power by bypassing procedures to fill the courts, electoral agencies and the attorney general's office with allies.

Conservative lawmakers have also passed legislation making it more difficult to investigate, prosecute and punish corruption cases and amended the constitution to increase the power of the legislative body.

And, increasingly, they are using that power to go after journalists.

Paola Ugaz, a journalist who revealed years of child sexual abuse and corruption at an influential Peruvian religious organization, has faced several criminal investigations, including accusations of money laundering.

Other journalists have been convicted on defamation charges for reporting on politicians, religious organizations and sports officials.

International press freedom groups agree that Peru has become a hostile environment for journalists. In the past two years, the country's ranking has plummeted on a press freedom index maintained by Reporters Without Borders. It fell to 77 from 125 — the biggest drop of any country in Latin America.

A recent study by Freedom House, a human rights organization that rates levels of liberty in countries around the world, dropped Peru's rating last year from "free" to "partly free."

Mr. Gorriti is the editor in chief of IDL-Reporteros, a Peruvian investigative website known for breaking corruption stories that implicate powerful people.

He got his start documenting the rise of the violent Shining Path rebel group in the 1980s, and exposed the narco-trafficking links of top intelligence officials under Mr. Fujimori, who, according to investigators, later ordered his kidnapping.



The journalist Gustavo Gorriti has exposed corruption in Peru for more than 40 years.

The kidnapping played a role in Mr. Fujimori's conviction in 2009 for various crimes and a sentence of 25 years in prison.

Mr. Gorriti moved to Panama, where he exposed links between government officials and drug traffickers for a Panamanian newspaper.

His reporting has implicated all four Peruvian former presidents who held power between 2001 and 2020 in some form of wrongdoing. One of them, Alan García, died when he shot himself in the head in his home after the authorities arrived to arrest him.

Mr. Gorriti said that despite decades of what he described as persecution, the bribery investigation stood out.

"At the time when Fujimori was in power, there was imminent physical danger," he said in an interview. But now, he said, current government officials are "turning the entire judicial system into an additional tool for them. That has been much more intense now than in the past."

Artur Romeu, the director of the Latin America bureau for Reporters Without Borders, said it was "striking that they have taken such a step against one of the most recognized journalists."

After years of authoritarian rule in Peru under Mr. Fujimori, elections in 2000 ushered in an era of democracy, economic growth and a flourishing of free expression.

But in recent years, the economy has faltered and there has been a plummeting of trust in the government. And the courts have been used to silence critics.

Mr. Gorriti and other journalists have also faced harassment from right-wing groups that have demonstrated outside their offices and thrown feces at their homes. Right-wing television channels frequently disseminate disinformation about independent journalists, accusing Mr. Gorriti of being a criminal mastermind.

Prosecutors are asking for Mr. Gorriti to turn over the phones he has used in his reporting and reveal his sources. He has refused to do so.

The case against Mr. Gorriti has made it more difficult for other journalists to do their work, said Jonathan Castro, a political reporter and the editor of a podcast.

"There are sources who no longer provide information because they are afraid," he said.

The government has pursued defamation cases against journalists in the past, but is now pursuing more serious criminal charges.

Ms. Ugaz, the journalist accused of money laundering, said that she has faced death threats on social media and verbal abuse on the streets of Lima, the capital, as a result of disinformation campaigns against her. The disinformation includes false claims that she, along with the family of the Nobel Prize-winning author Mario Vargas Llosa, was smuggling uranium and plutonium.

"There is no filter," she said. "You'd think it's all so absurd that no one would believe it."

Genevieve Glatsky reported from Bogotá, Colombia, and Bianca Padró Ocasio from Lima, Peru.

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National

The New York Times



CLEMSON COLLEGE REPUBLICANS

A Citadel student group backing former President Donald J. Trump, led by Elias Irizarry, front right, at a Trump rally in Charleston, S.C., in February. Mr. Irizarry is now running for the State House.

Is a Candidate's Jan. 6 Conviction a Blemish or a Boast?

By RICHARD FAUSSET



SEAN RAYFORD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

State Representative Randy Ligon finds himself in a vulnerable position against Mr. Irizarry, who scores points with voters who see his federal trespassing conviction as a badge of honor.

More than two years after Elias Irizarry breached the U.S. Capitol with other Trump supporters, he wrote a letter to Judge Tanya S. Chutkan as he waited for her to determine his sentence.

"I want to make clear that I am not writing to make excuses or defend my actions," he told Judge Chutkan, of Federal District Court in Washington. "My participation in an event like January 6th has brought great shame upon myself, my family, and, unfortunately, my country."

Today, Mr. Irizarry, a recent graduate of the Citadel, the renowned South Carolina military college, is mounting a primary challenge to a Republican in the state's House of Representatives. His website recently noted his prosecution for engaging in "nonviolent activities" at the Capitol on Jan. 6 as proof that he has "always stood for the conservative movement."

"At every pivotal moment of the America First movement," the website declared, "Elias has been there."

The reference to Jan. 6 disappeared from the website after The New York Times discussed it with Mr. Irizarry's federal public defender. In a text message Sunday night, Mr. Irizarry said he had initially mentioned his involvement in the Jan. 6 riots on his website bio "for the sake of transparency."

Mr. Irizarry declined interview requests, but much of his story is detailed in his court record.

He was 19 when he entered the Capitol through a broken window, wearing a red MAGA hat and carrying a metal pole. Since then, Judge Chutkan, Republican politicians in South Carolina and the Citadel have grappled with the question of whether he deserves reproach or redemption — a question being asked, in one way or another, of many of the 1,200-plus Americans charged with taking part in the Jan. 6 attack.

In the South Carolina primary on Tuesday, the question will fall to voters in the state's House District 43, a rural area so conservative that Democrats are not fielding a general election candidate. Two years ago, the incumbent, State Representative Randy Ligon, faced a primary challenger who called him "RINO Randy Ligon." Mr. Ligon won by a mere 139 votes; this year, that challenger has endorsed Mr. Irizarry.

Perhaps more important, Mr. Irizarry appears to have bet that primary voters would see his federal trespassing conviction as a badge of honor. Some clearly do.

On Wednesday evening, Grant Martin, 72, a retired property manager from Richburg, S.C., said he had not researched the race yet. But he said that given Mr. Irizarry's participation in the riot, "I would be more apt to vote for him."

"If I could, I would have been right there," Mr. Martin said of the Jan. 6 attack.

Though many Republican leaders denounced the attack in the immediate aftermath, former President Donald J. Trump, the party's presumptive presidential nominee, has more recently sought to rebrand the rioters as "unbelievable patriots." A CBS News/YouGov poll in January found that the percentage of Republicans who approve of the Jan. 6 rioters has risen to 30 percent, from 21 percent in 2021. Among self-identified "MAGA" Republicans, approval stood at 43 percent.

As a 22-year-old political neophyte, Mr. Irizarry is the underdog in the race. A number of other Jan. 6 participants who have run for office around the country this season have lost, including Derrick Evans, a former West Virginia state lawmaker who pleaded guilty to a felony for his role in the attack and was defeated in a Republican primary for a Congressional seat there in May.

Still, the conflicting feelings about the attack among MAGA Republicans have put Mr. Ligon in an awkward position. In an interview on Thursday, he declined to answer when asked whether voters should hold Jan. 6 against Mr. Irizarry. "I'm not going to speak for the voters," he said.

According to court records, Mr. Irizarry spent his early years in Montclair, N.J., where his family struggled economically. "We grew up in a suburb of New York that boasted how liberal it was, but on the flip side, was a town full of upper class families who made fun of our small 2-bedroom apartment," his older sister, Aria Irizarry, wrote in a letter to Judge Chutkan.

He is mentioned in a 2017 newspaper article for speaking out at a town meeting against a resolution pledging to create a welcoming environment for immigrants, including undocumented ones.

Eventually his family moved to South Carolina. Mr. Irizarry, who was involved in the military's Junior R.O.T.C. program and the Civil Air Patrol, had set his sights on the Citadel, with the aim of becoming an officer in the Air Force.

It was fellow Civil Air Patrol members who recognized him in wanted posters that the F.B.I. distributed as it sought to identify Jan. 6 participants who had been captured on video.

Federal officials, in court documents, said that Mr. Irizarry and two friends, Elliot Bishai and Grayson Sherrill, marched to the Capitol after attending Mr. Trump's "Stop the Steal" rally nearby. Mr. Sherrill, at one point, swung a metal pole at a police officer. At another point, Mr. Bishai yelled, "Civil War Two!"

Eventually, Mr. Irizarry climbed through scaffolding to the building's Upper West Terrace, where he waved fellow rioters toward the stairs. After entering the Capitol, he wandered around with his metal pole, shot video in a Senate conference room, rode an elevator and hung around in the Rotunda. He left 27 minutes later.

> Republicans' approval of Capitol rioters has risen significantly, polls show.

He was arrested in March 2021 and pleaded not guilty to four misdemeanors. In December 2022, the Citadel suspended him for "conduct unbecoming a cadet" but said he could reapply for admission.

None of it squelched his interest in politics. At some point after his arrest, Mr. Irizarry inquired about working as an intern for U.S. Representative Ralph Norman, a far-right legislator who represents the northern stretch of South Carolina where Mr. Irizarry had finished high school.

David O'Neal, a member of the South Carolina House who served as Mr. Norman's district director at the time, said he thought the hire was a "great idea," but that Mr. Norman's chief of staff rejected the idea.

"The optics of him working in the Capitol that he was charged with trespassing in was just not a good look," Mr. O'Neal said in an interview.

So Mr. O'Neal eventually found Mr. Irizarry a job as a page at the State Capitol in Columbia. "He's a good kid," Mr. O'Neal told The State newspaper at the time. "He made a mistake."

Eventually, Mr. Irizarry pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor trespassing charge as part of a plea deal. Before his sentencing hearing in March, teachers, relatives and friends wrote to Judge Chutkan, vouching for his character and noting his good grades and record of volunteer work. "I have no evidence that he has given up or resigned himself to an ignominious future," wrote DuBose Kapeluck, the then-chair of The Citadel's political science department.

Judge Chutkan said in court that day that she had slept fitfully before his sentencing, calling it "one of the most difficult I have had" among her many Jan. 6 cases, given Mr. Irizarry's youth and his "commendable" record before the breach.

The government took a different position, recommending 45 days in prison and painting Mr. Irizarry as an unremorseful character. Prosecutors said that he and Mr. Bishai participated in a group chat titled "Civil War" after the attack, in which they "discussed using small planes to cross borders undetected" and discussed joining the Russian army if they were kicked out of the United States.

But Judge Chutkan was swayed by Mr. Irizarry's note of contrition. "This is not who you are; this is one thing you did," she told him. She ordered him to be jailed for 14 days. Later, she wrote a letter to the Citadel on Mr. Irizarry's behalf as he sought reinstatement at the school. In it, she said he had "displayed impressive sincerity, remorse, and a determination to make amends."

The Citadel, a public university founded in Charleston, S.C., in 1842, commands a special place of respect in a state that puts a high value on military service. It is known for putting its cadets through grueling physical and mental challenges, and for its code of honor: "A Cadet does not lie, cheat or steal, nor tolerate those who do."

The Citadel reinstated Mr. Irizarry at the start of the 2023 academic year; a spokesman declined to explain the school's reasoning. On May 4, Mr. Irizarry graduated magna cum laude.

Mr. Irizarry had already begun running for Mr. Ligon's seat. In April, he paid a visit to a local Republican Party meeting in Chester County, where he and Mr. Ligon were invited to speak briefly. Neither mentioned Jan. 6.

Mr. Ligon, 63, who owns a real estate company, spoke about his wife of 40 years, the sanctity of the Second Amendment and "a flood of immigrants coming across the border that want to infiltrate our elections."

Mr. Irizarry told the group that the state Republican Party had become unmoored from fiscally conservative principles, suggesting that tax dollars were being unwisely spent to subsidize electric car plants.

A down-ticket rural contest like this one usually plays out not on physical hustings, but with social media, yard signs, push polls and texts. Online, Mr. Irizarry's supporters have written posts calling him a "Trump-supporting J-6 patriot" and "a J6 prisoner" intent on putting "America first."

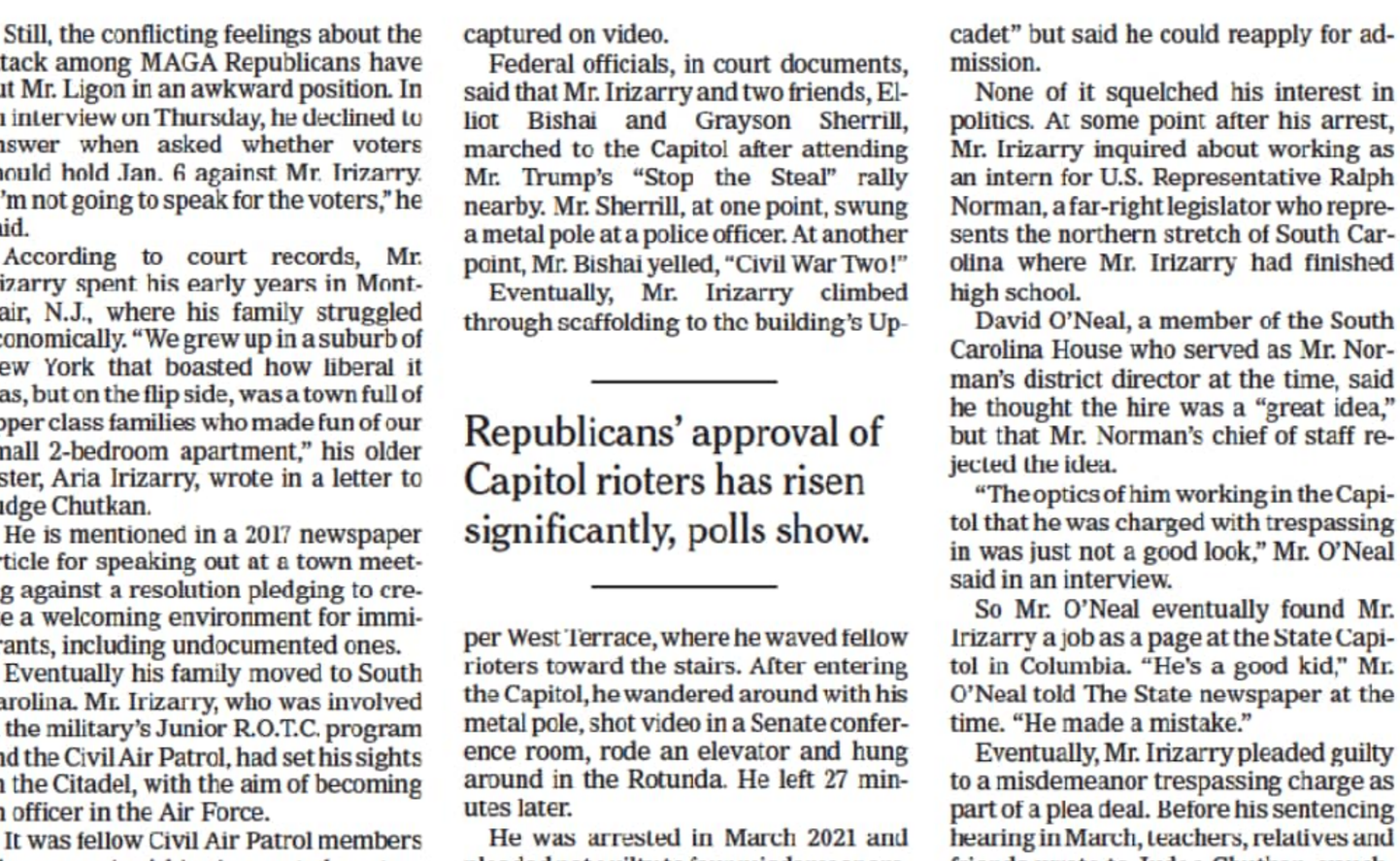
Mr. Ligon has received the endorsement of Mr. Trump. Mr. Irizarry has been endorsed by Mr. Norman and the Republican Party of York County, the other county that the district partially covers.

After the Chester County meeting, James Reinhardt, 80, a retired radiologist and vice chair of the county Republican Party, said he was voting for Mr. Ligon, who he has known personally for years. But he commended Mr. Irizarry for running.

The Jan. 6 insurrection, he said, "shouldn't have happened." But he also said it had been "blown out of proportion to the Democrats' advantage."

Mr. Irizarry, in a coat and tie, was still working the room, surrounded by a gaggle of fellow clean-cut cadets who had come to show support.

"He seems to be a bright young man," Dr. Reinhart said. "I like him 'cause he's got a haircut. And he went to the Citadel."



LEFT, ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES; RIGHT, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE U.S. COURTS, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rioters storming the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Elias Irizarry was 19 when he entered through a broken window carrying a metal pole. He later apologized for his actions, swaying Judge Tanya S. Chutkan, right, who ordered him to be jailed for 14 days, not the 45 prosecutors had recommended.

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Democrat Crosses Aisle At U.S. Agency to Open Financing Floodgates

From Page A1

eral Election Commission. "The deregulators are winning."

At the center of the shift is Commissioner Dara Lindenbaum, a Democrat who has repeatedly crossed the aisle to vote with her Republican colleagues since President Biden appointed her and she was confirmed by the Senate in a 54-38 vote in 2022. The rupture inside the once-unified bloc of Democrats has gotten so tense that at one point an actual olive branch, procured on Etsy for $16, was given as a peace offering — and was rejected.

"We are in a new era," said Adav Noti, executive director of the Campaign Legal Center, which pushes for stricter interpretation and enforcement of the law. "It is breathtaking the speed with which the rules are being torn down. There has been more activity in the last two years to allow money into the system than in the 20 years before that combined."

One decision this spring that is already reshaping the 2024 presidential race allowed super PACs and campaigns for the first time to work together to plan and execute costly door-to-door canvassing operations. Politicians had previously been forbidden from coordinating strategy with super PACs, which can raise unlimited amounts of money, to restrain the influence of megadonors on candidates.

But the commission ruled that canvassing work was exempt because it did not amount to "public communications," freeing politicians and super PACs to work more closely than ever.

Another recent ruling permitted federal candidates, for the first time, to raise unlimited money for state-level ballot measures.

The commission decided that a wealthy donor could put money into a trust that then could distribute donations to campaigns — while keeping the original source anonymous. And it ruled in 2022 that certain types of mass text messages did not constitute "public communications" either, subjecting them to fewer restrictions.

All of those decisions — along with numerous others — were settled on a 4-2 vote, with Ms. Lindenbaum as the swing commissioner.

"It's inexplicable and it's stunning," said Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, a Rhode Island Democrat who is one of his party's leading voices for curbing the influence of money in politics. At first, Mr. Whitehouse said, he hoped Ms. Lindenbaum was tactically yielding to notch other "strategic victories" in return. But no longer. "We don't see any sign that this is horse-trading," he said. "This looks more like just surrender."

'Caught by Surprise'

In a wide-ranging interview, Ms. Lindenbaum downplayed her role and the sweep of the decisions. "I don't see them as necessarily moving the needle," she said. Rather, she said, she was simply following the law and formalizing what had been happening in practice, such as with one 4-2 ruling that members of Congress could legally use their PACs for their own personal benefit.

"We don't need to try to broaden the scope of the law to cover activities that we find to be bad or icky," she said. "What the law says and what some people might wish the law says are different."

At first blush, Ms. Lindenbaum would seem a surprising apostate for the left. She once marched with Code Pink, the left-wing antiwar group, and later served as a top lawyer for Stacey Abrams, a progressive former candidate for Georgia governor, and her voting-rights group.

"She came from the progressive community, so I think everyone was caught by surprise," said Craig Holman, a lobbyist for Public Citizen, a consumer-advocacy group.

But it is Ms. Lindenbaum's work in the trenches of campaigns, where lawyers sort through the law's gray areas to decide what can and cannot be done, that her supporters and detractors alike say has informed her thinking.

Ms. Lindenbaum said her perspective as a lawyer who represented politicians who faced "ridiculous" allegations of wrongdoing was valuable to the commission. "I have the practical experience and I can explain why somebody did something a way they did," she said.

Mr. Noti said he had been hesitant to air his grievances with Ms. Lindenbaum publicly, lest it lead to backlash. Back when she was a private lawyer, she objected through a mutual acquaintance to a public comment Mr. Noti had made about one of her clients.

"I have thought there was a potential that speaking out could make things worse rather than better," he said. "But the recent set of rulings — I'm not sure what worse would look like."

Jason Torchinsky, a Republican elections lawyer, hailed the spate of recent decisions.

"Lots of things facing the F.E.C. call for practical applications of campaign finance law, and Commissioner Lindenbaum brings that to the commission from her years as a day-to-day lawyer in the field," he said.

An Actual Olive Branch

There have been brief periods of comity at the commission, which was created after the Watergate scandal. But for 15 years, the agency was defined by 3-3 gridlock on seemingly everything.

Donald F. McGahn II, who became a commissioner in 2008 and later was President Donald J. Trump's first White House counsel, imposed discipline on the Republican bloc when he arrived. The leader of the Democratic opposition became Commissioner Ellen Weintraub, who has served on the commission since 2002.

The dysfunction was so bad that by 2021, Ms. Weintraub pushed the Democrats to adopt the unusual tactic of refusing to close stalled investigations in hopes the commission would get sued for failing to act. The Democratic bloc then refused to send lawyers to defend the agency in court.

Ms. Lindenbaum undid that strategy almost immediately, providing the fourth vote to close all of those cases, some of which dated to 2016.

It was the beginning of what multiple people said was a frosty relationship between Ms. Lindenbaum and Ms. Weintraub, though both are Democrats. Tensions ran especially high with Ms. Weintraub's longtime counsel, Tom Moore.

At one point in late 2022, Mr. Moore ordered an actual olive branch on Etsy and gave it to Ms. Lindenbaum as a present at a commission holiday party. He attached a handwritten letter seeking to reset relations.

"I was sincere," Mr. Moore said. He never heard back.

Ms. Lindenbaum said it would be inappropriate to discuss another commissioner's aide in detail, but said of the episode: "Forgiveness only comes with a true apology and a true recognition of faults. And if I don't have a true recognition of faults, acknowledgment of what was done to bring about the apology, it is not an apology. And I will not accept it."

Mr. Moore, who declined to comment on Ms. Lindenbaum's response, left the commission in 2023 and has watched in frustration as it has moved from deadlock to deregulation.

"When nothing's happening, nothing bad is happening," said Mr. Moore, now a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress. "Now bad things are happening."

Among Republicans, Ms. Lindenbaum's reception has been warmer. Mr. Cooksey said he bonded with her over their past work in politics and over being parents of young children.

"I doubt that there is a single mainstream policy issue that we agree on," he said. "But we, I think, do both agree about how the current campaign finance system is burdensome and overly complicated and often unfair."

Ms. Lindenbaum said she was fighting for more agency funding and pushing for Congress to strip the street addresses of donors from online contribution records.

Outside watchdogs worry about the slow pace of investigations. A little-noticed footnote in one recent statement by Ms. Weintraub revealed that the general counsel's office was actively conducting only three investigations nationwide.

"Dara has turned the F.E.C. from dysfunctional to functionally avoiding enforcement," Mr. Holman said.

A Partisan Twist

One surprising thread through many of Ms. Lindenbaum's most consequential decisions is that they were sought by Mr. Elias, who has become the face of voting-rights litigation on the left.

But at the commission, Mr. Elias is better known for pressing to loosen restrictions on money for his Democratic clients. That includes seeking the new rules allowing super PACs and candidates to coordinate canvassing, allowing federal officials to raise unlimited sums for ballot measures and loosening rules on text messaging.

His role reveals an important ideological divide on the left between those who oppose the influence of money and practitioners who want to elect more Democrats.

"Some of the advocacy groups — they are fighting over hypotheticals," Mr. Elias said. "They are regulating for the thing that isn't real."

Interestingly, the campaign arm of the Senate Republicans lobbied against some of the looser rules that Mr. Elias successfully sought, warning against making sweeping changes in an election year.

"The campaign finance system has to work," Mr. Elias said, praising Ms. Lindenbaum for providing "clear guideposts."

What Democrats and Republicans are keenly aware of is that Ms. Lindenbaum's term runs all the way until 2027. "We're not done," Mr. Cooksey said.

"Who would have thought," said Mr. Whitehouse, the Democratic senator, "deadlock and dysfunction would be the good old days?"



ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES

"The deregulators are winning," said Sean Cooksey, G.O.P. head of the Federal Election Commission.



ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES

Dara Lindenbaum, a Democrat, started siding with the three Republicans on the commission.



ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES

Ellen Weintraub, a Democrat who has served since 2002, has had tensions with Ms. Lindenbaum.



FOOL PHOTO BY ROBERT WILLETT

Marc Elias, a prominent Democratic Party lawyer looking for political advantage for his clients, sought many of the rulings that loosened restrictions.



CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES

Before Ms. Lindenbaum's recent shift, the Federal Election Commission had been deadlocked along party lines for over a decade.

With Teamsters Union Yet to Endorse, Its Chief Seeks to Speak at Both Conventions

By MAGGIE HABERMAN and JONATHAN SWAN

The president of the Teamsters union has asked for speaking slots at both the Republican and Democratic national conventions, at a time when President Biden and former President Donald J. Trump have pressed for support from rank-and-file members of organized labor.

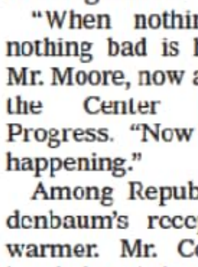
The move by Sean O'Brien, the president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, underscores the fact that his group, unlike other influential umbrella unions that have backed Mr. Biden in the 2024 election, has yet to endorse in the presidential race. Mr. O'Brien has made clear he is delaying a decision until later this year.

Kara Deniz, a spokeswoman for the Teamsters union, confirmed that Mr. O'Brien, through aides, has told officials working on both conventions that he would be interested in speaking at their days-long nomination events. The Republicans will hold their convention in Milwaukee in July, and the Democrats will hold theirs in Chicago in August.

It would be unusual in the current fractious political climate for someone to speak at both conventions.

Over the course of the year, Mr. O'Brien has invited several presidential candidates, including Mr. Biden, Mr. Trump and independent candidates like Cornel West and Robert F. Kennedy Jr., to speak before his group. But Mr. O'Brien has what people close to Mr. Trump believe is a developing relationship with the former president.

The Teamsters is one of the country's largest labor unions, with 1.3 million members in sectors like trucking and manufacturing. The A.F.L.-C.I.O. and the United Automobile Workers have backed Mr. Biden, and Shawn Fain, the president of the U.A.W., has been harshly critical of Mr. Trump.



Sean O'Brien said he would delay backing a presidential candidate until later in the year.

Mr. O'Brien, however, has appeared more open to the former president.

Mr. O'Brien had a private meeting with Mr. Trump at the beginning of the year at Mar-a-Lago, shortly before the Iowa caucuses that the former president won handily, setting him on a path to become his party's nominee for a third time.

The following month, the Teamsters gave $45,000 to both the Republican and Democratic convention funds, with officials saying the goal was to make sure its rank-and-file members are heard at the convention.

Mr. Biden has described himself as the most pro-labor president in history. And in 2020, he cut into what had been Mr. Trump's advantage with working-class white voters in the 2016 presidential campaign against former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. That year, Mr. Trump's appeal to voters in the Rust Belt states of Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania was key to his victory.

Also that year, some of Mr. Trump's allies, including Paul Manafort, his onetime campaign chairman, tried working connections in the labor movement to see if they could peel off support for Mrs. Clinton from organized labor.

This year, as Mr. Biden has struggled in the Sun Belt swing states, such as Arizona, his path through white working-class states in the Rust Belt is seen as key.

While Mr. Trump's camp is hopeful for an endorsement, it has been decades since the Teamsters backed a Republican presidential candidate. But keeping the Teamsters neutral would be viewed as a victory for the Trump team. And even absent an endorsement, having Mr. O'Brien at the Republican National Convention would be politically useful to Mr. Trump, who often highlights relationships to score political points.

The Teamsters endorsed Mr. Biden in 2020, although their support came relatively late in the general election campaign, well after it was clear that the then-candidate would be the presumptive Democratic nominee.

A spokeswoman who represents both the Trump campaign and the Republican National Committee did not respond to a request for comment about whether the GOP will grant Mr. O'Brien a speaking slot.

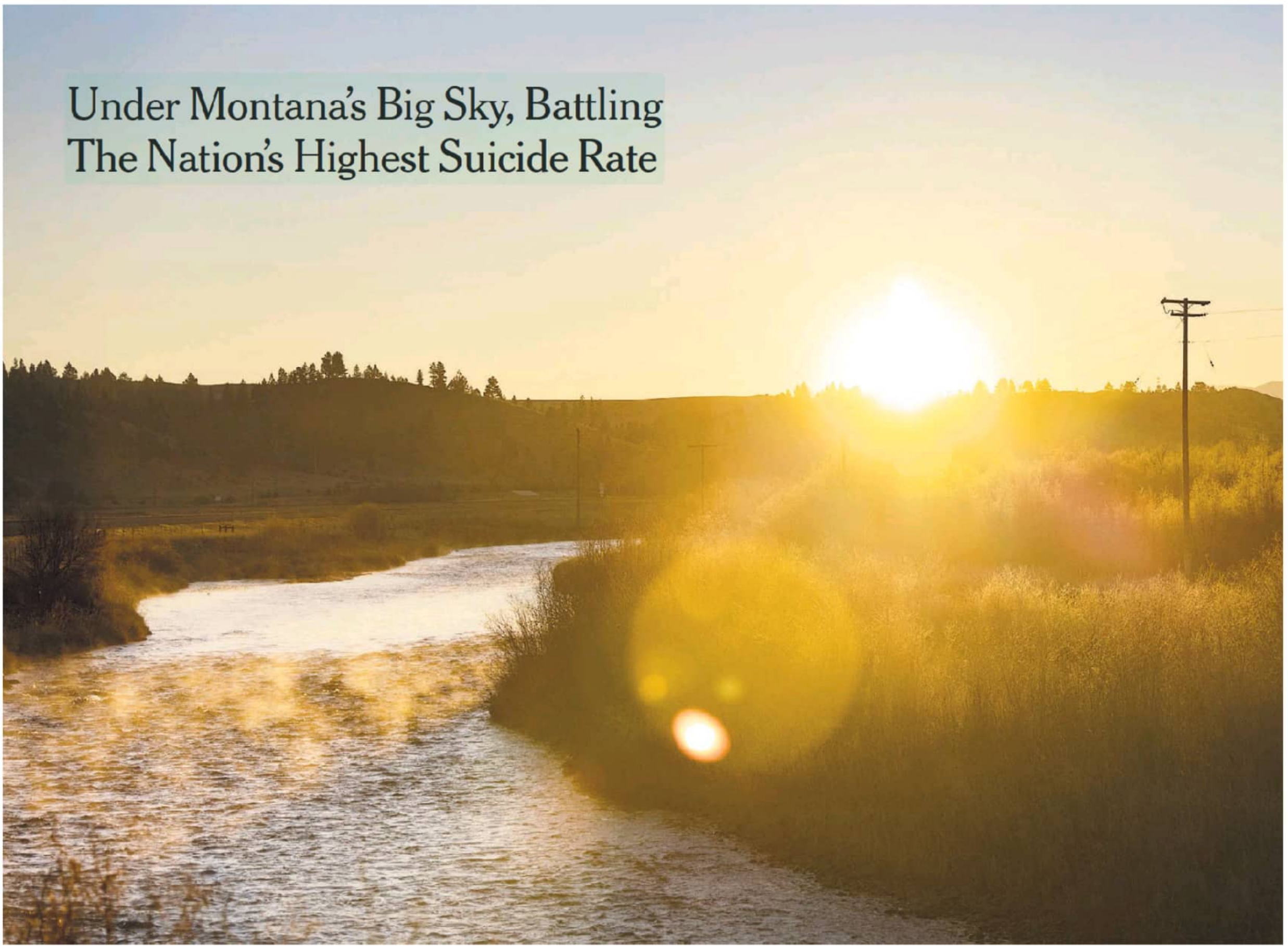
Kevin Munoz, a spokesman for the Biden campaign, did not address whether the Democrats will give Mr. O'Brien a slot.

"There's only one candidate in this race fighting for American workers and creating good-paying union jobs here at home, and that's President Biden," Mr. Munoz said, saying that Mr. Trump "has spent his entire life fighting against workers' rights" and that Mr. Biden "will continue to work to earn the Teamsters' support."

Mr. O'Brien was elected president of the union on a wave of reformist energy in 2021. But unlike some umbrella unions that have backed Mr. Biden, Mr. O'Brien has a number of members in southern states who support the former president. And whatever his personal relationship with Mr. Trump, there is likely a benefit to Mr. O'Brien with his own members in being seen as open to talking to Republicans.

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Under Montana's Big Sky, Battling The Nation's Highest Suicide Rate



From Page A1

United States every year for the past 25 years. Yet the harm inflicted on communities by suicides rarely registers in the national debate over guns.

Over the past three years, Montana's typically elevated suicide rate was the highest in the nation, according to an analysis of federal mortality data by The New York Times. In a state of 1.1 million people, 955 people died by suicide from January 2021 through November 2023. Other states in the Mountain West, including Wyoming and New Mexico, have also struggled with high suicide rates and face many of the same challenges as Montana.

Last year, suicides in Montana and the nation declined to near prepandemic levels. But the rate of suicides in Montana remained one of the worst in the country, and a source of widespread grief across the state.

Many of these deaths are felt but not seen. Suicide, despite its frequency, can still be steeped in secrecy and shame. The deaths often come after a struggle with mental health issues or substance abuse.

Suicidal impulses can last only briefly, but easy access to a gun makes the urges more difficult to survive. In Montana, 67 percent of suicides in 2022 involved a gun, according to the Times analysis. Nationally, guns were used in about 55 percent of such deaths.

But in a place where guns are embedded in the rugged, frontier ethos, there is little political will to prevent people who are at risk of harming themselves from owning a gun. A proposal to create a "red flag" law, which would prohibit a person determined to be a danger to himself or others from possessing a firearm, died in a committee of the State Legislature last year.

Several years ago, Ali's husband's family passed down some firearms that were considered heirlooms, and she agreed they could be stored at her house.

At the time, suicide did not cross her mind.



"I had never seen so many survivors in one place," said Ali Mullen, above, about joining a group in Helena, Mont., that supports people like herself whose loved ones have died by suicide. Below, a tribute to Ms. Mullen's husband, John, at an event for survivors, left, and an urn necklace filled with his ashes.





THE FIRST TIME Ali drove through Montana, she was in college on a road trip in the late 1990s. She remembers how the clouds cast giant shadows on the open plains, revealing the state's "Big Sky."

She was hooked.

She transferred to the University of Montana from a college in Illinois. After graduation, she worked as a 911 dispatcher in Glacier National Park, fielding calls for "bear-jams," when traffic would stop because a grizzly wandered out into the middle of the road.

John Mullen was working as a handyman at what is now the Whitefish Mountain Resort when they met.

They married in Glacier. A pair of bald eagles circled overhead as they exchanged their vows. "It's the greatest place on earth," she said of Glacier.

After their first child, a daughter, was born in 2006, they moved to the Helena area to be closer to John's parents.

The vice president of a community bank took a liking to John and hired him as mortgage loan officer. He was a natural, tapping his connections across greater Helena where he had lived since he was a boy.

Montana is a vast state. Yet, somehow, Ali said, it could feel intimate.

"Montana is a string of small towns connected by one or two highways," she said. "We all know each other."

But that closeness can also amplify the fallout from suicides.

Research has shown that 135 people can be "exposed" to a single suicide and that some of those closest to the person who dies can be at greater risk of contemplating suicide themselves.

"There is a lot of strength in a small-town structure, but the downside is that if you lose one person to suicide, it can have a large impact on the community," said Janet Lindow, chief executive of the Rural Behavioral Health Institute in Livingston, Mont., which screens children for suicide risk and connects them with mental health care.

Researchers say numerous issues contribute to Montana's suicide problem. A report by the state's suicide prevention coordinator points to a combination of factors, including access to firearms, the isolation of rural living and the relatively large number of veterans and Native Americans in Montana, groups that have had higher rates of suicides.

The Rev. Keith Johnson, the pastor of the Life Covenant Church in Helena and a friend of Ali's, used to avoid talking openly with congregants about suicide.

But faced with such regular deaths in the community, he now talks about the issue with middle school and high school students at his church, which is not far from the State Capitol building and blocks of Victorian homes, some dating back to Helena's boom during the gold rush.

"I have known people who have taken their life, who were followers of Jesus Christ," Mr. Johnson said. "In my opinion, while it can be related to a spiritual issue, it needs to be understood as a mental health issue."

For years, John struggled with his mental health, and Ali begged him to see a therapist, but he resisted. "I think it was very hard for him to admit that he was struggling," she said.

Just before the lockdowns began in March 2020, John had started a new job at a mortgage company. Ali obtained her brokerage license and joined him at the company. They worked at desks

Eli Murray and Susan Shain contributed reporting. Kirsten Noyes contributed research.

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY TAILYR IRVINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



Missoula, Mont., left. Over the past three years, the state's suicide rate was the highest in the nation, affecting families like the Mullens, above.

'I am angry at the states that allow people with a record of hospitalizations to buy a gun.'

JULIE MADDEN, whose son Tim shot himself in 2021. She says there should be more ways to keep guns away from people who are struggling with mental health.

crammed together in their bedroom in their house in Clancy, a small town near Helena.

As 2020 wore on, John increasingly found himself at odds with some people around town. He got into shouting matches with people who refused to wear masks and those who questioned whether Covid was real, his wife said.

John experienced volatile mood swings, which weighed on the family, Ali said. He started keeping the shades in their house drawn. He stopped going out with friends for beers. He fixated on conspiracy theories circulating online about social unrest.

His former boss and mentor at the bank, Jim Smith, remembers hearing John's voice breaking when he talked about the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol. "He said, 'Where is the country going for my kids?'" Mr. Smith recalled.

After the attack, Ali noticed that her husband started having trouble sleeping. "Something changed in him after that."

ONE CONDITION ALI HAD for bringing guns into her house was that they had to be locked up to keep them safe from their children.

One Christmas, when her children were still little, she bought a safe from a Helena gun shop for $100 and put it under the tree.

Ali and John kept the keys in a place only they knew about. But Ali eventually realized that her husband was the one who needed protecting.

When his mood would darken, she would secretly take the keys and keep them in her pocket. Then the storm would pass, and she would put the keys back in their original hiding spot.

She did not think to hide the keys again when her husband started shredding papers and told her the password to his phone. She was overwhelmed by her own stresses from the pandemic — the family's health, remote school, her new job as a mortgage broker.

She knew her husband was struggling, but she didn't comprehend the depth of his desperation. She knew that a friend of his had fatally shot himself. But she was not aware of how that death might affect John.

On the evening of Jan. 20, 2021, the family had finished dinner when John walked outside with a gun.

Ali realized what was happening and followed him out into the yard. By the time the paramedics arrived, she knew that her husband wouldn't survive.

Ali fell to the ground. A deputy sheriff helped her up. Then she went inside and told her three children what had happened.

THE YEAR John Mullen died, at age 40, Montana was among the nation's fastest growing states.

Ultrawealthy second-home owners and people wanting an escape from mask and vaccine mandates elsewhere all came seeking their piece of the "Last Best Place," as Montana is known.

Ali considered moving out of the house where her husband died. But with so many people relocating to Montana, it was difficult to find an affordable home for sale.

She felt trapped. People she barely knew would stop her in Costco to ask how she was doing. Grocery clerks would start crying when she walked in the store. Despite this sympathy, "I felt utterly alone," she said. "Like I was the only person in Helena that this had happened to."

In the spring of 2022, Ali realized she was far from the only one.

She joined a newly organized group called the LOSS team, which stands for Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors and which supports people whose loved ones have died by suicide. The first such team was started in Louisiana in the late 1990s, and there are organizations now operating in numerous states, including in Lewis and Clark County, where Helena is.

As part of the team's outreach, a survivor and a mental health professional visit a home in the days after a death has occurred.

Seeing a survivor who is "dressed" and "functioning" after experiencing a loss "plants seeds of hope" in the newly bereaved, according to the LOSS team website.

When Ali attended her first meeting, she realized the scale of the suicide problem. "I had never seen so many survivors in one place" she said.

She met Rowan Rankin, who with her best friend started a group called Saving Helena High School because they wanted to raise awareness about the student suicides there.

Ms. Rankin, who graduated from the high school in 2016 and now works as a care coordinator at the Helena children's hospital, said, "gun ownership is an important part of many Montanans' lives, and that isn't going to change." But she believes that "learning to safely store lethal means" can help prevent gun suicides.

Another LOSS team member, Julie Madden, said there needed to be more ways to keep guns away from people who are struggling with mental illness. Ms. Madden's son Tim died by suicide in April 2021. He had spent his childhood summers in Montana, hiking, camping and target shooting at his family's remote cabin.

When Mr. Madden died, he was living outside Houston. A musician, he had been hospitalized several times for various mental health crises during his life.

There are no state laws in Texas or Montana that require a waiting period for completing a gun purchase.

Mr. Madden used his pandemic stimulus money to buy the gun he used to take his life at age 35. It was the first firearm he had ever owned.

"Some people get angry at God for letting things like this happen," said Ms. Madden, who is 73. "I am a realist. I know bad things happen to innocent people."

"I am angry at the states that allow people with a record of hospitalizations to buy a gun."

"But I am not ready to be a crusader yet," she added. "I am still looking at my son's boxes that I need to go through and I think, 'Maybe another day.'"

LAST APRIL, the Legislature in Montana passed a piece of bipartisan legislation that would make it easier for people worried about their own mental health to temporarily store their guns with a friend or family member.

The new measure shields the person who agrees to hold the guns from liability if anyone is harmed after the firearms are returned to their owner.

"It is no great shakes, but if you look at the bigger picture in Montana, it's a big stride forward," said Mary Ann Dunwell, a Democratic state senator and a sponsor of the bill.

She is part of a bipartisan group of about 20 lawmakers who are discussing additional proposals ahead of the next legislative session to further increase safe gun storage.

Anything more aggressive on guns faces long political odds in the State Legislature, where Republicans hold majorities in the House and the Senate and where there is deep support for gun rights.

Ms. Dunwell said that there was widespread concern about being perceived as anti-firearm in Montana and that it was stifling discussions about guns.

Last year, Montana enacted a law requiring certain businesses receiving state funds to sign a contract stipulating that they would not "discriminate" against a "firearm entity" or "firearm trade association."

"I have Democratic colleagues who are afraid to introduce bills for firearm safety because of the political repercussions," Ms. Dunwell said.

Last year, Ali was hired by the Lewis and Clark County Public Health Department to work on issues around addiction and suicide prevention. Her work focuses on gun safety, as well as on safe storage and disposal of medicine to prevent suicides from overdoses.

She knows from experience that gun safes and trigger locks are not perfect solutions. Gun owners are encouraged to take the extra step of giving the keys to a friend or even freezing the keys in an ice-cube tray. Anything that can slow a suicidal impulse can save a life.

After her husband died, Ali had all the guns removed from her house. But she doesn't think it is productive for suicide prevention efforts to push for gun restrictions. "People don't want to be yelled at," she said.

ALI HAS ALSO taught her three children a series of "protective barriers" to keep them safe from suicide.

If they experience anxiety, they have steps to get "grounded" again. When they feel lonely, they need to call a friend.

Ali's daughter, Nora, was a member of the National Honor Society this year and starred in the school musical at Helena High School. In the fall, Nora is headed to the University of Montana to study biology. Ali's two sons earned straight A's this year.

A big source of support and inspiration at Helena High School had been a science teacher and trusted counselor for students in crisis named David McKim.

One day in early November, Ali was at work when Nora called and "could barely speak," Ali recalled.

Mr. McKim had taken his life.

She raced over to the school to pick up her daughter and son and any other students who wanted to join them.

A group of them hunkered down at the Mullens' house. They baked cookies and watched cartoons. One boy stayed for four days.

Even in a small city of about 34,000 people that is accustomed to suicide, Mr. McKim's death shook the community.

Ali attended Mr. McKim's memorial service in a school gym in Helena. The mayor of Helena was there, alongside hundreds of students, parents and teachers.

Ms. Rankin from the LOSS team was there, too. Mr. McKim had been a big supporter of her "Saving Helena High School" initiative after a string of student suicides.

Ali's friend Pastor Johnson presided over the service. He was Mr. McKim's pastor and close friend.

Some of the speakers at the service were open about Mr. McKim's challenges with mental health, a candor that was seen by many as a step toward raising awareness about the issue.

Before his death, Mr. McKim had been treated for anxiety and was given a medication that could cause suicidal ideation if mixed with alcohol, his brother Andy said in an interview. Mr. McKim died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

While Mr. McKim, 49, was struggling with his mental health, he had handed over his guns to be stored outside his home, his brother said. But at least one gun was still in the house. Andy said he thought that his brother kept that gun for protection or had forgotten to hand it over for safekeeping.

Mr. McKim used to talk for hours with Andy about the anguish he felt over the student suicides. "In my heart, I know when he was in his right mind; suicide wasn't something he would have considered," Andy said.

During the service in the gym, Ali saw the fresh grief on many students' faces. She handed out pamphlets to parents about spotting warning signs in teenagers. She insisted some students take cards with the suicide hotline number printed on it.

She listened to stories about Mr. McKim, a devoted teacher and avid outdoorsman, who loved Montana. Like her husband had.

A former colleague of Mr. McKim's quoted from a book by the Montana-raised writer Norman Maclean:

"Eventually all things merge into one, and a river runs through it.

"The river was cut by the world's great flood and runs over rocks from the basement of time. On some of the rocks are timeless raindrops. Under the rocks are the words, and some of the words are theirs."

If you are having thoughts of suicide, call or text 988 to reach the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline or go to SpeakingOfSuicide.com/resources for a list of additional resources.

Chilling Log From Dive Of Titan Declared Fake

By WILLIAM J. BROAD

Last year, a purported transcript of communications between the Titan submersible and its mother ship circulated widely on the internet. Viewed millions of times, the so-called log suggested that a series of alarms had turned a dive to the resting place of the Titanic into a heart-pounding crisis in which the five voyagers struggled in vain to return to the surface.

But the head of the U.S. federal government team investigating the disaster said that the entire transcript is a fiction. After nearly a year of investigation, his group has found no signs that the five voyagers aboard the Titan had any warning of the catastrophic implosion that was to take their lives. Two miles down, where seawater exerts vast pressures, an implosion would have made the violent collapse of the vehicle's hull instantaneous.

"I'm confident it's a false transcript," said Capt. Jason D. Neubauer, who retired from the U.S. Coast Guard and serves as chairman of the Marine Board of Investigation, the agency's highest level of inquiry. "It was made up." Its authorship is not known.

Despite the log's air of authenticity, the federal team saw through the pretense for a variety of reasons. Significantly, Mr. Neubauer's team gained access to the records of the actual communications between the submersible and its mother ship, which remain an undisclosed part of the federal investigation.

He said that his team, aided by investigators from the National Transportation Safety Board, had "found no evidence" that Titan's voyagers had any awareness of the imminent implosion or their fate.

His hope, Mr. Neubauer added, is that the truth will console relatives concerned that the five men inside the Titan may have suffered in their last moments.

The investigator's disclosures are the first to emerge from a comprehensive inquiry begun last summer into the disaster and its causes. While there were expectations that the investigation would be concluded before the one-year anniversary of the Titan's destruction, a mix of technical and jurisdictional complexities mean that a final report could take years.

The five men aboard the submersible were Shahzada Dawood, 48, a British Pakistani businessman; his son, Suleman, 19; Hamish Harding, 58, a British airline executive; Paul-Henri Nargeolet, 77, a French Titanic authority; and Stockton Rush, 61, a founder and chief executive of OceanGate, the American firm that built the submersible and ran its tourist dives. He was also the Titan's pilot that day.

For years, starting in 2018, Mr. Rush brushed aside warnings that the sub's maverick design was destined to fail. An OceanGate waiver for would-be passengers posted by the website Business Insider said that the "experimental" craft had plunged beneath the waves some 90 times and succeeded in reaching the depth of the Titanic on 13 dives.

The Titan calamity began on June 18, 2023, when the craft was reported missing in the North Atlantic. Five days later, on June 22, the Coast Guard, citing the discovery of debris from the Titan near the Titanic's resting place, announced that the submersible had suffered a "catastrophic implosion."

During the five tense days, a fleet of international vessels searched for the lost craft, raising hopes that the Titan voyagers were somehow alive but trapped in an increasingly grim crisis two miles down.

News reports asked how much oxygen might be left in the submersible's life-support system. Underwater banging noises were also detected. Some analysts suggested that survivors in the lost submersible were desperately trying to signal their location in hopes of rescue.

The Coast Guard's implosion announcement brought the survival narrative to an end. Public speculation in the following weeks turned to what might have gone wrong during Titan's last minutes on June 18.

The transcript apparently began circulating on the internet in late June and offered a minute-by-minute report rich in technical details. It recounted specialized Titan acronyms, the first name of a mother ship expert and credible depictions of the submersible's descent. In short, the detailed report had an air of authenticity.

"Somebody did it well enough to make it look plausible," Mr. Neubauer said. The log made the adventurers "look like they were panicking," he added.

The maker of a YouTube video that has nearly seven million views said in his line-by-line commentary on the fake log: "It's just so scary to know that these guys spent 20 minutes in fear of their lives."

The faux crisis centered on what the transcript called the R.T.M. — short for Real Time Hull Health Monitoring system. OceanGate had hailed the proprietary system as "an unparalleled safety feature that assesses the integrity of the hull throughout every dive." The network of sensors could — in theory — warn that the hull was failing and give the pilot enough time to escape the crushing pressures of the deep. Doubters of the system called it fake reassurance.

The bogus transcript told of Titan informing its mother ship of a series of hull alarms, as well as reports of crackling noises. Titan's last purported message about the hull sensors read: "RTM alert active all red."

The fake transcript ended on a troubling note of silence, as the mother ship sent seven terse messages inquiring about the submersible's fate but received no replies. "Please respond if you're able," the purported last message read.

In an interview, Alfred S. McLaren, a retired Navy submariner, submersible pilot and president emeritus of the Explorers Club, said that he had found the transcript credible. "It makes sense," he said. "It seems on the money" in terms of how Titan and its mother ship would have communicated.

Told in an subsequent interview of the Coast Guard refutation, Dr. McLaren speculated on the fraud's motive. "It may have been done to embarrass OceanGate," he said. "It certainly was guaranteed to stir up the relatives."

In the interview, Mr. Neubauer, the head of the federal inquiry, told not only of his team's dismissal of the transcript's authenticity but how the investigation was one of the most complex he had ever encountered over the decades. Complicating factors, he said, included the lack of witnesses to the disaster, a wealth of novel vessel technologies, the need to test exotic materials and to extract data from electronic devices, and the disaster's site off Canada in international waters, creating jurisdictional issues.

The dive itself illustrates the tangles. OceanGate was based in Everett, Wash., but its mother ship, the Polar Prince, was from Canada, and the five people aboard the submersible were citizens of England, Pakistan, France and the United States.

As a result, the Coast Guard investigation has many partners — not just the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board but also similar bodies in Canada, France and the United Kingdom. The agency relies on the U.S. Navy to recover debris from the accident site.

The multitude of angles and investigators, Mr. Neubauer said, has made some aspects of the inquiry more difficult than expected and pushed back its completion date.

The inquiry began officially on June 23, the day after the implosion announcement, and its convening notice called for a finished report in a year. However, Mr. Neubauer said, a major report typically takes two or three years to complete. He suggested that the Titan inquiry would probably follow the same pattern.

Despite the time and effort, Mr. Neubauer said, he valued such investigations because the findings regularly get turned into new laws, rules and regulations that improve vessel safety.

Mr. Neubauer added that the friends and families of Titan's victims might take comfort in knowing that such disasters have silver linings.

"It doesn't make it any less painful," he said. "But it can help."



OCEANGATE EXPEDITIONS, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Titan submersible, which is believed to have imploded without warning, instantaneously killing the five passengers aboard.

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Help Grows for People Who Are in Ill Health And Live on the Street

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reduce readmissions.

The number of programs, mostly nonprofit, has roughly doubled since 2016, to more than 165, according to the National Institute for Medical Respite Care. The movement has spread to places like Memphis; Missoula, Mont.; and Greenville, S.C., underscoring the ubiquity of homelessness.

With two 50-bed sites and a roster of clinicians, the Phoenix program, Circle the City, is one of the most sophisticated. Patients have an average age of 56 and bodies that seem much older. They crowd the halls with wheelchairs, walkers, intravenous lines and colostomy bags, markers of debilitation that without shelter would carry the risk of infection or assault.

Proponents of respite care hail the movement as a humanitarian imperative and a sensible way to control health care costs.

"We make sure people have a humane place to go and keep them from bouncing back to the emergency room," said Kim Despres, the chief executive at Circle the City.

But some programs offer only rudimentary care, more like shelters than nursing homes. Critics fear the movement could divert patients into second-class convalescence and obscure the need for permanent housing.

"Hospitals use respite care to get indigent patients off their books, and then they're often discharged back into homelessness," said Dennis Culhane, who studies aging and homelessness at the University of Pennsylvania.

Homeless patients should be cared for in licensed nursing homes, he said, alongside the general population.

A major challenge in respite care is what to do when patients get well: Many have nowhere to go. Caseworkers at Circle the City often spend months helping patients make plans, but high rents and the shortage of housing aid mean some return to the streets.

"It's very scary for them to be with us for two or three months and then have to leave," Ms. Despres said.

A visit to Circle the City is a tutorial on the infirmity that can accompany homelessness. Sheila Meade, 62, uses a walker after a hysterectomy. Armando Sanchez, 42, lost five toes to diabetes. Quintin Alston, 62, had a hip replaced. Kenson John, 50, a paraplegic, is recovering from toxic shock. Until recently, all were sleeping outdoors or in shelters.

It may be obvious that homelessness can cause health problems. After years in the Phoenix sun, Mr. Blair, the hernia patient, nearly went blind from cataracts, which have been removed.

But health problems can also cause homelessness. Born with spina bifida, Lawrence Mora, 57, long supported himself as a translator, but aging left him unable to walk and too depressed for full-time work. He was hospitalized with a kidney ailment and evicted from his apartment the same day.

He was discharged from the hospital to Circle the City and praises the mental health treatment it provided. "I might have the title 'homeless,' but we're given so much dignity," he said.

The aging of the homeless population is a stark demographic shift.

In a forthcoming study with Thomas Byrne, Mr. Culhane of the University of Pennsylvania found that by 2020 the largest cluster of homeless men were in their mid-50s, up from mid-30s three decades earlier. The share of the population that was 60 and older had more than doubled, to 19 percent. He says the trend reflects the plight of late baby boomers who matured amid deindustrialization and soaring housing costs, then carried the scars through life.

Margot Kushel, the director of the Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative at University of California, San Francisco, found that unhoused people have the health profiles of patients two decades older, with similar rates of incontinence, dementia and falls.

Worn by lives of poverty, weakened by high rates of addiction and injury, and unable to manage treatable diseases like diabetes and cancer, they suffer mortality rates 3.5 times those of the general population, Dr. Kushel found.

By insuring an additional 15 million people in or near poverty — the main risk pool for homelessness — the Medicaid expansion that started with the Affordable Care Act of 2010 gave respite programs new ways to recover costs. Five states, including California, have federal permission to cover respite care directly. In other states, respite programs can bill Medicaid for discrete services, like supplying wheelchairs or conducting exams.

Respite care has also grown, albeit more modestly, in the 10 states that have rejected the Medicaid expansion, driven by sheer need. With less funding, they tend to offer fewer services.

Circle the City, which opened in 2012, was willed into being by a Phoenix nun who sought donations with a shoe box. Now the nonprofit group has a $32 million budget and a staff of 260, including physicians, nurse practitioners, licensed social workers and mobile medical vans.

"Navigators" stationed in seven emergency rooms help manage homeless patients, seeking alternative care for those who do not need admission and making discharge plans for those who do. Some local hospitals help defray the cost.

Housing, not medicine, may be respite care's toughest test. Most patients are too ill to work, rent subsidies are scarce, and many have exhausted family aid.

About three quarters of Circle the City's patients leave with housing plans, including subsidized apartments, addiction programs or temporary stays with friends, Ms. Despres said. That still leaves a quarter leaving for sidewalks or shelters, and others return to homelessness after their makeshift arrangements dissolve.

Hard cases abound. Mr. John, who is paraplegic, is an undocumented immigrant. Mr. Alston, the hip patient, has a murder conviction. (He said he killed someone who had molested him as a teen.) Ms. Meade would live with her daughter, but her daughter lives in a park — the same park where Ms. Meade lived for a decade.

"It's a very fine balance, not wanting to discharge them back into the street with no options but not wanting to hold on to them too long because then we can't bring new people in," Ms. Despres said.

Circle the City offers hospice care. Its terminally ill patients include Douglas Botsford, 57, who arrived in April with a failing heart and a life story that he shares with a raconteur's flair. It involves a sales career in auto parts, a vindictive ex-girlfriend and an addiction to methamphetamine that left him living in his car with his soul mate, a pit bull named Mia.

She died two years ago after blinking goodbye in his arms. He suffered a heart attack two days later and learned he had little time to live.

"My heart died when my dog did," he said.

Hospitalized with another heart attack, Mr. Botsford was discharged to a shelter that could not care for him and sent back to the hospital — the exact scenario that respite care seeks to avoid. He assumed he would die on the street, until Circle the City offered care.

"I'm a very lucky man to have the chance to die here," he said.

Mr. Blair, recovering from his hernia, counts himself lucky, too. He went searching for shade and found good Samaritans.

A taciturn man with a graying red beard, he describes his life before homelessness only in faint detail. The factory where he worked near Cleveland closed. His girlfriend died. He could not afford the apartment they shared, and Ohio was too cold for him to live outdoors. He took a bus to Phoenix and slept behind an Italian restaurant, soothed by the patio music.

"Being around people is hard for me," he said. "I get a lot of anxiety feelings sometimes, panic attacks that are very tough."

He survived on food stamps and collected cans, but outdoor living weathered his body and planted dark thoughts. Ten days in a psychiatric hospital helped. Returning to homelessness did not.

When Tatiana Foss, 27, started working at a dermatology clinic in a building with a carport, she found a grizzled man with a gentle manner asking to sit in the shade. His hands shook, and he moved his mouth as if chewing invisible gum. She admired his politeness.

With a co-worker, she introduced him to the dermatologist, who treated a sore, diagnosed the hernia and understood that Mr. Blair could not get surgery without a place to recuperate. As it happened, Ms. Despres, Circle the City's leader, was among the dermatologist's patients. Mr. Blair got a bed.

His stay may offer a route from homelessness. With a case manager's help, Mr. Blair has been diagnosed with "serious mental illness," which gives him priority for subsidized housing with support services.

Ms. Foss recently visited. A woman of soft-spoken empathy, she praised Mr. Blair for accepting psychiatric care — "it's really important to take care of our mental health" — and expressed gratitude for their unlikely friendship.

"Thank you for letting me be part of your journey," she said.

Mr. Vance clasped his shaky hands and stared at the ceiling as if searching for words special enough to convey his gratitude. Finding none, he said simply, "I thank you for all your help."



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADRIANA ZEHBRAUSKAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Vance Blair, left, who was treated for a hernia, and Armando Sanchez, who lost five toes to diabetes, at Circle the City in Phoenix.



Lawrence Mora, left, and Sheila Meade. "I might have the title 'homeless,' but we're given so much dignity," Mr. Mora said.



Douglas Botsford, a hospice patient, prepared for Memorial Day. "I'm a very lucky man to have the chance to die here," he said.



With its roster of clinicians, Circle the City is one of the most sophisticated respite programs.

In Overheated Phoenix, E.M.T.s Are Cooling Patients With Body-Size Ice Cocoons

By DIONNE SEARCEY

As America comes to grips with hotter summer temperatures that already are seizing the nation's Southwest, emergency medical responders in some areas are carrying new gear to treat heat victims: giant plastic bags to immerse people in ice water.

The tactic involves placing patients suffering from heat-related illnesses in zippered bags that engulf the body, then packing them with ice cubes and water, until they cool to safe levels.

It's a technique that has been used for years to cool overheated soldiers or athletes facing heat stroke. Now the bags are being routinely deployed in some emergency rooms and on ambulance calls.

In Phoenix, where record-breaking temperatures last year killed 645 people, fire trucks and ambulances have been equipped with specially designed "immersion bags," said Phoenix Fire Captain Todd Keller. Emergency responders fill the bags with water and ice at fire stations before heading out on heat-related calls, he said.

"Sometimes, when they get to the hospital, the ice is completely melted, the patient is so hot," Mr. Keller said.

Patients typically stay inside 15 to 20 minutes or so, until their body temperature is reduced to about 101 degrees Fahrenheit. A pilot program using the therapy in Phoenix last summer proved successful enough that fire officials decided to deploy it across the entire department.

Last summer, Phoenix broke records with 31 straight days of the temperature reaching or exceeding 110 degrees Fahrenheit. Medical workers say it doesn't take long to overheat in extremely hot weather, or even in temperatures that aren't excessive if someone isn't adapted to the heat.

Studies showing the efficacy of cold water immersion were carried out by the military in the 1990s. Yet there has been widespread fear that immersion could cool a body too quickly and provoke a stroke or heart attack. Instead, emergency responders were often advised to mist patients with water and to fan their bodies to cool them. More recent guidance has taught responders to put ice or cold water on a patient's major arteries in the groin, neck and other areas.

But cold water immersion can bring down body temperatures eight times faster, with little risk of triggering other issues, particularly if body temperature is monitored closely with a rectal thermometer, said Douglas Casa, who studies heat-related illnesses and is the chief executive of the Korey Stringer Institute at the University of Connecticut.

The longer a person's body temperature is elevated, the more likely the patient will face organ damage or other issues. (Using wet towels to cover as much of an overheated person's skin as possible is a good alternative to immersing them in cold water, some researchers said.)

Arizona is the center of heat-related health issues in the nation.

Until recently, cold water immersion hasn't gained widespread adoption outside of ice tubs and dunk tanks in locker rooms. At foot races, sometimes kiddie wading pools are filled with ice water to cool off participants suffering from the heat. "It's a shame this method has taken so long to permeate," Dr. Casa said.

The fire department in San Antonio last year started carrying ice, water and body bags to fire scenes to treat overheated firefighters, after working with researchers at nearby Brooke Army Medical Center and the University of Texas at San Antonio who were persuaded by the effectiveness of cold water immersion. "It's not something we use often, but it's a tool in the toolbox," said Joe Arrington, a fire department spokesman there.

Fire departments elsewhere have also used the technique *in* the line of duty.

In Phoenix, the current heat wave could be a test for cold water immersion and other new tactics that the city is rolling out to avoid the same kind of grim outcome as last summer.

More cooling centers are open longer to help address rising overnight temperatures, and two of the centers will be open all day and night, said Melissa Guardaro, an assistant research professor in Arizona State University's School of Sustainability who helps lead the state's Heat Preparedness and Resilience Workgroup. More signs have been placed across the city to help make sure residents know about the centers.

"There's no silver bullet," said Ms. Guardaro. "But we learned an awful lot last year."

Jerry Snow became convinced of the efficacy of cold water immersion after working in the city for seven years and watching people suffering from heat illnesses enter Banner-University Medical Center in Phoenix. "It is a safe therapy and it does improve outcomes in patients," said Dr. Snow, an emergency department physician and medical toxicologist.

He considers Phoenix to be the nation's epicenter of heat-related health issues. "Almost all heat-related deaths in the country occur in Arizona," Dr. Snow said. "We really should be ground zero for treating these cases."

Last summer as temperatures soared, he began visiting fire stations to train emergency medical workers in cold water immersion therapy. He plans to study the outcomes of the fire department's use of the technique and said he will closely monitor future studies of cold water immersion.

Dr. Snow knows some patients may be too overheated for far too long to be helped by the method. But he said he was persuaded by results he's seen so far.

"I've seen unresponsive patients, who are not responding to pain or to shaking them, but you start to cool them and in that 10-minute transport to the hospital you can already see dramatic improvement," he said.

Last summer, responders employed cold water immersion using what they had: a tarp. They would pinch the ends and fold it in a banana shape so they could fill it with ice water and wrap patients in an ice bath inside.

The new bags in use work much better, medical workers said.

Another hospital in Phoenix, Valleywise Health Medical Center, also uses the technique. Doctors initially tried using inflatable devices that looked like pools to immerse patients. But water splashed out of them and created slippery, unsafe conditions, said Dr. Geoffrey Comp, an emergency medicine doctor at Valleywise Health Medical Center.

Now, the emergency department uses body bags, which are readily in stock at the hospital. The department's freezers are filled with ice from the hospital cafeteria ice maker. For emergency responders, he said, body bags are also practical because space is tight in ambulances.

"There's a stigma against the term of body bag, but it's a liquid-impermeable lightweight, cheap container we can use to put a patient in, and add cold water and ice," he said.

Most heat patients who arrive at Valleywise have other health issues, Dr. Comp said, including people who are homeless or have addiction issues. He estimated that at least half the patients suffering from heat also have significant burns from skin contact with asphalt, which can get extremely hot in the sun.

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Trump Backs Army Veteran For Senate From Nevada

By KELLEN BROWNING

Former President Donald J. Trump on Sunday said he was endorsing Sam Brown, the Army veteran who is leading the crowded Republican primary field in Nevada's U.S. Senate race.

"Sam Brown is a fearless American patriot," Mr. Trump wrote in a post on his social media site, Truth Social, adding that Mr. Brown would "fight tirelessly" to protect the border and improve the economy.

The endorsement, though belated — the primary is on June 11 and early voting has already ended — solidifies Mr. Brown's standing as the front-runner and heavy favorite to advance to November's general election against Senator Jacky Rosen, the Democratic incumbent. He has raised more money than his primary rivals, received the endorsement of the state's Republican governor, Joe Lombardo, and led by double-digits in every recent poll of the race, though most were commissioned by his own campaign.

Mr. Trump's opinion was the sole remaining question mark. Though he is campaigning as a strong supporter of the former president, Mr. Brown was late to formally back Mr. Trump's bid for a second term, and his primary rivals sought to capitalize from the right. Jeff Gunter, a wealthy dermatologist and Mr. Trump's ambassador to Iceland, staked out a position as a MAGA candidate, slamming Mr. Brown in television advertisements as he angled for a possible endorsement from Mr. Trump.



Sam Brown was severely burned by a bomb set by the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2008.

A crowded G.O.P. field vies to take on a vulnerable Democrat.

Mr. Trump has shared images promoting Mr. Brown's dominance in Nevada polls on Truth Social, and he praised both Mr. Brown and Jim Marchant, a former state assemblyman and prominent election denier who is also running for Senate, in an interview with a local television station in late May.

In a post on X, Mr. Brown said he was "honored" to have Mr. Trump's endorsement. "I look forward to working with you to bring a better future to every Nevadan and American when we both win in November," Mr. Brown said.

Ms. Rosen's campaign criticized the endorsement from Mr. Trump on Sunday.

"Nevadans want a senator who will work across party lines to deliver for our state, not a MAGA extremist like Sam Brown who will always put partisan politics and pleasing Trump ahead of doing what's right," said Johanna Warsaw, a spokeswoman for Ms. Rosen's campaign.

In a statement, Mr. Gunter said, "Mitch McConnell money wins, the American people lose," referring to his recurrent line of attack that Mr. Brown is the pick of the Washington establishment. "Rinse and repeat," Mr. Gunter added.

Mr. Brown, a former Army captain, was nearly killed in Afghanistan in 2008 when his vehicle ran over an explosive device set by the Taliban. Severely burned, he was evacuated to a burn unit in the United States and underwent more than 30 operations during a three-year recovery. The injury left him permanently scarred.

He ran unsuccessfully for a seat in the Texas House of Representatives in 2014, before moving with his wife to Reno in 2018. In 2022, he lost in the Republican primary for U.S. Senate to Adam Laxalt, the state's former attorney general. Mr. Laxalt was defeated in the general election by Senator Catherine Cortez Masto, whose victory allowed Democrats to keep control of the chamber.

Assuming Mr. Brown advances to the general election, he could be buoyed by Mr. Trump's strong numbers in Nevada, which has not voted for a Republican at the presidential level since 2004 but is shaping up to be one of President Biden's shakiest states in November.

Nevada's economy, heavily reliant on tourism, was slower to recover from the coronavirus pandemic than other states were, and Ms. Rosen has sought to distance herself from Mr. Biden as she tries to retain her Senate seat.

Judge Strikes One Element of Trump Documents Indictment

By ALAN FEUER

A federal judge on Monday slightly narrowed the classified documents case against former President Donald J. Trump, saying prosecutors cannot charge him based on an episode in which he is said to have shown a highly sensitive military map to a political adviser months after leaving office.

The decision by the judge, Aileen M. Cannon, was more of a swipe at prosecutors working for the special counsel, Jack Smith, who brought the case than a major blow to the allegations against Mr. Trump. Even though Judge Cannon technically removed the incident from the 53-page indictment, prosecutors may still be able to introduce evidence of it to the jury if the case finally goes to trial.

The incident that Judge Cannon struck took place in August or September 2021 at a meeting at Mr. Trump's golf course in Bedminster, N.J. During the meeting, prosecutors say, Mr. Trump showed a classified map related to an continuing military operation to a representative of his political action committee, widely believed to be Susie Wiles, who is now a top adviser to Mr. Trump's campaign.

As he displayed the map, prosecutors say, Mr. Trump told Ms. Wiles that the military campaign was not going well. The indictment pointed out that she did not have a security clearance at the time or "any need-to-know" about the classified information concerning the campaign.

The episode about the map, while indicative of Mr. Trump's lax handling of classified materials, was not central to the formal allegations in the case. Those focus on his removal from the White House of nearly three dozen documents containing sensitive national security secrets and his repeated efforts to obstruct the government from retrieving them from Mar-a-Lago, his private club and residence in Florida.

Even though Judge Cannon struck the incident about the map from the indictment, she left untouched a similar allegation that is said to have occurred a few months earlier at Mr. Trump's Bedminster property. In that episode, prosecutors say the former president showed a classified battle plan to a group of people who had come to interview him for a memoir being written by his former chief of staff, Mark Meadows.

"As president I could have declassified it," Mr. Trump said of the battle plan, according to a recording made of him that day. "Now, I can't, you know. But this is still a secret."

It is likely that Judge Cannon allowed that allegation to remain part of the indictment because prosecutors ultimately charged Mr. Trump with illegally holding on to the classified plan.

Lawyers for Mr. Trump had challenged the inclusion of the map, however, as part of a broader attack on the indictment, saying it was extraneous and irrelevant. They argued that it should never have appeared as part of the charges because Mr. Trump has not been formally accused of improperly transmitting classified material to other people, only with illegally retaining it after he left the White House.



SAUL MARTINEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Judge Aileen Cannon is overseeing proceedings in the classified documents case against Donald J. Trump in Fort Pierce, Fla.

In her ruling, Judge Cannon denied the lawyers' request to dismiss the charges altogether. But she noted that prosecutors undertook an extra responsibility by electing to charge Mr. Trump in the case with what is known as a "speaking indictment" — one that describes events in evocative language rather than merely listing dry violations of the law.

She said she agreed with Mr. Trump's lawyers, who had argued that much of the language in the indictment — including the episode about the map — was "legally unnecessary" and that risks "can flow from a prosecutor's decision to include in a charging document an extensive narrative account of his or her view of the facts."

Judge Cannon added that it was "not appropriate" to include the story about the map in the indictment given that one of Mr. Smith's top deputies had admitted at a hearing last month that it was not directly related to the charges Mr. Trump is facing.

During the hearing, in Federal District Court in Fort Pierce, Fla., the deputy, Jay I. Bratt, told Judge Cannon that prosecutors had included the incident not as charged behavior, but rather as an indication of the former president's proclivity for recklessly handling classified material.

Mr. Bratt said the evidence was admissible under what is known as Rule 404(b) of the federal criminal procedure, which permits prosecutors to tell the jury about "bad acts" committed by a defendant that are not directly part of the charges in a case.

Judge Cannon seemed skeptical during the hearing about Mr. Bratt's argument.

"Do you normally include 404(b) in indictments?" she asked.

When Mr. Bratt said he had included similar evidence in other indictments, Judge Cannon shot back, "Is that proper?"

Judge Cannon left open the possibility that prosecutors could eventually introduce the story about the map to the jury at trial. But they will first have to seek her permission to do so, and Mr. Trump's lawyers can object to the request.

Her decision to strike the episode was the first time she has pared back any of the charges against Mr. Trump. Through his lawyers, the former president has filed a barrage of attacks against the indictment, and Judge Cannon has ruled on three of them so far, including this one, denying them all.

Biden Gun Case Concludes, and Jurors Begin Deliberations

This article is by Glenn Thrush, Eileen Sullivan, Zach Montague and Katie Rogers.

WILMINGTON, Del. — Jurors in Hunter Biden's federal gun trial began deliberations late Monday after prosecutors concluded their case with an exhaustive inventory of evidence they presented over the last week in hopes of proving that Mr. Biden knowingly falsified a firearms application in 2018.

During an hourlong closing argument, Leo J. Wise, the lead prosecutor in the case, connected dozens of evidentiary dots seeking to show that Mr. Biden, the president's deeply troubled son, lied when he filled out the gun form by claiming to be drug-free when he was addicted to crack cocaine, tearing his family apart in the process.

Abbe Lowell, Mr. Biden's lawyer, countered with a 90-minute closing argument that attacked the credibility of the government's main witnesses. He accused prosecutors of peddling "suspicion" and "conjecture," and suggested that the trial had less to do with justice than punishing a remorseful and sober man for the crime of drug addiction.

It was an intense coda for an extraordinary weeklong trial that made painfully public the private struggles of the Biden family. The trial was also an enervating experience for President Biden in the midst of a bitter re-election campaign against former President Donald J. Trump, whose own federal trials remain on hold.

The personal stakes of the proceedings, often seen through the lens of electoral politics, were evident on the strained faces of the defendant's family.

Hunter Biden's half sister, Ashley Biden, was so moved during Mr. Lowell's closing argument that she could be seen weeping and wiping away her tears with a tissue at one point. She moved from the front row of the gallery to a seat in the second row, where she looked down at the floor for the rest of the proceedings.

Mr. Biden, for his part, gazed at the jurors, sometimes resting his face on his clasped hands, as they thumbed through thick packets of handouts, appearing to struggle at times to follow the procedural Ping-Pong between lawyers and the judge.

The jurors began deliberations in the afternoon, after Maryellen Noreika, the judge in the case, gave them a second round of instructions. They left for the day around 4:30.

People around Mr. Biden see the jury, which includes several members whose families have been affected by addiction, as providing additional hope for acquittal.

The government, by contrast, views the case as relatively straightforward. Lawyers working for the special counsel overseeing the case, David C. Weiss, made that pointedly clear in their closing, practically demanding that the jury find Mr. Biden guilty.

Mr. Wise, in remarks that raised eyebrows in the packed courtroom gallery, admonished jurors to "bring your common sense into that jury box, use your common sense" — pointing to hundreds of text messages and bank records, as well as to the defendant's own memoir.

(Mr. Lowell would later leap on the common-sense remark, telling jurors, "Of course that's what you will bring to all of your deliberations.")

Personal stakes seen through the lens of electoral politics.

Mr. Wise, a longtime federal prosecutor in Baltimore known for an incisive and dispassionate style, said there was no question that Mr. Biden knew he used drugs. "The defendant knew what he was doing" when he answered "no" on the form, Mr. Wise said.

Mr. Wise added that, more than anything else, Mr. Biden's repeated stints in rehab before and after the gun purchase proved that he knew he was addicted to crack cocaine.

"If this evidence did not establish that Hunter Biden was a crack addict, and an unlawful user, then no one is a crack addict or an unlawful user," Derek Hines, Mr. Wise's deputy, added in wrapping up the government's case.

Mr. Wise quickly set about trying to demolish a central pillar of Mr. Biden's defense: that the government needed to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Mr. Biden was taking drugs on the exact day he signed the application in October 2018.

"There is no requirement" that prosecutors prove Mr. Biden even used drugs during "the month of October," he said, standing a few feet away from Jill Biden, the first lady, who appeared riveted by every word.

Even before Mr. Wise spoke, Judge Noreika told the jury that prosecutors needed to demonstrate only that Mr. Biden was "addicted to controlled substances" or was an "unlawful" user around the time he bought the gun — a sharp but not unexpected setback for the defense.

That did little to discourage Mr. Lowell, who continued to argue that the government had failed to establish that his client was addicted to drugs at the time, as opposed to abusing alcohol or dealing with the devastating emotional aftermath of his brother Beau's death in 2015.

He slammed the prosecution for introducing a handful of pictures — including images of drug residue, crack pipes and measuring scales — dating from before October 2018, but none taken during that critical month.

Speaking in measured but adamant tones, Mr. Lowell criticized the government's "grant of immunity" to two key prosecution witnesses — Mr. Biden's onetime girlfriend, Zoe Kestan, and Hallie Biden, his brother's widow, with whom he had a romantic relationship at the time he was abusing crack.

Mr. Lowell urged jurors not to internalize what he described as the government's "accordion" strategy, compressing years of addiction and rehab attempts into a reductive story about a helpless addict.

Mr. Biden was angered by the government's tough cross-examination of his daughter Naomi Biden Neal on Friday and had told people in his orbit that he would consider taking the stand. Mr. Lowell called the cross-examination by prosecutors "cruel." Mr. Hines later pointed out that prosecutors had not called Ms. Biden Neal to the stand — "the defendant," Mr. Hines said, had called Mr. Biden's daughter.

The defense, after a weekend of consultations between Mr. Biden and Mr. Lowell, rested without taking the risky step of calling the defendant himself to the witness stand.

In emotionally raw testimony, Ms. Biden Neal gave an upbeat assessment of her father's drug use in the weeks before he bought the gun, saying he seemed "hopeful" and sober.



HAIYUN JIANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Hunter Biden and his wife, Melissa Cohen Biden, at court in Wilmington, Del., on Monday.

But under cross-examination, that claim seemed to crumble, with prosecutors introducing text messages from that period that illustrated an anguished, and excruciating, relationship in which she informed her father that he had driven her to the breaking point.

Ms. Biden Neal could offer only limited insights into the actions of Mr. Biden, who was often absent from her life for months and erratic even when they were in the same city.

Over the last week, Mr. Lowell has established that no one saw Mr. Biden doing crack cocaine in the month he bought the gun. Ms. Biden Neal's testimony did not change that.

But two text messages retrieved from Mr. Biden's phone have hurt his defense from the start. One day after he purchased the gun, he sent a text saying he was meeting a dealer named Mookie. A day later, he followed up to say that he was sleeping in a car and smoking crack.

The apparent admission came to a head on Friday as Mr. Lowell questioned the prosecution's last witness, Joshua Romig, a special agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration, who was asked to translate drug lingo introduced in the government's case against Mr. Biden.

Mr. Lowell made the point that while the prosecution had spent days examining Mr. Biden's communications from earlier in 2018 and 2019, showing pictures of him holding a crack pipe and texts about buying drugs, there was nothing comparable to show for October 2018.

"No reference of Chore Boy?" Mr. Lowell said to Mr. Romig, referring to terms related to crack use. "No mention of a ball?"

Mr. Romig responded, "With the exception of the October text that we talked about, where he said he was smoking crack."

Corrections

NATIONAL

Because of an editing error, an article on Monday about the emergence of Doug Burgum, the Republican governor of North Dakota, as a cheerleader for oil and gas production and former President Donald J. Trump, misquoted the governor's statement on U.S. oil production. He said the country was producing 13 million barrels a day but should be producing "14, 15, 20 million barrels a day"; he did not say the country was producing 13 million gallons a day but should be producing 14, 15, 20 million gallons a day.

An article on Saturday about the ways in which media outlets on the left and right covered President Biden's executive order aimed at limiting asylum requests misspelled the given name of a reporter for Mother Jones. She is Isabela Dias, not Isabella.

METROPOLITAN

An article on Sunday about the popularity of Sam's Restaurant in Brooklyn's Cobble Hill neighborhood as a spot for film crews misidentified the prize that the rapper Kendrick Lamar won. It was the Pulitzer Prize for music, not the Nobel Prize.

Errors are corrected during the press run whenever possible, so some errors noted here may not have appeared in all editions.

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In Secret Recording, Alito Endorses Nation of 'Godliness'

By ABBIE VANSICKLE

WASHINGTON — Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. told a woman posing as a Catholic conservative last week that compromise in America between the left and right might be impossible and then agreed with the view that the nation should return to a place of godliness.

"One side or the other is going to win," Justice Alito told the woman, Lauren Windsor, at an exclusive gala at the Supreme Court. "There can be a way of working, a way of living together peacefully, but it's difficult, you know, because there are differences on fundamental things that really can't be compromised."

Ms. Windsor pressed Justice Alito further. "I think that the solution really is like winning the moral argument," she told him, according to the edited recordings of Justice Alito and Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr., which were posted and distributed widely on social media on Monday. "Like, people in this country who believe in God have got to keep fighting for that, to return our country to a place of godliness."

"I agree with you, I agree with you," he responded.

The justice's comments appeared to be in marked contrast to those of Chief Justice Roberts, who was also secretly recorded at the same event but who pushed back against Ms. Windsor's assertion that the court had an obligation to lead the country on a more "moral path."

"Would you want me to be in charge of putting the nation on a more moral path?" the chief justice said. "That's for people we elect. That's not for lawyers."

Ms. Windsor pressed the chief justice about religion, saying, "I believe that the founders were godly, like were Christians, and I think that we live in a Christian nation and that our Supreme Court should be guiding us in that path."

Chief Justice Roberts quickly answered, "I don't know if that's true."

He added: "I don't know that we live in a Christian nation. I know a lot of Jewish and Muslim friends who would say maybe not, and it's not our job to do that."

The chief justice also said he did not think polarization in the country was irreparable, pointing out that the United States had managed crises as severe as the Civil War and the Vietnam War.

When Ms. Windsor pressed him on whether he thought that there was "a role for the court" in "guiding us toward a more moral path," the chief justice's answer was immediate.

"No, I think the role for the court is deciding the cases," he said.

The justices were secretly recorded at an annual black-tie event for the Supreme Court Historical Society, a charity aimed at preserving the court's history and educating the public about the role of the court. The gala was open only to members, not journalists, and tickets cost $500.

Chief Justice Roberts and Justice Alito did not immediately respond to requests for comment, but the charity released a statement on Monday that its "policy is to ensure that all attendees, including the justices, are treated with respect."

The charity added: "We condemn the surreptitious recording of justices at the event, which is inconsistent with the entire spirit of the evening."



Justice Samuel Alito said on the secret recording, "One side or the other is going to win."

Ms. Windsor describes herself as a documentary filmmaker and "advocacy journalist." She has a reputation for approaching conservatives, including former Vice President Mike Pence, Representative Jim Jordan of Ohio and Gov. Glenn Youngkin of Virginia.

She said in an interview on Monday that she felt she had no other way to report on the candid thoughts of the justices.

"We have a court that has refused to submit to any accountability whatsoever — they are shrouded in secrecy" Ms. Windsor said. "I don't know how, other than going undercover, I would have been able to get answers to these questions."

Ms. Windsor would not say how she recorded the encounters, other than that she did not tell the justices she was a journalist or that they were being recorded. She said she felt she needed to record the justices secretly to ensure that her account would be believed.

"I wanted to get them on the record," she said. "So recording them was the only way to have proof of that encounter. Otherwise, it's just my word against theirs."

Some journalism ethics experts questioned her tactics.

Jane Kirtley, a professor of media ethics and law at the University of Minnesota, said that the episode called to mind the tactics used by Project Veritas, a conservative group well known for using covert recordings to embarrass its political opponents.

"I think it's fair to say that most ethical journalists deplore those kind of techniques," Ms. Kirtley said. "How do you expect your readers or your viewers to trust you if you're getting your story through deception?"

Bob Steele, a retired ethics scholar at the Poynter Institute, has written ethics guidelines for journalists on when it is appropriate to use secret recordings or to conceal their identities as reporters.

"I don't believe that in this particular case the level of misrepresentation of her identity and the surreptitious audio recording is justifiable," Mr. Steele said.

The secret recording is the latest controversy around the Supreme Court and its justices, particularly Justice Alito, who has faced recent revelations that provocative flags flew outside two of his homes. The flags raised concerns about an appearance of bias in cases currently pending before the court tied to the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol.

In the weeks following the attack, an upside-down American flag, a symbol used by Trump supporters who contested the 2020 election results, flew outside the Alitos' suburban Virginia home. Last summer, a flag carried by Capitol rioters, known as an "Appeal to Heaven" flag, was flown at their New Jersey vacation home.

Justice Alito has declined to recuse himself from any of the Jan. 6-related cases and has said that it was his wife who flew the flags.

This is also not the first time the historical society has been in the spotlight. The group, which has raised millions of dollars in recent decades, made news after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade when a former anti-abortion leader came forward to say that he had used the historical society to encourage wealthy donors, whom he called "stealth missionaries," to give money and mingle with the justices.

U.S. Agencies Form a Unit To Intercept Illegal Vapes

By CHRISTINA JEWETT

A multi-agency coalition of law enforcement agents will begin tackling the unruly market of illegal e-cigarettes, under pressure from antismoking groups, lawmakers and the tobacco industry urging federal authorities to stop the flood of vaping devices favored by adolescents.

The Justice Department announced the new effort, which is expected to target fruit- and candy-flavored vapes containing high levels of addictive nicotine.

The new coalition would include the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; the U.S. Marshals Service; the Federal Trade Commission and the U.S. Postal Service, tapping into federal laws that could include significant fines and jail terms. "Unauthorized e-cigarettes and vaping products continue to jeopardize the health of Americans — particularly children and adolescents — across the country," Benjamin C. Mizer, the acting associate attorney general, said.

Until now, enforcement efforts have largely involved warning letters and limited penalties issued by the Food and Drug Administration to various vendors like gas station and convenience store owners, ordering them to stop selling the items.

Those F.D.A. initiatives have been criticized as unsuccessful by congressional lawmakers and others, who have pushed the agency to do more to keep illegal e-cigarettes from entering the United States.

Traditional tobacco companies, including Reynolds American, have also asked the F.D.A., which regulates tobacco, to banish the illicit products that are in competition with their own e-cigarettes. Their call for flavored vape enforcement, though, has ended at the U.S. border. British American Tobacco, Reynolds' parent company, has said it marketed its Vuse Go vapes in flavors like Mango Ice and Blue Raspberry in 46 countries.

Adolescent vaping rates have fallen from peak levels reported in national surveys of teenagers about five years ago. But public health experts are still concerned about the dangers of nicotine addiction on the adolescent brain, with many illicit products carrying unknown levels and undisclosed chemicals.

Senator Dick Durbin, Democrat of Illinois and majority whip, is holding a hearing of the Judiciary Committee on Wednesday to focus on combating youth vaping and improving enforcement. Top Justice Department and F.D.A. officials were invited to testify.

"I hope this brings meaningful change — the health of our kids depends on it," Mr. Durbin said in a statement on Monday.

Public health groups also welcomed the new effort.

"Law enforcement needs to be there to get products off the market, and that needs to happen right away," said Erika Sward, assistant vice president of advocacy at the American Lung Association. "There's a reason these products are not legal for sale in the United States, and that's because they are very appealing to kids."

The proliferation of high-volume vapes in a vast array of flavors — like Strawberry Ice Cream, Hawaii Punch and Juicy Peach — has angered antismoking organizations. In the most recent annual government survey, about 10 percent of high school students and nearly 5 percent of middle school students reported vaping in the last month.

Those young people report a strong preference for flavors in surveys and have said in interviews that they enjoy trying and sharing novel blends. As of the end of 2023, about 6,000 unique varieties of vapes were sold on the U.S. market, according to data provided by the C.D.C. Foundation, a nonprofit that supports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Flavored vape sales have surged in recent years, to nearly $400 million at the end of 2023 from about $217 million in early 2020.

Also during that time, vape devices have gotten larger, offering high levels of nicotine and up to 8,500 puffs per device, drawing comparisons with a cigarette carton's amount of nicotine.

So far, the F.D.A. has authorized the sale of a short list of 23 tobacco-flavored vaping items, which include NJOY by Altria as well as Vuse products made by R.J. Reynolds Vapor Company.

The agency is still reviewing Juul's applications for vapes, and last week the F.D.A. lifted an earlier order that would have denied permission for the company to sell its devices.

Legacy tobacco companies have — albeit awkwardly — aligned with public health groups in calling on the F.D.A. to ramp up its battle against illegal vapes, which dominate the market in overall sales.

Experiments to Artificially Cool the Earth Are Getting a Major Backer

By CHRISTOPHER FLAVELLE

The Environmental Defense Fund will finance research into technologies that could artificially cool the planet, an idea that until recently was viewed as radical but is quickly gaining attention as global temperatures rise at alarming rates.

The group hopes to start issuing grants this fall, said Lisa Dilling, associate chief scientist at E.D.F., who is running the project. She said research would focus on estimating the likely effects in different parts of the world if governments were to deploy artificial cooling technologies.

The intent is to help inform policymakers, she said. "We are not in favor, period, of deployment. That's not our goal here," Dr. Dilling said. "Our goal is information, and solid, well-formulated science."

The Environmental Defense Fund has previously expressed skepticism about techniques like these. But Dr. Dilling says the discussion about ways to cool the planet isn't going away, regardless of opposition. "This is something that I don't think we can just ignore," she said.

The group will fund what is sometimes called solar radiation modification, or solar geoengineering, which involves reflecting more of the sun's energy back into space. Possible techniques involve injecting aerosols into the stratosphere, or brightening clouds to make them more reflective.

Researchers believe such actions could temporarily reduce global temperatures, until society reduces greenhouse gas emissions by burning far less fossil fuel.

What they don't know, and are trying to find out, is what other effects these actions could have. For example, would reflecting away more sunlight also change precipitation patterns, or alter ocean circulation patterns that influence life on land and in the sea? And if so, how?



IAN C. BATES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A recent test of cloud-brightening technology in California to reflect sunlight away from Earth.

The risk of unintended consequences is only part of what drives opposition. Opponents also say that simply talking about solar geoengineering creates a dangerous impression that quick fixes for climate change are available.

Techniques to artificially cool the earth "offer a bit of false promise, that there are things that you can do that will make it easier to address climate change without really tackling the root causes of it," said David Santillo, a senior scientist at Greenpeace International. "You're taking away from focusing on where you can actually make a difference."

The depth of unease with solar-geoengineering research burst into public view last week in Alameda, Calif., when elected officials voted to shut down the country's first outdoor test of a device that could one day be used to artificially cool the planet.

Researchers had built a machine designed to propel tiny sea-salt aerosols into the air and had begun testing it on the deck of a decommissioned aircraft carrier in Alameda. Their goal was to see how those aerosols behave in different atmospheric conditions. The idea is that, in the future, versions of the device might be used to spray particles into clouds, causing them to reflect more sunlight into space to temporarily ease global warming.

Alameda officials ordered the researchers to stop the experiment, citing possible health and environmental risks. The city said it would assess whether the experiment was safe.

The city manager eventually concluded that the experiment didn't pose a threat, and recommended that the City Council allow it to resume. Nevertheless, on June 5, the City Council permanently halted the experiment, overruling city staff members.

Many environmental groups remain skeptical of geoengineering.

"We're already running a massive chemical experiment on the planet, and now you're talking about another massive experiment," said Patrick Drupp, director of climate policy for the Sierra Club, referring to centuries of human activity that has released vast amounts of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. "I'm not sure if that's the best thing that we should be looking at right now."

Another large environmental nonprofit, the Natural Resources Defense Council, said in a policy paper that it did not currently support solar geoengineering "due to profound uncertainties regarding the adverse side effects." But it does support limited research programs, the paper said, in part because such research "will help avoid unfounded optimism" about the technology.

Even the Environmental Defense Fund has highlighted the risks. The group's own position on geoengineering says this: "Deliberate climate interventions such as albedo modification should not be undertaken for the foreseeable future as they present serious ecological, moral and geopolitical concerns." Albedo modification refers to changes in the amount of sunlight reflected away from the planet.

That a major environmental group like the Environmental Defense Fund is investing in solar geoengineering research sends a powerful message, said Larry Birenbaum, a partner at the LAD Climate Fund, one of the groups funding the research.

"We're not going to convince everyone about the necessity for research," said Mr. Birenbaum, a former senior vice president at Cisco Systems. "The climate community in general needs to be convinced, because this is on the fringe now, and it deserves not to be."

Life Sentences for Youths Loom Again as an Issue

ADAM LIPTAK

SIDEBAR

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Supreme Court has twice rebuked the Arizona Supreme Court for defying its precedents in capital cases.

A third ruling from the state court last year seemed to run headlong into another Supreme Court precedent. It said juvenile offenders could be sentenced to die in prison under a state law that did not allow for the possibility of parole.

That decision gave rise to a kind of judicial déjà vu, 15 law professors told the justices in a recent supporting brief.

"Once again, individuals in Arizona are forced to come to this court to vindicate firmly established constitutional rights, all because Arizona refuses to follow precedent," the professors wrote, urging the court to hear a juvenile offender's appeal. "This time, absent intervention, individuals sentenced to mandatory life without parole for crimes committed as juveniles will continue serving unconstitutional sentences."

In 2012, in Miller v. Alabama, the Supreme Court rejected such mandatory sentences for youths who committed murders before they turned 18. To be constitutional, the court said, state laws must at least allow judges the option of sentencing juvenile offenders to life with the possibility of parole.

As recently as 2021, even after the Supreme Court shifted to the right, it reaffirmed the core principle that "an individual who commits a homicide when he or she is under 18 may be sentenced to life without parole, but only if the sentence is not mandatory and the sentencer therefore has discretion to impose a lesser punishment."

The new case involves Lonnie Bassett, who was convicted of two murders committed when he was 16. When he was sentenced in 2006, Arizona law did not give the judge the option of sentencing him to anything but life in prison without the possibility of parole.

In a unanimous opinion last year, the Arizona Supreme Court did not dispute that. But it said an idiosyncratic feature of the state law, allowing judges to choose between "natural life" without the possibility of release in any fashion and life without parole but with the theoretical possibility of clemency from the governor, rendered it constitutional.

Rejecting the usual understanding of the governing precedent, the court said, "Miller and its progeny do not specifically require the availability of parole when sentencing a juvenile offender."

Lawyers for Mr. Bassett asked the U.S. Supreme Court to intervene, saying that his case could determine the fates of more than two dozen other juvenile offenders. The case, they wrote, "presents exceptionally significant questions about gamesmanship and the supremacy of federal law."

The justices are likely to act in the coming weeks.

In a striking brief urging the Supreme Court not to hear the case, Bassett v. Arizona, No. 23-830, Kristin K. Mayes, Arizona's attorney general, chose not to defend the state Supreme Court's reasoning.

"Parole eligibility is constitutionally required," Ms. Mayes wrote. "This court's precedents have already firmly established

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KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Supreme Court is poised to decide whether to consider an Arizona case that appears to run headlong into another one of its precedents.

beginning and end of the analysis," Ms. Mayes wrote. "But while this may typically be the case, it cannot be that simple in the unusual circumstance where sentencing judges misunderstand the law."

There are problems with this argument. First, Mr. Bassett's lawyers told the justices, the idea that Arizona judges were all ignorant of the law is "provably false." They cited a series of decisions demonstrating this.

Second, Mr. Bassett's lawyers wrote, "condoning the state's theory would permit states to violate the federal Constitution based on speculation that state courts were ignorant of their own state law."

A good reason to think that the Arizona law is at odds with the Miller decision is that the decision said it was, listing it as one of 29 state laws "mandating life without parole for children."

Since then, other states have taken steps to comply with the Constitution, the law professors wrote in their supporting brief. But Arizona remains, they said, "an extreme outlier."

They urged the justices to intervene.

"As it has previously done when Arizona refused to abide by binding precedent," the professors wrote, "the court should tell Arizona that enough is enough."

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Advisory Panel Endorses F.D.A. Approval of New Alzheimer's Drug

By GINA KOLATA and PAM BELLUCK

A committee of independent advisers to the Food and Drug Administration voted unanimously on Monday that the benefits outweigh the risks of the newest experimental drug for Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's afflicts more than six million Americans. It has no cure, and there is no treatment or lifestyle modification that can restore memory loss or reverse cognitive decline.

The drug, made by Eli Lilly, is donanemab. It modestly slowed cognitive decline in patients in the early stages of the disease but also had significant safety risks, including swelling and bleeding in the brain.

The committee concluded, though, that the consequences of Alzheimer's are so dire that even a modest benefit can be worthwhile.

The F.D.A. usually follows the advice of the agency's advisory committees but not always.

The drug is based on a long-held hypothesis that Alzheimer's disease begins when rough hard balls of amyloid, a protein, pile up in patients' brains, followed by a cascade of reactions leading to the death of neurons.

The idea is to treat Alzheimer's by attacking amyloid, clearing it from the brain. Two similar amyloid-fighting drugs were approved recently: Leqembi, made by Eisai and Biogen, was approved last year. That drug's risks and modest benefits are similar to those of donanemab. Aduhelm, made by Biogen, is the other drug and was approved in 2021 but was discontinued due to insufficient evidence that it could benefit patients.

Donanemab was expected to be approved earlier this year, but in March, the F.D.A. decided that, instead, it would require donanemab to undergo the scrutiny of an independent advisory committee, a surprise to Eli Lilly.

The vote, said Dr. Daniel Skovronsky, chief scientific officer at Lilly, confirmed his 25-year quest to find a way to intervene in the Alzheimer's disease. Now, he said, the company is starting a study to stop the disease before symptoms even begin.

At issue before the committee on Monday were some unusual aspects of donanemab's clinical trials, especially that study participants stopped taking the drug as soon as their amyloid was cleared. Some experts questioned whether stopping was the best strategy and whether clinical practice should include halting the treatment after amyloid clearance.

Donanemab, like Leqembi, is given as intravenous infusions. Alzheimer's experts said that the drugs' effects in slowing cognitive decline are so modest that they might not be noticeable to patients and families. Also, some noted, patients and families would have no way of knowing how the disease would have progressed without the treatment.

Donanemab's modest benefits were found to outweigh its risks.

Lilly submitted data from a 76-week study of 1,736 people in the early stages of the disease, with either mild cognitive impairment or mild dementia. The participants were randomly assigned to get donanemab or a placebo. To measure effectiveness, the Lilly researchers assessed the patients' performance on cognitive tests.

Cognitive decline slowed by about 4½ to 7½ months in those taking donanemab compared with those who got the placebo. Nearly half who took donanemab stayed at the same cognitive level one year into the study, compared with 29 percent who got the placebo.

But, the committee noted, nearly all study participants were white.

"I would like to see more data on underrepresented groups," Colette C. Johnson, a patient representative on the committee, said.

Three patients taking donanemab died with brain swelling or bleeding that was linked to the drug. The F.D.A. wanted a more detailed analysis of the deaths of trial participants to check for other serious safety problems. Lilly complied and reported that no evidence suggested additional deaths were caused by the drug.

Lilly's decision to stop treating patients as soon as a brain scan indicated donanemab had cleared their amyloid had real appeal, committee members said. Patients could avoid monthly infusions and some of the risks. And costs might be lower.

In a briefing document, Lilly suggested that continuing the drug after amyloid is gone would not help patients and might be harmful. "Once the target is cleared from the brain, continued dosing of donanemab is likely not beneficial and only adds to treatment burden and potential risks," the company wrote.

The committee liked the aspect of halting treatment but had questions.

Sarah Dolan, a panel member representing consumers, said that the possibility of stopping treatment "could actually be a motivational factor for patients to stay compliant." But, she said, "there will always be a concern in the back of their head: Is it coming back? Am I getting worse?"

Dr. Constantino Iadecola of Weill Cornell Medicine noted that it was not clear how to monitor patients after they stop taking the drug. "Monitoring is going to be necessary," he said. And, he added, "how soon will you have to intervene if you have a signal of amyloid going up?"

Lilly scientists have estimated it would take nearly four years for amyloid levels to bump up over the threshold again.

Another unusual feature involved the company's decision to scan patients' brains for tau, a tangled spaghetti-like protein that appears in brains after amyloid accumulates. The more tau, the worse the cognitive decline.

Trial participants with intermediate tau levels — indicating an earlier stage of the disease — declined more slowly on donanemab than those whose levels were high — supporting a widespread theory that treating patients as early as possible provides a better chance of slowing symptoms.

That raised a question of whether patients should have tau scans before starting the drug.

In its briefing document, Lilly said it was not recommending that tau scanning be required. The F.D.A., in its review, said that based on the evidence so far, there did not seem to be a reason for patients to be tested for tau before receiving donanemab.

In the end, these drugs may be just a foothold in the search for an effective treatment. But, as the committee heard, for patients and their families, the possibility of slowing the progress of Alzheimer's, even by a few months, can be tantalizing.

Bowman Makes Amends After Rift Over Israel

By NICHOLAS FANDOS

Last fall, in the days after Hamas's deadly Oct. 7 attack on Israel, Representative Jamaal Bowman of New York appeared ready to make a hard public break with the Democratic Socialists of America.

Mr. Bowman condemned a rally promoted by the group "in the strongest possible terms" after some members glorified the slaughter of 1,200 Israelis. His office also took the opportunity to publicize for the first time that he had let his own D.S.A. membership lapse amid earlier disagreements over funding for Israeli defenses.

But in a private video meeting with the group late last month, Mr. Bowman insisted he had never actually left, shifting his story as he sought to mend fences with the small but influential group amid a primary challenge that has become a symbolic test of his party's divisions over Israel.

"I'm still a member," the congressman said in a recording of the May 26 meeting that was obtained and verified by The New York Times. "I didn't let my dues lapse."

Pressed by members to explain why his office had publicly stated otherwise, he added: "Media has a tendency to talk about B.S., and not focus on the race. And we wanted to make sure we were focusing on our race at that time and getting re-elected."

It was not the only time Mr. Bowman appeared to break with an earlier stated position related to Israel during the half-hour meeting. He told the D.S.A. members that he no longer supported funding for Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system and that he would soon come out in favor of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, bending closer to the group's positions.

He also implored them to help him fight off a "common enemy" in the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, a pro-Israel lobby spending nearly $3 million a week to defeat him ahead of the June 25 contest.

"We have a common enemy right now, which is AIPAC, so let's form Voltron" and "destroy them," Mr. Bowman said, underscoring his urgency with an expletive.

The reassurances paid off. After a yearslong estrangement, the D.S.A.'s New York City chapter voted to give Mr. Bowman its endorsement days later, calling him "one of the strongest voices against genocide and for peace as many of his colleagues rush to warmonger." The group's members quickly began setting up phone banks and door-knocking campaigns for Mr. Bowman.

But Mr. Bowman's candid private assessments of one of the United States' closest allies, which have not previously been reported, are also likely to fuel more attacks from AIPAC and prompt further scrutiny about his relationship with an organization that was alienating many Jewish Democrats.

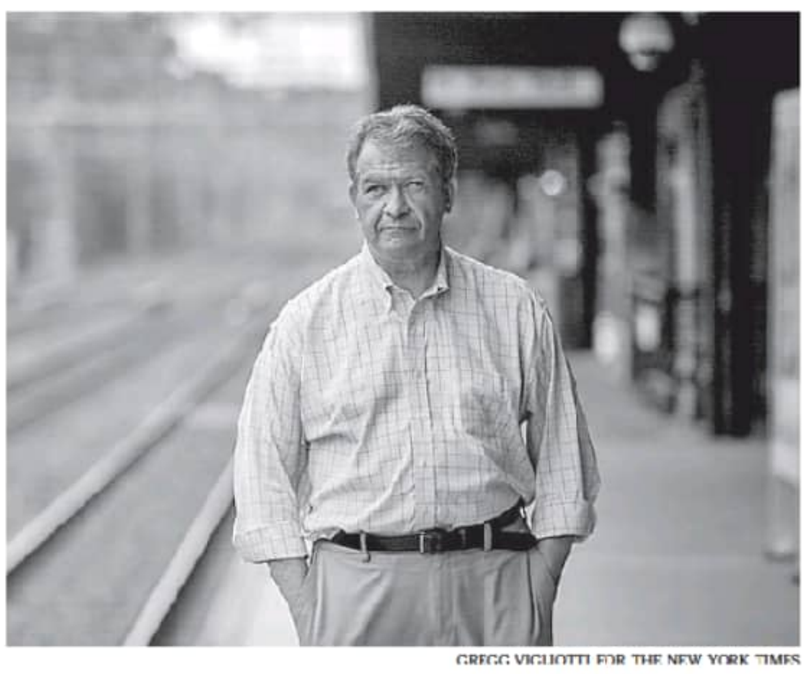
In a statement, Mr. Bowman's opponent in the Democratic primary, George Latimer, accused the congressman of lying about his relationship with the D.S.A., a group he called "extremists," and singled out the B.D.S. movement as antisemitic.

"In our democracy, truth still matters, and Mr. Bowman needs to explain why he keeps relying on falsehoods to justify his re-election," Mr. Latimer said.

Mr. Bowman's campaign manager insisted he had not been trying to mislead anyone but offered a different explanation than the one Mr. Bowman delivered to D.S.A. members.



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GREGG VIGLIOTTI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Representative Jamaal Bowman of New York, above, told democratic socialists that their views on Israel aligned. George Latimer, left, is challenging him in this month's primary.

The manager, Gabe Tobias, said that Mr. Bowman had indeed stopped paying dues sometime in 2021 or 2022 during a period of intense disagreement with the D.S.A. and had "assumed" he was no longer a member. But when the two sides re-engaged about Mr. Bowman's current race, he said, the group's leaders "informed us that in accordance to their own rules — that we were unaware of — Bowman could start repaying his dues and once again be a member in good standing, a standing that would apply retroactively even to the times his dues had lapsed."

Jeremy Cohan, a leader of the socialist group, offered a similar account, stressing that Mr. Bowman had agreed recently to rejoin the group and begin paying dues.

The estrangement and re-endorsement underscores how Mr. Bowman's attempts to balance the conflicting interests of fellow socialists dedicated to the Palestinian cause and Jewish constituents loyal to Israel have evolved.

Mr. Bowman, a former middle-school principal in his second term in Congress, joined D.S.A.'s Lower Hudson Valley chapter in 2019 when he was running a long-shot primary against Eliot L. Engel, a three-decade incumbent and staunch ally of Israel. The group endorsed him, Mr. Bowman won, and as one of only a handful of democratic socialists in Washington, he gladly backed shared priorities around climate change and health care.

Until recently, though, he had staked out more nuanced positions on Israel than had some of his allies on the left. Stressing the rights of both Israelis and Palestinians, he criticized Israel's occupation of the West Bank and its actions in Gaza, but supported funding Jerusalem's ability to defend itself from rocket barrages, too.

In 2021, some D.S.A. members called for his expulsion after his Iron Dome vote and a trip to the region with J Street, a center-left Israel lobby. The fallout prompted Mr. Bowman to stop paying his dues.

Yet in the weeks that followed the Oct. 7 attack, Mr. Bowman emerged as one of Israel's most forceful critics in Congress in ways that have brought him in closer alignment with socialists. After condemning Hamas's actions as "abhorrent," he has been among a small group of lawmakers who have publicly accused Israel of committing "genocide" and called for the United States to cut off all offensive military aid.

In a primary battle and trying to balance conflicting interests.

In the May endorsement interview, Mr. Bowman went further. He explained that he had voted to fund the Iron Dome to reassure Jewish constituents still getting to know him. "I didn't want my 'no' vote to be misinterpreted as 'I want Jews to be killed,'" he said.

But, he added, times have changed. "Now, there's no way I could support any of that, because there's a genocide happening in Gaza," he told the group.

Similarly, Mr. Bowman told the group that he was personally supportive of the B.D.S. movement, contradicting his public opposition. The D.S.A. has endorsed the program, which aims to marshal political and economic pressure on Israel to improve conditions for Palestinians, but Democratic Party leaders oppose it.

In the meeting, Mr. Bowman indicated that he had been trying to delicately broach his views to his district, which is home to a "large Jewish population, large Zionist population, large pro-Israel population, large AIPAC population."

He said that he wanted to go public with his position "at some point" to open a more direct conversation about the issue and how to secure "peace and justice and safety and humanity for all people."

"B.D.S. is a nonviolent protest opportunity to hold Israel accountable," Mr. Bowman said. "And I think Israel needs to be held accountable. And so I'm ready, willing and able to collaborate with you all to figure out what's the best way to do that."

Mr. Latimer supports funding for the Iron Dome and opposes B.D.S.

Mr. Latimer and many of his constituents, including two dozen local rabbis who helped recruit him into the race, have been alarmed by the forcefulness of Mr. Bowman's commentary. J Street rescinded its endorsement. Mr. Bowman's critics charge that he too quickly moved past the atrocities visited on Israel and has not done enough to fight a spike in antisemitism.

But with the D.S.A. members, Mr. Bowman made clear that he sees things differently. He said he took issue with a congressional resolution that did not mention Palestinians and "claimed what happened on Oct. 7 was unprovoked." He explained that he had immediately signed on to a cease-fire resolution because he believed members of his party were prioritizing Israelis and Jews over Palestinians.

"What I saw was immediately everyone recognized the humanity of the people of Israel, and the Jewish people, and completely dehumanized the Palestinians," he said. "From the president, to the governor, to the mayor here, to everyone in my district."

A Witness Says He Sought Aid Directly From Menendez

By BENJAMIN WEISER and TRACEY TULLY

Jose Uribe, the businessman who has said he bribed Senator Robert Menendez in return for his help in quashing a criminal investigation involving two people close to him, testified on Monday that he had asked the senator directly for his help and that Mr. Menendez had said he would "look into it."

Mr. Uribe said that on Sept. 5, 2019, the night before Mr. Menendez met with New Jersey's attorney general to discuss the matter, he was invited to the senator's girlfriend's home in Englewood Cliffs, N.J., where he and Mr. Menendez sat on a backyard patio, with the senator smoking a cigar.

Mr. Menendez rang a little bell that he had on the table, calling out "mon amour" — French for "my love" — and summoning Nadine Menendez, the woman he married the next year. Mr. Uribe said she brought him a piece of paper and went back into the house.

At the senator's request, Mr. Uribe wrote down the names of two friends and two companies he believed were under investigation. Mr. Menendez then took the paper, folded it and placed it in his pants pocket.

Mr. Uribe, who recounted the scene Monday during his second day of testimony at Mr. Menendez's corruption trial, said he pleaded with the senator. "I beg him to please do anything in his power," Mr. Uribe testified, to stop any investigation "that could cause harm to my family."

Mr. Uribe had repeatedly been asking Nadine Menendez to have the senator intervene, eventually going to the senator himself.

"I asked him to help me get peace for me and my family," Mr. Uribe testified at Mr. Menendez's trial in Federal District Court in Manhattan.

But Mr. Uribe also said the men never discussed the thousands of dollars in car payments Mr. Uribe had been making for a Mercedes-Benz convertible that, months earlier, he had provided to Ms. Menendez.

"I never talked to Mr. Menendez about making payments for the car," Mr. Uribe testified.

Mr. Uribe, who has emerged as the prosecution's chief witness in Mr. Menendez's trial, said he assumed Mr. Menendez would have known he was providing the financial assistance to Ms. Menendez because she had been trying repeatedly to set up a meeting for Mr. Uribe with the senator, so that Mr. Uribe could seek his help with the state matters.

Mr. Menendez, 70, and Ms. Menendez, 57, have both been charged with conspiring to take cash, gold, the Mercedes and other bribes collectively worth hundreds of thousands of dollars in return for the senator's agreeing to dispense political favors at home and abroad.

The day after Mr. Menendez met with Mr. Uribe on the patio, the senator met with Gurbir S. Grewal, then New Jersey's attorney general, whom Mr. Menendez had summoned to his office in Newark. Mr. Grewal testified last week that when Mr. Menendez indicated he wanted to discuss concerns about a specific matter before the attorney general's office, Mr. Grewal cut the conversation short. "I didn't know the case. I didn't want to know the case," Mr. Grewal testified, adding, "It's not something I was comfortable speaking to him about."

Later that same day, Mr. Uribe said, he received a call from Ms. Menendez asking to meet with him again, this time at the senator's New Jersey apartment building.

He and the senator spoke briefly in the lobby, Mr. Uribe recalled. He said that although Mr. Menendez said he could not offer Mr. Uribe a final answer, the senator told him there was no indication of an investigation against "my family," as Mr. Uribe put it in court.

Asked by a prosecutor, Lara Pomerantz, whether there came a time that he "got the peace" he was looking for, Mr. Uribe testified about a short phone call he received on Oct. 29, 2019, from a number with the 202 area code — it was the senator.

Mr. Uribe recalled Mr. Menendez's words: "That thing that you asked me about, there's nothing there. I give you your peace."

After the call ended, Mr. Uribe texted Ms. Menendez. "I am a very happy person," he wrote, adding, "GOD bless you and him for ever."

Mr. Menendez is being tried with two other New Jersey businessmen — Wael Hana and Fred Daibes. Ms. Menendez's trial was postponed by the judge, Sidney H. Stein, until July because she is being treated for breast cancer. All four defendants have pleaded not guilty.

Mr. Uribe, 57, who was also charged, pleaded guilty in March and has been cooperating with the government.

Mr. Menendez, who has emphatically maintained his innocence, told reporters as he left court on Monday to wait until Mr. Uribe could be cross-examined. Mr. Menendez's lawyers have already sharply attacked Mr. Uribe's credibility.

Mr. Uribe, who began testifying for the government on Friday, said he had been deeply concerned about two matters before the New Jersey attorney general's office. One involved the prosecution of a friend who had pleaded guilty in an insurance fraud case and faced sentencing. The other involved an insurance fraud investigation that Mr. Uribe believed was threatening to pull in a young woman whom he considered to be like his daughter.

Mr. Uribe said he had initially raised the matters with Mr. Hana, who had long been his and Ms. Menendez's friend.

Mr. Hana told Mr. Uribe that in return for $200,000 to $250,000, he had "a way to make these things go away," Mr. Uribe said.

"He could go to Nadine," Mr. Uribe testified. "Nadine will go to Senator Menendez."

Mr. Uribe, frustrated at the lack of any progress by Mr. Hana, said he eventually called Ms. Menendez directly, offering to buy her the Mercedes if she would have her husband "help me complete this deal."

"She agreed to the terms," Mr. Uribe testified; prosecutors say Mr. Uribe helped to buy her a 2019 Mercedes-Benz C-300 convertible worth more than $60,000.

Mr. Uribe testified that in the summer of 2020, the year after Mr. Menendez called him to say the matters had been resolved, he dined with the couple and Ms. Menendez's adult daughter at a New Jersey restaurant.

At one point, Mr. Uribe said, when he was alone with the senator, Mr. Menendez addressed him in Spanish — and was blunt. He made it clear he had resolved both matters of concern to Mr. Uribe.

"He said, 'I saved your ass twice — not once, but twice,'" Mr. Uribe recalled.

Ms. Pomerantz, the prosecutor, asked Mr. Uribe to describe Mr. Menendez's demeanor at the time.

He seemed like a person who was "proud and confident," Mr. Uribe said, "that he managed to get this done."

"What, if anything, did you say in response to him?" Ms. Pomerantz asked.

"Best of my recollection: 'I thank you,'" Mr. Uribe said.

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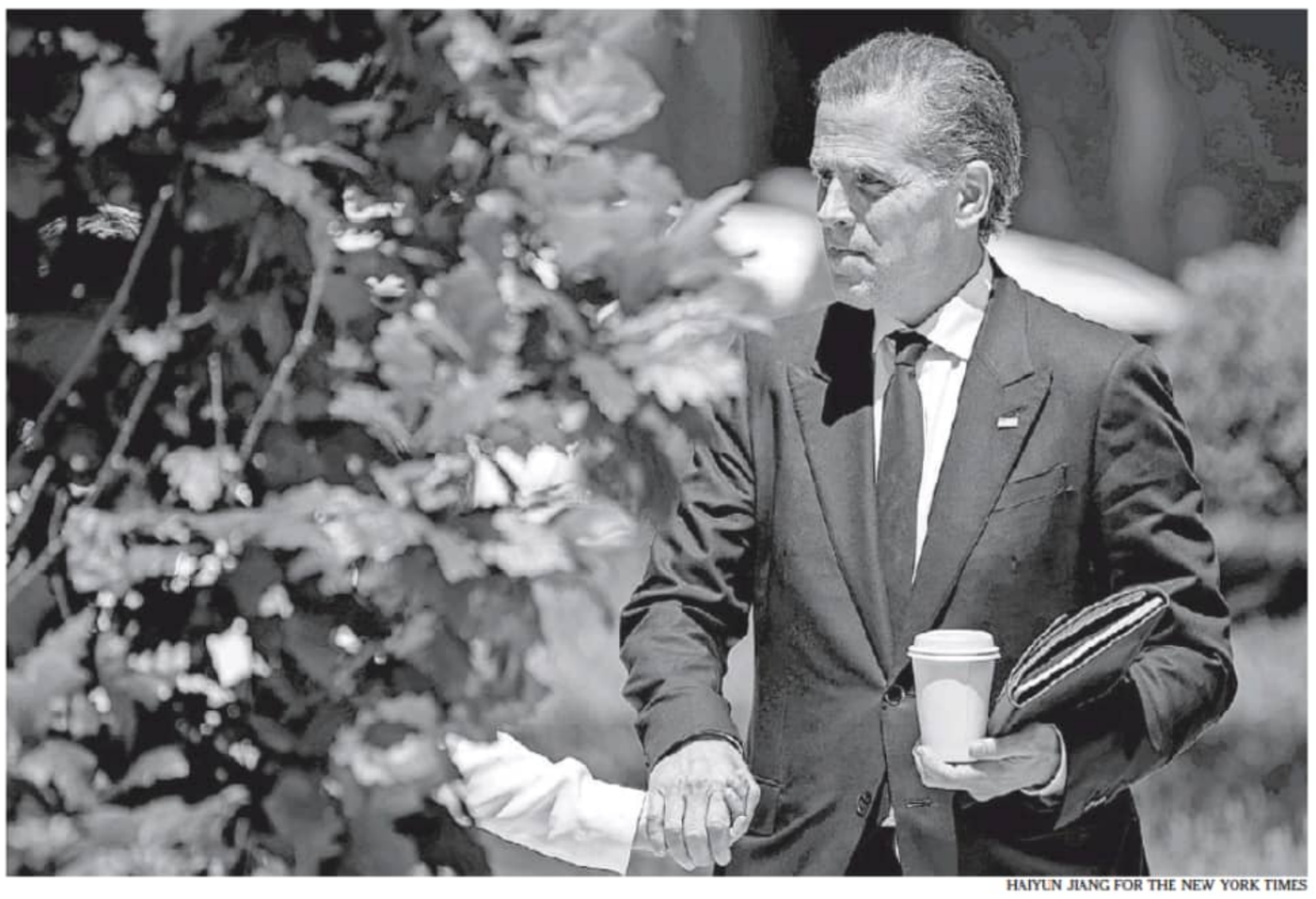
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Opinion

The New York Times

THE CONVERSATION| | GAIL COLLINS AND BRET STEPHENS

It's a Trial a Minute Around Here



HAIYUN JIANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Bret Stephens: Hi, Gail. I know we'll want to talk about the Hunter Biden trial. But I'd like to give kudos to The Times's Edgar Sandoval for his terrific report last week from the Rio Grande Valley in South Texas. The long and short of it is that Texan Latinos, once reliably Democratic, are turning against Joe Biden on account of the border chaos.

Do you think the president's executive order all but banning asylum applications will turn that around? Or does it merely confirm that the administration sat on its hands for more than three years while the crisis got worse?

Gail Collins: Bret, there are parts of Texas that are the natural first destinations for people crossing the border illegally. Whatever their ethnicity, residents are likely to feel unnerved by a flood of strangers with no homes and no jobs coming into their towns and hiding in terror from the government.

That's a crisis, but I think you've agreed with me in the past that overall, the influx of immigrants has been terrific for the national economy. We desperately need them for jobs in agriculture, and if they had the legal right to work, they'd create a boom in places like New York that are stuck right now trying to house newcomers who often can't even give their real names.

Bret: Not so sure. Between them, New York and Chicago are spending billions in tax dollars to handle the influx. San Diego has been hit by a wave of "burglary tourism" by crime groups coming across the border. Public schools are having to enroll thousands of migrant children when many of these schools face tight budgets. Unscrupulous employers are abusing migrant workers, many of them underage. And right-wing populists, from Brussels to Mar-a-Lago, are profiting from it politically.

I'm all for immigration, so long as it's lawful and brings in people we know and want, and doesn't come at the expense of people already living here. What we have now is just another Biden own goal, kinda like his stalwart defense of his son Hunter. Or am I getting this one all wrong?

Gail: I knew it wouldn't be long before we got to Hunter.

Bret: Rhymes with "punter." Sorry, go on.

Gail: Here's my interpretation: You have a troubled guy who was 2 years old when his mother and sister were killed in a car crash in which he and his brother, Beau, were critically injured. Who was completely wrecked when Beau died of cancer nine years ago at age 46.

Hunter was a tortured drug addict, then he came around and quit, taking the ever-popular celebrity role of working the whole thing out in a well-publicized autobiography. It's easy to be cynical about some parts of this — hey, maybe a lot of it. But I can't conceive that the American public expects Joe to be anything but a sad, supportive dad.

Bret: I respect the president for being a loving father. I respect Hunter for apparently getting clean. I know that addiction is an agony that deserves compassion for everyone it touches.

But here's what I don't respect. No matter what happened before, Hunter could have spared his family the trial by taking a plea deal. He could have spared his brother's widow, Hallie, the humiliation of acknowledging from the witness stand that she and Hunter had smoked crack together when they were lovers. He could have spared his daughter Naomi the legal jeopardy of testifying under oath to his sobriety when her own contemporaneous texts suggest he wasn't there yet. He could have spared his dad the need to continue to defend his son. And he could have spared the administration the hypocrisy of demanding tougher gun laws while defending Hunter's flagrant violation of them as a legal nothing burger.

And again, it's all a gift to La Panza Naranja. Who, by the way, continues to lead in every battleground state, his conviction on 34 felony counts notwithstanding.

Gail: OK, Bret, I acknowledge your Hunter-from-hell approach can be pretty compelling. But almost nobody cares about what actually happens to him, right? The big question in all this is the impact it has on his father. And I am absolutely sure the American people expect a dad to stand by his son. In private. While vowing, as he did already, that if Hunter is convicted, he won't attempt a pardon.

Bret: That's good. And smart. But remember that however this case turns out, Hunter will go on trial again in September on tax-evasion charges. And the net effect, politically, will be to neutralize Biden's advantage over Donald Trump on the ethical issues. Not because that's fair, but because a lot of disengaged voters will conclude that both candidates have ethical liabilities, so they may as well vote for the guy whose record and policies they prefer.

Which, I'm afraid, is gonna be Trump.

Gail: Trump, the guy whose vision of the economy is all about tax cuts for the rich? Who won't protect abortion — or even contraception — rights? Whose history with women is so disgusting it's easy to understand why Melania stays at home on the proverbial back porch?

Bret: Yes, that guy.

Gail: I have many, many worries about this election, but no doubt whatsoever that Biden's the superior candidate. And that with any luck, he'll be re-elected. When push comes to shove, American voters will prefer the guy who hasn't been convicted of dozens of fiscal felonies.

Bret: You've put me in mind of H.L. Mencken's famous line that "democracy is the theory that the common people know what they want, and deserve to get it good and hard." And that, I'm afraid, is what's going to happen here.

Can I give you my theory of why I think Trump is going to win?

Gail: I know you're going to ruin my day, but go ahead.

Bret: Trump is telling a story about America that is truer to the way swing-state voters experience their lives than the story Biden is telling. The president is saying that it's Morning in America. His predecessor says it's Darkness at Noon. If you're a wage-earning middle- or working-class American who hasn't benefited much from the stock market boom but has been walloped by high inflation in 2022 and high interest rates today, Trump's description seems about right. Throw in the fact that the outside world — whether at the southern border or in the Middle East or Ukraine — feels much more threatening today than it did five years ago, and Trump's message, combined with his truculence, resonates even louder.

In a nutshell, what these voters are saying is, "Give us Genghis, not Grandpa."

Gail: Sigh. The old-man thing is the Biden curse, I totally admit. But soon, when we get into the heart of the campaign, people will be reminded in TV ads every day that Trump is a guy who's been found liable for sexual abuse, who's vowed to be a dictator on "Day 1," who broke the law to pay off a nasty private deal . . . . They're just going to remember there are worse things than having an 80-plus-year-old squint at cue cards.

Admit it. Deep in your heart you think the American people will come around.

Bret: I wish. I think most Americans don't think Biden will be able to serve out a full second term given his obviously declining faculties. So this election will also be a referendum on the prospect of a Kamala Harris presidency, and she's got a 38 percent approval rating versus 50 percent disapproval. If Democrats are serious about defeating Trump instead of just sliding into the abyss, they'd take her off the ticket. But I know that's unlikely.

Switching subjects, Gail, I was really saddened to learn of the death in a plane crash of Bill Anders, the astronaut who snapped the famous "Earthrise" photo from Apollo 8. Any thoughts on the effect of that picture?

Gail: You know I grew up in the antiwar, Watergate era when nobody I hung out with wanted to identify with anything having to do with the government. So I'm sorry to say we didn't really get into the wonder of the early space program.

Bret: I was obsessed with the Apollo program as a kid, and I can still name every man who walked on the moon: Armstrong, Aldrin, Conrad, Bean, Shepard, Mitchell, Scott, Irwin, Young, Duke, Schmitt and Cernan. But none of that would have been possible without Frank Borman, Jim Lovell and Bill Anders — three Americans who taught the world that the reason we explore is to discover ourselves and that the most important word in life is "perspective."

Gail: Now I'm remembering the Joni Mitchell song about that picture:

And you couldn't see a city
On that marbled bowling ball
Or a forest or a highway
Or me here least of all

After that, I'll return all poetry quotations to you. Thanks for bringing it up.

Bret: Joni's impossible to beat. She gets the last word.

Hunter Biden's legal troubles didn't have to play out this way.

Some #MeToo Men Want to Change. We Should Let Them.

Lux Alptraum
The author of "Faking It: The Lies Women Tell About Sex — and the Truths They Reveal."

Morgan Spurlock tanked his career with a devastating confession. He still did the right thing.

FIVE years ago, I found myself in a coffee shop in downtown Manhattan sitting across a table from Morgan Spurlock, a man I'd never met and whom I knew only as the creator of the hit documentary "Super Size Me." A colleague had brought us together, thinking we might be able to forge a mutually beneficial relationship. As I told a friend in the lead-up to the meeting, "I think I'm supposed to teach Morgan Spurlock how to apologize."

I was there because I'm a feminist writer who'd just written a book that grappled with the post-#MeToo moment and how we might find a way forward. Mr. Spurlock was still reeling from the self-inflicted wound of a confessional post he published during the height of #MeToo, one that acknowledged a long history of ugly behavior, including a college era rape accusation, an incident of workplace sexual harassment, serial infidelity and decades of alcoholism.

Although he positioned his confession as taking accountability — "I am part of the problem," he wrote, "but I am also part of the solution" — the post tanked his career, delayed the release of the sequel to "Super Size Me" and prompted him to step down from his production company.

Which was why we were having coffee.

When the news broke last month that Mr. Spurlock had died from complications of cancer, the arc of his life seemed permanently settled: a one-hit wonder who'd squandered his success by trying to get out ahead of a potential P.R. scandal. On social media, more than a few people derided him as a rapist who didn't deserve to be mourned, a privileged white guy who'd hurt people on the way up and expected the slate to be wiped clean just because he admitted that he'd done something wrong.

I find myself chafing at this summary judgment. After that coffee, I stayed in touch with Mr. Spurlock, and eventually we formed a friendship, one full of conversations about what it might mean to be a better person. Despite that relationship, I don't consider him worthy of blanket forgiveness; I don't even believe that he deserved a second chance at the spotlight.

But I can't shake the feeling that nearly seven years after #MeToo, we still haven't found a way for men who want to make amends to do so meaningfully. There were prominent figures brought down by #MeToo who have never asked for, or deserved, our sympathy. But if we as a society want to truly break the cycle of harm, we need to offer an opportunity for forgiveness to those who are truly willing and eager to change.

We can remember Mr. Spurlock as a #MeToo casualty. Or we can look at him as a model for how people might honestly face up to the harm they've caused — and how the rest of us can better consider their efforts.

Mr. Spurlock's initial public confession wasn't polished or professional; he admitted to me once that he'd published it without having shown it to anyone. But in its messy, unpolished form, his outpouring struck me as genuine and honest, raw and emotional and antithetical to the massaged damage control we've come to expect from other disgraced public figures. If Mr. Spurlock's contribution to a larger conversation about systemic sexual abuse seemed imperfect, to me it also reflected what real growth can look like: a painful public reckoning that's commensurate with the moment.

I came to see other valuable elements in his approach. He recognized that intent and impact are different things. No matter how he might have felt about his intentions in any situation, the experience of the victim was paramount — a lesson he embraced over time. It felt to me like an essential breakthrough, after so many other public denials and apologies from prominent men that focused not on harm caused but on disputing claims, settling scores or salvaging reputations.

It's sobering to me to realize in hindsight that if Mr. Spurlock had simply said nothing, his reputation probably would have survived intact. Many celebrities touched by #MeToo scandals have since re-emerged relatively unscathed because of a shifting political climate, a steadfast refusal to be held to account or the inevitable cooling of the white-hot emotions that prevailed in that moment.

But it seems wrong to me that Mr. Spurlock — who I believe genuinely hoped to learn from his actions — would have fared better if he'd stayed silent. And it seems cruel that a man who attempted to take ownership of his actions accomplished so little beyond sabotaging his own career and public standing.

When I got the news of his death, I felt overwhelmed with tears. It wasn't just because a friend had died, leaving two sons without a father. It felt unfair to me that his journey to make reparations, which I knew he genuinely hoped to complete, had been cut short.

Even though he never found public absolution — in fact, because he never found it — I learned from him that the effort to become a better person is always worth undertaking and that a good-faith investment in understanding and addressing the wrongs you've committed should never be regretted. He wasn't a perfect messenger for a feminist revolution or for systemic change. But he was someone who tried.

That is how I hope he will be remembered. And I hope when the next people try, we can start to see their efforts with different, more accepting eyes.



BRANDON CELI

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In Vermont, Big Oil Must Clean Up Its Mess

Lee Wasserman
The director of the Rockefeller Family Fund.



SCOTT EISEN/GETTY IMAGES

AS EXTREME climate-driven weather events and rising seas savage infrastructure and human health, the costs to states grow. Expensive but necessary measures to fortify communities have been put off because money or political will is lacking. At the same time, fossil fuel companies — whose decades of deception and continued resistance to a clean-energy transition bear responsibility for our climate emergency — continue to generate enormous profits.

It does not take a climate scientist or economist to recognize that something is desperately wrong with this picture. Now Vermont — with a population just under 650,000, the second smallest among the states — has stepped up and accomplished what no other state or Congress has been able to do.

The Democratic Party-controlled General Assembly, with a handful of Republican votes, approved a measure that requires the world's biggest fossil fuel extractors and refiners to pay for some of the damages and adaptation costs the state has incurred and faces because of climate change. The state's Republican governor allowed it to become law.

The measure has been called "landmark" and "pioneering." And it is. But at its core, the idea behind the law is simple. Vermont is seeking to reinforce one of the most basic rules children learn in kindergarten, if not before: When you make a mess, you clean it up.

The federal government introduced this lesson in 1980, when Congress created the Superfund program to clean up thousands of sites contaminated by toxic and hazardous wastes. That law compels companies responsible for the contamination to either clean it up or reimburse the government for the work, regardless of whether they acted with fault or criminal intent.

That same principle will now apply in Vermont to the companies responsible for the biggest shares of the greenhouse gas emissions that are warming the planet. Other states, including California, New York and Massachusetts, are considering similar legislation. (The Rockefeller Family Fund, which I direct, has spent roughly $200,000 since 2022 in support of environmental efforts in Vermont, including passage of the climate Superfund law.)

The law covers the period between 1995 and 2024 and empowers Vermont to assess companies based on their share of the emissions they produced over those years. The money will pay for damages those emissions caused and also for measures to adapt to the changing climate by reducing exposure to floods, storms, crop damage, wildfires and other consequences.

Not every fossil fuel company falls under the law. It must have been responsible for more than one billion metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions globally over the period covered by the law. And the company must have some physical or economic connection to the state.

The law directs the state treasurer to calculate the damage to Vermont caused by climate change over that period and the costs the state faces to prepare for future impacts. Scientists can now pinpoint with increasing accuracy the role that climate change plays in specific weather events like floods, storms, droughts and heat waves. The state will identify the companies covered by the law, and their respective share of the total greenhouse gas emissions, based on the companies' own reporting to federal agencies.

A new 'polluters must pay' law could inspire similar legislation elsewhere.

Assume, as a hypothetical, that the climate damages and adaptation costs to Vermont total $3 billion and that Chevron's share of greenhouse gas pollution during the measuring period is 3 percent of the global total. Chevron would be assessed at $90 million, a tiny fraction of the more than $21 billion in profits the company made in 2023 alone.

The law does not restrict future production by fossil fuel companies. They can still drill to their corporate hearts' content and pay nothing more to Vermont. An economic analysis of a similar proposal in New York State by the Institute for Policy Integrity at New York University's law school found that it "was unlikely to alter the price" of gasoline at the pump or the price of crude oil. In short, Vermont's law is an elegant legal approach to make oil company shareholders foot their fair share of these costs.

That is, of course, if the law survives the legal challenges that will no doubt arise and delay this law from taking effect. "Taking on Big Oil should not be taken lightly," the governor, Phil Scott, warned lawmakers even as he agreed to let the legislation become law.

Still, it is an important step forward against a powerful and deep-pocketed industry. Perhaps it will inspire other states to follow or embolden Congress to pass a climate version of the Superfund law it pioneered 44 years ago. One such federal bill has been introduced by Senators Chris Van Hollen, a Democrat from Maryland, and Bernie Sanders, an independent from Vermont.

State Senator Dick Sears of Bennington County, the prime sponsor of the climate bill, died this month at 81, less than a month after helping steer the measure through the Legislature. He felt strongly about making polluters pay for the damage they caused, a view born from fighting to help constituents whose drinking water had been polluted by a local company's use of the forever chemicals known as PFAS.

One of his legacies will be his success in convincing fellow lawmakers that the "polluters must pay" idea should apply to reckless fossil fuel companies that keep drilling and refining, no matter what the stakes.

COLUMNIST | PAUL KRUGMAN

Freedom's Just Another Word for Not Paying Taxes

AFTER DONALD TRUMP was convicted on 34 felony counts, the Heritage Foundation — a right-wing think tank that has, among other things, produced the Project 2025 agenda, a blueprint for policy if Trump wins — flew an upside-down American flag, which has become an emblem for support of MAGA in general and election denial in particular.

This action may have shocked some old-line conservatives who still thought of Heritage as a serious institution, but Heritage is, after all, just a think tank. It's not as if upside-down flags were being flown by people we expect to defend our constitutional order, like Supreme Court justices.

Oh, wait.

But Heritage's embrace of what amounts to an attack on democracy is a useful symbol of one of the really troubling developments of this election as it heads into the final stretch. Heritage presents itself as a defender of freedom, but its real mission has always been to produce arguments — frequently based on shoddy research — for low taxes on rich people. And its tacit endorsement of lawlessness illustrates the way many of America's plutocrats — both in Silicon Valley and on Wall Street — have, after flirting with the crank candidacy of Robert F. Kennedy Jr., been rallying around Trump.

Why would billionaires support Trump? It's not as if they've done badly under President Biden. Stock prices — which Trump predicted would crash if he lost in 2020 — have soared. High interest rates, which are a burden on many Americans, are if anything a net positive for wealthy people with money to invest. And I doubt that the superrich are suffering much from higher prices for fast food.

Wealthy Americans, though, are surely betting they'll pay lower taxes if Trump wins.

Biden and his team have offered fairly explicit guidance about their tax agenda, which would directly raise taxes on high-income Americans and also raise corporate taxes, which would indirectly be mainly a tax on the wealthy. These measures wouldn't produce taxes at the top remotely comparable to what they were during the Eisenhower years, when the top marginal income tax rate was 91 percent and large estates could face inheritance taxes as high as 77 percent. Still, Biden's plans, if carried out, would make the rich a bit less rich.

Trump has been far less explicit, but he clearly wants to retain his 2017 tax cut in full, and his allies in Congress are committed not just to tax cuts but to starving the Internal Revenue Service of resources, which would allow more wealthy Americans to evade the taxes they legally owe.

So billionaires aren't wrong in thinking they'll pay less in taxes if Trump wins. But why aren't they more concerned about the bigger picture?

After all, even if all you care about is money, Trump's agenda should make you very worried. His advisers' plans to deport millions of immigrants (supposedly only the undocumented, but do you really believe many legal residents wouldn't get caught up in the dragnets?) would shrink the U.S. labor force and be hugely disruptive. His protectionist proposals (which would be very different from Biden's targeted measures) could mean an all-out global trade war. If he's able to make good on them, his attacks on the independence of the Federal Reserve risk much more serious inflation than anything we've experienced in recent years.

Beyond all that, Trump will almost certainly try to weaponize the justice system to go after his perceived enemies. Only someone completely ignorant of history would imagine himself safe from that kind of weaponization — even if Trump considers you an ally now, that can change in an instant.

And if you've been following Trump's rantings, you know that his rhetoric is getting less rational and more vindictive by the week. Yet his support among billionaires seems if anything to be consolidating.

So what's going on? Here's what I think, although it's admittedly speculative.

First, America's oligarchs probably believe that their wealth and influence would protect them from the arbitrary exercise of power. Trump and company might turn corrupt law enforcement and a cowed judiciary against other people, but surely not them! By the time they realized how wrong they were, it would be too late.

As I've written before, the superrich can be remarkably obtuse and ignorant of history.

Second, at some level I don't really think it's about the money. How much difference does it make to a billionaire's quality of life if he has to settle for a slightly smaller superyacht? At the top of the pyramid, wealth is largely about status and self-importance; as Tom Wolfe wrote long ago, it's about "seeing 'em jump."

Why the oligarchs of America are rallying around Trump.

And when politicians don't jump, when they don't treat the very wealthy with the deference and admiration they consider their due, some of them become enraged. We saw this when many Wall Streeters turned on President Barack Obama — after he helped bail them out in the financial crisis — because they felt insulted by his occasional criticisms.

Biden is hardly a class warrior, but he clearly doesn't worship the superrich. And all too many of them are turning to Trump out of sheer pettiness.

LETTERS

The Israeli Hostage Rescue, and the Cost

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "Israel's Rescue Euphoria Fades as Troubles Linger" (news analysis, front page, June 10):

I think the article misses the point. Yes, only four hostages were freed as a result of Israel's military operation. Yet the message to Hamas and those Palestinian civilians who are hiding Israeli hostages is clear: Israel will act to free those hostages, regardless of the cost.

That cost is high. Many innocent Palestinians have been killed, while Israel continues to incur the wrath of those who would have Israel, not Hamas, pay the price for Hamas terrorism. The way to avoid such hazards, however, is clear: Hamas should free the hostages — all of them.

If your children were being held hostage by a terrorist organization, would you be concerned about world opinion — yet alone show restraint?

RITA C. TOBIN
CHAPPAQUA, N.Y.

TO THE EDITOR:

It is difficult to celebrate the rescue of four hostages while watching the carnage the military operation delivered to Palestinians in Gaza — particularly with the knowledge that many more hostages were released during past cease-fire diplomacy and with the logical conclusion that these four, along with many more of the remaining hostages, could have been released by similar means.

Increasingly, Israel is presenting an image that it cares only about its own citizens and does not value the lives of Palestinians. This is a sad statement.

KATHY O'GARA, WESTFIELD, N.J.

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "Israeli Military Frees 4 Hostages in Gaza Mission" (front page, June 9):

Imagine that Israel had learned that Hamas, against all expectations, was hiding four hostages in, or below, the heart of downtown Tel Aviv. Whatever steps Israel would have taken to protect its own civilians living or working in the vicinity — exactly that, no more and no less — is what it should have done to protect Palestinian lives in Saturday's raid to free four hostages.

FRANK GAIPA, OAKLAND, CALIF.

Trump Is Unfit to Serve, No Diagnosis Needed

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "Holy Cow: 34 for 45!," by Maureen Dowd (column, June 2):

Ms. Dowd highlights Donald Trump's inability to accept responsibility for his own actions, presenting himself as a martyr whose witnesses were "literally crucified" by Justice Juan Merchan, who is "a devil."

His distorted and self-obsessed perspective, perhaps on starkest display during his recent trial, inevitably raises the question of what is psychologically the matter with Mr. Trump. Indeed some friends have asked if now I am willing to diagnose him. (I'm a psychiatrist who contributed a chapter to "The Dangerous Case of Donald Trump: 27 Psychiatrists and Mental Health Experts Assess a President" but refrained from formally diagnosing him.)

My answer now is the same as it was then: The central issue is Mr. Trump's fitness to serve, not what mental illness we can label him with.

Given the stigma that mental illness unfortunately still carries, the fact that many such people can serve admirably in countless roles, and the absence of any expressed interest in having his problems treated by a mental health professional, diagnosing Mr. Trump is pointless and little more than name-calling.

What the recent trial and conviction again demonstrated is that, when not in charge of the setting, Mr. Trump displayed the same impulsivity, lack of self-awareness, vindictiveness, inability to take responsibility and contempt for others (e.g., the judge, witnesses, the jury's judgment, etc.) that has characterized him throughout his public appearances.

Thus, without the need for speculation about underlying diagnoses, Mr. Trump has confirmed his utter unfitness to serve as president.

LEONARD L. GLASS
NEWTON, MASS.

The writer is an associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School.

John Roberts's Legacy

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "Roberts Won't Compel Justice to Refrain From Jan. 6 Cases" (news article, May 31):

Chief Justice John Roberts has cemented his legacy as the man who destroyed the Supreme Court of the United States. Witness his refusal to hold Justices Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas accountable, his refusal to enforce minimal and obvious ethics codes for the court, and his refusal to discuss the situation with the Senate.

In addition, Chief Justice Roberts's career-long drive to dismantle the Voting Rights Act and fair access to the ballot for minorities will ensure that he has replaced Roger Taney as the worst chief justice in the history of the court.

PETER LOTTO
FAYETTEVILLE, N.Y.

A Butterfly Memorial

TO THE EDITOR:

After reading "With Grief by Their Side" (Arts & Leisure, May 26), I was blown away by the similarities to a recent meeting of our Compassionate Friends grief support group, at which members were given various art and writing materials to help them explore ways to express their grief after the loss of a child, a grandchild or a sibling.

Our son Mark died of myocarditis after running in a half-marathon, and since the butterfly is the symbol of Compassionate Friends, my husband and I decided to build a monarch butterfly garden in his memory. We dedicated the garden on his birthday, which is near the time of year that the monarchs arrive in Mexico after their annual migration of up to 3,000 miles from the northern U.S. and Canada.

When people stop to admire the flowers at our "Monarch Waystation," we give them plants and explain how important it is for them to plant host and nectar plants in order to save this magnificent but endangered butterfly.

Now as more beautiful butterflies appear daily in our garden, each one of them reminds us of a wonderful memory of our beautiful son.

SHARON AUSTRY, FORT WORTH

Abandoned Oil Wells

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "These Teens Adopted an Orphaned Oil Well. Their Goal: Shut It Down" (news article, May 28):

While the efforts of these teenagers to raise money to plug orphan wells is laudable, the real question is why kids are giving up their birthday money while an industry with billion-dollar profits is allowed to continue to pass these cleanup costs on to the public.

It has become a fundamental part of the fossil fuel industry playbook to pocket the profits while avoiding the costs of plugging and remediating these wells. Complacent state and federal regulators facilitate this practice in three ways.

First, they fail to require upfront bonding adequate to cover the actual costs of well plugging. These costs regularly exceed $100,000, but bonding requirements in some states are as low as $2,500 per well.

Second, they don't enforce plugging deadlines, allowing wells to sit idle — often leaking methane and other pollutants — long after they stopped producing.

Finally, they allow low- or non-producing wells to be transferred from the operators that enjoyed the initial profits to less-resourced operators that frequently go bankrupt before completing plugging.

We need to clean up the millions of existing orphan wells across the country. But just as important, we need to stop the fossil fuel industry from producing even more of these hazards.

PETER MORGAN, DENVER

The writer is a senior attorney with the Sierra Club.

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Jürgen Moltmann, 98, Theologian Who Ruminated on Auschwitz, Dies

By CLAY RISEN

Jürgen Moltmann, who drew on his searing experiences as a German soldier during World War II to construct transformative ideas about God, Jesus and salvation in a fallen world, making him one of the leading Protestant theologians of the 20th century, died on June 3 at his home in Tübingen, in southwest Germany. He was 98.

His daughter Anne-Ruth Moltmann-Willisch confirmed the death.

Dr. Moltmann, who spent most of his career as a professor at the University of Tübingen, played a central role in Christianity's struggle to come to grips with the Nazi era, insisting that any established set of beliefs had to confront the theological implications of Auschwitz.

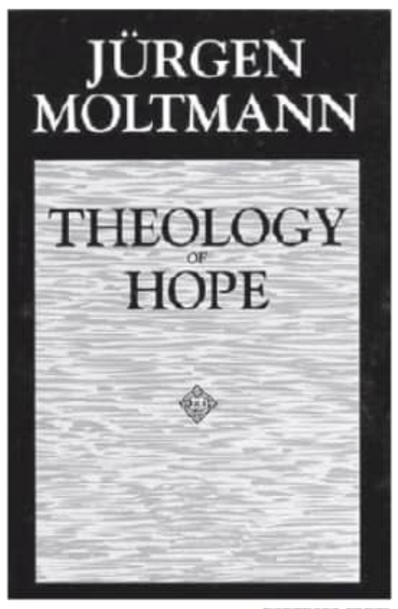
As a teenage conscript in the German Army, he barely escaped death during an Allied bombing raid on Hamburg in 1943. The horrors of the war led him to chart a path between those who insisted that faith was now meaningless and those who wanted a return to the doctrines of the past as if the Nazi era had never occurred.

Though his work ranged widely, including ecological and feminist theology, he specialized in the branch of theology known as eschatology, which is concerned with the disposition of the soul after death and the end of the world, when Christians believe that Christ will return to earth.

Dr. Moltmann outlined his eschatology, and established his reputation, with a trilogy of books, beginning with "The Theology of Hope" in 1964.

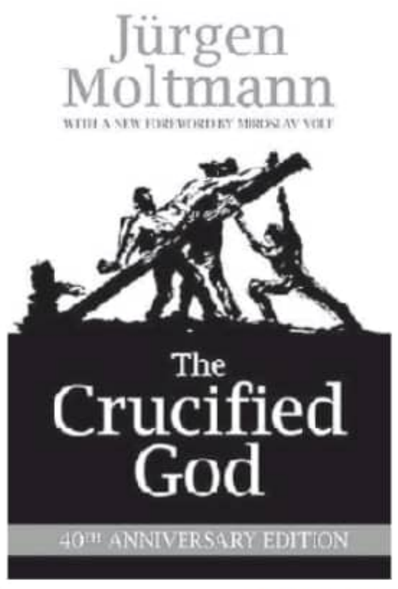
Many traditional Christians hold that Christ will return in judgment, and that sinners and nonbelievers will be cast into eternal damnation. Dr. Moltmann fiercely disagreed, arguing that the end of the world would cease suffering for all, regardless of faith or moral rap sheet.

"From first to last, and not merely in the epilogue, Christianity is eschatology, is hope, forward looking and forward moving, and therefore also revolutionizing and transforming the present," he wrote.



FORTRESS PRESS

"Theology of Hope" was the first book in a trilogy that established his reputation.



FORTRESS PRESS

Next he tackled a key question: Does God suffer, or is he incapable of experiencing pain?

The ensuing debate over "The Theology of Hope" swept through Christian thought, making enough noise to land Dr. Moltmann on the front page of The New York Times in 1968.

Dr. Moltmann followed with "The Crucified God" (1972), in which he tackled a fundamental question for many Christian theologians: Does God suffer, or, as the all-powerful being, is he incapable of experiencing pain and sorrow?

He posited that after Auschwitz, when so many believers asked, "God, where are you?," the only possible answer was that God had chosen to be there, suffering alongside the oppressed.

"There cannot be any other Christian answer to the question of this torment; to speak here of a God who could not suffer would make God a demon," he wrote. "To speak here of an absolute God would make God an annihilating nothingness."

Dr. Moltmann was a close friend of Hans Küng, a progressive Roman Catholic thinker who also taught at Tübingen. But whereas Dr. Küng was so outspoken in his criticisms of the Catholic Church that he was censured by the Vatican, Dr. Moltmann preferred to let his political views emerge through his writing.

Nevertheless, his readership reached beyond the world of Protestant theologians. Though his writing could be dense, it was also marked by an exciting curiosity and an insistence on the role of religion in fighting for social justice that drew avid followers, who sometimes referred to themselves as "moltmanniacs," on both sides of the Atlantic.

"The church of the crucified Christ must take sides in the concrete social and political conflicts going on about it and in which it is involved, and must be prepared to join and form parties," he wrote in "The Crucified God."

Jürgen Dankwart Moltmann was born on April 8, 1926, in Hamburg and raised in a small village in the city's far suburbs, where his parents, Herbert and Gerda (Stuhr) Moltmann, relocated as part of a social movement that emphasized simple, rural living. His father taught high school, and his mother managed the home.



ULRICH METZ

Jürgen Moltmann posited that after Auschwitz, when so many asked, "God, where are you?," the only possible answer was that God had chosen to be there, suffering alongside the oppressed.

The Moltmanns were secular but conventional enough to send their son to the local church for Sunday school. By then, Nazism had swept the country; he later recalled an antisemitic pastor arguing that Jesus Christ had been Aryan and not Jewish.

Herbert Moltmann was drafted into the German Army in 1939, and his son, still a teenager, was forced to follow him in 1943. For intellectual sustenance, he took with him a copy of Goethe's "Faust" and Nietzsche's "Thus Spake Zarathustra."

In the Army, he was assigned to man an antiaircraft gun defending Hamburg from Allied forces. Over the course of 10 days in the summer of 1943, some 8,650 tons of bombs were dropped over the city and killed 40,000 people, mostly civilians.

One night a bomb exploded nearby, throwing him to the ground and killing a friend instantly. With fires closing in around him, he grabbed a piece of wood and floated to safety in a nearby lake.

"During that night I cried out to God for the first time in my life," he wrote in his autobiography, "A Broad Place" (2007). "My question was not 'Why does God allow this to happen?' but 'My God, where are you?'"

About a year later, he surrendered to British troops and was sent to prison camps in Belgium, Scotland and England. He watched as his fellow prisoners sank into depression after realizing the enormity of their country's crimes, and he became convinced that traditional ideas about faith were no longer viable.

He believed that the end of the world would cease suffering for everyone.

Under an educational program run by British authorities, he began studying theology, religious history and Hebrew. He returned to Germany in 1948 and received a doctorate of theology from the University of Göttingen in 1952.

Dr. Moltmann had a variety of influences, including the Swiss theologian Karl Barth and the Marxist philosopher and avowed atheist Ernst Bloch, whose three-volume work "The Principle of Hope" (1938-47) inspired his early scholarship.

He married Elisabeth Wendel, a fellow student who also became a prominent theologian, in 1952, and the two were together until her death in 2016. Along with his daughter Anne-Ruth, he is survived by three other daughters, Susanne Moltmann-von Braunmühl, Esther Moltmann and Friederike Moltmann; five grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

Dr. Moltmann wrote more than 40 books, including a set of six on systematic theology, another branch of study that attempts to create a coherent, comprehensive set of doctrines defining Christian belief.

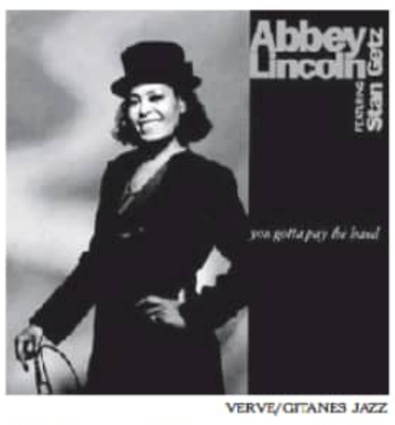
Yet throughout his career, he returned to the point he made in his first books: God chooses not to be a judge of mankind, but to be a fellow sufferer, and he will one day end suffering for everyone, not just a select few.

"I am convinced that God is with those who suffer violence and injustice and he is on their side," he said in a 2012 interview with the British magazine Third Way. "He is not the general director of the theater, he is in the play."

Jean-Philippe Allard, 67, Jazz Producer Who Lent An Eager Ear to Musicians

By GIOVANNI RUSSONELLO

Jean-Philippe Allard, a French record executive and producer who helped revive the careers of jazz greats who had been all but forgotten in the United States, and who earned a reputation for uncommonly fierce advocacy on behalf of musicians, died on May 17 in Paris. He was 67.



VERVE/GITANES JAZZ

"He has no tolerance for cliché — he likes original," Abbey Lincoln said of Mr. Allard.

The music producer Brian Bacchus, a close friend and frequent collaborator, said Mr. Allard died in a hospital from cancer, which had returned after a long remission.

Artists ranging from Abbey Lincoln to Juliette Gréco to Kenny Barron all said they had never worked with a more musician-friendly producer.

"Regarding my work, I would always consider it as co-producing with the artist," Mr. Allard told the music journalist Willard Jenkins in an interview in March. "Some producers are musicians or arrangers, like Tco Macco or Larry Klein; others are engineers; some are professional listeners. I would fall in this last category: listening to the artist before the session, listening to the music during the session, and listening to the mixing engineer."

He tended to develop lifelong relationships with the artists he worked with. "His ear was always open to the artist, and he was always concerned about what was best for the artist," the vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater said in an interview. "He saw me. He embraced me. He wasn't afraid of me. He encouraged my independence. He encouraged me speaking out."

When Mr. Allard, then a record-industry newbie, was invited to start a jazz division at PolyGram France in 1987, the assignment was simple: Promote and distribute the roster of jazz talent already signed to PolyGram, a multinational, and its subsidiaries Verve, Mercury and EmArcy. But his passion for the music was stronger than his patience for taking directions — and when he found out that some of his U.S. jazz heroes were having trouble getting signed back home, he started cutting deals himself.

Partnering with producers at different labels in the United States and Japan allowed him to construct bigger budgets and sign some of the top jazz talent in the world.

A $250,000 multi-album deal between Mr. Allard, the Japanese producer Kiyoshi Koyama and the saxophonist Stan Getz turned heads — it was an outlandish sum for any jazz instrumentalist in the 1980s not named Miles Davis — especially because it paid off. From there, Mr. Allard had room to run and undertook ambitious projects with Ms. Lincoln, the pianist Randy Weston, the bassist Charlie Haden and others.



MIGUEL MEDINA/A.F.P. — GETTY IMAGES



CHEUNG CHING MING, VIA POLYGRAM/UNIVERSAL

Jean-Philippe Allard, far left, receiving an award in 2012 and, near left, with the bassist Charlie Haden in an undated photo. "He saw me," the vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater said.

And he persuaded Gitanes, the French cigarette company (whose product he personally favored), to sponsor a line of albums for Verve, generating otherwise unthinkable budgets for sessions by Ms. Lincoln and Shirley Horn that are now seen as classics.

Ms. Lincoln had been a prominent singer and actress but had fallen out of the spotlight by the end of the '80s, when Mr. Allard signed her to Verve. Ms. Lincoln, who died in 2010, credited him not only with reviving her career but also with giving her the platform to embrace her identity as a composer. Today she might be remembered as a songwriter as much as a singer.

"He has no tolerance for cliché — he likes original," she once told Carol Friedman, who is working on a documentary about Ms. Lincoln. "He came to get all the great original musicians here — J.J. Johnson, Randy Weston, Hank Jones, Ornette Coleman and me! He picked us all off the sidewalk."

Mr. Allard received a lifetime achievement award at the 2012 Victoires du Jazz, a prestigious French awards ceremony. In 2014 he was given the Bruce Lundvall Prize at the Montreal International Jazz Festival. Perhaps more meaningful to him was the song Ornette Coleman wrote in his honor, "Monsieur Allard," for the 1996 album "Sound Museum: Three Women."

Developing lifelong relationships with the artists he worked with.

Jean-Philippe Armand Allard was born on April 8, 1957, in Saint-Mandé, France, just outside Paris, and grew up in the city's northern suburbs. His father, Jean, was a sales manager,; his mother, Marie-Thérèse (Prats) Allard, was a high school principal.

From the start, his interests veered far from the professional middle-class ideal. In his teens he read Rimbaud's verse and the famous jazz hipster Mezz Mezzrow's memoir. He listened to Bessie Smith, Jimi Hendrix and Led Zeppelin; dressed in North African shawls; and once famously exclaimed at the family dinner table, head in hands, "I'll never work!"

Though fiercely intelligent, he was booted from one high school and dropped out of another, then started picking up part-time jobs. (During a stint as an ambulance driver at Charles de Gaulle Airport, he pushed the wheelchairs of Jean-Paul Sartre and Charles Mingus.) When not working, he played bass in rock bands and joined with friends to start a discothèque and restaurant, which they kept open for two years. He and another of its founders, Christine Corbet, would eventually marry.

She survives him, as do their daughter, Céline Allard, and his brother, Jean-Marc. Mr. Allard's son, Pablo, died before him.

After taking a job in the classical music department at Fnac, the French records and electronics chain, he was hired at PolyGram France in its classical division. When the company's executives decided to start a jazz department, he reminded them that he didn't know much about classical music but was wild about jazz. They put him in charge of starting the department.

In 2007, with PolyGram now owned by Universal Music Group, Mr. Allard was promoted to run all of Universal Music France's record and publishing divisions. He relaunched Impulse! Records, a once-mighty jazz label that had gone dormant at Universal, in 2014, and released albums by the Henry Butler-Steven Bernstein Hot 9, the pianists Sullivan Fortner and Rodney Kendrick (Ms. Lincoln's onetime accompanist), Mr. Haden and others.

He left Universal in 2017 to start his own artist management company, Le Bureau des Artistes, working primarily with French pop and hip-hop musicians. And in late 2022, he began an independent label, Artwork Records.

Mr. Allard's first call was to an artist he'd been working with for over 30 years: the pianist Kenny Barron. Last year, Artwork released Mr. Barron's first solo piano album in decades, which was nominated for a Grammy, and it went on to release albums by the rising pianists Mr. Fortner (his enthusiastically received double-album, "Solo/Game") and Micah Thomas, as well as the young French artists Oan Kim and Edouard Pennes's Generation Django.

"It's wonderful to see someone who's committed to trying to understand your truth," Mr. Kendrick told DownBeat recently. "I watched Jean-Philippe function as a producer around strong, socially involved people like Abbey, Randy Weston and Charlie Haden, and not only get along with them, but be accepted as part of the family."

Deaths

Britton, Herbert
Chatzky, Audrey
Haggin, Jonathan
Katz, Susan
Meyers Ferdinand, N.
Perry, Mary
Policart, Iclea
Weiser, Kenneth
Wilsker, Marjorie

BRITTON—Herbert M.
(April 2, 1934-June 9, 2024)
It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Herb Britton from natural causes. He was a devoted father and grandfather, proud Friar, CPA and partner of Reminick Aaron's & Co. Herb is survived by his children William (Bill), Nikki, Sybil (Jorge Bromberg) and their children: Zachary, Alexander, Lauren, James, David, Benjamin and Ilana. A lifelong New Yorker and a New York Giants fan-go Blue, he loved Jupiter, Florida, East Hampton, New York and his dog Pebbles. Herb's energetic zest for life included multiple NYC marathons and many sets of club tennis. May his memory be a blessing. The funeral will be held graveside at Mt. Ararat Cemetery, Lindenhurst, NY on Tuesday, June 11 at 10am. Shiva arrangements have been entrusted to Gutterman's 516-921-5757.

CHATZKY—Audrey,
age 94, passed away peacefully at home on June 6th, surrounded by loved ones. She was the adored wife of the late Jerome Chatzky, with whom she shared a life of love and devotion. Known for her grace and elegance; beloved by her vast family, life-long friends, and adoring Facebook fans who admired her beautifully polished nails and Chanel outfits. A graduate of Hunter College at 19, she returned to school in her 40s to earn a master's in special education from the College of New Rochelle, proudly, and somewhat annoyingly, posting each straight-A report card on the refrigerator door. She taught at the Purchase Elementary School and then established Eggs & Tricity, an antiques accessory business. An extensive world traveler, Audrey was a devotee of the fine arts, including the philharmonic, classical ballet, Broadway, Lobel's, and Neiman-Marcus. She is survived by her sister Helene, her four children Amy Linde (Frank), John Chatzky (Deborah Mullin), Jane Nelson and Peter Chatzky (Susan), 16 grandchildren, and ten (so far) great-grandchildren. She leaves a legacy of endless love and generosity and will be missed by countless home contractors to whom she reliably offered coffee and muffins. Anyone who wishes to honor her memory may donate to Save The Children: tinyurl.com/ChatzkyDonate
The family will be receiving guests on Tuesday, June 11th from 3pm-8pm at Brae Burn Country Club, 39 Brae Burn Drive, Purchase, NY 10577.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF DEATHS MAY BE TELEPHONED FROM WITHIN NYC TO 212-556-3900; OR OUTSIDE NYC TOLL FREE 1-800-458-5521; OR SENT BY EMAIL TO NYTIMES@CLASSIFIEDSPLUS.COM FOR THE FOLLOWING EDITIONS: Until 3:30 PM the day before for Tuesday through Saturday editions, until 4:00 PM on Friday for Sunday's national edition, until 12:45 PM Saturday for Sunday's New York and late national editions, until 2:00 PM Sunday for Monday's editions. Photos must be submitted by noon the day prior to publication Tuesday through Friday. Photos for Saturday, Sunday and Monday must be submitted by 12 noon on Friday.

HAGGIN—Jonathan.



Jonathan Haggin known as "Ben Ali" died on June 8, 2024. He was 91. He was born on April 24, 1933, son of Mary Haggin of Santa Barbara California and renowned painter and stage designer Ben Ali Haggin. His great-grandfather James Ben Ali Haggin was the principal owner of the Anaconda Copper Company and the owner of Elmendorf horse farm in Lexington, Kentucky. He graduated from Buckley School in Manhattan. Pomfret School in Connecticut, and Colorado College. After college, he served in the Press Corps during the Korean Conflict. Then he began working at Tucker Anthony Investment Banking and Brokerage Firm, where he ultimately became partner. He married Theodora Bersbach on July 16, 1961 and was the father of two, Terah and Leslie. At the age of fifty, he attended New York Institute of Fine Arts to study nineteenth century American Art. He then opened and ran his own private art gallery, specializing in nineteenth and twentieth century American Art. At the age of 60, he met and later married Maxine Kahn. He was a member of the Brook Club, The Racquette Club, and The Pilgrims. He was a member of The National Golf Links of America and was on the board of The Joffrey Ballet Company. He is survived by his wife Maxine, his daughters, Terah and Leslie, and four grandchildren. There will be a service at St. Peter's Church in Millbrook.

KATZ—Susan.
Congregation Or Zarua mourns the death of our member Susan Katz. May the One who consoles the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem bring comfort to her family.
Scott N. Bolton, Rabbi
Hannah Kranich, President

MEYERS FERDINAND—Nancy.
From the 50s Florida to forever. Love always, Gail

PERRY—Mary Joyce,
aged 88, passed away peacefully surrounded by family on June 9, 2024. She was born and raised in Clifden, Ireland before immigrating to the US. While living in NYC, she completed a BA in English at Hunter College and taught elementary school. She radiated good humor and joy all her life and her beloved memory will be cherished by friends and family. She joins her late husband, Jay, in heaven and is survived by her only son, Charles, and her two grandchildren, Collin and Christine. Calling hours at the Fred H. McGrath & Son Funeral Home, Bronxville on Wednesday, June 12, 2024 from 9:30 to 11:30am. Mass of Christian Burial to follow at St. Barnabas Church, Bronx, NY at 12 Noon on Wednesday.

POLICART—Iclea.
On June 10, 2023, Iclea Policart passed away at Piedmont Atlanta Hospital.

WEISER—Kenneth D.
With great sadness, Montefiore Einstein acknowledges the loss of Kenneth D. Weiser, our longtime board member. Ken joined the Montefiore board in 1994 and generously lent his time and talent for 20 years before being appointed emeritus. Ken and his spouse, Carol, demonstrated their philanthropic spirit of support of the arts, higher education and healthcare institutions, including our own, through the Weiser Family Foundation. Ken and Carol's three children include Betsy, Edward and Robert, who received his MD from Albert Einstein College of Medicine and completed his residency at Montefiore Medical Center. In commemorating Ken's life, we celebrate not only his achievements, but also his kindness, wisdom, and dedication to serving others. May his memory continue to be a guiding light for us all.
Daniel R. Tishman
Chair, Board of Trustees, Montefiore Einstein
James. M. Butler
Chair, Board of Trustees, Montefiore Health System
Ruth L. Gottesman, Ed.D.
Chair, Board of Trustees, Albert Einstein College of Medicine
Philip O. Ozuah, M.D., Ph.D.
President and CEO, Montefiore Einstein

WEISER—Kenneth.
UJA-Federation of New York mourns the passing of our dear friend Ken Weiser, beloved husband of Carol. Ken exhibited exceptional generosity within the Jewish community and was deeply committed to social and humanitarian causes. We extend our deepest condolences to Carol; their children Robert (Susan), Betsy (Eric Kurp), and Ned (Nancy); and the entire family.
Linda Mirels, President;
Marc Rowan,
Chair of the Board;
Eric S. Goldstein, CEO

WILSKER—Marjorie Grant,
age 94, beloved wife of the late Howard "Butsy" Wilsker for 60 years. Loved and devoted mother of Susan (Richard) Brownstein, Michael (Wendy) Wilsker, grandmother of Ross Brownstein (Jenny), Gabriella Wilsker Goodman (Sebastion) and Gavin Grant Wilsker. Margie was an active member of Hadassa and Cancer Care. Known for writing beautiful lyrics to popular songs for shows and her children. Loved playing golf with her husband and friends and play her piano. Always available, day or night, to talk with family members or friends about personal matters, politics or any other subject. It was never too early or too late to talk to Margie.

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3 LABOR
The United Automobile Workers said it reached a tentative deal with General Motors at an Ohio plant.



4 DINING
Pete Wells asks whether the picks for the World's 50 Best Restaurants are restaurants or more like endurance tests.



10 SPORTS
Dont'a Hightower, left, and Jerod Mayo were teammates on the New England Patriots. Now they coach the team.



JENN ACKERMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; ILLUSTRATION BY NYT

Your Driving Data, for Sale

By KASHMIR HILL

You know you have a credit score. Did you know that you might also have a driver score?

The score reflects the safety of your driving habits — how often you slam on the brakes, speed, look at your phone or drive late at night.

While you can see your credit score, you will have a harder time finding out what your driving score is. But auto insurance companies can get it — and that could affect the rate you pay.

For the last two decades, auto insurers have been trying to get people to enroll in programs, commonly called usage-based insurance plans, that monitor their day-to-day driving so rates better reflect the actual risk. But privacy-minded consumers have been reluctant to sign up.

The insurance industry, hungry for insights into motorists, has turned to automakers and smartphone apps like Life360 that track your movements.

So the industry has taken a different tack, getting data about how people drive from automakers or from apps that drivers already have on their phones. Experts say most people have no idea the insurance industry can track them this way.

After The New York Times revealed that General Motors was sharing driving behavior with LexisNexis, customers filed dozens of lawsuits and the carmaker ended its contract with the data broker. But data is still being collected from other automakers and it is still being collected from apps.

Driving behavior analysis, or telematics, as the insurance industry calls it, could be better for consumers, leading to personalized rates that are more fair. Plus, if people have to pay more for their risky driving, they may drive more cautiously, leading to safer roads. But this will happen only if drivers are aware that their behavior is being monitored.

According to the companies collecting and selling the data, consumers agree to share their infor-

CONTINUED ON PAGE B6

Shopping Centers Going From Vacant to Vibrant

Square Feet
By JOE GOSE

Shopping center landlords have found themselves in a wholly unfamiliar position: For the first time in 20 years, demand for retail space outstrips supply.

That demand has soared recently and, after years of muted construction and a purge of weak-performing properties, met a retail market with less available space. Properties that survived the purge signed up tenants that would draw more shoppers and give them more reason to linger. That meant more restaurants and venues that promote recreational experiences, like ax throwing and, more recently, pickleball. It also meant less space for traditional retailers that weren't performing as well, like bookstores and apparel brands.

Because of those moves, "there's not as much redundancy from tenants, and landlords are creating much more robust tenant mixes," said Barrie Scardina, president of Americas retail services, agency leasing and

CONTINUED ON PAGE B4



ARIANA DREHSLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

With department stores withering, developers have focused on offerings like restaurants and medical facilities.

California Makes Push To Limit A.I.

By CECILIA KANG

Lawmakers in California last month advanced about 30 new measures on artificial intelligence aimed at protecting consumers and jobs, one of the biggest efforts yet to regulate the new technology.

The bills seek the toughest restrictions in the nation on A.I., which some technologists warn could kill entire categories of jobs, throw elections into chaos with disinformation and pose national security risks. The California proposals, many of which have gained broad support, include rules to prevent A.I. tools from discriminating in housing and health care services. They also aim to protect intellectual property and jobs.

California's legislature, which is expected to vote on the proposed laws by Aug. 31, has already helped shape U.S. tech consumer protections. The state passed a privacy law in 2020 that curbed the collection of user data, and in

CONTINUED ON PAGE B3

Apple Plans To Add A.I. To iPhones

By TRIPP MICKLE

SAN FRANCISCO — Nearly two years after OpenAI ignited a race to add generative artificial intelligence into products, Apple jumped into the competition on Monday, as it revealed plans to bring the technology to more than a billion iPhone users around the world.

During a two-hour presentation from its futuristic Silicon Valley campus, Apple said that it would be using generative A.I. to power what it is calling Apple Intelligence. The system will prioritize messages and notifications and will offer writing tools that are capable of proofreading and suggesting what users have written in emails, notes or text. It also will result in a major upgrade for Siri, Apple's virtual assistant.

Apple's plans to offer A.I. in its iPhones represents the next step in bringing artificial intelligence into the consumer mainstream. Apple, the marquee name of Silicon Valley, could do more than any

CONTINUED ON PAGE B3

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The Digest

AVIATION

Activist Investor Wants To Oust Southwest C.E.O.

The activist shareholder Elliott Investment Management has bought a $1.9 billion stake in Southwest Airlines and is seeking to force out the chief executive of the struggling airline.

In a letter to Southwest's board, the investment firm complained that Southwest's stock price has dropped more than 50 percent in the last three years. The firm said Southwest failed to evolve, hurting its ability to compete with other carriers. Elliot blamed the Dallas-based carrier's large number of flight cancellations in December 2022 on what it described as the airline's outdated software and operational processes.

Southwest's C.E.O., Robert Jordan "has delivered unacceptable financial and operational performance quarter after quarter," the letter read.

Southwest said it was contacted by Elliott on Sunday and looked forward "to better understanding their views on our company."

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TECHNOLOGY

Meta Seeks Europe Data To Train Its A.I. Model



THIBAULT CAMUS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Meta wants to use data from users in privacy-conscious Europe to train its artificial intelligence models, the social media giant said on Monday as it faces concerns about data protection while battling to keep up with rivals like OpenAI and Google.

The company, which owns Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, said that to better reflect the "languages, geography and cultural references" of its users in Europe, it needs to use public data from those users to teach its Llama AI large language model.

Meta's AI training efforts are hampered by stringent European Union data privacy laws, which give people control over how their personal information is used. The Vienna-based group NOYB, led by the activist Max Schrems, complained last week to 11 national privacy watchdogs about Meta's AI training plans and urged them to stop the company.

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INTERNATIONAL

Japan's Economy Shrinks 1.8% in the First Quarter

The Japanese economy shrank at an annual rate of 1.8 percent in the first quarter, slightly better than the initial estimate at a 2.0 percent contraction, according to revised government data on Monday. The revision was because of private sector investments, at minus 0.4 percent, up from the previous minus 0.5 percent.

Seasonally adjusted real gross domestic product, a measure of the value of a nation's products and services, remained in negative territory, as exports and consumption declined from the previous quarter.

Quarter-to-quarter, the economy slipped 0.5 percent in the January-March period, according to the Cabinet Office, unchanged from last month's results.

Wage growth has been slow, and prices on imports have risen amid a decline in the Japanese yen against the U.S. dollar. The dollar is trading at nearly 157 yen lately, up from about 140 yen a year ago.

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S&P 500 INDEX
+0.3%
5,360.79

DOW JONES INDUSTRIALS
+0.2%
38,868.04

NASDAQ COMPOSITE INDEX
+0.3%
17,192.53

10-YEAR TREASURY YIELD
4.47%
+0.034 points

CRUDE OIL (U.S.)
$77.74
+$2.21

GOLD (N.Y.)
$2,327.00
+$2.00

Stocks & Bonds

S&P 500 and Nasdaq Hit Records Ahead of Fed Meeting

By The Associated Press

U.S. stocks ticked to more records on Monday ahead of a week with several top-tier reports on inflation due, as well as the Federal Reserve's latest meeting on interest rates.

The S&P 500 rose 13.80 points, or 0.3 percent, to 5,360.79 and topped its high set last week. The Nasdaq composite also set a record after rising 59.40, or 0.3 percent, to 17,192.53, while the Dow Jones industrial average gained 69.05, or 0.2 percent, to 38,868.04.

Southwest Airlines flew to one of the market's biggest gains, up 7 percent, after Elliott Investment Management said it took a $1.9 billion ownership stake in the company.

Diamond Offshore Drilling jumped 10.9 percent after Noble agreed to buy its rival in a cash-and-stock deal valued at roughly $1.6 billion. Noble added 6.1 percent in a signal that traders expect the combination to be a winner. Other energy producers also climbed as the price of crude oil recovered some of its sharp losses since the spring.

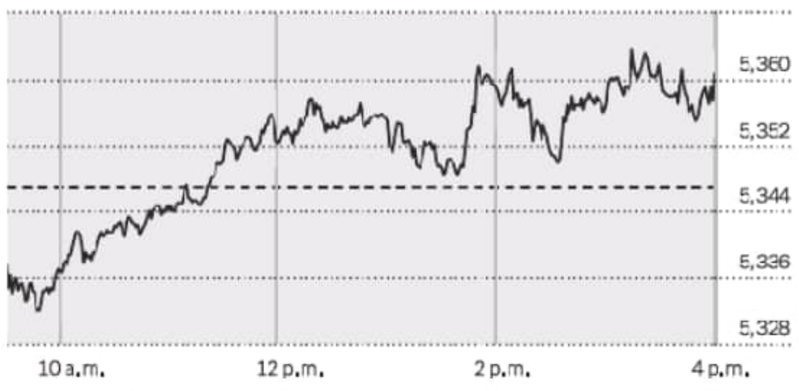
Huntington Bancshares dropped 6.1 percent for one of the market's largest losses after cutting its forecast for a key component of profit this year.

Apple fell 1.9 percent after a highly anticipated conference where it showed how its operating systems will use ChatGPT to offer services using artificial-intelligence technology. A furor around A.I. broadly on Wall Street has helped send stocks to records despite worries about high interest rates and the slowdown in the U.S. economy that they induce.

Data on the economy have come in mixed recently, and traders are hoping they will ultimately show a slowdown that stops short of a recession and is just right in magnitude. A cooldown would put less upward pressure on inflation, which could encourage the Federal Reserve to cut its main interest rate from its most punishing level in more than two decades.

The S&P 500 Index

Position of the S&P 500 index at 1-minute intervals on Monday



Source: FactSet THE NEW YORK TIMES

But the data have been tough to parse, with Friday's stronger-than-expected jobs report quickly on the heels of weaker-than-expected reports on U.S. manufacturing and other areas of the economy. Even within U.S. consumer spending, the heart of the economy, is a sharp divide between lower-income households struggling to keep up with still-high inflation and higher-income households doing much better.

"Bottom line, the data remains mixed, leaving all of the major macro outcomes still on the table for this year," according to Morgan Stanley strategists, led by Michael Wilson.

In the meantime, companies benefiting from the A.I. boom are continuing to report big growth almost regardless of what the economy and interest rates are doing.

Nvidia, for example, is worth roughly $3 trillion and rose 0.7 percent Monday after reversing an early-morning loss. It was the first day of trading for the company since a 10-for-one stock split made its share price more affordable to investors, after it ballooned to more than $1,000 amid the A.I. frenzy.

Treasury yields were mixed in the bond market ahead of reports later in the week that will show whether inflation improved last month at both the consumer and wholesale levels.

On Wednesday, the Federal Reserve will announce its latest decision on interest rates. Virtually no one expects it to move its main interest rate then. But policymakers will be publishing their latest forecasts for where they see interest rates and the economy heading in the future.

The last time Fed officials released such projections, in March, they indicated the typical member foresaw roughly three cuts to interest rates in 2024. Traders are largely betting on just one or two cuts to rates in 2024, according to data from CME Group.

In the bond market, the yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 4.47 percent from 4.43 percent late Friday. The two-year yield, which more closely tracks expectations for the Fed, slipped to 4.88 percent from 4.89 percent.

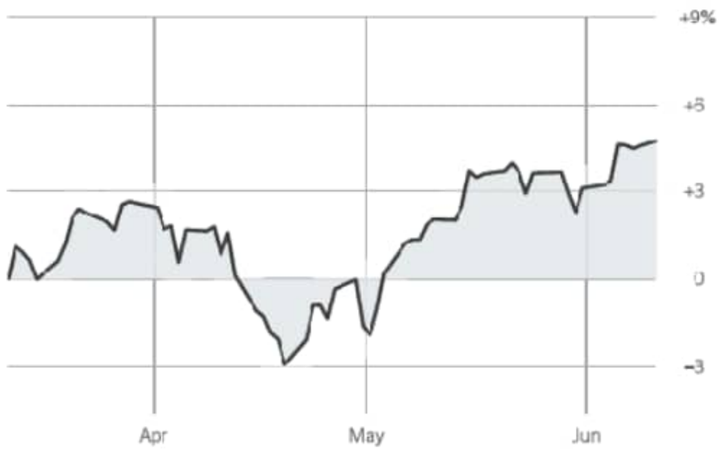
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What Happened in Stock Markets Yesterday

POWERED BY FACTSET

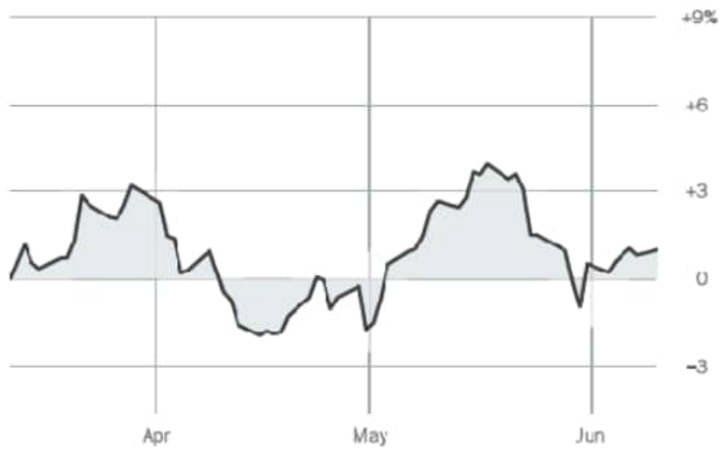
S&P 500 5,360.79 ↑+0.3%
3 month performance: **+4.7%**



Nasdaq Composite Index 17,192.53 ↑+0.3%
3 month performance: **+7.3%**



Dow Jones Industrials 38,868.04 ↑+0.2%
3 month performance: **+1.0%**



Best performers

S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE
1. Constellation Energy (CEG)	$214.63	+8.4%
2. Southwest Airlines (LUV)	$29.70	+7.0
3. Enphase Energy (ENPH)	$130.67	+6.5
4. First Solar (FSLR)	$279.80	+4.7
5. Lam Research (LRCX)	$1,003.07	+4.2
6. Mohawk Industries (MHK)	$118.08	+4.1
7. General Motors (GM)	$47.57	+4.0
8. Monolithic Power Systems (MPWR)	$779.58	+3.7
9. VISTRA (VST)	$88.22	+3.7
10. Ralph Lauren 'A' (RL)	$188.32	+3.6

Worst performers

S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE
1. Huntington Bancshares (HBAN)	$12.58	−6.1%
2. Advanced Micro Devices (AMD)	$160.34	−4.5
3. Illumina (ILMN)	$109.82	−3.4
4. Monster Beverage (MNST)	$51.00	−3.2
5. PepsiCo (PEP)	$165.90	−3.0
6. FMC Corp (FMC)	$54.99	−2.9
7. WestRock (WRK)	$50.50	−2.6
8. Teleflex (TFX)	$207.09	−2.6
9. Take Two Interactive (TTWO)	$160.54	2.6
10. Hershey (HSY)	$191.12	−2.5

Most active

S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE	VOLUME IN MIL.
1. NVIDIA (NVDA)	$121.79	+0.7%	308
2. Apple (AAPL)	$193.12	−1.9	95
3. Ford Motor (F)	$12.38	+1.9	67
4. Advanced Micro Devices (AMD)	$160.34	−4.5	67
5. Huntington Bancshares (HBAN)	$12.58	−6.1	52
6. Tesla (TSLA)	$173.79	−2.1	50
7. Bank of America (BAC)	$39.67	−0.3	37
8. Pfizer Inc (PFE)	$28.07	−1.8	36
9. Intel (INTC)	$30.91	+0.6	36
10. Southwest Airlines (LUV)	$29.70	+7.0	35

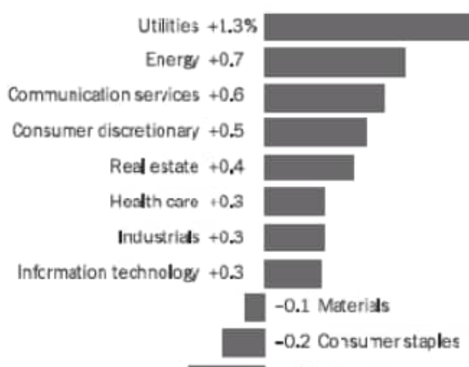
Municipal bonds

	TOTAL RETURN 1 YR	5 YRS	TOTAL ASSETS IN BIL.
1. Vanguard Intermediate-Term Tax-Exempt Fund Investor Shares (VWITX)	+2.9%	+1.1%	71.4
2. Vanguard Tax-Exempt Bond Index Fund Admiral Shares (VTEAX)	+2.4	+0.9	34.6
3. Vanguard Limited-Term Tax-Exempt Fund (VMLTX)	+3.2	+1.2	29.2
4. American Funds Tax Exempt Bond Fund Class F-3 (TFEBX)	+3.3	+1.3	23.1
5. Vanguard Long-Term Tax-Exempt Fund (VWLTX)	+3.7	+1.2	17.2
6. Vanguard High-Yield Tax-Exempt Fund (VWAHX)	+5.1	+1.5	15.3
7. Vanguard California Intermediate-Term Tax-Exempt Fund Investor Shares (VCAIX)	+2.9	+1.0	15.3
8. Vanguard Ultra-Short-Term Tax-Exempt Fund (VWSTX)	+3.5	+1.4	14.9
9. Bridge Builder Municipal Bond Fund (BBMUX)	+3.7	+1.2	14.2
10. Franklin California Tax-Free Income Fund Class R6 (FKTQX)	+3.7	+1.0	13.0

Source: Morningstar

Sector performance

S&P 500 SECTORS



How stock markets fared yesterday in Asia ...

— Nikkei 225 (Japan): +0.9%
— Shanghai Composite (Shanghai): —%

... in Europe

— FTSE 100 (London): −0.2%
— DAX (Frankfurt): −0.3%

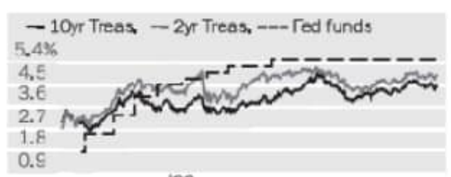
... and North America

— Dow Jones Industrials (New York): +0.2%
— S&P/TSX (Toronto): +0.3%

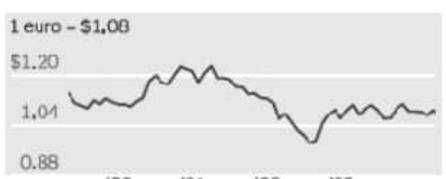


What Is Happening in Other Markets and the Economy

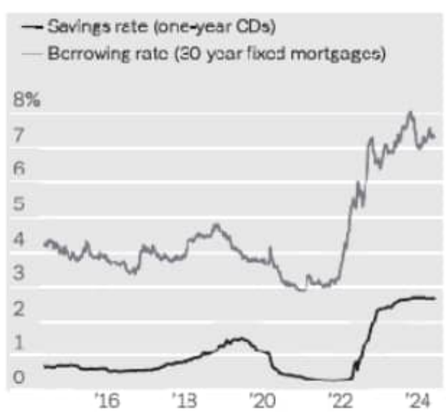
Bonds



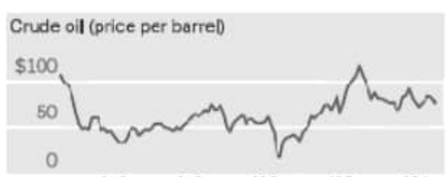
Currencies



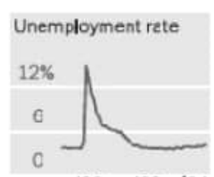
Consumer rates



Commodities



Economy





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TECHNOLOGY | LABOR

California Legislators Try to Pick Up Slack in Reins on A.I.

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

2022 it passed a child safety law that created safeguards for those under 18.

"As California has seen with privacy, the federal government isn't going to act, so we feel that it is critical that we step up in California and protect our own citizens," said Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, a Democratic legislator who is chair of the State Assembly's Privacy and Consumer Protection Committee.

As federal lawmakers drag out regulating A.I., state legislators have stepped into the vacuum with a flurry of bills poised to become de facto regulations for all Americans. Tech laws like those in California frequently set precedents for the nation, in large part because lawmakers across the country know it can be challenging for companies to comply with a patchwork across state lines.

State lawmakers across the country have proposed nearly 400 laws on A.I. in recent months, according to the lobbying group TechNet. California leads the states with a total of 50 bills proposed, although that number has narrowed as the legislative session proceeds.

Colorado recently enacted a comprehensive consumer protection law that requires A.I. companies to use "reasonable care" while developing the technology to avoid discrimination, among other issues. In March, the Tennessee legislature passed the ELVIS Act (Ensuring Likeness Voice and Image Security Act), which protects musicians from having their voices and likenesses used in A.I.-generated content without their explicit consent.

It's easier to pass legislation in many states than it is on the federal level, said Matt Perault, executive director of the Center on Technology Policy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Forty states now have "trifecta" governments, in which both houses of the legislature and the governor's office are run by the same party — the most since at least 1991.

"We're still waiting to see what proposals actually become law, but the massive number of A.I. bills introduced in states like California shows just how interested lawmakers are in this topic," he said.

The state proposals are having a ripple effect globally, said Victoria Espinel, the chief executive of the Business Software Alliance, a lobbying group representing big software companies.

"Countries around the world are looking at these drafts for ideas that can influence their decisions on A.I. laws," she said.

More than a year ago, a new wave of generative A.I. like OpenAI's ChatGPT provoked regulatory concern as it became clear the technology had the potential to disrupt the global economy. U.S. lawmakers held several hearings to investigate the technology's potential to replace workers, violate copyrights and even threaten human existence.

The OpenAI chief executive Sam Altman testified before Congress and called for federal regulations roughly a year ago. Soon afterward, Sundar Pichai, chief executive of Google; Mark Zuckerberg, chief executive of Meta; and Elon Musk, chief executive of Tesla, gathered in Washington for an A.I. forum hosted by the Senate majority leader, Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York. The tech leaders warned of the risks their products presented and urged Congress to create guardrails. They also asked for support for domestic A.I. research to ensure the United States could maintain its lead in developing the technology.

At the time, Mr. Schumer and other U.S. lawmakers said they wouldn't repeat past mistakes of failing to rein in emerging technology before it became harmful.

Last month, Mr. Schumer introduced an A.I. regulation road map that proposed $38 billion in investments, but few specific guardrails on the technology in the near term. This year, federal lawmakers have introduced bills to create an agency to oversee A.I. regulations, proposals to clamp down on disinformation generated by A.I., and privacy laws for A.I. models.

But most tech policy experts say they don't expect federal proposals to pass this year.



RICH PEDRONCELLI/ASSOCIATED PRESS

"The federal government isn't going to act," said Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, a California assemblywoman and chair of a key privacy and consumer panel.

"Clearly there is a need for harmonized federal legislation," said Michael Karanicolas, executive director of the Institute for Technology, Law and Policy at the University of California, Los Angeles.

State and global regulators have rushed to fill the gap. In March, the European Union adopted the AI Act, a law that curbs law enforcement's use of tools that can discriminate, like facial recognition software.

The surge of state A.I. legislation has touched off a fierce lobbying effort by tech companies against the proposals. That effort is particularly pronounced in Sacramento, California's capital, where nearly every tech lobbying group has expanded its staff to lobby the Legislature.

The 30 bills in California that were passed out of either the Senate or the Assembly will now go to various committees for further consideration before the Legislature ends its session this summer. Democrats control the Assembly, the Senate and the governor's office.

"We're in a unique position because we are the fourth-largest economy on the planet and where so many tech innovators are," said Josh Lowenthal, a Democratic Assembly member, who introduced a bill aimed at protecting young people online. "As a result, we are expected to be leaders, and we expect that of ourselves."

Three of those bills are designed to protect actors and singers, living or dead.

SAG-AFTRA, the union for actors and other creators, helped write a bill that would require studios to obtain explicit consent from actors for the use of their digital replicas. The union said the public has expressed strong support for intellectual property protections after high-profile conflicts between actors and A.I. companies.

States aim to fill a regulatory void as federal efforts stall.

Last month, for instance, the actress Scarlett Johansson accused OpenAI of copying her voice to develop a voice assistant without her permission. OpenAI has denied the accusation.

California is an important battleground because "the Legislature tends to be progressive and believes strongly in consumer protection and worker rights," said Duncan Crabtree Ireland, the strategic and creative chief negotiator for SAG-AFTRA. "But it is also where five of the six biggest A.I. companies in the world are based."

The bill gaining the most traction requires safety tests of future versions of generative A.I. models like OpenAI's chatbot GPT4 and the image creator DALL-E, which can generate humanlike writing or eerily realistic videos and images. The bill, by State Senator Scott Wiener, a Democrat, also gives the state attorney general power to sue for consumer harms.

(The New York Times has sued OpenAI and its partner, Microsoft, claiming copyright infringement of news content related to A.I. systems.)

On May 8, the California Chamber of Commerce and tech lobbying groups wrote a letter to appropriations committee members who were considering the bill. The letter described the proposal as "vague and impractical," saying it would create "significant regulatory uncertainty" that discourages innovation.

Chamber of Progress, a tech trade group with lobbyists in California, has also criticized the bill. It issued a report last month that noted the state's dependence on tech businesses and their tax revenue, which total around $20 billion annually.

"Let's not overregulate an industry that is located primarily in California, but doesn't have to be, especially when we are talking about a budget deficit here," said Dylan Hoffman, executive director for California and the Southwest for TechNet, in an interview.

Mr. Wiener said his safety testing bill would probably be amended in the coming weeks to include provisions that support more transparency in A.I. technology development and to limit the tests only to the biggest systems in which companies have invested more than $100 million to develop. He stressed that many in the tech sector have supported the bill.

"I would prefer that Congress act, but I'm not optimistic they will," he said.

Apple Announces Plans to Integrate A.I. With Its Billions of iPhones

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

other company to add credibility to a technology that has more than a few critics, who worry that it is mistake-prone and could add to the flood of misinformation already on the internet.

Apple's new A.I. features could also help calm concerns that the iPhone maker had slipped behind its biggest rivals in the tech industry's embrace of artificial intelligence. The value of other tech companies, like Microsoft and Nvidia, has ballooned because of their aggressive A.I. plans. Earlier this year, Microsoft dethroned Apple as the most valuable technology company in the world.

While introducing its new A.I., Apple emphasized how it planned to integrate the technology into its products with privacy in mind. The company said that the technology, which can answer questions, create images and write software code, would perform sensitive tasks. It showed how the system would be able to automatically determine if a rescheduled meeting time would complicate plans to attend a child's theater performance.

It said that the computer processing would be done on an iPhone rather than in data centers, where personal information has a greater risk of being compromised. For complex requests that require more computing power, it has created a cloud network with Apple semiconductors that, it said, is more private because it's not stored or accessible, even by Apple.

Apple struck a deal with OpenAI, the maker of ChatGPT, to support some of its A.I. capabilities. Requests that its system can't field will be directed to ChatGPT. For example, a user could say that they have salmon, lemon and tomatoes and want help planning dinner with those ingredients. Users would have to choose to direct those requests to ChatGPT, ensuring that they know that the chatbot — not Apple — is responsible if the answers are unsatisfying. Sam Altman, the chief executive of OpenAI, attended the Apple event.

Apple's deal with OpenAI, which already has a close partnership with Microsoft, is another indication that the young San Francisco company has clearly become the tech industry's leading developer of A.I. technology

"As we look to build in these incredible new capabilities, we want to be sure that the outcome reflects the principles at the core of our products," said Tim Cook, the chief executive of Apple. "It has to be powerful enough to help the things that matter the most to you. It has to be intuitive and easy to do."



JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

Tim Cook, Apple's chief executive, at the company's developer conference at its headquarters in Cupertino, Calif.

Apple also said that it would be making improvements to its iPhone software system. This fall, messaging will add the ability to schedule messages and respond to messages by tapping back with more emojis. Apple will also release a redesigned Photos app to make it easier to browse images by topics like pets and travel. And it said that iPhone users would be able to send high-resolution images to Android smartphones.

Apple brings several strengths to the A.I. race. Its semiconductor development team is among the most talented in the industry and has been making chips that power complex A.I. functions for years.

The company has also marketed itself as being better at protecting people's personal information than its rivals because it makes money by selling devices, not by advertising.

But Apple has several weaknesses that could slow its A.I. development. The secretive company has struggled to recruit and retain leading A.I. researchers because it limits how much research it publishes. It has also sought to license published material and objected to collecting it without permission, as other generative A.I. companies have done to build and train their technology.

Though Siri has been around for more than a decade, Apple has let the voice assistant languish. The assistant has frustrated users with its failure to recognize various requests, and its ability to actually converse is limited because it is programmed to follow each individual command.

Generative A.I. could improve Siri because it has been trained on spoken conversations pulled from podcasts and videos. The result is a system that can mimic the way people talk.

Apple said that Siri would be able to remember the context of something that a user has raised with it. For example, if someone asks for the weather in Muir Woods National Monument and later asks to schedule a hike there, Siri will now know that the hike it is scheduling is in Muir Woods.

Siri will also understand more of the things that people want to get done in iPhone apps. For instance, users can ask it to show a photo of a friend and it will find and surface those images for people in the Photos app. It also will be able to perform tasks for people like finding an image of a user's driver's license and filling it out into a form.

Other generative A.I. capabilities that Apple demonstrated included automatically summarizing audio recordings, allowing customers to create movies from photos by writing a description, and cleaning up photos by removing distracting images in the background.

"This is the biggest event for investors since the iPhone because they have to infuse A.I. into their products to thrive," said Gene Munster, a managing partner at Deepwater Asset Management, which invests in emerging technology companies. "Today was about showing that they will make A.I. a core competency and that they can deliver an A.I. experience that consumers want."

The event was an important milestone in Apple's relationship with developers, as well. Tensions have flared between the company and app makers over the past year, as Apple has resisted new rules in Europe designed to loosen its grip on the App Store. The rules require Apple to allow third-party payment alternatives that could circumvent the 30 percent fee it collects on app sales. But developers say that Apple has responded by introducing alternatives that would make such a change prohibitively expensive.

Apple is facing similar challenges in the United States. A federal judge in San Jose, Calif., is weighing whether the company can proceed with a plan to collect 27 percent of sales on alternative payment systems. And the Justice Department also sued Apple for rules that prevent other companies from offering cloud-streaming game apps, digital wallets and other alternatives on iPhones.

Against that backdrop, Apple sought to emphasize the benefits it offers developers. During the event, it showed how its Apple Intelligence tools would be available to make apps more useful to customers.

Apple said that later this month it would be expanding sales of the Vision Pro, its mixed reality headset, beyond the United States to China, Japan and Europe. The company also unveiled new capabilities for the headset, including the ability to view older photographs in three dimensions and to create a giant, virtual display for a Mac.

JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

Sam Altman, the chief executive of OpenAI, attended the event. Apple struck a deal with OpenAI to provide some generative A.I. technology.

Ohio Plant For Batteries Makes Deal With U.A.W.

By NEAL E. BOUDETTE

The United Automobile Workers union on Monday announced a tentative contract agreement at an Ohio factory that makes batteries for electric vehicles, a step that it called a milestone in enhancing pay and safety in the E.V. supply chain.

The accord covers 1,600 workers at a Lordstown plant operated by Ultium Cells, a joint venture between General Motors and a South Korean partner, LG Energy Solution. It produces batteries for G.M. electric vehicles.

The workers had not been unionized when the plant opened in 2022, but they were brought into the U.A.W. under the terms of the national contract the union negotiated with G.M. last fall. This new contract, subject to ratification by the plant's workers, defines wages and working conditions specific to that location.

Shawn Fain, the U.A.W. president, said in a letter to union members that the accord was "a game changer for the electric vehicle battery industry."

G.M. and Ultium issued statements saying they were pleased with the agreement.

The union said it planned to use the Ultium Cells contract as a template as it negotiated local agreements at other battery plants that G.M. and its Detroit rivals are building. G.M. started production this year at a battery plant in Spring Hill, Tenn., and has another under construction in Lansing, Mich.

Ford Motor plans two battery plants in Kentucky, one in Tennessee and one in Michigan. Stellantis, the maker of Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge, and Ram vehicles, plans two battery plants in Indiana. Aside from one Ford location, those plants involve joint ventures that were brought under the U.A.W. umbrella by the national contracts the union signed with Ford and Stellantis last fall.

The Ultium Cells contract calls for moving workers to a new wage of $30.50 an hour. Over three years, wages will rise to $35 an hour. The national contract signed last fall had increased the Ultium Cells starting wage to $26.91, up from $16.50 an hour when the plant opened.

That wage scale is slightly less than that at G.M. auto plants, where most workers will move to a top wage of more than $40 an hour over the next few years.

The Ultium Cells contract also calls for the plant to employ four U.A.W. members as full-time safety representatives, and one full-time industrial hygienist. The union and Ultium workers have raised concerns about working with high-voltage electricity and potentially harmful compounds used in the production of E.V. battery packs.

The Ohio factory has special significance because it is next to G.M.'s shuttered Lordstown auto plant, which once employed several thousand workers.

After G.M. closed the Lordstown factory permanently in 2019, the company came under criticism from President Donald J. Trump, and the plight of the laid-off workers was invoked in the 2020 election campaign.

Separately, the U.A.W. said about 200 workers who had once been employed at the Lordstown plant and had taken jobs at other G.M. locations would soon transfer to the Ultium Cells factory so they could return to the area. About 40 workers will start work there next week, followed by other groups of 40 or so over the next several weeks, a union spokesman said.

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Blackstone Real Estate and MRP Group announces that a Mexican trust formed by their affiliates has commenced a tender offer for up to 100% of the outstanding real estate trust certificates of Terrafina (BMV:TERRA 13) at a purchase price of Ps.38.50 per certificate.

Terrafina certificates may be tendered at any time until 14:00 Mexico City time, on July 10, 2024, unless the expiration date is extended in accordance with the Offer to Purchase referred to below.

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COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE | DINING

'Retail real estate fundamentals are the strongest they've been in my career.'
Terry Montesi, founder of Trademark Property Company in Fort Worth



ADAM RIDING FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



ARIANA DREHSLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Retail development is booming. The average rental rate of nearly $24 a square foot in the first quarter was almost 4 percent higher than a year earlier. Some landlords are able to raise rates on new leases by more than 30 percent.

Shopping Centers Going From Vacant to Vibrant by Shifting Focus

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

alliances for Cushman & Wakefield, a real estate firm. "We are seeing some of the most productive occupancy recorded in the last 10 years."

Shopping center vacancy is the lowest it has been in two decades, at 5.4 percent, Cushman & Wakefield said in a recent report, and the edge in lease negotiations has shifted from tenants back to landlords.

To meet demand, developers are on the hunt for distressed and failed properties — or even locations where retail would be a better fit than the current use. Partners Capital is converting a 100,000-square-foot office complex near Las Vegas into a $30 million project, called the Cliff, that will include restaurants, boutiques, health-and-wellness operators, entertainment space and a central bar. This is a shift from what the developer was doing just a few years ago, when it was selling off much of its retail-center portfolio and pivoting to industrial buildings that housed tenants such as logistics providers, said Bobby Khorshidi, president of the firm.

Partners Capital's move is an apt representation of how the fates of office properties and shopping centers have switched places.

David Larcher, chief executive of Vestar, a developer in Phoenix that is planning several projects, including the second phase of Vineyard Towne Center, a 260,000-square-foot shopping center in Queen Creek, Ariz., said the pandemic had been "good for retail."

"There was a lot of derelict space converted into other uses, and retailers with too much debt who had been hanging on by their fingertips were wiped out," he said.

The pandemic may have hastened the rebound, but it is underpinned by a shift that began more than a decade ago. After the financial crisis and 2009 recession and amid the growth of e-commerce, retailer bankruptcies led to a glut of space that prompted many investors to sell or convert shopping centers and embrace offices, apartments and warehouses. Shopping center space, which had surged from 2006 through 2009, began to shrink — primarily in two waves, first from 2009 to 2016 and then again during the pandemic.

The shopping centers that were still around shifted strategy to meet changing consumer taste, and landlords brought in high-traffic-driving tenants including restaurants and entertainment centers, fitness operators, boutique services, public gathering areas and medical facilities.

In some cases, developers are adding apartments, grocery stores, hotels and offices, while still scaling back excess store space.

Trademark Property Company is planning to redevelop a 470,000-square-foot center in Arlington, Texas, by reducing the retail space by about half and adding office, residential, hotel and entertainment uses.

Similarly, Shopoff Realty Investments plans to turn a Macy's and vacant Sears that bookend Westminster Mall, south of Los Angeles, into housing and about 25,000 square feet of food retail space, like restaurants. The project is part of the firm's strategy to buy and convert distressed retail properties. It typically reduces shop space 60 to 90 percent, said Bill Shopoff, founder of the company, which is in Irvine, Calif.

5.4%
Rate of shopping center vacancy, the lowest in two decades.

"There's a sufficient number of these opportunities to keep our pipeline well stocked for a number of years to come," he said.

Open-air centers in high-growth markets such as Phoenix, Nashville, and Austin, Texas, are leading the resurgence, said Ms. Scardina and other industry experts. High-end malls have tight vacancies as well, she added.

The industry also experienced an uptick in demand in recent years as shopping in person enjoyed a mild resurgence and more retailers began using stores as distribution points. Nationally, the average rental rate of nearly $24 a square foot in the first quarter of this year was almost 4 percent higher than it was a year earlier. In some cases, landlords are able to raise rates on new leases by more than 30 percent from the previous lease, said Terry Montesi, founder of Trademark Property Company, a retail and mixed-use property developer in Fort Worth.

The current environment is reigniting investor interest. Because retail properties were out of favor, their values in general did not rise as much as apartments and warehouses over the past several years. As a result, shopping centers can generate an attractive yield compared with those pricier assets in a time of stubbornly high interest rates.

"Retail real estate fundamentals are the strongest they've been in my career," said Mr. Montesi, who started Trademark in 1992. "The capital markets haven't completely come around to retail, but they're warming up."

But a handful of threats could derail the good times. Most notably, industry experts say, consumers are feeling squeezed by inflation and have pulled back on discretionary spending, as recently reported in Walmart's and Target's quarterly earnings. Shopping center owners and retailers alike are being pressed by higher interest rates as well as the increasing cost of construction and insurance, all of which are elevating occupancy expenses.

Investors are also keeping an eye on troubled retailers, as more apparel stores like Express and Rue21 file for bankruptcy and major retailers like Macy's and Walmart close low-performing locations.

In the meantime, shopping centers are looking better than they have in a long time, and spaces that become vacant are often snapped up quickly by other tenants.

During the pandemic, the developer NewMark Merrill secured pre-lease commitments for 100 percent of its Rialto Village project, a 96,000-square-foot center that opened last year in California's Inland Empire region, said Sanford Sigal, chief executive of the group. A decade ago, pre-leasing commitments typically filled 65 to 70 percent of a center, he said.

"Every time I went to a party of any sort and would tell someone I was in the shopping center business, people would say, 'Oh, you poor thing!'" said Mr. Sigal, who bought four shopping centers in Chicago for roughly $100 million this year. "So the idea of getting calls from brokers the day after a store announces closings is very unusual. Maybe we're the cockroaches of the earth-extinction event."

'The World's 50 Best Restaurants' Serve Ego Over Food a Normal Person Can Eat

Does the list seek out the most inaccessible spectacles in dining, or has it simply been hijacked by them?

By PETE WELLS

To be media literate these days is to understand that no ranked list, whether it is the "100 Greatest Drummers of All Time" or the "35 Cutest Dog Breeds to Ever Exist," should be taken too literally. We all know that the cuteness of the Maltipoo and the awesomeness of Keith Moon are matters of opinion.

When it comes to parsing the annual dining survey known as The World's 50 Best Restaurants, though, you really have to open your mind. Forget asking whether these establishments are the best in the world. The bigger question is: Are they restaurants?

Consider some of the highest-ranking winners from this year's edition, which was announced Wednesday night in a ceremony at the Wynn Las Vegas that began with feathered and painted dancers twirling light sticks to electronic dance music on a darkened stage.

Gaggan, in Bangkok, was named not just the ninth-best restaurant in the world but the single best restaurant in Asia. The chef, Gaggan Anand, greets diners at his 14-seat table facing the kitchen with "Welcome to my . . . ." completing the sentence with a term, meaning a chaotic situation, that will not be appearing in The New York Times.

What follows are about two dozen dishes organized in two acts (with intermission). The menu is written in emojis. Each bite is accompanied by a long story from Mr. Anand that may or may not be true. The furrowed white orb splotched with what appears to be blood, he claims, is the brain of a rat raised in a basement feedlot.

Brains are big in other restaurants on the list. Rasmus Munk, chef of the eighth-best restaurant in the world, Alchemist, in Copenhagen, pipes a mousse of lamb brains and foie gras into a bleached lamb skull, then garnishes it with ants and roasted mealworms. Another of the 50 or so courses — the restaurant calls them "impressions"— lurks inside the cavity of a realistic, life-size model of a man's head with the top of the cranium removed.

Now, among the 50 Best are a number of establishments where they let you see a menu written in real words and order things you actually want to eat. Some of these, like Asador Etxebarri in Spain and Schloss Schauenstein in Switzerland, are hard to reach. Nearly all are very expensive. Still, there are places on the list where a relatively normal person might eat a relatively normal dinner and go home feeling relatively well-fed.

But the list is dominated by places that normal people can't get into, where the few diners who will go to almost any length for reservations will go home feeling bloated and drunk. They are not restaurants, or not just restaurants. They are endurance tests, theatrical spectacles, monuments to ego and — the two most frightening words in dining — "immersive experiences."

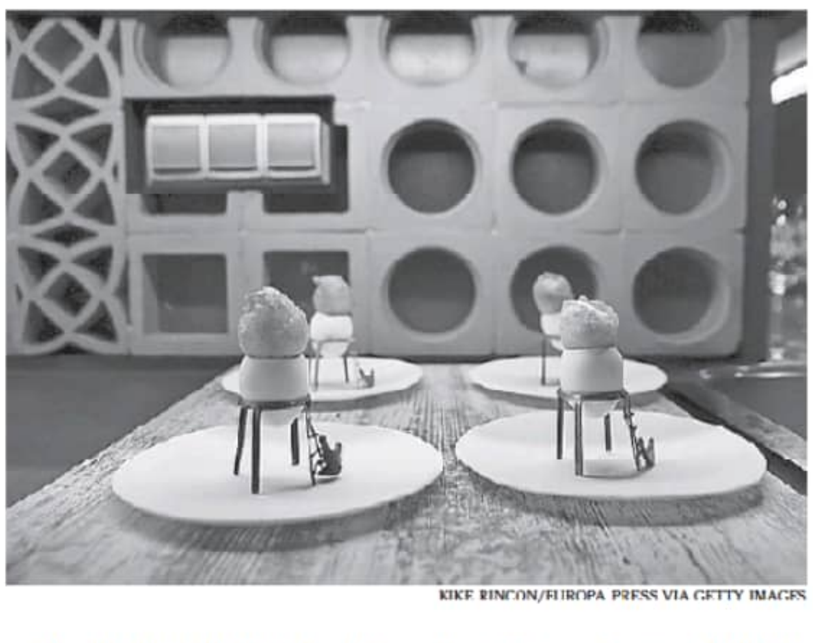
Whether the World's 50 Best seeks out these spectacular spectaculars or has simply been hijacked by them is impossible to tell. The list's website is a model that should be studied by anyone who wants to arrange words that sound important and don't mean anything.

On the subject of what it takes to win the attention of the 1,080 "independent experts" who make up the organization's voting body, the website has this to say: "What constitutes 'best' is up to each voter to decide — as everyone's tastes are different, so is everyone's idea of what constitutes a great restaurant experience. Of course, the quality of food is going to be central, as is the service — but the style of both, the surroundings, atmosphere and indeed the price level are each more or less important for each different individual."

Well, that clears up *that*.



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SERGEI GAPON/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Clockwise from top, chef Gaggan Anand, at center, who wrote his Bangkok restaurant's menu in emojis; an "impression," known elsewhere as a course, from Alchemist in Copenhagen; and an item from Disfrutar in Barcelona.

The World's 50 Best Restaurants and its spinoff awards, by now almost too numerous to count, weren't always so rarefied. In the early years, when the list was being published by Restaurants magazine, the editors saw it as a kind of anti-Michelin, and took pride in recognizing spots that would never, ever make Michelin's little red guidebooks. Carnivore, an open-air meat buffet in a suburb of Nairobi, Kenya, came in at No. 47 in 2003.

No. 1 on the list that year, though, was the Spanish restaurant El Bulli, which set a standard for kitchen experimentation, highly manipulated food, restless change and marathon tastings to which the highest end of the business is still in thrall. The more famous the list became, the harder it was for a place like Carnivore to land a spot. Nobody much noticed, because the game that El Bulli played was starting to become the only one that mattered.

Today the list is dominated by tasting-menu restaurants, and every year those menus seem to get longer and more unforgiving. There are more courses than any rational person would choose to eat, and more tastes of more wines than anyone can possibly remember the next day. The spiraling, metastasizing length of these meals seems designed to convince you that there's just no way a mere 10 or 15 courses could contain all the genius in the kitchen.

One well-traveled diner told me about a recent, four-hour meal at Disfrutar, in Barcelona — No. 1 this year. He said he was "blown away" and at the same time he never wants to go back. "It was an assault, and not fun," he said.

Visits to the kitchen and other locations around the property, once an entertaining surprise, are now almost mandatory in any restaurant that aspires to a place on the list. The formula for success is so well-known that the structure of a meal in these restaurants is weirdly, depressingly conformist, even though you're supposed to be amazed by the originality of it all. Once a revolt against stuffy, conservative dining hierarchies, the World's 50 Best Restaurants now rewards a different kind of stuffiness and conservatism.

The contradiction at the core of the list is that it has become a publicity machine that directs enormous amounts of attention and business toward some of the least-accessible dining rooms in the world.

The chefs may fool themselves into believing that they're operating idea factories, that they're offering intellectual journeys and emotional wallops. But they're really just competing for votes on a listicle that will reduce whatever they achieve in the dining room to strings of clichés on the World's 50 Best Website. Table by Bruno Verjus, this year's third-best restaurant, offers "stunning wine and incredible food." A meal at Disfrutar is "the dining experience of a lifetime."

That sounds stunning! And incredible! You know, though, I'm wondering whether this experience of a lifetime is going to be a good time. But that's not a question the World's 50 Best Restaurants is set up to answer.

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Insurance Industry Can Easily Get Access to Your Driving Data

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

mation with the insurance industry. But the murky consent process means people may not realize what they are opting into.

"Most consumers are put off by the idea of an insurance company riding shotgun," said Michael DeLong of the nonprofit Consumer Federation of America.

Smartphone Apps

The smartphone apps collecting driver data may not be obvious at first glance. One, Life360, is used by parents to keep track of their children. MyRadar offers weather forecasts. GasBuddy helps people save on fuel costs.

All of these apps also have opt-in driving analysis features that rely on sensor and motion data from the phone. You can turn on these features to get notifications if a family member crashes or suggestions for a more fuel-efficient route to work. Those features, though, are provided by an analytics company, Arity, which was founded by Allstate in 2016 and pays for access to the data. What is not made clear when people sign up for the features is that Arity also analyzes how risky their driving is for insurance purposes.

On GasBuddy, for instance, users can turn on a feature that rates the fuel efficiency of their drives, a feature "powered by Arity." Brandon Logsdon, a spokesman for the company, said users "agree to Arity's privacy statement before they opt in to the Drives function."

But this agreement is in small gray font under a big red button labeled "Join Drives." The tiny disclosure says simply that by clicking "Join Drives" you will share "certain information" with Arity and agree to Arity's privacy statement, which is hyperlinked. The language does not explain what Arity is or does.

The company sells access to the driving scores of tens of millions of people. Auto insurance companies can "request a person's individual driving score, which is delivered instantly," according to Allstate's website.

The scores "look at drivers' performance behind the wheel, including how often they brake suddenly, speed or use their phones," according to an Arity blog post aimed at insurance marketers, and can be used to target potential customers based on "10 different risk categories."

Last month, Kathleen Lomax, a New Jersey mother who paid $100 annually for Life360 to track her husband and twin 18-year-old daughters, reached out to the company to ask if it was selling their driving data. An automated response, "crafted with the help of A.I.," told her that Life360 did share driving behavior data with Arity.

"No one who realizes what they're doing would consent," said Ms. Lomax, who canceled her subscription.

A spokeswoman for Life360 wrote in an email that "personally identifiable driving data," for Ms. Lomax and her family, were never shared with an insurance company, that a Life360 member must consent and that Arity was required to "take steps with its partners" to identify Life360 as data source when it was used to generate insurance quotes. In a statement, GasBuddy said Arity provides users "who choose to opt in with personalized offerings and enhanced services." MyRadar did not respond to requests for comment.

When a person shops around for auto insurance, the insurer needs to get consent to have access to the driving data collected by these apps, said Arity's spokeswoman, Stacy Silver. But how explicit is that request? A spokesman for CSAA, a regional insurer for AAA members that uses Arity's product in some states, said the consent to use smartphone data happened when it informed consumers that "we may collect third party data and reports." That is standard language that insurers use to view a credit report, for example, and many consumers may click past it without reading closely.

Companies that create consumer reports are required by the Fair Credit Reporting Act to provide them upon request. Not all of the millions of people in Arity's database can get their individual driving report, though; the company provides a report to a driver only if an insurance company has requested it as part of a quote.

Not all insurers are using Arity's driving data. Spokesmen for GEICO and USAA said they collected driving behavior only from people who downloaded a dedicated smartphone app to track how they drove.

Allstate said it planned to "soon offer consumers the choice to get a personalized rate based on their driving history," as collected by Arity.

A New Metric

Auto insurance pricing is complicated. A number of factors go into determining it, including credit history, gender, marital status, age, what car you drive and where you live, said Dale Porfilio of the Insurance Information Institute, a trade group.

"We are trying to predict the future, which, of course, nobody can know with certainty," Mr. Porfilio said. "It's a core tenet of insurance that the price of the policy should reflect the risk of the policy."

He said the insurance industry had access to lots of data, and he described telematics, when drivers granted access to it, as "just one of the most recent variables that has come into play as a tool to align price to risk."

One reason it may be particularly appealing right now, Mr. Porfilio said, is that traffic citation data, which insurers have long relied on to predict risk, is not as reliable as it once was. Driving has gotten more dangerous, but the police are giving out fewer tickets, a decline that some attribute to a law enforcement pullback after the pandemic and widespread protests over George Floyd's death four years ago.

But the bigger appeal of telematics is that it could more accurately predict risk for individual drivers and be a fairer way to set rates. Most insurers will charge a 24-year-old man who lives in a busy city more than a 50-year-old woman who lives in the suburbs, an Arity promotional document states, but what if this particular man is a cautious driver who rarely uses his car while the woman is a road-rager who racks up the miles?

Alan Demers, founder of InsurTech Consulting, predicted that everyone would eventually have a driving score, and that good drivers — which most people think they are — might well prefer it.

"Don't judge me based on everyone else," Mr. Demers said. "Judge me based on me."

On this, advocates for consumers agree with the industry.

"There's a lot of unfair discrimination in auto insurance," Mr. DeLong of the Consumer Federation of America said. "Auto insurance companies use a lot of socioeconomic factors, like your credit score or your job or your education level, like whether you went to high school or to college or whether you're married."

People with poor credit scores pay much more for auto insurance even if they have clean driving records, Mr. DeLong has found.

"Telematics has substantial promise for consumers, and it could be a way to better price auto insurance," he said. Still, he had concerns that insurance companies could become overly invasive or use data in ways that lead to new forms of discrimination.

What time of day someone drives, for example, can be tracked. Significant time spent driving at night hurts a person's score because of poorer visibility and drivers on the road who are more likely to be tired or inebriated. But that, Mr. DeLong pointed out, penalizes people who work the night shift and are more likely to be lower-income workers, such as janitors.

Mr. DeLong also objects to consumers' being "unknowingly or unwillingly enrolled in these programs."

Chi Chi Wu, a lawyer at the National Consumer Law Center, raised another concern: The law requires consumer reporting agencies such as Arity to make efforts to ensure that their data is accurate.

"They need to have procedures to figure out when the app is collecting data about you as the driver versus the passenger," she said.

Ms. Silver, Arity's spokeswoman, said Arity "uses advanced technology to determine if a person is driving or riding as a passenger."

Unexpected Monitoring

Last year, Rob Leathern, a tech executive in Texas, got a seemingly innocuous email from Toyota: "Good news, Robert! You've been identified by Toyota Insurance as a safe driver."

The email promised "big savings" from Progressive and invited him to get a quote for his 2023 Sequoia sport utility vehicle. When Mr. Leathern clicked the link in the email, it took him to a Toyota Insurance website that told him to enter his ZIP code and "get a quote." If he clicked the quote button, the website informed him, he would authorize a company called Connected Analytic Services to send his contact information, vehicle identification number and "certain vehicle driving data" to Progressive.

Mr. Leathern wanted to know what information was being collected about him. After a month of phone calls, emails and data privacy requests to Toyota and Connected Analytic Services — which turned out to be an insurance data broker — he got a report in January from Connected Analytic Services that detailed the previous six months of driving in his S.U.V. (Corey Proffitt, a Toyota spokesman, said that Connected Analytic Services is a Toyota affiliate that anonymously shares location and driving data with partner insurers, and that customers can manage what is shared about them in the data privacy portal of the Toyota/Lexus app.)

The report had two parts. A driving summary included Mr. Leathern's mileage, how many times his car's safety systems had been engaged and the number of times he had braked and accelerated at a rate "that insurers view as harder than necessary for defensive driving."

There was also a Microsoft Excel file with time-stamped lists of his every offending event and the latitude and longitude for where they occurred. In the speeding tab, for example, there were more than 200 second-by-second entries for the handful of drives during which Mr. Leathern had exceeded 85 miles per hour.

"I had no idea they'd be collecting this data, let alone using it this way," he said.

Ronald Davis, a spokesman for Progressive, said the insurer got identified driving data from a carmaker only when customers provided explicit consent to use that data to determine their rate.

In a presentation for investors in 2022, Progressive said data about how people drove was improving its pricing accuracy. It included a screen that a potential customer would see when seeking a quote. "Get a personalized rate based on your driving behavior," the screen read, with a yes-or-no option to "use my existing driving data."

"When quoting a new policy with Progressive, we specifically inform eligible customers that driving data is available from their vehicle manufacturer and ask them if they would like us to use that data in determining their rate," Mr. Davis said.

He noted that 70 percent of people who had chosen to share their behavior had gotten a discount.

Driver, Beware

In April, Connecticut's insurance regulator issued a consumer alert warning that new cars may track people's driving and affect how much they pay for insurance.

George Bradner, an assistant deputy commissioner at the Connecticut Insurance Department, said his agency supported the use of telematics and the opportunity for people to be rated on how they drove.

But his agency issued the alert because many consumers aren't aware of the use of the data. He said insurance companies needed to be transparent and disclose the information they were using to rate people.

And consumers, he said, "need to be more vigilant about their protection of their privacy."



ANDRES KUDACKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A safety feature of the Life360 app tracked the driving habits of Kathleen Lomax and her family, including her daughters, Bridget, left, and Morgan. Ms. Lomax ended up canceling her $100 annual subscription to Life360, at right.

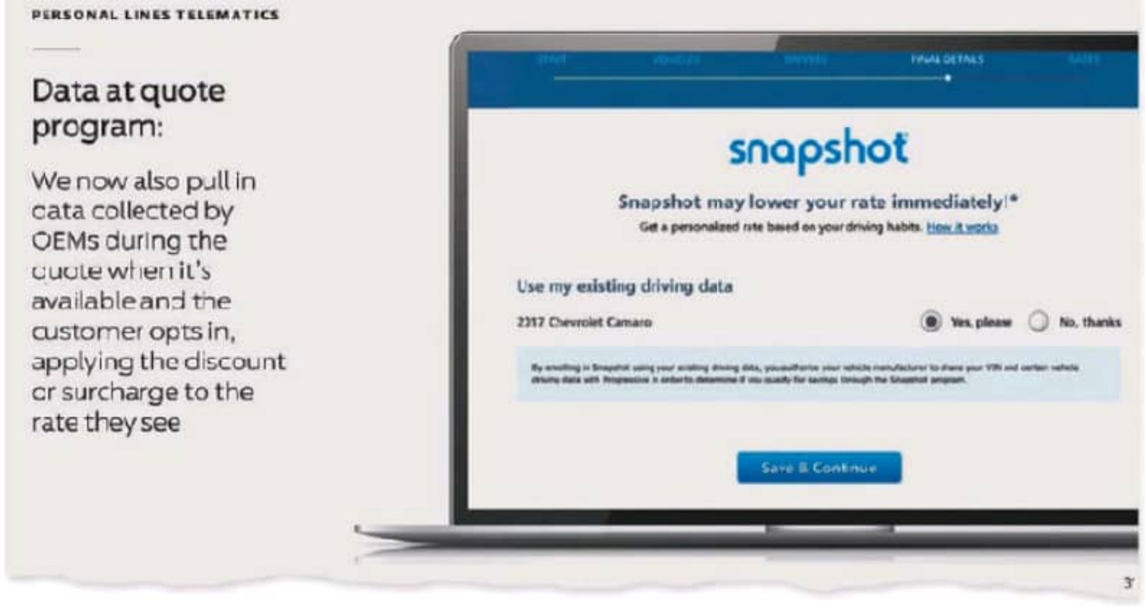


ANDRES KUDACKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A man learned that his Toyota Sequoia was collecting time-stamped data on his driving habits and turning it over to an insurance broker. Bottom, a 2022 Progressive presentation showing a screen for customers to opt in to a program using driving data collected by carmakers to set rates.



BRANDON BELL/GETTY IMAGES



What You Can Do

- Check the privacy settings on your car's dashboard system and in smartphone apps.
- If an app connects to your car, or gives you feedback about your driving, that's a good place to start.
- In some apps, such as Life360 and MyRadar, you can select this option: "Do not sell my personal information."
- Two apps you don't have to worry about: Google Maps and Waze. Google, which owns both apps, said it doesn't provide driving data that's linked to individuals to third parties.

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Sports
The New York Times

SOCCER

German Soccer Has Fleeting Star: Nets' Point Guard

By SEBASTIAN STAFFORD-BLOOR
The Athletic

A remote soccer field in a village in northern Germany is not somewhere you would expect to see an N.B.A. point guard.

But it was here, at F.C. Germania Bleckenstedt, playing at the sixth level of German soccer, that you could find Dennis Schröder on an overcast afternoon at the end of last month.

An online roster from the game against S.C. Göttingen records the oddity of the occasion. Among the thumbnail portraits of the players picked to start, some have no photos available, which is hardly unusual at this level of German soccer. Others have a wonky, taken-by-a-phone quality.

The exception is the image of an international basketball player, captured in glorious high resolution: Schröder, in his red Germany basketball uniform.

Since entering the N.B.A. in 2013, as the 17th pick in that year's draft, Schröder has toured the league. Five years with the Atlanta Hawks ended in 2018 when he was traded to the Oklahoma City Thunder. Since then, Schröder has played for six teams in six years, most recently the Brooklyn Nets, where he was traded in February.

Schröder, 30, is from Braunschweig, a city of about 250,000 people in northern Germany, and he has been playing for his country's national basketball team since 2014.



THE NEW YORK TIMES

Dennis Schröder is from Braunschweig, a city of about 250,000 people in Germany.

Dennis Schröder returned home to play a regional game.

Unlike most other N.B.A. players, he did not attend a college in the United States. Instead, he began his professional career in the Bundesliga, German basketball's highest level, before entering the N.B.A. draft at 19 years old. He had already become the youngest all-star in Bundesliga history, a record he still holds.

Brooklyn did not make the playoffs this year, and when the Nets' season ended in the middle of April, Schröder returned home — and to the parochial confines of semiprofessional soccer.

On recent trips back, he has been an occasional presence at Germania Bleckenstedt's games. Not only is it about 20 minutes from where he grew up; it's also where his brother-in-law, Daniel Ziolo, has been playing soccer since 2021. And when his career has allowed, Schröder has gone along to support him.

But it's hard to be inconspicuous in Bleckenstedt, a village about an hour's drive southeast of Hanover. Rather than the stands you would see at higher levels of soccer, its field is surrounded by metal railings painted yellow and blue, the colors of the club crest, and fringed by trees. Cars are parked a few yards from the sidelines.

Bleckenstedt is home to hundreds rather than thousands of people, and the small clusters of fans who turn out to watch their local side reflect that. In the background, small kiosks do gentle business, while a canal creeps quietly past behind one side of the field. And when Bleckenstedt kicks off its home games, it's under the shadow of towers and turbines in the distance.

So, how did Schröder end up here?

"At some point, the idea came up that Dennis wanted to play with Daniel, his brother-in-law," said Thomas Kohler, Bleckenstedt's club secretary and board member and formerly the head of the club's youth section. "However, this requires playing authorization, which Dennis has had since May 2022."



F.C. GERMANIA BLECKENSTEDT

Schröder playing with his F.C. Germania Bleckenstedt teammates last month. He wore No. 17, which he wears in the N.B.A.

Schröder attended a match as a spectator on May 26. "Then in a conversation with our coach, Gokhan Arikoglu, we agreed to play him in the next game," Kohler said.

As a conceit, it is not so outlandish. Soccer is by far the most popular sport in Germany, and as a boy, before Schröder committed himself to basketball, he was a talented soccer player. Unlike some of the sky-scraping colleagues in the N.B.A. whose size might make the sport tricky, he stands at only 6-foot-1.

"Dennis is a surprisingly good footballer," Kohler said. "If he hadn't become a professional basketball player, he could have become a footballer — probably not as a professional, but I could imagine him in the middle-to-upper amateur level."

In the competitive sense, Bleckenstedt's season was already over by that point. It was in sixth place and had been safe from relegation for some time, with promotion also out of the picture.

Bleckenstedt took a heavy beating in the game. It was down 3-0 within 27 minutes, and eventually lost 5-1.

Nevertheless, Schröder was still able to play alongside his brother-in-law and emerge unscathed from injury.

"Dennis played as a striker on the left side," Kohler said. "Since Daniel defended on the left, it was a good fit. They were both able to support each other. It was the third-to-last game of the season, so it was no longer about the championship or relegation, but just the competition.

"Dennis was able to stay out of duels for the most part and the opponent — who also had nothing to play for — was also sensible around him and didn't play too tough."

Schröder, who wore the No. 17 shirt he wears in the N.B.A., enjoyed himself.

"My first football game was a really cool experience for me," he told the club's Instagram account after the game. "I really want to thank Bleckenstedt and send them love for that."

He also said in that interview that a prior planned appearance for the team had been canceled because of the presence of local media. So for the Göttingen game, Bleckenstedt made no mention of Schröder's impending appearance; the first news of it came just a few minutes before kickoff, when a blurry photo of him leaving the dressing room surfaced on social media.

"Until a few hours before kickoff, it wasn't clear whether Dennis would even play," Kohler said. "And if we had communicated it beforehand, the media would have been all over us. We are a small village association where most of the work is done through voluntary work. The stewards, the cashiers and the staff who work the drinks stand and the grill — they are all volunteers. We wouldn't have been able to cope with the media hype."

There are no plans for Schröder to make a second appearance. But for one afternoon at least, the worlds of amateur German soccer and the N.B.A. collided.

'My first football game was a really cool experience for me.'

DENNIS SCHRÖDER, the 17th pick in the 2013 N.B.A. draft.

GREGORY FISHER/USA TODAY

Sebastian Stafford-Bloor covers soccer for The Athletic.

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COLLEGES

COMMENTARY

Smaller Schools Would Be 'Hurt the Most' if N.C.A.A. Antitrust Deal Is Approved

By JIM TROTTER
The Athletic

If a federal judge approves the settlement in the House v. N.C.A.A. antitrust case — and there is no guarantee that will happen — conference commissioners and athletic department officials will still not sleep soundly because the agreement raises more questions than it answers about the future of college sports.

"We don't know the unintended consequences of what this looks like," a small-conference commissioner said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter. "Do all these things like collectives and scholarship limits — do they all go away because the institution can now pay for these things? At the Power 5 level, they're probably fine with this; the Group of 5 is probably more in the middle; and then you've got the lower-level D-Is that get the D-I basketball revenue and will have to take a cut. They're the ones who this is going to hurt the most."

Jim Trotter is a national columnist for The Athletic.

The focus since the House case was brought forward has centered primarily on the impact it could have among power conferences and, to a lesser degree, within the Group of 5.

Seemingly little attention has been paid to the midmajors or lower-level Division I schools, which some administrators and executives believe could be left with three choices when addressing the loss of revenue stemming from the $2.8 billion settlement: find a way to replace the money, make cuts to programs to offset lost money or drop down a division.

The last option is being discussed among some athletic directors who are fearful of what the new world order could bring, according to a small-school athletic director who has been privy to private conversations.

"There's a major financial difference in operating a Big West Conference or West Coast Conference athletic department versus a high-level Division II department," the athletic director said on condition of anonymity. "The differences are in scholarships, scholarship equivalencies, what you're paying your coaches, facility costs, administrative costs. There's a massive difference. So if you're going to try to stay put in D-I and have a go at it, where do you make up for the loss in revenue? People are tapped out. Donors? They're fatigued, but you're going to have to go back to them anyway."

Under terms of the House settlement, former Division I athletes would receive at least $2.75 billion in back-pay damages, paid out over 10 years. The N.C.A.A. would be on the hook for roughly 41 percent of that total — or $1.2 billion from reserves — while the power conferences would be responsible for about 24 percent through withheld future revenues, with the Group of 5 accounting for about 10 percent, the Football Championship Subdivision schools about 13 percent and nonfootball Division I schools about 12 percent.

In a letter sent to member schools, and obtained by The Athletic, Charlie Baker, the president of the N.C.A.A., acknowledged that smaller schools could be hit harder even though they were not the focal point of the House litigation, adding: "I understand this change will not be easy to manage, but given the challenges facing college sports over the last few decades, change is inevitable."



MARIAM ZUHAIB/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Charlie Baker, the president of the N.C.A.A. His allegiance is to the power conferences.

Some argue that smaller schools are part of the same exploitative system as the higher-profile programs, but it is not an apples-to-apples comparison because many of the current lawsuits are directly tied to how student-athletes at power conferences helped bring in millions, if not billions, of dollars but were not compensated financially for it. And if it looks as though the proposed new system is a form of financial Darwinism, well, it's because it is.

Baker can claim empathy for smaller schools, but his allegiance is to the power conferences that drive the massive broadcast deals. He knows it is much easier for the Ohio States and Alabamas of the world to make up the lost revenue, even if it is a projected $2 million a year, than it is for the Group of 5 and others, where the pathway to solvency is longer and harder.

"The reduction could be over half a million dollars annually for the Group of 5," the conference commissioner said. He added: "Go a step deeper, and it's $175,000 to $200,000 annually for the midmajors. That's a lot of money for them. There's a lot of concern there."

The kicker is that the House case, which incorporates two other antitrust suits, is not the greatest fear of some conference executives. It is the Johnson v. N.C.A.A. case, which argues that student-athletes should be classified as employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act and subject to a minimum wage and overtime pay.

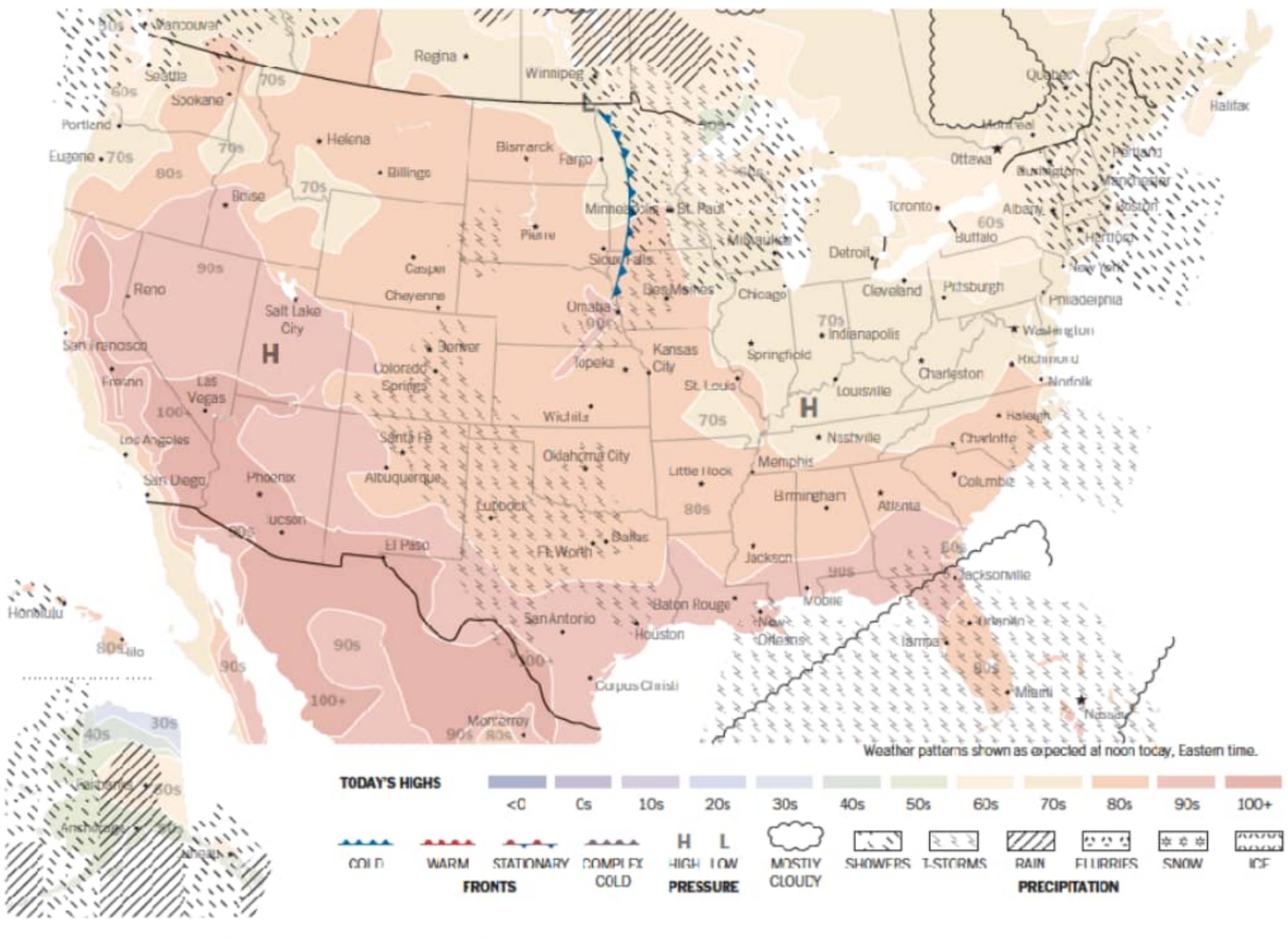
The outcome of the case could officially eliminate the outdated notion of amateurism at the collegiate level and clear the way for athletes to unionize and collectively bargain working conditions.

"If that happens," the commissioner said, "you're going to see a lot of non-Power 5 athletic departments go away, including at the Division I level."

It is sad yet predictable that the smaller schools are being forced to pay disproportionately for the sins of the bigger colleges.

Weather Report

Meteorology by **AccuWeather**



Metropolitan Forecast

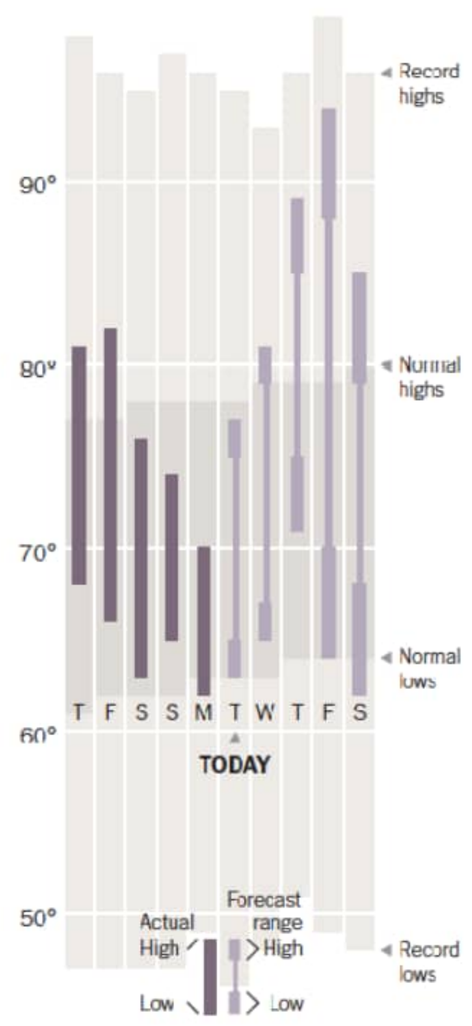
TODAY .....Clouds and sunshine
High 76. Most of the area will be dry with a mix of sunshine and clouds. Temperatures will be a bit lower than average. The humidity will be very low.

TONIGHT .....Partly cloudy
Low 64. An area of high pressure building into the region will lead to a clear to partly cloudy sky and dry weather. Winds will become light, and the humidity will remain low.

TOMORROW .....Partly sunny
High 80. The air mass over the region will turn warmer, and most or all of the day will be dry. There will be a mix of clouds and sunshine. The humidity will remain low.

THURSDAY .....Some sunshine, very warm
The warming trend will continue, and humidity levels will be slightly higher. The sky will be partly sunny, and there will be dry conditions all day.

FRIDAY
SATURDAY .....Thunderstorms Friday
Friday will be a hot and more humid day with afternoon thunderstorms. High 91. Saturday will be partly sunny and less humid. High 82.



Highlight: Northeast Turns Drier and Warmer

An area of high pressure will move into the Northeast to promote dry weather and warmer conditions through late week. Temperatures will rise by 10 to 20 degrees over a two-day span. The spike in temperatures will be accompanied by higher humidity levels, making it feel even warmer than the actual temperature.



National Forecast

A tropical rainstorm will spread showers and thunderstorms across Florida today. Some storms may be heavy, and areas of flooding and difficult travel are possible in southern parts of the state. Thunderstorms will develop from the Colorado Front Range to Texas and the Gulf Coast of Louisiana during the afternoon. Some thunderstorms across central and western Texas could produce damaging gusts and hail.

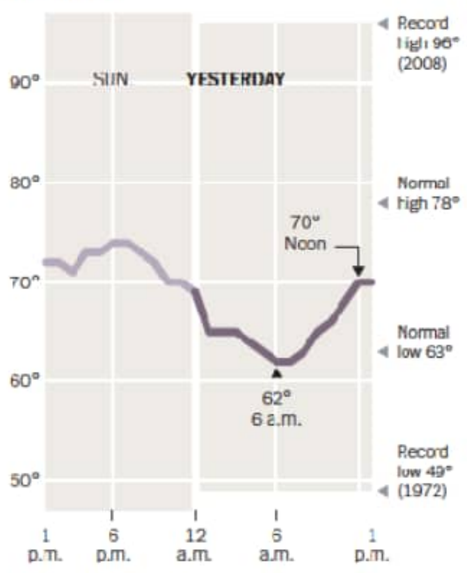
Another storm will bring showers and a few afternoon thunderstorms to portions of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa. Much of the Northeast will be dry.

Heat will continue across the interior West, while places along the West Coast will have seasonable conditions.

Metropolitan Almanac

In Central Park, for the 13 hours ended at 1 p.m. yesterday.

Temperature



Avg. daily departure from normal this month ..... +3.2°

Avg. daily departure from normal this year ..... +3.3°

Reservoir levels (New York City water supply)

Yesterday 96%
Est. normal 99%

Precipitation (in inches)

Yesterday 0.00
Record 2.07

For the last 30 days
Actual 4.11
Normal 4.23

For the last 365 days
Actual 65.82
Normal 49.43
LAST 30 DAYS

Air pressure
High ..... 29.68 7 a.m.
Low ..... 29.64 1 a.m.

Humidity
High ..... 67% 6 a.m.
Low ..... 52% 11 a.m.

Cooling Degree Days

An index of fuel consumption that tracks how far the day's mean temperature rose above 65

Yesterday 1
So far this month 74
So far this season (since January 1) 183
Normal to date for the season 132

Trends

	Temperature Average Below	Temperature Average Above	Precipitation Average Below	Precipitation Average Above
Last 10 days		●	○	
30 days		●		●
90 days		●		●
365 days		●		○

Chart shows how recent temperature and precipitation trends compare with those of the last 30 years.

Recreational Forecast

Sun, Moon and Planets

First Quarter	Full	Last Quarter	New
June 14	June 21 9:09 p.m.	June 28	July 5 6:58 p.m.

Sun	RISE	5:24 a.m.	Moon	S	12:11 a.m.
	SET	8:28 p.m.		R	10:15 a.m.
	NEXT R	5:24 a.m.		S	12:36 a.m.
Jupiter	R	4:25 a.m.	Mars	R	2:52 a.m.
	S	7:00 p.m.		S	4:16 p.m.
Saturn	R	1:16 a.m.	Venus	R	5:32 a.m.
	S	12:40 p.m.		S	8:36 p.m.

Boating

From Montauk Point to Sandy Hook, N.J., out to 20 nautical miles, including Long Island Sound and New York Harbor.

Winds will be mainly out of the north and will average 6-12 knots. Waves will be a foot or so on Long Island Sound and 2-3 feet on the open ocean. Visibility will be unrestricted most of the day.

High Tides

Atlantic City	12:08 p.m.	---
Barnegat Inlet	12:23 p.m.	
The Battery	12:19 a.m.	1:11 p.m.
Beach Haven	1:05 a.m.	1:55 p.m.
Bridgeport	3:17 a.m.	3:53 p.m.
City Island	3:31 a.m.	4:20 p.m.
Fire Island Lt.	12:33 a.m.	1:23 p.m.
Montauk Point	1:08 a.m.	1:41 p.m.
Northport	3:20 a.m.	3:58 p.m.
Port Washington	3:17 a.m.	4:10 p.m.
Sandy Hook	12:37 p.m.	---
Shinnecock Inlet	12:04 p.m.	---
Stamford	3:22 a.m.	4:02 p.m.
Tarrytown	2:08 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
Willets Point	3:30 a.m.	4:17 p.m.

Beach and Ocean Temperatures

Aside from stray afternoon showers, many of the beaches from Maine to Virginia will have a dry day with a mix of sunshine and cloudiness. The humidity will remain low, and temperatures will be a little cooler than average.

Cities

High/low temperatures for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday, Eastern time, and precipitation (in inches) for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday.
Expected conditions for today and tomorrow.

C ..... Clouds
F ..... Fog
H ..... Haze
I ..... Ice
PC ..... Partly cloudy
R ..... Rain
Sh ..... Showers
S ..... Sun
Sn ..... Snow
SS ..... Snow showers
T ..... Thunderstorms
Tr ..... Trace
W ..... Windy
– ..... Not available

N.Y.C. region	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
New York City	70/ 62 0	76/ 64 PC	80/ 66 PC
Bridgeport	70/ 58 0	74/ 61 PC	79/ 61 PC
Caldwell	72/ 60 Tr	76/ 58 PC	82/ 56 PC
Danbury	71/ 54 0	73/ 55 PC	80/ 55 PC
Islip	71/ 58 0	73/ 63 PC	77/ 64 S
Newark	73/ 63 0	78/ 64 PC	80/ 64 PC
Trenton	70/ 58 0	75/ 58 PC	79/ 60 PC
White Plains	71/ 58 0	73/ 57 PC	77/ 59 PC

United States	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Albany	70/ 54 0.02	72/ 55 PC	76/ 57 PC
Albuquerque	72/ 59 0.20	90/ 64 S	95/ 68 S
Anchorage	62/ 49 0	55/ 47 C	55/ 48 Sh
Atlanta	88/ 65 0.01	86/ 65 PC	86/ 71 PC
Atlantic City	80/ 63 0	74/ 60 PC	76/ 65 S
Austin	92/ 71 0.19	93/ 74 T	86/ 72 T
Baltimore	80/ 64 0	78/ 60 PC	83/ 63 S
Baton Rouge	94/ 74 0.05	93/ 69 PC	92/ 68 S
Birmingham	86/ 62 0.01	84/ 61 PC	86/ 62 S
Boise	85/ 59 0	93/ 57 S	87/ 55 S
Boston	75/ 58 0	71/ 62 PC	73/ 63 PC
Buffalo	61/ 53 0	67/ 51 PC	72/ 61 PC
Burlington	65/ 56 0.08	72/ 57 Sh	77/ 60 Sh
Casper	82/ 48 0	88/ 54 S	91/ 53 W
Charlotte	84/ 65 0	83/ 63 PC	84/ 68 PC
Chattanooga	85/ 62 0	82/ 60 PC	89/ 65 PC
Chicago	69/ 51 0	77/ 63 PC	86/ 70 PC
Cincinnati	67/ 52 0	74/ 55 PC	83/ 61 PC
Cleveland	60/ 48 0.02	70/ 54 S	80/ 66 S
Colorado Springs	74/ 57 0.05	81/ 54 T	90/ 61 PC
Columbus	64/ 52 0	75/ 55 PC	81/ 62 S
Concord, N.H.	73/ 49 0.02	75/ 53 PC	77/ 54 PC
Dallas-Ft. Worth	84/ 72 0.44	86/ 71 T	86/ 73 T
Denver	87/ 56 0.05	86/ 62 T	94/ 66 S
Des Moines	76/ 57 0	86/ 65 T	94/ 72 S
Detroit	64/ 47 0	74/ 56 S	82/ 64 PC
El Paso	98/ 73 0	102/ 76 S	101/ 77 S
Fargo	75/ 60 0	82/ 62 W	89/ 58 T
Hartford	77/ 55 0	78/ 59 PC	81/ 58 PC
Honolulu	86/ 75 0.05	87/ 75 PC	86/ 73 Sh
Houston	92/ 75 0.08	90/ 76 T	87/ 73 T
Indianapolis	69/ 46 0	75/ 56 S	84/ 64 PC
Jackson	88/ 65 0.04	87/ 62 PC	86/ 62 S
Jacksonville	99/ 72 0.15	93/ 74 T	91/ 72 T
Kansas City	81/ 69 0	86/ 66 PC	90/ 71 S
Key West	89/ 82 0.08	85/ 79 T	86/ 79 T
Las Vegas	104/ 79 0	109/ 83 S	110/ 81 S
Lexington	75/ 50 0	75/ 54 PC	81/ 61 PC
Little Rock	87/ 64 0	86/ 64 PC	84/ 65 C
Los Angeles	77/ 58 0	76/ 58 PC	75/ 60 PC
Louisville	75/ 54 0	71/ 59 S	86/ 65 PC
Memphis	86/ 63 0	82/ 61 PC	84/ 65 PC
Miami	89/ 80 Tr	83/ 76 T	85/ 76 T
Milwaukee	64/ 53 0	71/ 62 PC	84/ 68 S
Mpls.-St. Paul	76/ 57 0	80/ 62 T	88/ 68 T
Nashville	83/ 57 0	79/ 57 PC	84/ 61 PC
New Orleans	92/ 78 0.04	91/ 78 T	91/ 77 S
Norfolk	86/ 66 0	79/ 67 PC	81/ 68 S
Oklahoma City	83/ 63 0	84/ 64 T	88/ 68 PC
Omaha	81/ 62 0	91/ 65 T	97/ 74 S
Orlando	97/ 76 0.14	83/ 73 T	86/ 71 T
Philadelphia	80/ 62 0	79/ 63 PC	85/ 65 S
Phoenix	106/ 79 0	111/ 81 S	113/ 82 S
Pittsburgh	66/ 51 0	72/ 53 PC	79/ 58 S
Portland, Me.	74/ 52 0.03	70/ 52 PC	72/ 54 PC
Portland, Ore.	78/ 57 0	72/ 51 S	76/ 50 S
Providence	75/ 55 0	75/ 56 PC	77/ 61 PC
Raleigh	85/ 62 0	86/ 60 PC	87/ 65 PC
Reno	93/ 66 0	99/ 64 S	99/ 66 S
Richmond	86/ 61 0	81/ 60 PC	83/ 63 S
Rochester	60/ 52 0	67/ 51 PC	73/ 56 PC
Sacramento	93/ 59 0	101/ 63 S	92/ 56 S
Salt Lake City	88/ 63 0	90/ 72 S	100/ 70 S
San Antonio	96/ 77 0.05	97/ 77 PC	95/ 78 T
San Diego	70/ 62 0	68/ 61 PC	69/ 62 PC
San Francisco	71/ 54 0	76/ 55 S	73/ 55 S
San Jose	84/ 60 0	91/ 61 S	83/ 55 S
San Juan	94/ 80 0	90/ 81 PC	89/ 80 C
Seattle	71/ 55 0	67/ 49 C	66/ 48 S
Sioux Falls	78/ 66 0	84/ 62 S	90/ 63 T
Spokane	81/ 58 0	82/ 47 W	73/ 50 S
St. Louis	78/ 57 0	81/ 64 S	92/ 71 S
St. Thomas	90/ 81 0	91/ 81 PC	90/ 81 C
Syracuse	63/ 56 0.07	69/ 54 PC	74/ 57 PC
Tampa	93/ 79 0	87/ 77 T	84/ 74 T
Toledo	68/ 48 0	76/ 54 S	84/ 66 PC
Tucson	102/ 68 0	107/ 70 S	110/ 73 S
Tulsa	86/ 63 0	86/ 66 C	89/ 69 C
Virginia Beach	81/ 66 0	78/ 64 T	78/ 65 S
Washington	81/ 64 0	79/ 62 PC	84/ 66 S
Wichita	83/ 60 0	86/ 64 C	91/ 71 PC
Wilmington, Del.	78/ 60 0	77/ 59 PC	83/ 61 S

Africa	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Algiers	82/ 57 0	79/ 64 C	79/ 61 PC
Cairo	100/ 74 0	98/ 76 S	101/ 77 S
Cape Town	79/ 44 0	72/ 56 W	66/ 48 PC
Dakar	84/ 74 0	85/ 75 PC	85/ 75 PC
Johannesburg	60/ 33 0	62/ 40 S	63/ 44 S
Nairobi	78/ 57 0	74/ 55 PC	75/ 55 PC
Tunis	90/ 70 0	88/ 71 S	84/ 70 C

Asia/Pacific	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Baghdad	121/ 90 0	110/ 81 PC	109/ 82 PC
Bangkok	92/ 83 0	90/ 81 T	95/ 81 T
Beijing	97/ 67 0	98/ 71 C	100/ 74 PC
Damascus	95/ 65 0	98/ 68 PC	102/ 68 PC
Hong Kong	88/ 81 0.14	89/ 81 T	91/ 83 T
Jakarta	92/ 79 0	90/ 76 Sh	90/ 76 T
Jerusalem	86/ 65 0	87/ 67 S	90/ 69 S
Karachi	93/ 84 0	94/ 84 W	94/ 85 W
Manila	97/ 78 0.60	93/ 82 PC	94/ 82 T
Mumbai	91/ 77 0.77	87/ 82 T	91/ 82 C
New Delhi	110/ 86 0	112/ 89 PC	113/ 90 PC
Riyadh	111/ 82 0	113/ 66 S	113/ 88 S
Seoul	86/ 63 0	85/ 63 PC	87/ 63 S
Shanghai	76/ 68 0	79/ 70 C	83/ 72 C
Singapore	90/ 80 0.01	89/ 79 T	88/ 78 T
Sydney	66/ 46 0	65/ 56 C	66/ 47 W
Taipei City	88/ 78 0.03	94/ 79 PC	96/ 79 C
Tehran	102/ 82 0.01	97/ 76 C	99/ 76 S
Tokyo	78/ 64 0.40	81/ 69 PC	83/ 70 PC

Europe	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Amsterdam	60/ 48 1.56	59/ 46 Sh	58/ 49 PC
Athens	96/ 72 0	92/ 72 S	94/ 75 S
Berlin	70/ 52 0	65/ 47 PC	65/ 47 PC
Brussels	58/ 50 0.30	59/ 44 PC	61/ 45 PC
Budapest	77/ 66 0.29	74/ 55 PC	71/ 56 PC
Copenhagen	65/ 52 0	62/ 52 Sh	61/ 47 PC
Dublin	61/ 43 0.14	57/ 40 C	59/ 48 C
Edinburgh	58/ 46 0.49	59/ 44 C	60/ 44 PC
Frankfurt	68/ 46 0	65/ 44 PC	65/ 44 PC
Geneva	72/ 57 0.42	67/ 48 Sh	67/ 49 PC
Helsinki	65/ 46 0.67	67/ 51 PC	63/ 47 Sh
Istanbul	84/ 70 0	93/ 75 PC	92/ 75 PC
Kyiv	87/ 57 0.23	80/ 63 T	74/ 59 Sh
Lisbon	72/ 61 0	76/ 68 S	72/ 67 S
London	60/ 52 0.25	62/ 47 PC	64/ 46 PC
Madrid	68/ 55 0.57	79/ 53 S	75/ 52 PC
Moscow	72/ 55 0	74/ 63 T	77/ 58 R
Nice	75/ 66 0	75/ 63 PC	74/ 63 PC
Oslo	63/ 39 0.07	69/ 50 PC	58/ 49 Sh
Paris	65/ 50 0.26	64/ 46 PC	66/ 48 PC
Prague	72/ 55 0	64/ 47 PC	65/ 47 PC
Rome	77/ 68 0	79/ 64 PC	79/ 62 S
St. Petersburg	66/ 48 Tr	69/ 53 S	67/ 52 PC
Stockholm	63/ 46 0.27	62/ 45 Sh	61/ 46 Sh
Vienna	77/ 63 0.66	67/ 54 C	63/ 53 C
Warsaw	70/ 59 0.07	73/ 49 PC	68/ 50 C

North America	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Acapulco	86/ 75 0	89/ 75 PC	90/ 75 PC
Bermuda	82/ 75 0	83/ 75 T	81/ 74 Sh
Edmonton	60/ 41 0	75/ 47 PC	57/ 46 R
Guadalajara	82/ 65 0	95/ 69 PC	97/ 66 S
Havana	82/ 75 0.09	83/ 79 T	84/ 77 T
Kingston	90/ 82 0.02	92/ 82 W	91/ 82 W
Martinique	90/ 79 0.03	91/ 80 T	91/ 79 T
Mexico City	76/ 61 0.01	85/ 58 PC	87/ 56 PC
Monterrey	90/ 73 0	97/ 72 S	98/ 73 S
Montreal	59/ 57 0.14	72/ 57 PC	76/ 60 PC
Nassau	87/ 76 0.02	90/ 80 T	89/ 80 C
Panama City	86/ 76 0.42	86/ 77 T	87/ 76 T
Quebec City	66/ 55 Tr	75/ 56 C	73/ 57 Sh
Santo Domingo	90/ 75 0	92/ 76 PC	92/ 76 C
Toronto	57/ 52 0	68/ 54 PC	75/ 61 PC
Vancouver	59/ 52 0	66/ 49 Sh	63/ 47 S
Winnipeg	68/ 43 0	74/ 54 W	76/ 53 T

South America	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Buenos Aires	66/ 57 0	63/ 60 C	68/ 55 C
Caracas	90/ 77 0	90/ 77 T	90/ 77 T
Lima	65/ 60 0	67/ 60 C	68/ 62 PC
Quito	64/ 47 0.07	68/ 44 R	68/ 45 R
Recife	86/ 76 0.02	85/ 77 C	87/ 78 PC
Rio de Janeiro	82/ 69 0	81/ 69 S	81/ 68 S
Santiago	52/ 46 0	60/ 46 C	59/ 46 C

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N.B.A. FINALS | BOSTON VS. DALLAS

COMMENTARY

Mavs Need Celtics To Beat Themselves, Because They Can't

By JOHN HOLLINGER
The Athletic

BOSTON — Was Jason Kidd's N.B.A. finals news conference gambit on Saturday an early admission of a humbling reality?

The Dallas coach tried playing a mental game by saying that Jaylen Brown was Boston's best player and not Jayson Tatum. That part isn't true, but the underlying logic of his Jedi mind trick attempt looks ironclad: He was trying to get the Celtics to beat themselves in Game 2 because he knew the Dallas Mavericks couldn't in Game 1.

Neither Boston nor Tatum played to their usual standard on Sunday, with Tatum shooting 6 of 22 and bizarrely passing up a wide-open 3 at the end of the first half. The normally sharpshooting Celtics made just 10 of their 39 3s despite numerous wide-open attempts.

It didn't matter. The Celtics still prevailed, 105-98, to take a 2-0 series lead into Wednesday's Game 3 in Dallas. Yes, the Mavericks had opportunities. They will rue eight missed free throws and a missed foul on Derrick White's late block on P.J. Washington. They are capable of playing better themselves.

However, failing to beat Boston on a night when the Celtics fell so far short of their peak doesn't instill much confidence that the Mavs can do so four times in the next five games.

In the end, Kidd's observation may have been half right in a way he didn't intend. The salient point here isn't whether Brown is Boston's best player; it's that Tatum doesn't need to be. Nor does Brown, for that matter. Of the seven best players in this series, five wear green.

On this night, the two biggest stars were Jrue Holiday, who had 26 points and 11 rebounds to go with several spectacular defensive stands, and White, who hit two tough fourth-quarter jumpers and came up with that amazing late block on a dunk attempt by Washington. (Even if Washington were fouled by Jaylen Brown, the effort and block by White was ridiculous.) Similarly, in Game 1, it was Kristaps Porzingis who starred, scoring 20 points in 21 minutes while Tatum labored to a 6-of-16 night with six turnovers.

Dallas has now lost its last six meetings against the Celtics. In the four games against Boston this year, the Mavs lost by 9, 28, 18 and 7, averaging just 101.8 points per contest.

Boston seems to have the formula down at both ends: Force mismatches on offense that get Dallas into rotation and lead to either catch-and-shoot 3s or drives for layups, and at the other end, take away those same shots and live with Luka Doncic and Kyrie Irving shooting contested jumpers one-on-one.

Doncic got off to a hot start in Game 2 — having particular success against Tatum when he drew him in switches — and finished the night with 32 points, 11 assists and 11 rebounds. He left money on the table, too, by missing four of his eight free throws. Even as Boston makes him score, he's still had occasional moments of utter brilliance as a passer.

Nonetheless, those top-line numbers mask how hard it was for him to get there. Boston forced eight turnovers from Doncic, but that's only part of the story. The more important takeaway is that he's unlikely to shoot as successfully in future games on the same shots.

Yes, Doncic managed to make seven of his 11 non-paint 2-pointers despite having a Celtics player draped all over him on nearly every one. But he didn't get a shot inside the charge circle until the game's final minute. That was his only basket of the fourth quarter.

Already suffering from multiple physical problems entering the game, Doncic was worn down by the Celtics, who forced him to work for his points on offense and relentlessly targeted him on defense. Again, Boston could do this because of its superior bevy of options; with five good starters for the Celtics, there's no place for Doncic to hide.

"My turnovers and my missed free throws cost us the game," Doncic said.

In a very technical sense, that was true, but this wasn't exactly an outlier for the Mavs, who were 27th in the league in free-throw shooting at 75.8 percent. No, the real thing that cost Dallas the game is the same story: The Mavs' secondary players aren't nearly as good as Boston's.

The most amazing thing about this game, in fact, was how many of the most crucial sequences didn't include either Brown *or* Tatum. There was the block by White, obviously, but consider several others:

The banked 3-pointer by Payton Pritchard to end the third quarter. Two late-clock bailout shots by White — a running floater and a 3-pointer — in the fourth quarter that salvaged a six-minute stretch in which Boston had only 4 other points. The incredible hustle by the 38-year-old Al Horford to sprint back out of the corner after a Tatum turnover, making up a 10-foot margin on Doncic to snuff out a Dallas transition opportunity, and then recovering to challenge a Dereck Lively II shot. Holiday unbelievably deflecting two passes in the backcourt to force a late fourth-quarter steal that he then converted into a backbreaking 3-pointer.

Perhaps underscoring all of this was the offensive outburst by Holiday, who burned Dallas for *nine* layups by roaming the dunker spot, often with Irving forced to be the "big man" with him while a Dallas shot blocker was marooned at the 3-point line.

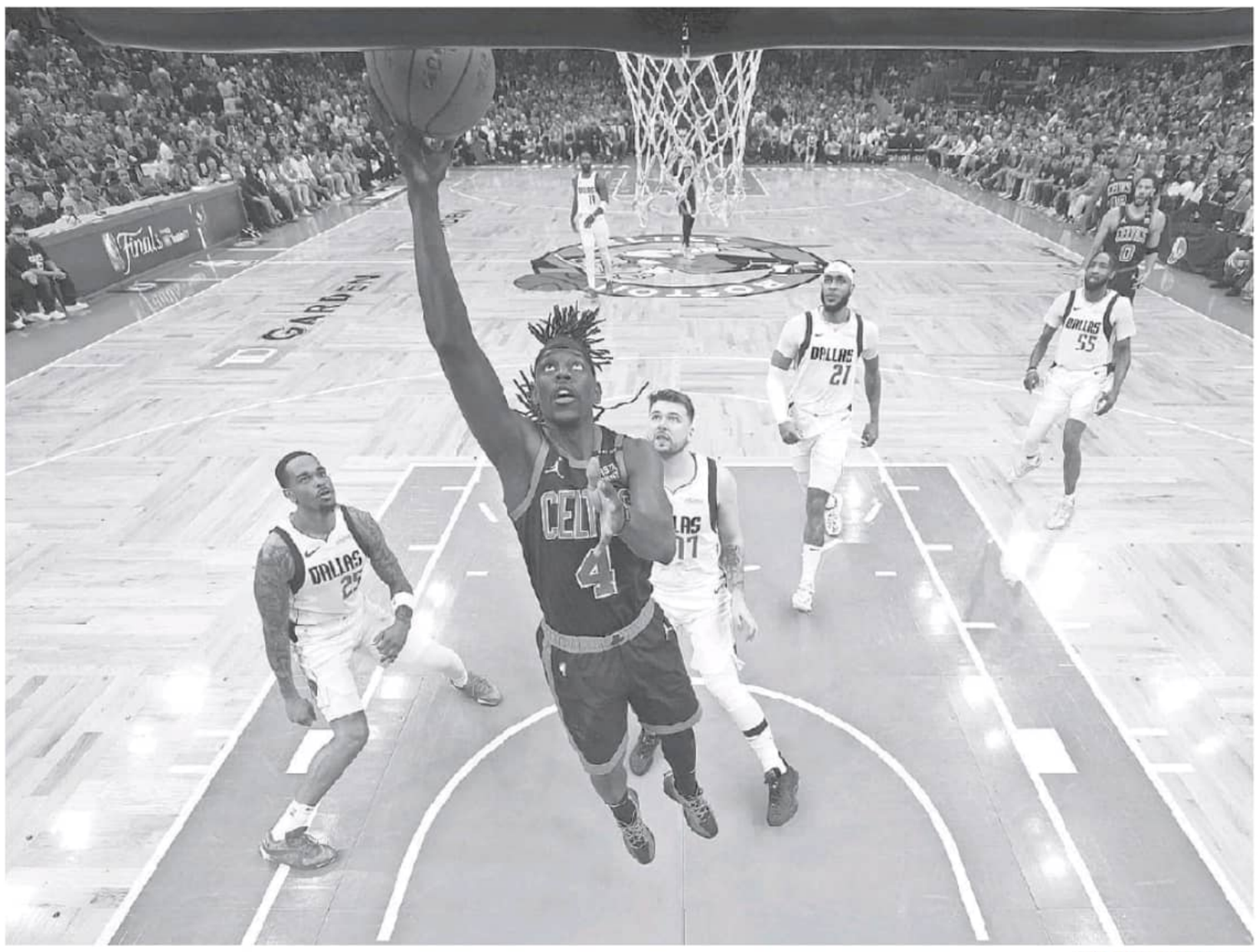
Holiday had 17 points in the first half alone. Can you imagine the fifth option for Dallas having a 17-point half? Doncic was the only Mav to exceed 17 points for the entire game on Sunday.

The flip side goes on the offensive end; while Doncic and Irving took turns getting cooked by the Celtics, Boston's stars were mostly lights out on defense.

Boston has six starters, essentially, and two knockdown shooters coming off the bench to keep things moving. Porzingis might be limited after having to leave this contest late in the fourth quarter, but otherwise, there wasn't much optimistic news here for the Mavs.

As it turns out, there's a reason Boston went 64-18 with a historic scoring margin in the regular season. Yes, at times, the Celtics can get sluggish and satisfied. At their worst, they needlessly milk the shot clock and turn down layups to hunt kick-out 3s, and Brown especially can get caught up in mano-a-mano hero ball. (Not Sunday, however — seven assists!) Catch them when that happens and the 3s aren't falling, and you might have a chance.

In other words, when these guys lose, it's usually because they beat themselves. And that, basically, is the sliver of a chance for Dallas to beat this team four times in seven at full strength, and why Kidd felt the need to probe that vulnerability when he could. For these Mavs, against this opponent, it's not clear how they can win four times without the Celtics' help.



POOL PHOTO BY PETER CASEY



MADDIE MEYER/GETTY IMAGES

Boston's Jrue Holiday driving past Dallas' P.J. Washington, left, and Luka Doncic in Game 2 of the N.B.A. finals on Sunday. Holiday had 26 points and 11 rebounds in the Celtics' 105-98 win. At left, Mavericks Coach Jason Kidd huddling with his team.

After another loss, nothing is working for the Mavericks.

Have Their Number

The Dallas Mavericks have not beaten the Boston Celtics since the 2021-22 regular season.

2024 FINALS

6/9	Boston 105, Dallas 98
6/6	Boston 107, Dallas 89

2023-24 REGULAR SEASON

3/1	Boston 138, Dallas 110
1/22	Boston 119, Dallas 110

2022-23 REGULAR SEASON

1/5	Boston 124, Dallas 95
11/23	Boston 125, Dallas 112

Source: ESPN THE NEW YORK TIMES

John Hollinger is a senior N.B.A. writer for The Athletic.

TENNIS | FRENCH OPEN

Alcaraz Overcomes Toughest Rival, His Body, and Finds 'Joy in the Suffering'

By MATTHEW FUTTERMAN
The Athletic

PARIS — There has been a growing sense that two players pose the biggest obstacles to Carlos Alcaraz's takeover of men's tennis.

One is Jannik Sinner, the talented Italian who assumed the No. 1 spot in the rankings on Monday. The other is Carlos Alcaraz.

More specifically, it is Alcaraz's body, and his mind — to the extent that it often dictates how his body feels.

Alcaraz, 21, the Spanish star who makes tennis fans gasp, beat Alexander Zverev of Germany on Sunday to win his first French Open title. It is the third Grand Slam tournament title of his surging career, and it puts him on a track to be one of the great players in tennis history, which is what people have been predicting for him since his early teenage years. He became the first men's player to win his first three Grand Slam event titles on three different surfaces.

His greatness may feel inevitable now, with Alcaraz holding two of the four Grand Slam event titles. A year ago, it was anything but inevitable. Nobody, least of all Alcaraz, believed it could happen this way and this quickly, especially not in the past month, when a lingering arm injury had him afraid to hit his lethal forehand at 100 percent.

His coaches and physiotherapists told him everything was fine, that it was OK to swing freely. After what he had been through, he was not sure, and that was top of mind on Sunday.

"The last month we were struggling a lot," he said. Then, after two weeks of struggle, he beat two of his greatest opponents: Sinner in a five-set display of physical toughness and his body with his mind.

The weeks before the French Open had been filled with doubt. He had barely been able to practice. In the previous year or so, he had gained a reputation as a beautiful but perhaps brittle player. His young body, so fast and so strong, somehow kept betraying him.

This was the time in his life that he was supposed to be enjoying the benefits of a physique that can perform like a rubber band, twisting and racing for hours on end, then doing it all over again. That was not how it went, though.

Shortly after his breakthrough win at the U.S. Open in 2022, an abdominal injury forced him out of the ATP Tour finals. Then in January 2023, in his final practice before traveling to the Australian Open, he stretched after a short ball at the net, pulling his hamstring and putting himself out of the tournament.

He aggravated that injury in South America a month later, but found his health and form in the early spring, winning Indian Wells. Then they deserted him again, and he cramped on a humid evening at the Miami Open that March and limped his way to the end of his semifinal loss to Sinner.

That brought him to May 2023. This is where the symmetry kicks in.

One year ago, Alcaraz was in the same stadium, Sunday's scene of triumph, going through a nightmare.

He was playing Novak Djokovic in the semifinal of the same tournament. A bundle of nerves and errors, he lost the first set before playing majestic tennis to win the second set and draw even (as he did at Wimbledon, weeks later).

At Wimbledon, that was the thrust to go on and win the title. In Paris, that was when things got really weird.

Near the end of that second set, as the physical match edged toward its third hour, Alcaraz began to stiffen. He tried to shake out his limbs, but the stress and Djokovic's relentlessness again brought on cramping, this time with a nearly paralyzing effect.

He promised then that he would figure it out — when he beat Djokovic in the Wimbledon final in July, he seemed to have made good on his word. He did not win another tournament for the rest of the season, but it was not because of his health. He kept losing his concentration, he said, and was unable to claw his way back before it was too late. Tennis, he said, was losing its joy.

His family asked him why he so rarely smiled when he practiced.

Those challenges stretched through the Australian Open, where he lost to Zverev in the quarterfinals in a shoddy performance. A month later, he twisted his ankle two games into the Rio Open. He was feeling low when he arrived at Indian Wells to defend his title but desperate to rediscover the joy that is so essential for his game. He did, beating Sinner in the semifinals, playing the kind of joyful rubber band tennis that had eluded him for so long.

It appeared his old magic was back. Instead, it eluded him a little longer.

The forearm injury forced him out of tournaments in Monte Carlo and Barcelona. It endured long enough to compromise his efforts in Madrid, where he lost to Andrey Rublev after squeaking past Jan-Lennard Struff, and forced him to skip the Italian Open, the main tuneup for the French Open.

When he arrived in Paris, he hammered his first opponent, J.J. Wolf, who won just three games. "I'm still feeling weird, let's say, or afraid to hit every forehand 100 percent," Alcaraz said. "It's still in my mind."

There is a lot that makes Alcaraz very different from just about every other tennis player. Part of that is his willingness to be open about his fears, and the havoc that his mind can wreak on his body. He uses that vulnerability to find ways to right himself.

"I'm stronger mentally," he said after beating Sinner in the French Open semifinal. The cramps came then, in the third set; Sinner was experiencing them too. Flashbacks to Djokovic rose like smoke, but Alcaraz did not panic. He had been here before, and he had a plan.

He knew that if he just accepted the moment and tried to shorten the points, the cramps would go away. "I knew much better how to do it this year than last year," he said.

More pain would come against Zverev on Sunday, beginning late in the third set and continuing into the fourth. It was the same pain he had felt during the match against Sinner.

He asked for a medical timeout. A trainer massaged his left thigh. Again, he accepted that some pain was inevitable.

"If you don't feel something like this, you are not human," he said later.

Zverev said he was struggling, too, running out of gas.

"I don't cramp. We're both physically strong, but he's a beast," Zverev said. "He's an animal, for sure. The intensity at which he plays tennis is different from other people."

On Sunday night, Alcaraz was saying he took more pride in this latest win than the first two Grand Slam titles because of the rocky road he has been on for nearly a year.

"Everything that I have done the last month is just to be ready for this tournament with my team," he said.

Every day, he and his team had to consider whether it was safe for him to practice or if he needed to rest. That was tough on a player who is still, at heart, someone who just loves tennis.

"It's been really difficult," he said.

After he beat Sinner to make the French Open final, Alcaraz said something that he had not really said before: that grinding out victories on the red clay of Roland Garros requires an ability to "find joy in the suffering."

He had suffered here plenty. On Sunday, on his fourth try, he got to the joy.



THIBAULT CAMUS/ASSOCIATED PRESS



DIMITAR DILKOFF/AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE GETTY IMAGES

Carlos Alcaraz, left, suffered leg cramps in a semifinal match against Novak Djokovic in the French Open last year. At right, Alcaraz in this year's French Open, which he won, giving the Spanish star the third Grand Slam tournament title of his surging career.

Matthew Futterman is a senior tennis writer for The Athletic.

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PRO FOOTBALL

Former Teammates Are Reunited on New England's Coaching Staff

By **JEFF HOWE**
The Athletic

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — As far back as 2012, Dont'a Hightower thought about the idea of coaching alongside Jerod Mayo.

Back then, they were linebackers with the New England Patriots, and the rookie Hightower was taking the veterans' lunch order before making a sushi run to Skipjacks. Mayo, who always knew coaching was in his future, was picking out his future coordinators with his teammates Devin McCourty and Vince Wilfork when Hightower walked up.

"You can be my special teams coach," Hightower recently recalled Mayo saying. "I was like, Damn, bro, special teams? It was all fun and games. Whenever I think about it, that's the first event that pops up. It's really surreal how it's unfolded."

There's usually a hint of truth inside a joke, and that was no doubt the case that day. Mayo and Hightower were two of the smartest and most respected leaders to ever suit up for former Patriots Coach Bill Belichick, so it was apparent coaching would be their calling when they finished playing.

Mayo, who joined Belichick's staff in 2019, kept the bug in Hightower's ear as his career was winding down. And in January, when Mayo was chosen to succeed Belichick as coach, he solicited one of his closest friends to lead the inside linebackers group.

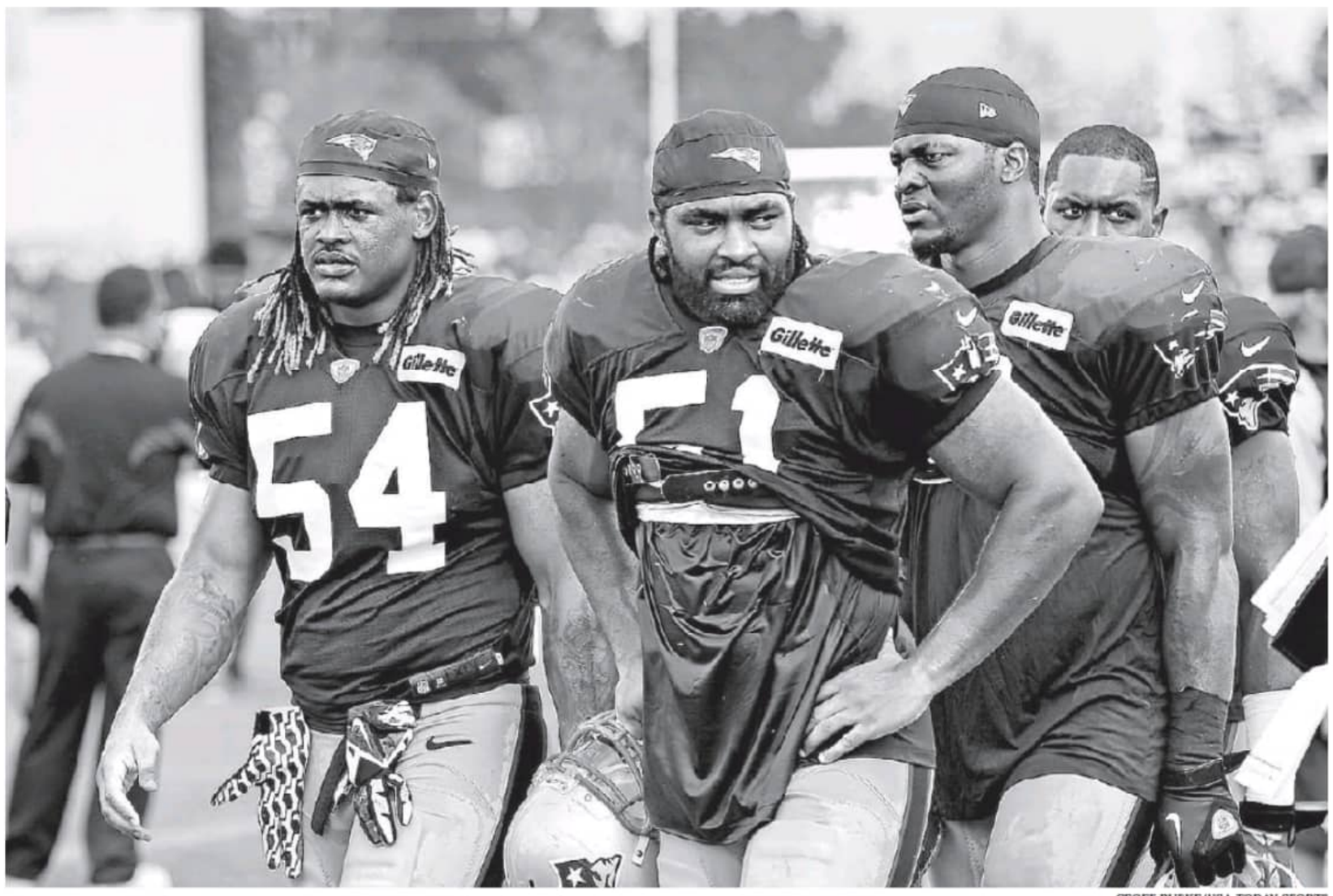
It was an easy decision for Hightower, who had retired two years earlier.

"It was something I was kind of looking forward to," Hightower said of coaching. "I enjoyed my time off with my family, but I think it was kind of getting to the point where my wife was like, You either need to concentrate on golf, or you need to go coach. I feel like it all happened pretty good and at the right time."

Hightower needed the time away to mentally recharge with his family at home in Tennessee. Whether it was gardening with his wife, Morgan, or making breakfast with his son, who turns 4 in July, Hightower took advantage of time that wasn't necessarily available during his decorated playing career with the Patriots.

But with every lost Titleist ProV1 golf ball — about four dozen in his first week alone — and every holler at the TV during a game, Hightower knew he was a step closer to the sideline. Morgan

Jeff Howe is the national N.F.L. insider for The Athletic.



GEOFF BURKE/USA TODAY SPORTS



MADDIE MEYER/GETTY IMAGES

Above, Dont'a Hightower, left, and Jerod Mayo with the Patriots in 2014. At left, Mayo at a workout last month. The former linebackers are now on the coaching staff, with Mayo serving as head coach and Hightower leading the inside linebackers.

Hightower was fully onboard, too, probably because she didn't want to hear any more about the differences between coverage shells, them for big plays or get on them for missing assignments.

But as Hightower envisioned his future, he just wasn't sure if he wanted to take on a positional role or become an adviser or strength coach. It just so happened that one of his closest confidants came calling. Mayo, a first-time head coach after five years as an assistant, was in elite company on Hightower's short list, along with the former Alabama Coach Nick Saban.

"It was really honestly like if Nick or Mayo would have called me, those were the only two people I would have wanted to get with," Hightower said. "Other than that, I probably would have just stayed at home and worked on my golf game.

"The transition has been great. Some days you wake up and it doesn't even feel like work. Sometimes when I was playing football, I was going in and my knees hurt. My shoulders hurt. Surgeries, all this other stuff. Now it's just me talking football, spreading my knowledge, being able to relate to these guys. It's really awesome to be back in the world of football, just to talk about it and be around it."

Hightower, a three-time Super Bowl champion dubbed "Mr. February" by Belichick for his penchant for making huge plays, was essentially a quasi-coach during his career, but he acknowledged this was much different.

Appropriate for someone who grew up under Saban and Belichick, Hightower, 34, isn't trying to overcomplicate anything simply because of his past accomplishments.

Rather, he is just trying to teach and lead and find his strengths on a brand-new staff.

"Honestly, there are players you play with that you're thinking this guy is just on it," Mayo said. "His knowledge of the scheme, how the offense was trying to attack us and what we needed to do as far as adjustments, he was one of those players.

"He has a chance to be a very special coach. And he has that instant credibility because he did it at a high level."

Mayo referred to Hightower as "a rookie." He's still learning, including how to teach and relay messages to players who have come from different systems in which a new defense is like learning a new language.

There are also more subtle responsibilities. He's never had to write up a scouting report or evaluate someone's job from the perspective of someone who's higher in command. But for the de facto general manager Eliot Wolf, who had limited prior exposure to Hightower, the work ethic has come as advertised.

Mayo and Hightower first talked about being coaches more than a decade ago.

"He was really inquisitive, wanted to sit down and ask a ton of questions to not only me but guys on the staff," Wolf said. "He's got an eye for it, so that obviously made it easier. Really just his presence and his ability, sometimes you run into former players who really just still want to be around it but they don't want to work. That hasn't been the case with him."

Hightower isn't just in this for a quick football fix. He acknowledged he'd like to someday work his way into a position where he could become a head coach, although that's a long time from now.

"I mean, I've been doing this for two months," " Hightower said, laughing.

It really is like starting over. He was a star at Alabama and a first-round draft pick but still faced a tangible learning curve early in his Patriots career, and there have been similar adjustments with this coaching role.

He has leaned heavily on Mayo, just as he did as a player.

"I want to be a good coach, so I want to be a good teacher," Hightower said. "I want to be a guy they're comfortable talking to. I don't want anybody to look at whatever success I had. I'm trying to share what knowledge I have and share it to be used across the board.

"I just want to be able to help develop and empower those guys to continue to be good players, continue to develop and grow as great young men."



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ROSS D. FRANKLIN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

James Conner, left, gives Kyler Murray (1) a strong running back behind a deeper offensive line. Murray has also been building chemistry with the star rookie wide receiver Marvin Harrison Jr. (18).

Healthy Again, Murray Has High Hopes for a Revamped Offense in Arizona

By **DOUG HALLER**
The Athletic

TEMPE, Ariz. — After a recent workout during organized team activities, Arizona Cardinals quarterback Kyler Murray was asked a simple question: After everything that you've experienced, the contract situation, the anterior cruciate ligament injury, the recent losing, are you happy entering your sixth season?

Murray responded with a brief summary of his pro career.

"Being a rookie, just trying to get better every game." *(Murray wins AP Offensive Rookie of the Year!)*

"Year 2, feeling really comfortable and exploding onto the scene." *(Murray makes the Pro Bowl!)*

"Year 3, OK, let's ride." *(Murray takes Arizona to the playoffs for the first time in six years!)*

"Four, obviously that was a down year. To be the No. 1 overall draft pick, obviously the circumstances that you go into, I think we got better every year. But Year 4 was kind of a painful one, obviously getting hurt." *(Murray tears A.C.L.)*

"Year 5, new regime, sitting there learning and everything, just trying to be there to support the guys." *(Murray misses nine games recovering from surgery.)*

"So I think going into Year 6, am I excited? Hell yeah, I'm excited."

For a team coming off a 4-13 season, there's noticeable optimism in the Valley of the Sun. Some of this stems from the popular belief that next season will always be better. But it's also impossible to ignore Murray's comfort level and confidence. That obviously has to do with his health, but his relationship with his head coach, Jonathan Gannon, should not go overlooked.

Important to note: Gannon doesn't care about external optimism, especially at this time of year. Asked about it last week, he started shaking his head before a reporter could even finish the question. The Cardinals understand the standard, he said. No one's high-fiving, celebrating culture changes inside the team offices. Winning is all that matters.

Come September, that starts with Murray.

Murray, 26, has had an uneven five seasons. It's easy to forget that not long ago he was trending toward stardom. For the first half of 2021, when Arizona started 10-2, he was in the M.V.P. discussion. But in 2022, Kliff Kingsbury's final season as coach, Murray regressed. Then he tore up his knee. After the Cardinals parted ways with Kingsbury and General Manager Steve Keim, it was reasonable to wonder how Murray fit in the organization's future. That is no longer the case. Since his arrival, Gannon has praised the quarterback's work habits and desire.

Asked on a recent radio show to describe his relationship with Murray, Gannon initially joked that the quarterback was his best friend. More seriously, he added: "From a competitive standpoint, we are very similar. 'Hey, this is what I need from you. This is what you need from me. Let's deliver.'"

Murray recalled the afternoon he met Gannon. It was after the head coach's introductory news conference. A former defensive coordinator of the Philadelphia Eagles, Gannon was coming off a Super Bowl loss. Murray had been in the building rehabbing his knee. The two talked for about three minutes. The conversation itself wasn't important, it was the vibe, Murray said. The connection. The two just clicked.

"I think all relationships, you got to know yourself and then you got to know the other person," Gannon said. "Then you got to communicate and be honest. I think after we kind of learned about each other a little bit, then that kind of took off."

Looking to get back on course after five uneven seasons.

Gannon is a frequent texter, and this once got Murray into trouble. The coach has a 24-hour rule. That is, when he texts someone, he expects a response within 24 hours. Over time, he noticed that Murray texted back immediately if it was about something that piqued his curiosity. If not, the return text tended to take a while.

"Yeah, he got on me one time because I forgot to text him back, but, no, I was not aware of that rule," Murray said.

Gannon's texts can be about anything.

"Anything that he sees, I see, but it doesn't even have to be football, and that's where he goes to the next level," Murray said. "You got a guy that you would legit run through a wall for. I think he's just got that aura about him. He actually cares about the players, and he holds everybody accountable. It's not fake. He doesn't treat me any different than he would a rookie."

During organized team activities last year, Murray had to work with a strength coach off to the side. He learned the offense and attended meetings, but it wasn't the same. Even when he started playing in November, he caught himself thinking instead of reacting. This spring has been different. The offensive coordinator Drew Petzing tweaked timing patterns to better suit Murray's quickness. And Murray has built chemistry with wide receivers, including the star rookie Marvin Harrison Jr.

The comfort level and confidence reminds Murray of how he felt in 2018, the year he won the Heisman Trophy during his junior season at Oklahoma. Yes, he knows college is different, but it just has a similar "feel," he said. With more depth on the offensive line and a strong running back in James Conner, he expects the Cardinals to have one of the league's top offenses.

"I just feel really locked in to what we're doing," Murray said, adding that confidence is "understanding where to go with the ball no matter what they're doing because I've been in the system a year.

He added: "When you feel like that, man, the sky's the limit. I've played quarterback my whole life, but when you're at that point, and I really can't explain it to y'all, but it's a good feeling."

"Yeah," he added, "I'm excited."

Doug Haller is a senior writer for The Athletic based in Arizona.

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CRICKET



YUVRAJ KHANNA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The stadium in East Meadow, N.Y., was built in 100 days and will be taken apart after the tournament. Sunday's crowd was said to be the largest at an international cricket match in the United States.

On Long Island, Sea of Orange, Blue and Green for Cricket World Cup

By DAVID WALDSTEIN

Normally at this time of year, the grassy southeastern corner of Eisenhower Park in East Meadow, N.Y., is a place for softball games, family picnics and a few cricket players enjoying a warm weekend afternoon. On Sunday, that space was transformed into a stage for one of the most-watched global sporting events of the year.

More than 34,000 fans and cricket dignitaries squeezed into a temporary stadium built in the last three months in the Long Island park to watch the most anticipated match of the T20 Cricket World Cup: India versus Pakistan.

For about three hours, fans in blue and orange India shirts mingled with their (vastly outnumbered) rivals in the dark green of Pakistan, producing a festive and vibrant atmosphere.

They roared at every big play, shouting and waving signs and flags. They ate South Asian food sold at the concession stands, jumped, chanted, high-fived with fellow supporters and — after a bit of rain — soaked up the sunshine on a historic day at the usually quiet park.

"It was electric," said Chandu Talla, an India fan and entrepreneur from Tampa, Fla., who came to the match with his son Aryan, a high school junior. "We paid $2,500 per ticket and no regrets," he added. "It was a dream come true to see India here."

After a slow start, India came back to win, and when Pakistan's Naseem Shah hit the last ball from India bowler Arshdeep Singh, the India fans erupted in cheers.

"It was pretty good," said India bowler Jasprit Bumrah, who was named the player of the match. "Always, when India and Pakistan play, a lot of emotion does come in. It did feel like we had a lot of support."

People in the New York area may have been mostly oblivious to it, but any match between India and Pakistan, two of the greatest cricketing nations, is a monumental event, at least in South Asia and other cricket-loving parts of the world. The previous time the teams played, last fall, viewership reached 398 million in India alone, according to the International Cricket Council. (This year's Super Bowl had 123 million viewers.)

Sunday's attendance (34,028) constituted the largest at an international cricket match in the United States, according to the I.C.C. Attendees included such cricketing legends as Yuvraj Singh of India, Pakistan's Shahid Afridi and Australia's Ricky Ponting.

> A temporary stadium draws 34,000 for the India-Pakistan match.

For Omar Minaya, the Yankees' special adviser and the former general manager of the Mets, the cricket match was his first.

"It's amazing," he said. "The atmosphere is great. It's like the World Baseball Classic, or the Dominican Baseball League."

The T20 World Cup, held every two years, is a 20-nation tournament featuring a shorter form of cricket. This year, for the first time, the event is being held in the United States and several Caribbean nations where cricket is revered. The U.S. matches are also being held in Dallas and Lauderhill, Fla., but New York was designated for the marquee matchup.

Cricket is part of the cultural fabric in both India and Pakistan, but political tensions over the decades have forced the countries to play each other in other places.

Security was tight for the match, especially after a website purportedly affiliated with the terrorist organization ISIS called for attacks on the event. Mounted police, SWAT units, sniffer dogs, helicopters and large numbers of police officers swarmed the area, and long lines formed at entrances as people went through security scanners. Bruce Blakeman, the Nassau County executive, said the I.C.C. had defrayed some of the cost of the security, which he said included local, state and federal agencies, including the F.B.I.

"I want to commend the fans," Blakeman said, adding, "Everybody has been so polite and respectful, and they followed instructions so they could be safe and healthy."

There was at least one exception. An airplane trailing a sign that said "Release Imran Khan" breached restricted airspace over the stadium before the match. (Khan, a former Pakistani cricket star and former prime minister of Pakistan, is serving a prison sentence there.) Blakeman said the plane was eventually intercepted.

The mood at the park was generally upbeat, even for Pakistan fans on the losing end.

"India-Pakistan is a very big deal," said Temu Martin, an air-freight transport official from New Jersey and a Pakistan supporter. "But it's not war. It's a game."

He said that after Pakistan lost to the United States last week in a major upset in Dallas, ticket prices for Sunday's match in East Meadow plummeted from over $2,000 to $600. He said he was planning to travel to Barbados for Pakistan's next match and then to attend a knockout-stage match in Antigua.

There are three more matches scheduled in New York, with the final one on Wednesday between India and the United States. The stadium will then be dismantled and the pieces sent out to other sporting events around the country. Blakeman predicted that Nassau County would make $150 million on the eight New York games of the tournament — 10 times what the county spent on infrastructure, planning and security, he said. Cricket officials had told him that there could be as many as 600 million viewers worldwide for Sunday's match, he added.

He said he had heard from investors who want to bring the sport, perhaps with New York's franchise in Major League Cricket, to Nassau County.

"The way things have gone here these last couple of weeks, I think cricket has found a home," Blakeman said.



YUVRAJ KHANNA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

India and Pakistan, two of the great cricketing nations, have loyal followings. "We paid $2,500 per ticket and no regrets," a fan said.



YUVRAJ KHANNA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

After a slow start on Sunday, India came back to win. The T20 World Cup is held every two years.

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PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that, in accordance with applicable provisions of the Uniform Commercial Code as enacted in New York, DBD AYE FUNDING II, LLC a Delaware limited liability company, as Administrative Agent for DBD AYB FUNDING II, LLC and AYB FUNDING 200, LLC, a Delaware limited liability Company, ("Secured Party"), will sell 100% of the Class B limited liability membership interests in AY PHASE II DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, as more particularly described in that certain Pledge and Security Agreement, dated as of June 17, 2015, by and among Secured Party's predecessor in interest and AY PHASE III MEZZANINE LLC, a Delaware limited liability company (the "Collateral") to the highest qualified bidder at a public sale. The public sale will take place at 11:00 a.m. on July 23, 2024, both in person and remotely from the offices of Rosenberg & Estis, P.C., 733 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017, with access afforded in person and remotely via Zoom or other web-based video conferencing and/or telephonic conferencing program selected by Secured Party. Secured Party's understanding is that the principal asset of the Class B limited liability membership interests in AY PHASE II DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, LLC is the parcels of real property located on the eastern blockfront of Vanderbilt Avenue between Atlantic Avenue and Pacific Street in the Prospect Heights section of Brooklyn, New York, identified as B9 and B10, and more particularly known as the air rights parcels above Block 1121 and the terra firma known as Lots 42 and 47, Block 1121 in Kings County, New York, as such Collateral is described in that certain Schedule II to the Mezzanine Loan Agreement, dated as of June 17, 2015, by and among Secured Party's predecessor-in-interest and AY PHASE III MEZZANINE LLC, a Delaware limited liability company. The Collateral will be sold to the highest qualified bidder; provided, however, that Secured Party reserves the right to cancel the sale in its entirety, or to adjourn the sale to a future date by announcement made at the time and place scheduled for the public sale. The sale will be conducted by Mannion Auctions, LLC, by Matthew Mannion, Licensed Auctioneer, NYC Division of Consumer Affairs Licensed Auctioneer, License No. 1434494. The Collateral will be sold as a single lot and will not be divided or sold in any lesser amounts. Interested parties who would like additional information concerning such conditions, as well as other information regarding the Collateral, the requirements to be a bidder for the Collateral or the terms of the Sale should contact the agent for Secured Party, Nick Scribani of Newmark, at (212) 372-2113 or Nick.Scribanis@nmrk.com to receive the Terms of Public Sale and bidding instructions. Upon execution of a standard non-disclosure agreement, additional documentation and information will be made available. Interested parties who do not contact Secured Party and qualify prior to the public sale will not be permitted to enter a bid or participate at the public sale either in person or remotely.

This Notice of Secured Party Public Auction of 100% of the Class B Limited Liability Membership Interests in AY Phase II Development Company, LLC constitutes notice that the prior sale of the Collateral, previously scheduled for June 5, 2024, has been adjourned to July 23, 2024, as set forth above.

ROSENBERG & ESTIS, P.C., Attorneys for Secured Party, 733 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017, Attention: Eric S. Orenstein, Esq. Telephone: (212) 551-8438, E-mail: eorenstein@rosenbergestis.com

NOTICE OF SECURED PARTY PUBLIC AUCTION OF 100% OF THE CLASS A LIMITED LIABILITY MEMBERSHIP INTERESTS IN AY PHASE II DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, LLC

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that, in accordance with applicable provisions of the Uniform Commercial Code as enacted in New York, DBD AYE FUNDING, LLC a Delaware limited liability company, as Administrative Agent for DBD AYB FUNDING, LLC and AYB FUNDING 100, LLC, a Delaware limited liability Company, ("Secured Party"), will sell 100% of the Class A limited liability membership interests in AY PHASE II DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, as more particularly described in that certain Amended and Restated Pledge and Security Agreement, dated as of June 17, 2015, by and among Secured Party and AY PHASE II MEZZANINE, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company (the "Collateral") to the highest qualified bidder at a public sale. The public sale will take place at 11:00 a.m. on July 23, 2024, both in person and remotely from the offices of Rosenberg & Estis, P.C., 733 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017, with access afforded in person and remotely via Zoom or other web-based video conferencing and/or telephonic conferencing program selected by Secured Party. Secured Party's understanding is that the principal asset of the Class A limited liability membership interests in AY PHASE II DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, LLC is the parcels of real property located on the entire block bound by Sixth Avenue, Atlantic Avenue, Pacific Street and Carlton Street and the western blockfront of Carlton Street between Atlantic and Pacific Street in the Prospect Heights section of Brooklyn, New York, identified as B5, 36, B7 and B8 and more particularly known as the air rights parcels above Block 1120 and Block 1121 and the terra firma known as Block 1120, Lots 19, 28 and 35, in Kings County, New York, as such Collateral is described in that certain Schedule II to the Omnibus First Amendment and Reaffirmation of Loan Documents, dated as of June 17, 2015, by and among Secured Party, AY PHASE II MEZZANINE, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, FOREST CITY ENTERPRISES, INC., a corporation organized under the laws of the State of Ohio, GREENLAND US HOLDING, INC., a Delaware corporation, and GREENLAND US COMMERCIAL HOLDING, INC., a Delaware corporation, as amended. The Collateral will be sold to the highest qualified bidder; provided, however, that Secured Party reserves the right to cancel the sale in its entirety, or to adjourn the sale to a future date by announcement made at the time and place scheduled for the public sale. The sale will be conducted by Mannion Auctions, LLC, by Matthew Mannion, Licensed Auctioneer, NYC Division of Consumer Affairs Licensed Auctioneer, License No. 1434494. The Collateral will be sold as a single lot and will not be divided or sold in any lesser amounts. Interested parties who would like additional information concerning such conditions, as well as other information regarding the Collateral, the requirements to be a bidder for the Collateral, or the terms of the Sale should contact the agent for Secured Party, Nick Scribani of Newmark, at (212) 372-2113 or Nick.Scribani@nmrk.com to receive the Terms of Public Sale and bidding instructions. Upon execution of a standard non-disclosure agreement, additional documentation and information will be made available. Interested parties who do not contact Secured Party and qualify prior to the public sale will not be permitted to enter a bid or participate at the public sale either in person or remotely.

This Notice of Secured Party Public Auction of 100% of the Class A Limited Liability Membership Interests in AY Phase II Development Company, LLC constitutes notice that the prior sale of the Collateral, previously scheduled for June 5, 2024 has been adjourned to July 23, 2024, as set forth above.

ROSENBERG & ESTIS, P.C., Attorneys for Secured Party, 733 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017, Attention: Eric S. Orenstein, Esq. Telephone: (212) 551-8438, E-mail: eorenstein@rosenbergestis.com

MARSHAL/ SHERIFF SALES

3650

MARSHAL EXECUTION SALE
PUBLIC AUCTION
RE: Parking Violations Vs Various
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At Public Auction For
City Marshal Martin Bienstock
Or Any Other City Marshal
By Arthur Vigar, Auctioneer
On Thursday, June 13, 2024
At 10:00AM At Five J's Towing
4825 Baldwin Street, Bronx, N.Y., 10470
All R/T/I in & to the Following Vehicles:

12 VOLVO	4V4NC9TG4CN556558
20 LEXUS	2T2HGMDAXLC052170
20 JEEP	1C4RJFBG5LC123120
04 ACURA	19UUA66234A009920
10 HONDA	5FNRL3H96AB019254
05 DODGE	WD0PD744755838701
16CHEVR	1G1PA5SG2G7105402
11VW	3VWGX7AJ3BM042444
10 JEEP	1J4NF1GB7AD619930
06 HONDA	5FNRL38696B061530
20 JEEP	1C4RJECGXLC106100
11 BMW	5UXZV4C52BL413299
19 NISSAN	5N1AT2MV4KC729970
08 MAZDA	JM1BK12F081794188
08HYUNDAI	5NMSG13D68H191928
11 KIA	5XYKT3A10BG008427
11HYUNDAI	5NPEC4AC1BH124770
14 JEEP	1C4RJFAG0EC180492
10CHEVR	2CNFLEEW3A6340923
06 ACURA	19UUA66206A039931
05 HONDA	5FNRL38415B408328
20CHEVR	1GCHSBEAXL1106268
18 MAZDA	JM1GL1UW7J1320176
10 DODGE	2D4RN3D19AR454268
10 BMW	5UXFF0C55AL299870
12 JEEP	1C4RJFAG8CC287531
08 TOYOTA	1NXBR32E98Z034589
05 TOYOTA	JTEEP21A650110669
03 FORD	1FMFU18L33LC41617
08 MAZDA	JM3TB38V480158384
15 HONDA	1HGCT1B30FA005477
11 HONDA	1HGCP2F36BA013484
07 INFINITI	JNKAY01F97M456628
18 TOYOTA	NMTKHMBXJR053842

Following Vehicles Sold With Liens

09 HONDA	1HGCP26809A085318
15 NISSAN	3N1AB7AP4FL669065
17 INFINITI	JN1CV7AP2GM680887
23 FORD	1FA6P8TH3P5104460
20 DODGE	1C4RDHDG3LC259456
18 BMW	WBA8D9G59JNU67058
19 KIA	3KPF24AD3KE073130
07 TOYOTA	5TDBK22C77S004978
18 NISSAN	5N1AT2MT0JC781805
23 MITSUB	JA4J4UA88PZ025734
14 JEEP	1C4RJFAG0EC260035
19HYUNDAI	KMHD74LF2KU830801
09CHEVR	KL1TD56E69B642006
10 ACURA	2HNYD2H60AH514001
20 NISSAN	1N4BL4CVXLC211553
19 HONDA	5FNYF6H65KB017706
13 HONDA	1HGCR2F34DA145043
16 LEXUS	2T2BZMCA1GC038052
14 MERBE	WDDHF8JB5EA859771
19 BMW	5UXTR9C58KLE18310
18 HONDA	1HGCV1F35JA259182
15 AUDI	WAUFGAFC9FN033651 19
19 HONDA	5FNYF6H35KB098871

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04 FORD	1FMFU16L84LA97317

CASH ONLY Inspect ½ Hr. Prior to Sale
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2 SOCIAL MEDIA
Enjoyed your stay? A rant from a traveler says no.

3 THEATER
A foreign take on the Hollywood western.







5 OPERA REVIEW
Get comfortable: A five-hour selection is just a glimpse of an epically long work.

Arts
The New York Times



Nona Hendryx is bringing an ambitious multimedia project, "The Dream Machine Experience," to Lincoln Center.

EVELYN FREJA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Conjuring Her Own Virtual Reality

Nona Hendryx, singer, designer, curator and technologist, is closing in on 80, but refuses to slow down.

By MELENA RYZIK

In a purple catsuit and spiky celestial headpiece, Nona Hendryx beckoned, with a wave. "I'm inside the tree!" she called. "In the forest of the ancestors."

It was not the real Hendryx but her digital avatar, giving a tour of a new virtual reality project. Still, there is little distance between the flesh-and-blood Hendryx — the musician, artist and futurist, who has been forging her own way for more than a half-century — and the slinky cyborg on winged feet who was scampering through a turquoise and fuchsia dreamscape on a recent Friday. They both inhabit a world of their own creation, signaling urgently for everyone to catch up.

The soundtrack for this V.R. journey was Hendryx's 1983 electro jam "Transformation" — "Change your mind/Change your skin," the lyrics go — because, she said, "I've constantly evolved and transformed over time."

With each metamorphosis, Hendryx has spun into an even more singular cultural presence. She is not just the throaty alto who had an enduring hit with "Lady Marmalade" as part of the 1970s trio Labelle. She is also a teacher, curator, designer and technologist — a vanguard creator. In fact, she blithely told me, she never wanted to be a singer at all.

"It happened, and I'm thankful that I'm pretty good at it," she said, playing down a career that took her from '60s girl groups to the pioneering soul and R&B of the '70s, then to her solo act in the '80s, an ahead-of-

CONTINUED ON PAGE C6

JENNIFER SZALAI | CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

Shrink the Economy, Save the World?

Defying conventional wisdom, some experts are supporting 'degrowth.'

A RISING TIDE and a bigger pie: Economic growth has long been considered such an obvious boon that it's pursued by governments across the world as a matter of course. But in 2016, when a London professor warned an audience in Newcastle that Brexit would lead to a precipitous drop in Britain's gross domestic product, that well-worn measure of economic activity, one woman's heckling caught him by surprise. "That's your bloody G.D.P.," she shouted, "not ours!"

The eruption tapped into a suspicion supported by reality: Gains in economic growth have too often buoyed the fortunes of the richest instead of lifting all boats. Prosperity even in the most prosperous countries hasn't been shared. But all the attention to inequality is just a crack in the edifice of economic orthodoxy. Now a much more radical proposition has emerged, looming like a wrecking ball: Is economic growth desirable at all?

CONTINUED ON PAGE C4



TIMO LENZEN

MICHAEL KIMMELMAN
CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

Putting Up A Roadblock To Boldness

New York, leadership and the pausing of congestion pricing.

HAVE WE LOST the ability to do big things?

It's a question after Gov. Kathy Hochul suddenly put an "indefinite pause" on a plan to institute congestion pricing for driving in a large swath of Manhattan, an idea dating back some six decades to the Lindsay era.

The governor, at a news conference on Friday, denied that she flip-flopped because Democratic leaders had been whispering in her ear about the plan's unpopularity in suburban counties like Nassau, Suffolk and Westchester, which could be pivotal in deciding who will control the House of Representatives.

But back in December, at a rally promoting congestion pricing, she had said: "From time to time, leaders are called upon to envision a better future, be bold in the implementation and execution, and be undaunted by the opposition."

She declared at the time, "This is when

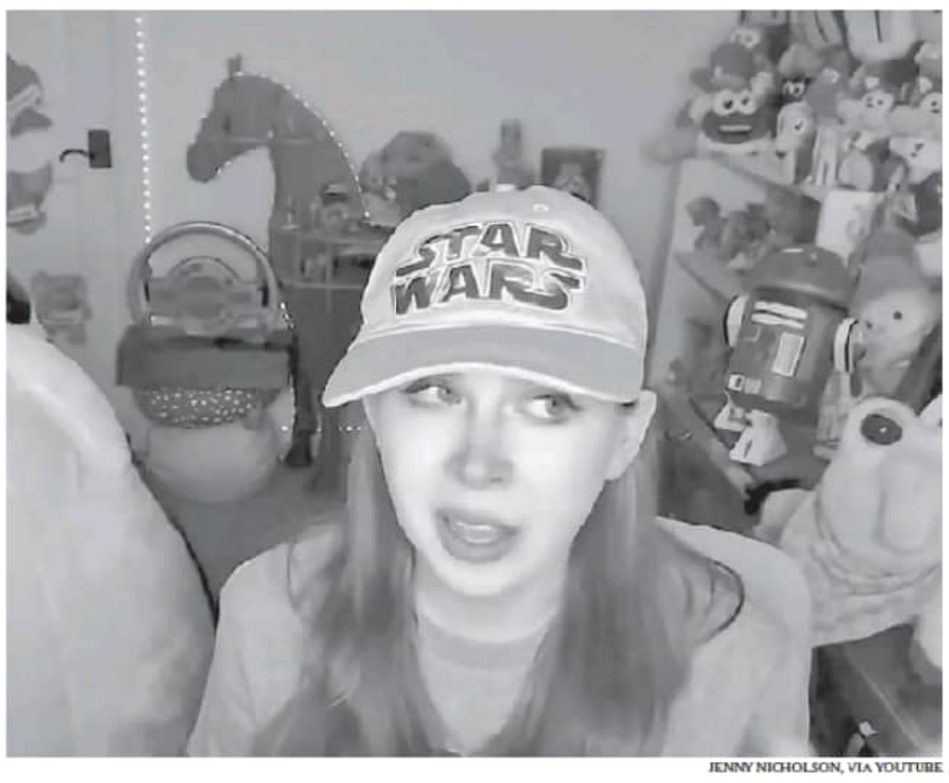
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ESTHER ZUCKERMAN | CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

The Crash of the Galactic Starcruiser

A YouTube video about an awful experience pans more than a Disney hotel.



JENNY NICHOLSON, VIA YOUTUBE



JENNY NICHOLSON





ABOVE AND LEFT, TODD ANDERSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

ONE OF THE MOST captivating pieces of entertainment I've seen so far this year is a four-hour YouTube video in which one woman describes her stay at a Disney World hotel. I'm as shocked by this as anyone.

To be clear: I was initially resistant when my partner encouraged me to watch Jenny Nicholson's epic "The Spectacular Failure of the Star Wars Hotel," which breaks down in microscopic detail her visit to Disney's Star Wars: Galactic Starcruiser. During the hotel experience, now closed, guests on vacation were encouraged to live out their George Lucas dreams by participating in a role-playing game while staying in a structure on the outskirts of the park near Orlando, Fla.

Nicholson's monologue, which runs longer than "Lawrence of Arabia," has been viewed more than seven million times since it was uploaded last month and has been the talk of social media, yet I was still unprepared for how absolutely riveting it was. While it highlights a litany of problems with the hotel itself, the video can also be viewed as a diagnosis of the entertainment industry's current ills writ large. In her frustration, Nicholson becomes a valiant truth teller, clearly articulating how corporate greed betrays loyal fans to sell a cheaper and less emotionally enriching product. And she does this against a backdrop of stuffed animals and while wearing various costumes, including, at one point, a giant suit resembling a porg, the puffin-like creature in "The Last Jedi."

Nicholson is a great storyteller, even in Twi'lek head-tails and a Rodian beanie. She lands somewhere between a friend letting you in on some great gossip and a Homerian poet of 21st-century pop culture, engaging in the oral traditions of the ancients, only the subject is theme parks and "Star Wars."

Here's the very abridged version of what she's talking about: In 2022, Disney opened the Galactic Starcruiser, billed as a "two-night adventure." (Think: A cruise, but on land.) Guests would spend their days and nights inside a largely windowless hotel built to look like a spaceship, and actors would engage them in a story in which the Resistance battles the First Order for control of the vessel. As Stormtroopers and aliens roamed the halls, the visitors would play games immersing them in the world via an app on their phones.

Nicholson spent upward of $6,000 for a two-person stay. What did she get for that exorbitant fee? Well, for starters, a tiny room. (The "Star Wars" locale her footage most reminded me of was the prison in the TV series "Andor.") Besides that, very little. She was barely able to crack the role-playing element. And, in a particular indignity, she was seated behind a pole during a dinner show and unable to see the alien singer Gaya. Nicholson repeatedly returns to the pole as an example of the poor design of the space, but also because it just seems to become an incredible symbol of how wrong her stay went.



JENNY NICHOLSON, VIA YOUTUBE

Clockwise from top left: Jenny Nicholson, who recorded a YouTube review of her visit to Disney's Star Wars: Galactic Starcruiser; one of the costumes Nicholson wore in her video; the hotel experience was billed as a "two-night adventure"; her seat for a show at the hotel offered an obstructed view; and guests were encouraged to take part in a role-playing game. Nicholson's review has been viewed more than seven million times.

A trend toward iterative releases that exploit fans' devotion.

Watching her explain it is a strange combination of delightful and enraging. She's got a charming knack for quippy asides, and her complaints are so well documented that they never seem unreasonable. You feel for Nicholson because she clearly wanted to have fun. Despite her frustration with the Starcruiser, she bought merchandise. She dressed up. She even tried to invent a persona for herself when interacting with the cast. None of it worked.

Nicholson is nerdier than most, but she's also representative of a pure kind of fandom. She adores Disney and "Star Wars," and her complaints come from a place of true disappointment. That's why she can so effectively call out manipulation when she sees it. She is not an influencer paid to shill Disney's wares, and in one of the video's most viral moments she explains how you can spot someone who is, based on whether they use the convoluted official names for products. For instance, a paid influencer might say Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge instead of Star Wars Land. If you've spent any time on social media, you'll stop to consider how many times you've been sold a bill of goods by a TikTok or an Instagram Reel.

What also struck me about the video was how Nicholson's criticisms held true in other mediums. Too frequently corporations like Disney are asking audiences to accept whatever they are given no matter the quality. A critic might roll her eyes at the nonstop influx of projects based on pre-existing intellectual property — and often I do — but there's a reason studios keep going to that well: fans. You can dismiss fandom as being blind to quality, but Nicholson proves that's not true. Putting out a lesser, cheaper product can mean taking advantage of what is often genuine love. Sometimes the quiet part is even said out loud: A recent trailer for "Deadpool & Wolverine" featured a QR code leading to a video of the Marvel star Ryan Reynolds telling "excited" fans that the movie is "as paper-thin as a sequel to 'Battlefield Earth.'"

Nicholson argues that instead of making the Starcruiser the experience Disney promised, the company cut corners, betraying those who paid exorbitantly for what they assumed would be transportive. She also highlights how, when Disney decided to shut down the Starcruiser in September 2023, the enthusiastic cast members were the ones who probably paid the heaviest personal price.

Because it's both consumers and laborers who suffer. Take, for instance, a recent Bloomberg report revealing that Pixar is turning away from movies driven by the personal stories of directors and thinking more about spinoffs and sequels, even though the studio's biggest recent bomb, "Lightyear," was just that. And at Marvel, where fan commitment to the franchise has been stretched thin in recent years by consistently lesser-quality films and television shows, overworked visual effects artists voted last year to unionize.

"I grew up dreaming of working on Marvel films," one coordinator said in a statement, "so when I started my first job at Marvel, I felt like I couldn't complain about the unpaid overtime, the lack of meal breaks and the incredible pressure put on VFX teams to meet deadlines because I was just supposed to be grateful to be here at all." "Grateful to be here" is what it seems Disney expected Nicholson and other customers to say, too.

This mentality is evident in the glut of streaming television shows — too many to watch, only some of them worthwhile — and the number of superlong albums and alternate "versions" that musicians release to game the charts. If you're a Taylor Swift fan, for instance, you might buy minimally different "special" editions of her latest out of the need to be a completist.

Nicholson is so compelling because her righteous indignation is less about her personal financial loss and more about how devotees like her have been taken advantage of simply because they want to escape into a magical world. Call that desire silly, but that's what Disney promises time and time again whether that be in theme parks or onscreen. Fans like Nicholson take their passion for this material seriously. What she wants is that care to be reciprocated.

The great irony is that Nicholson herself produced what Disney couldn't: a comprehensive, entrancing experience that held my attention.

A 99-Year-Old Story Is Broadway Bound as a Musical

'Floyd Collins' tells the tale of a spelunker and the media circus around his failed rescue.

By MICHAEL PAULSON

In 1925, a spelunker named Floyd Collins got trapped in a Kentucky cave and the unsuccessful efforts to rescue him became a media sensation, with print and radio reporters breathlessly tracking the endeavor.

Now a musical about the tragedy is heading to Broadway, three decades after it was first performed and a century after Collins's death.

Lincoln Center Theater, one of the four nonprofits with Broadway houses, said on Monday that it would stage a revival of "Floyd Collins" at its Vivian Beaumont Theater next spring, with previews beginning March 27 and an opening on April 21.

The musical features a bluegrass score by Adam Guettel and a book, as well as additional lyrics, by Tina Landau, who will direct the production. No cast has been announced.

The show debuted in Philadelphia in 1994, and then had a generally well-received Off Broadway production in 1996 at Playwrights Horizons; it won an Obie Award for music, has periodically been staged at theaters in the United States and Britain, and has fans thanks to an Off Broadway cast album.

Guettel, a Tony winner for "The Light in the Piazza," is experiencing a bit of a renaissance. He is a Tony nominee again this year, for "Days of Wine and Roses." And next spring, in addition to "Floyd Collins," his new musical "Millions," adapted from the novel and film of the same name, will have an initial staging at the Alliance Theater in Atlanta.

"Floyd Collins" will be one of two Broadway shows staged by Lincoln Center Theater this season, which is the final season of its longtime producing artistic director, André Bishop. The nonprofit previously announced that this fall it would stage a Broadway production of "McNeal," a new play by Ayad Akhtar, starring Robert Downey Jr. as a novelist.

The theater also announced on Monday that it would stage Off Broadway productions of "The Blood Quilt," written by Katori Hall and directed by Lileana Blain-Cruz, and Henrik Ibsen's "Ghosts," revised by Mark O'Rowe and directed by Jack O'Brien.

They join an already announced Off Off Broadway production of "Six Characters," a new play by Phillip Howze, directed by Dustin Wills. As a fund-raiser in December, the theater is planning a one-night reunion concert of its Tony-winning 2008 revival of "South Pacific."



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Floyd Collins, in 1925, before the cave exploration that cost him his life.

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Right, onstage and onscreen, Lillian Tshabalala-Malulyck in the play "Dark Moon." Far right, Katlego Kaygee Letsholonyana, left, and Joe Young are among the actors in the play.

Hollywood Westerns Get a South African Reboot

In 'Dark Noon,' a collaboration with a Danish director, the tropes of a genre are questioned.

By ERIC GRODE

CHARLESTON, S.C. — The saloon is there. So are the dusty cowboy hats, the freshly laid railroad tracks and the Native American headdresses.

But while "Dark Noon" basks in these hallmarks of Hollywood westerns, it examines them through new eyes, leaving no triumphalist cliché unquestioned. Virtually every scene in this collaboration between a Danish director and a South African theater company (at St. Ann's Warehouse in Brooklyn in previews before opening June 17) ends with at least one bullet-riddled corpse on the parched red earth of the set. Many of the dead are female or Indigenous.

"It is a western town," Nhlanhla Mahlangu, the play's choreographer and co-director, said of the tumbleweedy community that rises up over the course of the action, "but it is all the settlement towns of South Africa as well. We are also talking about the shootings in our country."

Nearly all of the play's seven actors piled into an increasingly crammed green room with Mahlangu to discuss the work after their final performance at Spoleto Festival USA in Charleston, S.C., and they agreed about these similarities. "So much of our own lives are connected to these tropes," said Mandla Gaduka, a cast member.

The narrative in which the white-hatted cowboy tames the Wild West, typically through the explicit or (usually) implicit genocide of his Indigenous predecessors, comes in for withering scrutiny in "Dark Noon."

Tue Biering, the play's writer and other co-director, said he initiated the project about five years ago with a very different concept in mind. "It started with me wanting to talk about Africa through the lens of an American western film," he said in a Zoom interview. "And it struck me that this was so wrong as a white European telling the story. I thought, 'How about if we reversed it? How about if you told my story?'"

Not specifically Biering's story, of course, but those of millions of Europeans who fled oppression and poverty from "a time where white lives didn't matter," as the script cheekily puts it, only to find that any chance of owning land meant colonization. The savage irony of these men and women — but mostly men — going on to oppress the Indigenous populations that they discovered there plays a central role in "Dark Noon."

Biering and Mahlangu, through a series of workshops in Johannesburg, assembled a company of actors and assigned each performer a research topic on American history (such as religion and gun culture). Later, the actors took turns trying on different outfits from a collection of western costumes in the center of the rehearsal room and improvising. The costumes, the research, the actors' memories of Clint Eastwood movies on VHS tapes and their own experiences in post-apartheid South Africa all went into Biering's script.

> 'It started with me wanting to talk about Africa through the lens of an American western film.'
>
> *TUE BIERING*
> *WRITER OF 'DARK MOON'*

The mostly Black cast of "Dark Noon" — one actor is white — ultimately wore something else as they portrayed the European settlers: whiteface. Lillian Tshabalala-Malulyck, who has been involved with "Dark Noon" for five years, said her feelings about wearing the white powder have shifted over time.

"In the beginning, I was so excited about whitefacing," she said. "As a Black actor, it felt like a rebellious and freeing response to blackface. As the show has progressed, I do think about how two wrongs don't make a right. But I have learned to become OK in sitting with the awkwardness, and I think this show gives the audience a chance to do the same."

But several audience members sit for only part of the show. The cast members routinely pull them onto the set, where they sip whiskey, attend church and even square dance. Just as quickly, they find themselves herded into a barbed-wire pen and even sold in a slave auction, sometimes mere seconds after one of the more idyllic interactions.

Mahlangu compared the audience's experience to that of Sarah Baartman, the South African woman who voluntarily sailed to England in the early 1800s and later found herself paraded around Europe as a freak-show oddity known as the Hottentot Venus. "There are times where you board this ship with no conception of what awaits you," Mahlangu said of the "Dark Noon" stage.

Also, he said, "because our play is like a western movie, all Hollywood films have lead actors and extras." He added, "We have deluxe extras who have paid to be there!"

One task that the audience members are spared is the real-time construction of a western town, as the cast members gradually fill the bare stage with a saloon, a church, a jail and other buildings.

"As I was reading about American history," Biering said, "it was all about territory and planting something to say, 'This is my land.'"

Tshabalala-Malulyck compared the construction of the town with the ills of gentrification. "It speaks to development and progress," she said, "but it also asks: Who is this for? Who does it benefit?"

As far back as the 1920s, Hollywood asked these thorny questions as well, according to Andrew Patrick Nelson, a film studies professor at the University of Utah who is also the host of the podcast "How the West Was 'Cast."

"At any time, can you find triumphalist good-guys-and-bad-guys conventions?" Nelson said. "You can. But nearly all of the great westerns are quite critical of the process in which white civilization took ownership of the West."

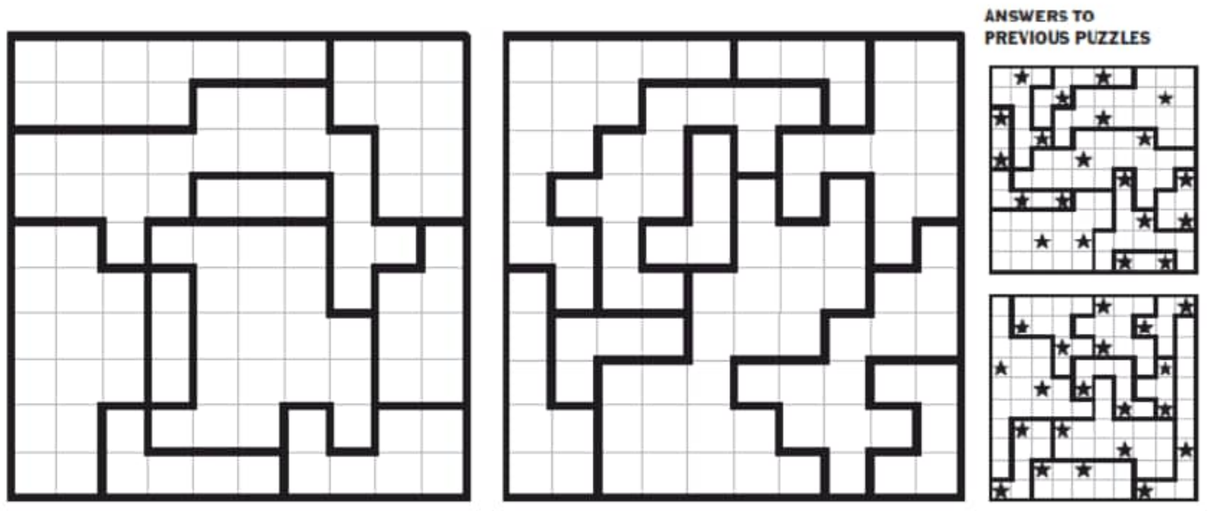
However, he said, the power of such western films as "The Searchers" is that they can simultaneously be read as glorifying and condemning their protagonists. "Those two things can exist side by side," he said. "That's the power of the myth we're dealing with here."

The Spoleto run was the U.S. premiere of "Dark Noon," which generated both walkouts and standing ovations at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2023. (Finagling the cast and crew's visas took some bipartisan effort. "Lindsey Graham and Chuck Schumer's offices ended up joining forces to get them here," said Mena Mark Hanna, Spoleto's general director, "which is a testament to art bringing people together.")

Back in that Charleston green room, the cast and creative team all expressed some discomfort about finally presenting America's unvarnished history to American audiences. "It's scary," Gaduka admitted, although "the U.K. presented its own challenges since we as Black South Africans were colonized by England."

As for Tshabalala-Malulyck, she sees that awkwardness among the audience as a valuable and even necessary part of the "Dark Noon" experience. "I hope they can be open-minded and don't automatically detach," she said. "I hope they can see themselves in it. I hope they can unpack for themselves what history really is and come to their own decision of what they carry forth as an American."

Two Not Touch



ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS PUZZLES

Put two stars in each row, column and region of the grid. No two stars may touch, not even diagonally.

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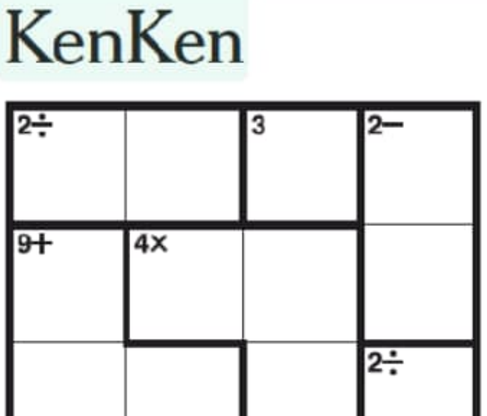
Cryptogram

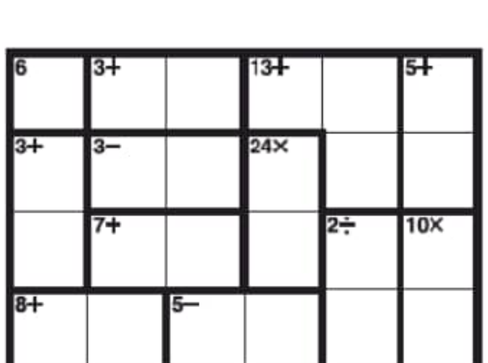
F LYJN XO NFEQ AULQC SJA OJKU, IPA XPCA CSQ BJYCAUYATO AUTL UIJPA SQZ SJA OJKU AQUBSQZ?

PUZZLE BY BEN BASS

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER 1. Cucumber 2. Dietetic 3. Sorority 4. Throwaway 5. Convivial 6. Breaststroke

KenKen





ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS PUZZLES

2	4	3	1
1	3	2	4
4	2	1	3
3	1	4	2

5	1	4	6	3	2
2	4	6	1	5	3
1	2	3	5	4	6
6	3	1	4	2	5
4	5	2	3	6	1
3	6	5	2	1	4

Fill the grid with digits so as not to repeat a digit in any row or column, and so that the digits within each heavily outlined box will produce the target number shown, by using addition, subtraction, multiplication or division, as indicated in the box. A 4x4 grid will use the digits 1-4. A 6x6 grid will use 1-6.

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Crossword | Edited by Joel Fagliano

PUZZLE BY CHLOE REVERY



6/11/24

ACROSS

1 Trunk appendage
5 Schleps
9 Goes clubbing?
14 Danish shoe brand
15 Up to the task
16 Poet Frank who led the 1950s-'60s "New York School"
17 *Crazy for
19 Stringed Indian instrument
20 Camera type, for short
21 End of the earth
22 Verbal equivalent of tomato-throwing
23 *Title role for Lee Marvin in a 1962 western
26 Trees that produce moth-repelling oil
27 Aware of, as a plot
28 Increase
29 Exec's helper: Abbr.
31 Cutting onomatopoeia
35 Goose egg
36 *Get seriously fortunate
39 Gold, in Galicia
40 Pedometer unit
42 Bring up
43 "Gimme five!"
45 Word with history or exam
47 Nuts for a squirrel
48 *Meteorological description in a Beatles song
53 Changes with the times, say
54 Leaves might get stuck in its teeth
55 Not very bright
57 "Impression, Sunrise" painter
58 Title for Jackie or Jill, and a hint to the answers to the starred clues
60 Oven setting that can be "Hi" or "Lo"
61 Not buy, perhaps
62 "You said it!"
63 Proulx who wrote "Brokeback Mountain"
64 Just about
65 Site for a cliff dwelling

DOWN

1 Arachnid's octet
2 "Told you so!"
3 Popular fast-food breakfast sandwich
4 Accessory for a flapper costume
5 Grinds away
6 Fastener used in securing pipes
7 Sticky
8 "I'm all ___"
9 Emulate Paul Simon in 1972 or Harry Styles in 2017
10 Buckeyes
11 Language of much legalese
12 Currency of Switzerland
13 Military address?
18 Red alcohol in a spritz
22 ___ knots (hairstyle)
24 Dracula's alternate form
25 Sun blocker
26 Sends packing
29 Train line between Boston and D.C.
30 Jamaican music genre
32 Noted example of French Gothic architecture
33 Nickname for Oliver Cromwell
34 Goes like a weasel?
37 Range that separates Europe and Asia
38 Trumpet flourish
41 Unfortunate neighbor of Mount Vesuvius
44 Pounded taro dish
46 Maraca, e.g.
47 Invites along for
48 Deadly African snake
49 Festoon
50 Rambled
51 Less interesting
52 Deserves
56 Talkative bird
58 Curly hairstyle, for short
59 Hasty escape

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

S	E	T			A	S	T	O			S	W	A	P
T	S	O	S		P	E	S	K	Y		E	R	G	O
O	P	A	L		S	T	A	G	E		T	I	R	E
O	N	D	I	S	C		R	O	N	A		S	E	T
D	U	S	T	M	O	P		O	F	N	O	T	E	
			S	O	R	E		D	O	G	S	P	A	
S	E	T		K	E	G	S		R	E	H	A	B	S
E	X	I	L	E		S	E	T		L	A	D	L	E
T	I	P	O	F	F		T	U	R	F		S	E	T
	S	P	O	R	E	S		B	A	I	T			
	T	Y	P	E	U	P		A	N	S	W	E	R	S
S	E	T		E	D	E	N		C	H	I	P	I	N
A	N	O	S		A	W	A	S	H		R	E	D	O
I	C	E	E		L	E	V	E	E		L	E	G	O
L	E	S	T			D	I	T	S			S	E	T

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MICHAEL KIMMELMAN | CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

Pausing Congestion Pricing: A Roadblock to Boldness

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1

we demonstrate leadership."

New York has been suffering a leadership crisis for a while now.

Hochul's predecessor, Andrew Cuomo, channeling his inner Robert Moses, made it a priority to rebuild La Guardia Airport without having to shut it down. It was an astonishing act of chutzpah and feat of structural engineering. Cuomo also pushed to turn a Midtown post office building with a facade by Charles McKim into a soaring new gateway for Amtrak passengers called Moynihan Train Hall.

Then he resigned in disgrace.

Hochul reflects today's wider, fearful culture, increasingly distracted by partisan politics, focusing on swing voters, not swinging for the fences. She said, in effect, that she paused congestion pricing because it doesn't poll well. It didn't poll well before it was instituted in London or Stockholm, either, where it has been solving gridlock, increasing bus ridership and reducing asthma rates. Opinion shifted in those cities after residents saw the benefits.

The loudest voices today often belong to NIMBYs and naysayers. New Yorkers just shrugged last year when Metropolitan Transportation Authority officials said they could provide wheelchair access to (nearly) all of the city's subway stations sometime around the middle of the 2050s, more than 60 years after the passage of the Americans With Disabilities Act.

Even that goal has now become uncertain thanks to Hochul's last-second about-face. Postponing congestion pricing jeopardizes a whole laundry list of much-needed, long-promised M.T.A. initiatives that banked on money from the tolls, like extending the Second Avenue subway to East Harlem and updating a signal system dating back to Prohibition that causes regular havoc and delays.

You may recall that, a year ago, M.T.A. officials also said that they would finally fix Penn Station. They swore last spring that by now they would produce an architectural design sufficiently evolved — and pin down local funding reliable and substantial enough — to apply for crucial federal money to redo the Western Hemisphere's busiest and most appalling transit hub.

Hochul's "pause," denying the M.T.A. the proceeds from tolls that were to have supplied that local funding, leaves this promise in limbo, too.

Without any Plan B, the governor sticks New York taxpayers with a roughly half-billion-dollar tab for camera gantries and other equipment already installed to monitor vehicles entering Manhattan below 60th Street. That's not counting the $390 million the Independent Budget Office estimates rush-hour subway holdups cost riders each year, or the untold health effects of gridlock and idling vehicles, all of which Hochul leaves New Yorkers to deal with.

She has meanwhile alienated groups as diverse as the Real Estate Board of New York and New York Communities for Change, the environmental and social justice organization. Congestion pricing may not have polled well with suburban and other voters who drive into Midtown, but it united an exceptional coalition, including business leaders and community activists, who understood its broad economic and environmental implications.

The governor had it right back in December. The bottom line is leadership.



KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Traffic on Avenue of the Americas in Midtown. A plan to charge fees for driving on Manhattan streets below 60th Street during certain times has been indefinitely paused.

It was poor leadership, as Tom Wright and Kate Slevin of the Regional Plan Association recalled in a guest essay for The New York Times last week, that accounts for the fiasco of the Gateway tunnel delay, a telling precedent. Back in 2010, Chris Christie, then the governor of New Jersey, derailed a $12.4 billion plan to build a train tunnel under the Hudson River. The economies of New Jersey, New York and the rest of the nation rely in no small part on a pair of broken-down, century-old tunnels strained to capacity that create a transit bottleneck for the entire Eastern Seaboard. Christie went along with the New Jersey voters who didn't want to help pay for a new one.

More than a dozen years later, the tunnel, renamed Gateway, remains a necessity, and now will take at least another decade to complete, at a cost of $16 billion. The delay jeopardized "the region's competitiveness, economy and environment," as Wright and Slevin point out.

Hochul's pause "could do the same," they write.

New York can still accomplish big, meaningful change.

Reflecting a fearful culture, distracted by partisan politics.

The city is in many ways a strikingly different place than it was a generation or two ago. The Bloomberg years inaugurated sweeping changes along the waterfront. Brooklyn Bridge Park and Hudson River Park have dramatically reshaped what had once been the city's economic and industrial heart. Hunters Point South Park has transformed the waterfront of Long Island City. We can argue about Hudson Yards, which decks over rail yards on Manhattan's West Side. But whatever else one can say, it's a big change.

None of this is Central Park or the Brooklyn Bridge or the original Penn Station or the Manhattan street grid, the tent poles of a gloried past. Those all required leaders to make messy, imperfect, troubling decisions and see them through.

The street grid, let's recall, remained wildly unpopular from its conception in 1811 throughout the century it required to complete, with New Yorkers in neighborhoods being bulldozed and reconfigured. Leaders over several generations had to carry through the plan, which ultimately made the city the economic and cultural capital of the last century.

The creation of Central Park and Penn Station involved the eviction of longstanding Black communities. The park remains a source of pride and awe and the since-demolished station an architectural wonder and aspiration. They're also part of a troubling and too-little-acknowledged legacy of displacement and diaspora.

And the Brooklyn Bridge, before it opened in 1883, baffled and bothered commuters who were content taking ferries across the East River. It was a scandal before it was a miracle. Its construction was plagued by death and corruption. It ended up way over budget and took three times as long to finish as its builders had promised.

Then it was completed.

Hochul might wish to remember the bridge the next time her motorcade struggles through Manhattan's choked traffic.

Shrink the Economy, and Save the World?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1

Less than two decades ago, an economist like Herman Daly, who argued for a "steady-state economy," was such an outlier that his fellow economist Benjamin Friedman could declare that "practically nobody opposes economic growth per se." Yet today there is a burgeoning "post-growth" and "degrowth" movement doing exactly that — in journals, on podcasts, at conferences. Consider some of the books published in the last several years: Tim Jackson's "Post-Growth: Life After Capitalism," Kate Soper's "Post-Growth Living," Giorgos Kallis's "In Defense of Degrowth," Vincent Liegey and Anitra Nelson's "Exploring Degrowth," Jason Hickel's "Less Is More: How Degrowth Will Save the World." The proliferation of the term is as good an indicator as any: The literature of degrowth is growing.

In 1972, the French theorist André Gorz coined the word *décroissance* to ask whether "no-growth — or even degrowth" in material production was necessary for "the earth's balance," even if it ran counter to "the survival of the capitalist system." Gorz was writing the same year that "The Limits to Growth" was published, a report by a group of scientists warning that surges in population and economic activity would eventually outstrip the carrying capacity of the planet. "The Limits to Growth" was initially met with skepticism and even ridicule. Critics pointed to humanity's undeniably impressive record of technological innovation. As one representative economist put it, "Our predictions are firmly based on a study of the way these problems have been overcome in the past."

And so degrowth remained on the fringes of the fringe for decades, until increasing awareness about global warming percolated into public debates in the early aughts. The realization that we hadn't innovated our way out of our ecological predicament, along with inequalities laid bare by the 2008 financial crisis, fueled a more widespread distrust of the conventional capitalist wisdom. Maybe relentless economic growth was more poison than panacea.

An Ideology of 'Growthism'

This doubt has taken varied forms, from cautious agnosticism to categorical doomsaying, with degrowth occupying the furthest end of the spectrum. For advocates of degrowth, it's a core tenet that in high-income countries the constant expansion demanded by capitalism isn't required to improve people's lives; instead, the ensuing inequality and environmental havoc have frequently undermined them.

Take Hickel, an anthropologist who teaches in London and Barcelona and is one of the movement's most spirited exponents. Like other contemporary critics of unfettered growth, he emphasizes the climate crisis. His book begins with scenes of ecological devastation: dying earthworms, declining crop yields, collapsing fish stocks. He points to the connection between growing G.D.P. and energy use, identifying an ideology of "growthism" that he equates with "a kind of madness." He says that he is not promoting a deliberate reduction in G.D.P. But if G.D.P. stagnates or declines because we conserve energy instead of consuming it, so be it.

In what could be a mission statement for the movement, Hickel writes: "Degrowth is about reducing the material and energy throughput of the economy to bring it back into balance with the living world, while distributing income and resources more fairly, liberating people from needless work, and investing in the public goods that people need to thrive."

This program amounts to an overhaul of the capitalist system, not just some reformist tinkering around the edges. Nor do its advocates place much hope in technological fixes. "'Green growth' is not a thing," Hickel asserts, citing research he conducted with Kallis. "It has no empirical support."



SHIHO FUKADA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Kohei Saito, a Marxist philosopher, wrote a book advocating that Japan should just embrace its slowing growth.

Of course, such a sweeping pronouncement is far from uncontested. Economists like Paul Krugman and data scientists like Hannah Ritchie have maintained that technological advances mean that economic prosperity doesn't have to lead to ecological degradation. But for all the debates over carbon pricing and parts per million and degrees of warming, the distinctive argument that Hickel and other degrowthers make is ultimately a moral one: "We have ceded our political agency to the lazy calculus of growth."

In other words, we have plundered the planet instead of figuring out more egalitarian ways to live with one another. "The problem with growthism is that for decades it has distracted us from the difficult politics of redistribution," Hickel writes. This initially looked like the opposite of a problem. Growth's seemingly magical ability to allow us to sidestep the toughest moral disputes was, for generations of politicians, the very thing that commended it.

Yet this pattern of avoidance has compounded not only our ecological troubles but our moral ones, too. An illusory consensus held together by economic growth has dissolved. As the economist Daniel Susskind notes in his new book, "Growth: A History and a Reckoning," big questions that were pushed to the margins — about clashing notions of freedom, equality and justice — have roared back with a vengeance. Still, he sees this as cause for ambivalence, not despair. After all, growth has also emancipated much of the world from "an unforgiving struggle for subsistence," Susskind points out. "Growth has an irresistible promise and an unacceptable price; it is miraculous and devastating; we need a lot more and vastly less."

Although he denounces the blithe optimism of the economic establishment, Susskind is also highly critical of degrowthers, who are too dismissive of capitalism for his liking. He recommends "adopting a weak degrowth mind-set" — one that holds "*less* regard for growth" while also preserving a "serious endorsement of growth's merits." Only a "more balanced position," he says, would "recognize the reality of a difficult trade-off between growth and the climate."

Abundance Without Growth?

Yet for the vocal proponents of degrowth, the timorousness of a "more balanced position" is what allowed capitalist growth to run roughshod over the earth in the first place. This is the resolute message promulgated by Kohei Saito, a 37-year-old Japanese Marxist philosopher who has emerged as the movement's public face. "Any attempt to blend degrowth with capitalism is doomed to fail," he proclaims in "Slow Down: The Degrowth Manifesto." Capitalism doesn't just tend toward growth, he says, but requires it. "To demand the cessation of all these things — to demand deceleration — is in fact to demand capitalism's end."

This idea might sound extreme, but it has found a considerable audience: "Slow Down," which was released in the United States in January, has sold half a million copies since it was first published in Japan in 2020. In it, Saito quotes the Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, who denounced an older generation for only being "interested in solutions that would enable you to carry on like before." Saito himself was born in 1987, and suggests that because he did not live through the Cold War, he was able to study Marxism without "reflexively" imposing the reality of the Soviet Union onto Marx's work. By demanding "capitalism's end," Saito is just getting started; what he calls for is not just degrowth, but "degrowth communism."

Mind you, Saito maintains that the communism he's proposing isn't the top-down, coercive, undemocratic statism of the Soviet Union, but something that looks a lot more like communitarianism, with an emphasis on more local measures like mutual aid, citizens' assemblies and "face-to-face community building." This redefinition, he says, isn't a repudiation of Marx — who emphasized the necessity of state-led economic growth in "The Communist Manifesto" — but is based on "research notes Marx kept at the end of his life," as he became increasingly willing to take the dangers of environmental degradation into account.

It's certainly an unusual rhetorical strategy: insist on repurposing Marx and resuscitating a loaded (and arguably inaccurate) term like "communism" by trying to purge (or ignore) its historical baggage. But Saito's book is written largely for a generation that has been saddled with the ecological consequences of economic growth and therefore has little reason to respect the likes and dislikes of its elders. He repeatedly derides the faintest hint of moderation with a dismissive "amounts to nothing more"; his uncompromising provocations are undoubtedly part of the appeal.

Eventually, though, Saito admits that there is "some truth" to the argument that capitalism produces material wealth, and so he champions degrowth communism only for rich countries, not for poor ones. "Those in the Global North enjoy rich lifestyles enabled by the sacrifices of those in the Global South," he writes. Degrowth would halt this injustice and offer a form of "reparations": Reducing the resources and energy used by the Global North would allow the Global South to pursue its own economic growth instead.

Just don't call this a sacrifice on our part. Even Saito is forced to contend with our stubborn attraction to bounty, edging away from the austere vocabulary of degrowth by resorting to the language of plenitude. Like Hickel, he promises a new kind of "radical abundance," in which a genuine commitment to "the commons" will allow us to savor "public wealth" instead of endlessly chasing stuff we don't need.

'A Poverty of Imagination'

Given how keenly the degrowth movement disavows coercion, how is this wholesale transformation supposed to happen? "Seeds of degrowth communism are sprouting all over the world," Saito writes, pointing to experiments in local governance in cities like Barcelona, which has pledged to be carbon neutral by 2050, and farming cooperatives in South Africa.

Even degrowth's skeptics may find that Saito's examples of grass-roots organizing sound agreeably democratic and improvisational. But the prospect of global apocalypse that degrowthers keep emphasizing also has the perverse effect of making local measures sound acutely inadequate. Still, Saito says that such experiments do offer something crucial: an enlarged sense of what's possible. Degrowth's critics, he writes, suffer from "a poverty of imagination that simply accepts the status quo as unchangeable."

As it happens, Susskind says precisely the same thing but in the reverse: that it's degrowth's advocates who suffer from a "lack of imagination." The mirrored accusations are striking. Maybe it isn't a matter so much of imagination scarcity as of where that imagination is directed. Techno-optimists place their faith in innovation; degrowthers place theirs in social movements. Both sides lay claim to being the genuine realists. Each insists that we simply don't have enough time to do what the other side wants.

The intransigence of such zero-sum disputes is a reminder of why win-win fantasies are so attractive in the first place. Whatever the profound differences between degrowth's proponents and their critics, the scale of the climate crisis suggests one point of convergence: We need all the imaginative help we can get.

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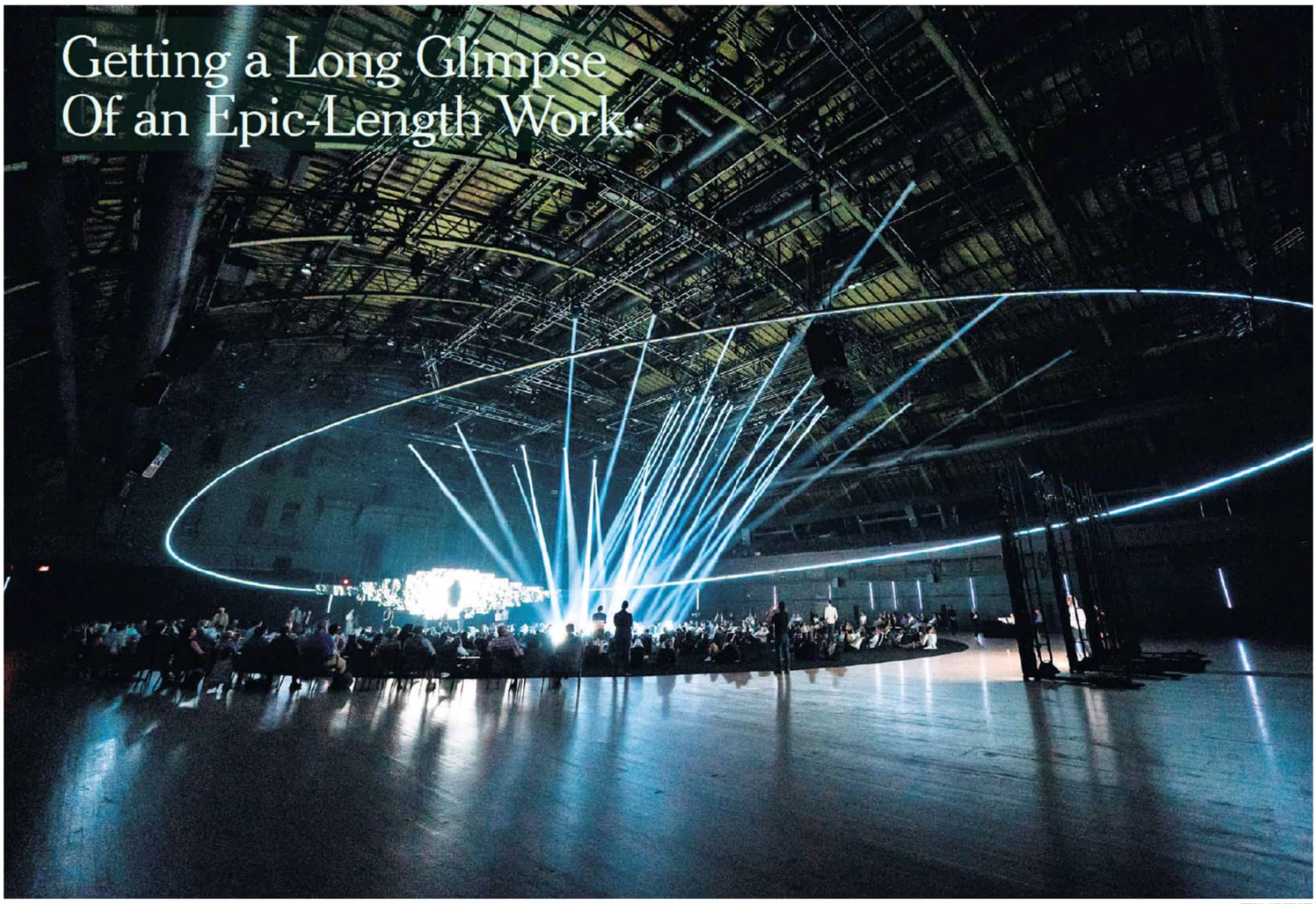
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ZACHARY WOOLFE | OPERA REVIEW

Getting a Long Glimpse Of an Epic-Length Work.



STEPHANIE BERGER

"Inside Light," at the Park Avenue Armory, is a presentation of prerecorded electronic music from Karlheinz Stockhausen's 29-hour opera cycle "Licht."

A six-and-a-half-hour commitment comes with a pair of intermissions and a dinner break.

HOW OFTEN CAN you describe five hours of excerpts from an opera as a drop in the bucket of the whole?

But Karlheinz Stockhausen's epic "Licht" — 29 hours of enormous forces, fanciful notions (a camel as candidate for galactic president) and loopy cosmogony — is no ordinary opera. It calls for several spaces, and at one point several helicopters, dwarfing even Wagner's mighty "Ring," a mere dozen or so hours that can fit in a single theater.

Presenting bits of "Licht," as the Park Avenue Armory is doing with the vivid yet meditative, ultimately stirring "Inside Light," still means presenting quite a lot. For viewers, it's a six-and-a-half-hour commitment, counting a pair of intermissions and a dinner break. But it's worth it: Written over about 25 years starting in the late 1970s, and never produced — because it's almost unproduceable — all at once, "Licht" is one of the sui generis works of art from the turn of the 21st century.

In Amsterdam in 2019, the stage director and impresario Pierre Audi put on a three-day festival of chunks from the cycle, which is divided into seven operas, each named for a day of the week. As the Armory's artistic director, Audi has now brought to New York a yet smaller, but still valuable, selection.

You can see the program in two parts, half on Wednesday, half on Thursday. But I recommend going on Friday to see it as I did: a back-to-back marathon. With Stockhausen (1928-2007), the experience blossoms, and becomes more oddly moving, the more of his music you take in, ending up greater than the sum of its parts.

Eschewing live performers, cast-of-thousands theatricality and idiosyncratic subject matter — in other words, almost everything about "Licht" — in favor of an elegantly restrained light show and immersive surround sound, "Inside Light" concentrates on five of the cycle's prerecorded sections. This makes sense for a composer who made his avant-garde name with electronic music experiments in the 1950s, influencing artists as varied as Pierre Boulez and Björk.

A thin band of hovering light defines a huge oval within the Armory's vast, darkened Drill Hall. Some audience members sit in standard chairs along the perimeter, but most are on the ground in Crazy Creek-style trail chairs in the middle; you can come and go, and walk around the space, as you please.

Shafts and sheets of light in various colors are the main visual vocabulary, with screens on two sides showing slowly morphing visualizations. (Urs Schönebaum designed the spatial installation and lighting, Robi Voigt the video.) The beams sometimes point straight down and are sometimes angled, occasionally forming an intersecting thicket. But nothing changes too quickly; the pace is glacial, the mood serene and shadowy.

Four of the five pieces are "greetings" or "farewells" that Stockhausen intended to have playing in the lobbies of the spaces where the operas proper were being performed. For example, you would hear "Montags-Gruss" ("Monday's Greeting") as you walked into "Monday," "Montags-Abschied" ("Monday's Farewell") as you left.

This is beefily droning, actively changeable music. Created from layers of basset horns, "Montags-Gruss" bends pitches up and down, condensing them into dense clouds of tone out of which forceful clusters burst like sudden thunder. As so often with Stockhausen, the mood can shift before you know it from amiably mellow to hostile and back again, like weather.

"Mittwochs-Gruss" ("Wednesday's Greeting") is stern and forbidding synthesizer music, a little Kubrick-style-interplanetary in its steely grandeur. The only piece here not a greeting or farewell, "Unsichtbare Chöre" ("Invisible Choir"), from "Thursday," is just one of many layers of sound, accompanied by onstage action, in Stockhausen's original conception. On its own, its chants of religious texts in Hebrew and German, dotted with kooky, amusingly triumphant outbursts, manage to be solemn and blithe at once.

The two "Friday" pieces on the second program, "Freitags-Gruss" and "Freitags-Abschied," are somber and forlorn, the drones grimly trembling. But they're never too heavy, leavened with a light, feverish rustling, like a mass of cicadas; birdlike quivering calls; stuttering, ricocheting pinball machine sounds; and a slow, unsteady beat that's deep and juicy, even sensual. Sometimes seemingly random or improvisatory-sounding, Stockhausen's music is always intricately constructed, giving even these sprawling spans an ineffable sense of confident intention.

Inside Light
CRITIC'S PICK
Through Friday at the Park Avenue Armory in Manhattan; armoryonpark.org.

"Inside Light" wrests "Licht" almost entirely free of its dramaturgical context: the sometimes concretely semi-autobiographical, more often surreally ritualistic story of the relationship between characters named Michael, Eve and Lucifer, who exist somewhere between stylized archetypes and actual people.

Some of the video at the Armory conjures ocean waves; a set of lights on one side occasionally shines down brightly, like a sun or full moon. That, though, is about as much recognizable imagery as there is in "Inside Light." The visuals steer away from kitsch or gratuitous weirdness; this is, however improbably, a coolly stylish Stockhausen, shorn of much of his bizarrerie.

That sacrifices a lot. But what it leaves — what makes "Inside Light" special — is the opportunity to hear this music arranged so sensitively and stimulatingly, on such a complex yet clear array of speakers set up around the audience. (Spatialized music has become an Armory subspecialty: It has presented Stockhausen's "Oktophonie" and "Gruppen," and works by Boulez and Kaija Saariaho.)

Contrast the sophisticated sound work being done here by Kathinka Pasveer, a longtime Stockhausen collaborator, and Reinhard Klose with the murky, gimmicky multichannel audio of the Sonic Sphere (based on a Stockhausen prototype) at the Shed last year. In "Unsichtbare Chöre," male voices were audible off to one side of where I was sitting, with women behind somewhere in the distance. In "Freitags-Abschied," just a second or two of tinkling way off to my left transformed music-making into world-building.

Stockhausen sometimes placed his music in total darkness, and, with all due respect to the designers, closing your eyes barely limits the experience at the Armory. Yet not looking would prevent taking in a climactic vision.

"Freitags-Abschied" slowly ends as a man's speaking voice intones "dreizehn," or "13," over and over, a super-elongated incantation or mantra. A high, soft drone seems to move around the space. (A bit of musical hope flickering in the darkness?) The final image accompanying all this is a square of white LEDs beaming down a ghostly tower, with the slight separation between the lights creating distinctive vertical striations on the tower's "facade."

It was hard, for me at least, not to think of the World Trade Center, especially since Stockhausen and "Licht" were ensnared in controversy related to the Sept. 11 attacks. Asked by a journalist a few days after the attacks about his opera's characters, he said that Lucifer — for him the cosmic force in opposition to creation and love — "is very much present, like in New York recently," and added that the attacks were "the greatest work of art that is possible in the whole cosmos."

The international press picked this up, and in the ensuing firestorm, a festival of Stockhausen's music was canceled in Hamburg; his daughter, a pianist, said she would no longer appear under their family name. Stockhausen released a statement saying that he had "used the designation 'work of art' to mean the work of destruction personified in Lucifer."

Was the apparition of one of the towers at the Armory, less than five miles from ground zero, a benediction over this long-ago scandal? A requiem, nearly a quarter-century later, for those who died? A figment of my free-associating imagination?

The ambiguity — and the fact that, after so many hours of roiling electronics, my mind would go to this — felt true to a strange, suggestive, unmistakably great composer, and to this homage to his strange, suggestive, unmistakably great magnum opus.

Taylor Swift Stays at No. 1 on Billboard for the Seventh Week

Ateez's 'Golden Hour: Part.1' opens in second place on the album chart.

By BEN SISARIO

Taylor Swift's "The Tortured Poets Department" is the No. 1 album once again, leading the Billboard 200 chart for a seventh straight time.

Since it came out in April with historic numbers — breaking records for streaming and vinyl sales, and posting the biggest opening week of Swift's career — "Tortured Poets" has been unstoppable, even as its performance has gradually cooled. In recent weeks, it has held off challenges from Billie Eilish and Dua Lipa, and this week it blocks the latest from the K-pop boy band Ateez.

In its latest week out, "Tortured Poets" had the equivalent of 148,000 sales in the United States, including 157 million streams and 27,000 copies sold as a complete package, according to the tracking service Luminate. Since its release, the album has had the equivalent of about 4.3 million sales and just shy of 2.5 billion streams in the United States alone.

Of the 14 albums that Swift has sent to No. 1 in her career — going back to "Fearless," her second LP, back in 2008 — "Tortured Poets" has now had the longest consecutive stretch at the top, exceeding "Folklore," which in 2020 spent its first six weeks at No. 1 on Billboard's flagship LP chart. (Several of Swift's albums, including "Folklore," have had more turns at No. 1 overall, but not in a row.)

Also this week, Ateez's "Golden Hour: Part.1," a six-track "mini-album," opens in second place with 131,000 equivalent sales, largely from its popularity on CD and vinyl. "Where I've Been, Isn't Where I'm Going" by Shaboozey, a singer-songwriter who was featured on Beyoncé's latest album, "Cowboy Carter," opens at No. 5 with the equivalent of 50,000.

Eilish's "Hit Me Hard and Soft" falls to No. 3 after spending its first two weeks in second place, and Morgan Wallen's "One Thing at a Time" is No. 4 in its 67th week on the chart.



JANE BARLOW/PRESS ASSOCIATION, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

"The Tortured Poets Department" is Swift's longest consecutive stretch atop the chart.

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Conjuring Her Own Virtual Reality



EVELYN FREJA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1

its-time amalgam of art rock, funk, no wave and electronica that put her in league with technology-forward artists like Talking Heads, Peter Gabriel and Laurie Anderson.

Music still drives her. But now, she said, "I'm much more interested in making that, rather than performing and presenting it."

Swathed in black and silver, the earthly Hendryx was sitting in a work space on the Upper West Side, forceful yet serene. Her baseball cap read "No Pressure." A brand name? No, she said. "A philosophy. It is actually how I live."

In a V.R. headset, she deftly manipulated controllers and offered design directives for "The Dream Machine Experience," her hugely ambitious multimedia project. A commission by Lincoln Center that will take over its campus from Wednesday to June 30, it encompasses A.I., augmented and virtual reality; a digitally collaged garden by the painter Mickalene Thomas; and performances — real and virtual — by artists including Hendryx, Anderson and George Clinton.

Her hope is it will liberate the concert from the stage — "to bring that liveliness, interactiveness, immediacy, wherever I want to be," she said. Walking through her "forest of ancestors," a family tree of her influences, is like musical time travel.

Hendryx, who will turn 80 this fall, is a living link between the origins of 20th-century rock and pop (reared on gospel and blues, she was pals with the Rolling Stones and made a cameo in the Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper's" movie) and the 21st-century sounds streaming out of laptops and into virtual spheres. Young composers do most of the coding, but Hendryx wanted get under the hood, too, so she took up programming in her early 70s.

"What I want people to understand," she said, "is that this is not technology that is separate from us. It is yet another extension of us."

She is "a genius" and "one of the best songwriters in the world," according to Patti LaBelle, her onetime bandmate and friend of more than 60 years. What was evident from almost the first moment they met, in Hendryx's senior year of high school, was that Hendryx was not going to be content merely being onstage, behind a mic.

"She doesn't have an ordinary mind — she's so far advanced in everything she's doing," LaBelle said in a phone interview. "She's not afraid to take chances. She's always inventing things and thinking of different ways of doing things."

But especially as a Black woman, Hendryx has also been "very underestimated, unsung and underrated," she added. "She's not noticed, and that bothers me. That's why I praise her every chance I get. People are missing a whole lot if they don't know about Nona Hendryx."

This summer, audiences may get the chance: In addition to her first-of-its-kind, mostly free project for Lincoln Center, she had a residency at Symphony Space, where she recently performed a tribute to Betty Davis, the uninhibited funk singer and wife of Miles Davis. In August, Hendryx will celebrate the semicentennial of "Lady Marmalade" with a concert at the Fisher Center at Bard College.

She once called the song, a No. 1 hit in 1975, "catchy, corny and commercial," but loved the way it united the Black, gay, disco and funk audiences Labelle was drawing, with its glam look and far-reaching lyrics. "It really did bring people together," she told me, "because it's very difficult for you to hate when you're dancing."

The group knew "Marmalade" — written by the songwriter-producers Bob Crewe and Kenny Nolan — was a winner during its recording, with Allen Toussaint in his New Orleans studio, LaBelle said, even though she had no idea what its now-famous chorus "Voulez-vous coucher avec moi?" meant. "We thought it was just a fun song," LaBelle said, "then finding out it was about a hooker! But she has to make her money too. So we kept singing."

By then, Hendryx had taken an interest in the logistics of recording, and migrated to the engineer's side of the booth — almost unheard-of for a female artist, or any woman, in that era. Roberta Grace, an assistant engineer on that session, was a rare exception, later teaching Hendryx how to solder wires for her own board. "I wasn't happy with the sound" on "Lady Marmalade," Hendryx recalled, and because she and the band pushed, it was mixed again.

The trio had no more chart-toppers, though, and Hendryx, who had been their main songwriter, stepped out on her own. She never quite achieved the same level of public acclaim, even as she earned critical attention and a wider artistic circle of downtown rockers, along with a Grammy nomination in 1985, for "Rock This House," recorded with Keith Richards.

Hendryx was quick to join the Black Rock Coalition, a nonprofit founded to counter racism in the industry, and raised money for H.I.V./AIDS and L.G.B.T. causes. Publicly out early — "It's an open book," she told The Advocate in 2001, of her sexuality — she has been in a relationship with Vicki Wickham, a British producer and Labelle's manager, since 1971. They've lived in a rent-stabilized Upper West Side apartment, with one room as Hendryx's gear-filled studio, for more than 40 years.



EYEJACK

Nona Hendryx, top, was a member of LaBelle in the 1970s when it had a hit with "Lady Marmalade." Above, Cyboracle, an avatar invented by Hendryx.

"She's been very comfortable in her own skin," said the tennis star Billie Jean King, a friend for about that long. "She doesn't go, 'Oh, well, is this good for my image?' She's very authentic. It comes from the center of her being."

Hendryx releases music only sporadically. "I really, truly know that fame is fleeting," she said. "And actually, money is fleeting, right? So my joy is in the doing."

And her doing is often wildly imaginative, like the multisensory homage to Sun Ra that she organized at the Met Museum's Temple of Dendur on Leap Day in 2020.

Clinton, the 82-year-old Parliament-Funkadelic frontman, is her longtime brethren: He did her hair in the '60s, when he was still a New Jersey barber. A few years ago, after a show, they danced on tables in Ibiza. "A lot of musicians our age are not relevant at this stage in our life, but she's been able to stay in touch," he said, because she was experimenting from the jump. "You do that with a risk of not being normal or top of the pop charts," he added, in a phone interview between tour stops. "But you last much longer."

At the Betty Davis tribute, in a white blouse with twirling, floor-length sleeves, a skintight holographic silver suit, pompadoured ponytail and big-eyed butterfly glasses, Hendryx looked like she beamed in

> **'This is not technology that is separate from us. It is yet another extension of us.'**
> *NONA HENDRYX*

from a planet only inhabited by Prince (whom she also collaborated with). She frequently ceded the spotlight to her background vocalists, but when she came forward, she killed: Bringing out a falsetto and a growl, she performed almost an entire song in a deep crouch at the foot of the stage, then twerked from atop the drums.

Women in the audience were agog. "I think she does balance work," one said afterward. "If I squatted like that, I couldn't get up. I'm going to work on it, though. It's not too late!"

Shanta Thake, the chief artistic officer of Lincoln Center, who has worked with Hendryx for close to two decades around New York, said her energy level is unparalleled.

"Total rock star," she said, "in the way that you see Mick Jagger, and you think, how is he still doing this?"

But that onstage stamina and charisma, "she brings that to *everything*," Thake said. "She brings it into her emails, into the way that she brings these ideas. The commitment that she has to literally everything she does, I think I've never seen in another person."

Hendryx credits her longevity, and her endurance, in part to her upbringing. "My mother opened her first restaurant," a soul food spot, "at 73," she said.

She grew up in Trenton, N.J., one of seven siblings; her mother had a cleaning service, and her father worked on railroads and as an electrician. (Jimi Hendrix is a distant cousin.) "I was a take-apart kid," she said, with an older brother who encouraged her. Once — only once — they disassembled the TV.

Her tech savvy inspires across generations, and mediums. Thomas, the visual artist, recalled traversing Art Basel in Miami with her last year, and noticing something following them: "Nona's like, 'Oh, I have my own drone. It's recording.'"

Working with Hendryx expanded her ideas about what's creatively possible, she added. "That is opening up my mind to learn to not be afraid of these new things, because I'm watching her."

"The Dream Machine Experience," with V.R. and A.R. by the Australian designer Sutu, and some of Hendryx's other projects have their roots in her role, starting in 2011, as an artist ambassador at the Berklee College of Music.

When Hendryx arrived, the electronic production and design department had zero female professors — or students. Now, said Michele Darling, a sound designer who became the department's first-ever female chair last year, there are a half-dozen women faculty members and many students who were drawn by Hendryx's example. "She's been so empowering for all of them," Darling said.

Everyone I spoke to about Hendryx talked about her as an unrivaled connector and community builder, amplifying people's strengths. She was an Afrofuturist before she had the name for it, she said, laughing. Now, "I consider myself more of a human futurist," she explained: A perspective "that doesn't encompass everyone is not a future."

She hired Berklee students to work on "Dream Machine," and added programming by and for young people at Lincoln Center. She was most excited about the pathway she built for all the kinetic, energetic Betty Davis types, as she described them, who have been "told to turn it down, because your frequency is too high."

"My engagement with young women — young women of color, specifically — is to transfer what it is that I hold, into others," she said, "so that if they have the vision, they can see it."

Our "Dream Machine" tour ended with a performance by the Cyboracle, a larger-than-life character Hendryx invented. It's her — via motion-capture recording — in a silver suit, orange lipstick and platform boots, doing many of the same moves I'd seen her rock onstage. Inside the V.R., Hendryx's avatar paused to watch, a Nona-loop in digital perpetuity. I peeked beneath the headset, and saw her grinning in amazement.

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3 THE NEW OLD AGE

Personal conflicts, and even violence, among residents in long-term care.



7 WELL

With microplastics, 'you're not going to get to zero, but you can reduce your levels.'

8 ORIGINS

A small fern that lives on a Pacific island has the largest known genome.

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The New York Times

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The Future Of Foraging

Mycologists and hobbyists are using DNA sequencing on wild fungi.
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Collecting food on public lands is so popular that new limits are a possibility.
PAGE 5

A coral fungus at Salt Point State Park in Northern California.

RACHEL BUJALSKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



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Observatory

FINDINGS, EVENTS AND MORE



DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURE & SCIENCE

FAMILY DISCOVERY

Stumbling Upon a Tyrannosaurus Rex In the Badlands of North Dakota

In the summer of 2022, two boys hiking with their father and a 9-year-old cousin in the North Dakota badlands came across some large bones poking out of a rock. They had no idea what to make of them.

The father took some photos and sent them to a paleontologist friend. Later, the relatives learned they'd made a staggering discovery: They had stumbled upon a rare juvenile skeleton of a Tyrannosaurus rex.

Part of the fossil, which measures about 32 inches, is believed to be the tibia, or shin bone, of a 10-foot-tall, 3,500-pound dinosaur that scientists are calling Teen Rex. Only a few such fossils have been discovered worldwide, according to the Denver Museum of Nature & Science, which announced the finding last week.

The friend of the father who identified the fossil, Tyler Lyson, who is the museum's curator of paleontology, said that the boys had made an "incredible dinosaur discovery that advances science and deepens our understanding of the natural world."

After identifying the fossil — found in the Hell Creek Formation, a rocky area south of Marmarth, N.D., that dates back more than 65 million years — Dr. Lyson led an 11-day excavation that involved removing the overlying rock with a 70-pound jackhammer, picks and shovels. The bones were then carefully excavated, photographed and encased in protective plaster so that they could be safely transported back to the museum. Paleontologists plan to return to the site this year to keep looking for bones, the museum said.

In a video, the brothers, Jessin and Liam Fisher, 9 and 12, and their cousin, Kaiden Madsen, now 11, said that they were busy hiking and exploring when they first came across the bones and had no inkling they could be so special. "I didn't have a clue," Jessin says in the video. At first, he added, Dr. Lyson believed they belonged to a duck-billed dinosaur.

In a news conference, the three boys agreed that the T. rex was their favorite species of dinosaur. "I was, like, completely speechless," Kaiden said of how he felt when they finally learned of the significance of their discovery. *LIVIA ALBECK-RIPKA*



ERIK KARITS/ ALAMY

EVOLUTION OF A PEST

How This Cockroach Crawled From Asia to Your Kitchen

They come out of hiding at night and scuttle across the house in search of starchy crumbs on the floor, a sugary stain on the counter or even a nibble of toothpaste or soap. Cockroaches.

Yet out of the 4,500 species of cockroaches, the German cockroach is probably the primary source of your frustration. It has overpowered other cockroach species and is considered the world's most prevalent indoor pest.

A new study describes the scavenger's origin story, and reveals the genetic variations that make the insect "different from other cockroaches," said Qian Tang, an evolutionary biologist now at Harvard and an author of the study, published in The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The German cockroach was given its name in the late 1700s in Central Europe. Scientists later concluded that the species, Blattella germanica, originated in northeastern Africa.

But there is another species, the Asian cockroach, or Blattella asahinai, that scientists saw as a good candidate for B. germanica's ancestor. It looks almost identical to the German cockroach, although it has distinctive traits, like an attraction to light, an ability to live outdoors and the power of flight.

Dr. Tang's team sourced DNA from 281 German cockroaches from 17 countries to study their genetic differences. Then they traced the pest's journey across the planet, from where it first evolved until it crawled into your kitchen.

The data confirmed that B. germanica evolved from the Asian cockroach, somewhere in India or Myanmar around 2,100 years ago as human settlements bloomed. Some Asian cockroaches lived near human settlements, and they probably switched to eating crops planted by humans. Then, because human dwellings had similar food sources, they moved indoors. *SOFIA QUAGLIA*

'Oh my God! Look at that picture over there. Here's the Earth coming up. Wow, that's pretty.'

Maj. Gen. William A. Anders, an Apollo 8 astronaut, just before he captured the image of planet Earth known as "Earthrise" while orbiting the moon in 1968. He died on Friday in a small plane crash at 90.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GRANT LINLEY, TOP, DEAN LEWINS/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK

DEEP DOWN UNDER

In Case of Fire, Break Into the Wombat's Burrows

The tale seemed too good to be true, and fact it was: During the 2019-20 Black Summer wildfires in southeastern Australia, false reports circulated that wombats had saved other animals by herding them into their burrows.

But like any good fairy tale, the reports did contain an inkling of truth; it turns out that wombat burrows do serve as fireproof refuges for small mammals, birds and reptiles during and after extreme fires.

Dale Nimmo, an ecologist at Charles Sturt University in Australia, was asked to fact-check the rumors of hero wombats that spread during the fires. "In going through the literature," Dr. Nimmo said, "there was quite a lot of evidence that species other than wombats were regularly using wombat burrows."

While it turned out that wombats weren't gallantly ushering creatures out of harm's way, Dr. Nimmo decided to explore the role of their burrows in forest ecosystems affected by a fire.

His colleague Grant Linley went searching for wombat burrows in Woomargama National Park and Woomargama State Forest. Around 70 of their combined 120 square miles had burned during the 2019-20 fires. By the time Mr. Linley got there in the summer of 2021, vegetation had already started growing back.

"Historically, these areas are very well adapted to fire," said Mr. Linley, also a Charles Sturt University ecologist.

Wombat burrows are impressive feats of subterranean infrastructure. "They have multiple entrances, multiple chambers," Dr. Nimmo said. "They're wide. They have temperatures that are far below the above ground temperature, so they're cool when it's hot."

Wombats can grow to over three feet and weigh close to 90 pounds. They can be territorial and aggressive toward each other, and to other large mammals that they may perceive as a threat. But because wombats aren't predators, "it's a little bit safer for other species, small mammals and small lizards and stuff, to co-inhabit with them," Dr. Nimmo said.

In a paper published recently in the Journal of Mammalogy, the team described how Mr. Linley set up trail cameras at 28 wombat burrows in areas that had experienced varying degrees of wildfire charring, including some that hadn't been burned at all.

The pictures (shown above) showed that the burrows are a hub of activity. Fifty-six vertebrate species were observed at the burrows, and several native species were seen more often at the burrows than at nearby sites without burrows, including bush rats and agile antechinus (a marsupial related to the Tasmanian devil), the lace monitor lizard and birds like the painted button quail and the gray shrike thrush. *DARREN INCORVAIA*

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THE NEW OLD AGE | PAULA SPAN

Conflict Is Common in Elder-Care Settings

Experts say better staffing and training can ease the arguments and aggression.



ERINA CHIDA

AT AN ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY in New York State, a small crowd had gathered at the dining room entrance at lunchtime, waiting for the doors to open. As a researcher observed, one woman, growing tired and frustrated, asked the man in front of her to move; he didn't appear to hear.

"Come on, let's get going!" she shouted — and pushed her walker into him.

In Salisbury, Md., a woman awoke in the darkness to find another resident in her bedroom in an assisted living complex. Her daughter, Rebecca Addy-Twaits, suspected that her 87-year-old mother, who had dementia and could become confused, was hallucinating about the encounter.

But the man, who lived down the hall, returned half a dozen times, sometimes during Ms. Addy-Twaits's visits. He never menaced or harmed her mother, but "she's entitled to her privacy," Ms. Addy-Twaits said. She reported the incidents to administrators.

In long-term care facilities, residents sometimes yell at or threaten one other, lob insults, invade fellow residents' personal or living space, rummage through others' possessions and take them. They can swat or kick or push.

Or worse. Eilon Caspi, a gerontologist at the University of Connecticut, has searched news coverage and coroners' reports and identified 105 resident deaths in long-term care facilities over 30 years that resulted from incidents involving other residents.

The actual number is higher, he said, because such deaths don't always receive news media attention or are not reported in detail to the authorities.

"We have this extraordinary paradox: The institutions, nursing homes and assisted livings who care for the most vulnerable members of our society are some of the most violent in our society," said Karl Pillemer, a Cornell University gerontologist who has studied resident-to-resident conflict for years.

Aside from psychiatric hospitals and residential youth facilities, he said, "it doesn't happen anywhere else that one in five residents are involved in some kind of aggressive incident every month."

That number — 20.2 percent of residents were involved in at least one verified incident of resident-to-resident mistreatment within a month — comes from a landmark study he and several co-authors published in 2016, involving more than 2,000 residents in 10 urban and suburban nursing homes in New York State.

"It's ubiquitous," Dr. Pillemer said. "No matter the quality of the home, there are similar rates."

In May, the same team published a follow-up study looking at resident-to-resident aggression in assisted living. The researchers expected to find lower prevalence, since most assisted living residents are in better health with less cognitive impairment compared with those in nursing homes, and most live in private apartments with more space.

Based on data from 930 residents in 14 large New York State facilities, the numbers were indeed lower, but not by much: About 15 percent of assisted living residents were involved in resident-to-resident aggression within a month.

The studies classify most resident-to-resident aggression as verbal — about 9 percent of residents in nursing homes and 11 percent in assisted living experienced angry arguments, insults, threats or accusations.

About 5 percent encountered physical events: others hitting, grabbing, pushing, throwing objects. A small percentage of events were classified as unwanted sexual remarks or conduct; the "other" category included unwanted entry into rooms and apartments, taking or damaging possessions and making threatening gestures.

Those most likely to be involved are younger and ambulatory, "able to move around and get into harm's way," Dr. Pillemer said. Most had at least moderate cognitive impairment. The studies also found that incidents occurred more often in specialized dementia units.

"Memory care has positive elements, but it also places residents at greater risk for aggression," Dr. Pillemer said. "More people with brain disease, people who are disinhibited, are congregated in a smaller space."

Because so many among both initiators and victims have dementia, "sometimes we can't tell what started things," said Leanne Rorick, director of a program that trains staff members in intervention and de-escalation. "An initiator is not necessarily someone with malicious intent."

Because so many among both initiators and victims have dementia, 'sometimes we can't tell what started things.'

A resident might be confused about which room is hers, or lash out if someone asks her to be quiet in the TV room. In a case Ms. Rorick observed, a resident fought off staff attempts to quiet her when she believed someone had taken her baby — until she was reunited with the doll she cherished and calm returned.

"These are people with serious brain disease, doing the best they can with their remaining cognitive abilities in situations that are stressful, frightening and overcrowded," Dr. Caspi said. Residents may be coping with pain, depression or reactions to medications.

Still, in a population of frail people, even a slight push can cause injuries: falls, fractures, lacerations and emergency room visits. Residents suffer psychologically, too, from feeling anxious or unsafe in what is now their home.

"You're half asleep and someone is hovering over your bed?" Ms. Rorick said. "With or without dementia, you might start kicking."

A number of the changes that advocates have long sought to improve long-term care could help reduce such incidents. "In many situations, they're preventable with proper assessments, proper monitoring, enough staff who are trained properly and have the knowledge to redirect and diffuse these issues," said Lori Smetanka, executive director of the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care.

Facilities are generally understaffed, a problem exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, so that staff members rarely witness aggression. In both nursing homes and assisted living, the Cornell studies showed, resident-to-resident mistreatment occurred more often when aides' caseloads were higher.

Sufficient staffing would allow workers to keep watchful eyes on residents; so would reconfiguring facilities to avoid long hospital-like corridors that make monitoring difficult. Private rooms could reduce roommate disputes. Taking steps like opening dining rooms a few minutes earlier might help prevent jostling and congestion.

(New Medicare mandates will require staffing increases in most nursing facilities, if a providers' lawsuit doesn't overturn them, but won't affect assisted living, which is regulated by states.)

Meanwhile, "the first line of defense needs to be training on this specific issue," Dr. Pillemer said. The Cornell-developed program "Improving Resident Relationships in Long-Term Care," which provides online and in-person training programs for staff members and administrators, has demonstrated that nursing home workers are more knowledgeable after training, better able to recognize and report aggressive incidents.

Another study found that falls and injuries declined after training, although because of low sample size, the results didn't reach statistical significance.

"We help people understand why this happens, the specific risk factors," said Ms. Rorick, who directs the training program, which has been used in about 50 facilities nationwide. "They tell us the training helps them stop and do something about it. Things can escalate quickly when they're ignored."

Ask NYT Climate

What are eco-friendly ways to control backyard bugs?

Just as the weather calls us to long evenings outdoors in short sleeves and sundresses, mosquitoes show up. At best, they're annoying. At worst, they spread disease.

And then there are those terrifying ticks, which can be active year round.

To combat these bloodsuckers, companies offer a deluge of products and services. The problem is, some can harm bees, butterflies, moths and fireflies. Insects pollinate plants, provide critical protein for all kinds of baby birds and nourish the soil. Many insects are facing alarming declines.

But no one wants to be itchy or sick. Aside from covering up or using bug repellent, what can you do?

KILLING THE WRONG BUGS In the world of bug control, there's a term for accidental victims: nontarget insects. It's clear that treating large areas with pesticides can kill or harm bugs other than mosquitoes and ticks. What's less clear is the degree to which that happens.

"The nontarget insects have not been studied well enough," said Doug Tallamy, a professor of entomology and wildlife ecology at the University of Delaware and a leader in the growing effort to support ecosystems by planting native species in yards.

Dr. Tallamy and many nonprofit conservation groups, including the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, recommend that people avoid spraying for mosquitoes and ticks. They point out that even a pesticide that is marketed as "natural" can still do damage.

"Cyanide is natural and organic too," Dr. Tallamy said.

The National Pest Management Association, a trade group, defends backyard spraying, citing the importance of controlling diseases transmitted by mosquitoes and ticks. For



NAOMI ANDERSON-SUBRYAN

example, technicians can avoid treating areas around flowering plants, which attract pollinators.

There are also devices like bug zappers, which lure flying bugs to their death. But research shows they overwhelmingly kill the wrong ones.

'BUCKET OF DOOM' You probably already know Step 1 of mosquito control: Eliminate standing water, which is where mosquito larvae hatch and grow.

Clogged gutters, drainage pipes and flowerpots are prime offenders that people often overlook, said Aimée Code, pesticide program director at the Xerces Society.

Conservation organizations recommend a method that's sometimes called "the bucket of doom." Put water in a bucket along with some hay or straw to make it extra irresistible. Then, add a mosquito control dunk, which you can get at a hardware store. They contain a bacterium that kills the larvae of mosquitoes and some other aquatic flies with minimal additional effects.

Dunks work in many places where you can't eliminate standing water.

Daniel Markowski, a vector ecologist and technical adviser for the American Mosquito Control Association, said that these practices of prevention and mosquito dunks should be "critical components of all mosquito management strategies."

Another option: outdoor fans, because mosquitoes are poor fliers.

AND FINALLY, TICKS Ticks, like many beneficial insects, thrive in areas with trees, brush and long grasses. If ticks are a problem in your yard, you can create a barrier strip bordering wilder areas with gravel, wood chips or mulch (three feet is often recommended). Keep the grass short where people hang out.

Some pollinator advocacy groups recommend tick boxes. The boxes use bait to lure mice and chipmunks into a passageway, where they are brushed with the same kind of topical tick prevention used on dogs. Research finds these tools to be effective over time, but they can be expensive.

Dr. Tallamy recommends tick tubes, which are filled with insecticide-treated cotton, because they are cheaper, though possibly less effective. The mice take the cotton to their nests, where it kills ticks.

"It's targeted in a way that doesn't kill everything," Dr. Tallamy said.

There's no silver bullet for a bite-free summer. But some strategies can help you, and all kinds of beneficial bugs, survive it a bit better.

CATRIN EINHORN

They'd Give an Arm (or Three) to Survive

Octopuses are willing to lose limbs in order to defend themselves against eels.

By JOSHUA RAPP LEARN



LUIS LARIA, JESUS LLAMES AND ALBERTO UTERO

A conger eel with a common octopus in a video taken last year in waters off northwestern Spain. An octopus has intelligence and a "big repertoire of defensive behavior," a marine ecologist said.

The conger eel was the favorite, weighing at least three times more than its eight-armed opponent. But by the time the video footage begins, the underdog octopus had already asserted its toughness, blocking off the eel's eyes and stuffing arms into its mouth and out the gill hole.

"I thought that with such difference in size it would be hard for the octopus to avoid death," said Jorge Hernández-Urcera, a marine ecologist at the Institute of Marine Research of the Spanish National Research Council.

The common octopus not only defended itself, but also seemed to come out on top. The divers who made the video — not scientists — broke up the brawl, and the two animals survived, the octopus tearing off in a cloud of ink.

"It was very impressive to see," said Dr. Hernández-Urcera, who collects amateur diving videos and analyzes them for previously undescribed behavior. He believed this video, recorded in 2008 off the coast of Galicia in northwestern Spain, showed "the intelligence of octopus and the big repertoire of defensive behavior." But it was only a single video, not enough to suggest that this eight-armed technique was a regular form of octopus martial arts.

More recently, Dr. Hernández-Urcera acquired additional video footage. Enough, he believes, to show that octopuses will choke, blind and sacrifice limbs in an effort to defend themselves from much bigger eel foes. He published his research in March in the journal Ecology and Evolution.

In this 2022 video, taken off the coast of the northern Spanish region of Asturias, another common octopus uses the same tactics seen in the first video to defend against a conger eel attack. In response, the eel rapidly spins to get loose. At this point the octopus escapes, but it manages to pop out one of the eel's eyeballs with the power of a sucker.

In each video, the common octopus may sacrifice arms, much as lizards drop their tails to distract predators, Dr. Hernández-Urcera said. In the first video, the octopus loses three arms while the one in the second video loses two — but they can fully regrow limbs in about 45 days, some lab tests show.

The octopus doesn't always win. In a third video, taken in 2023 near Galicia again, the conger eel grabbed the cephalopod from the head, then spins the octopus around in a death hold, slamming it onto rocks. The octopus appears stunned, if not dead, and then the eel swims off with its prey.

Piero Amodio, a biologist and comparative psychologist with the Anton Dohrn Zoological Station in Naples in Italy, thinks that when plugging the eel's gills, the octopus's arms may operate instinctually — literally with a mind of their own because of the many neurons in their appendages.

"My hunch is that the arms can do that in a non-completely conscious way," Dr. Amodio said.

He said he had seen fights between octopuses where one will fill the gill hole of the other with an arm, asphyxiating its foe.

Peter Tse, a professor of cognitive neuroscience who works with octopuses at Dartmouth College, calls it a "remarkable adaptation" and points to a scene in the documentary "My Octopus Teacher," where an octopus resists an attack from a shark by climbing onto the back of its head.

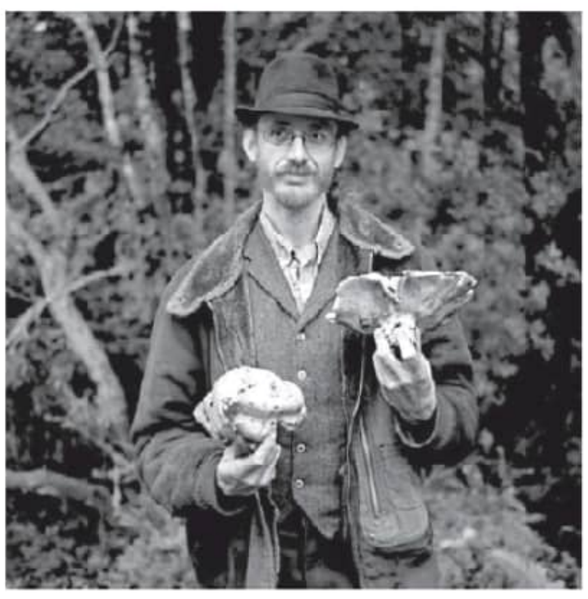
"If it's not an instinct but something that they think of individually, it's even more remarkable," Dr. Tse said, "because it takes quite a bit of insight to understand that the only way to escape this mouth is to get behind it."

Dr. Hernández-Urcera isn't sure whether the fighting techniques in his videos are instinctual or learned behavior. But that's partly because conger eels typically hunt at night, whereas these videos were taken in the day. He believes these encounters may happen frequently.

"We think from the beginning of their lives," he said, "octopus have to face these kinds of attacks from conger eels."

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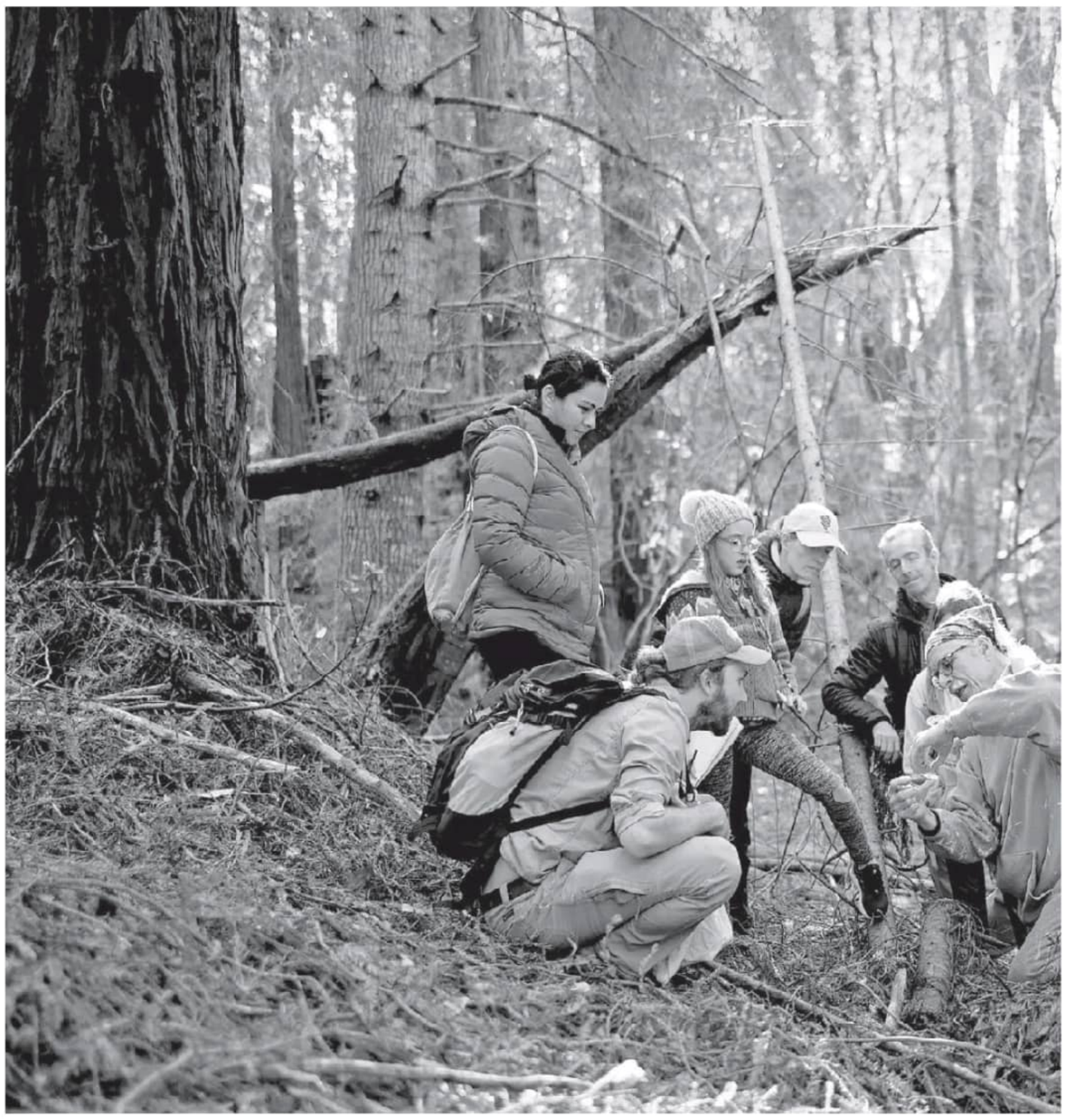






From top: Fiorella Lema with a golden turkey mushroom she found on a mushroom hike at Salt Point State Park in California; Mikhael Selk with mushrooms he foraged in Occidental, Calif.; and Cynthia Le smelling a specimen.

Below, the Sonoma County Mycological Association's foraging camp in January. From left: extracting a bit of mushroom tissue with tweezers for DNA bar coding; preparing a slide; a mushroom on a microscope.





Searching to Identify New I

Mushroom hunters, both mycologists and hobbyists, are using DNA sequencing.

Photographs by RACHEL BUJALSKI
Article by VERONIQUE GREENWOOD

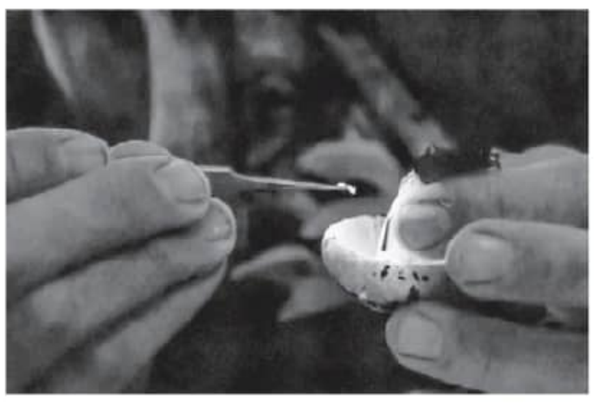
Strange things appear in the forests and chaparral of California after a big rain. Invigorated by the damp, fungi living quietly in the soil sprout fruiting bodies. Some have the familiar mushroom shape of a stalk and a cap, but others resemble fluorescent corals, wads of clear brown jelly, brilliant yellow buttons — bizarre forms visible to the naked eye for only a brief window while spores are released.

With each emergence comes a chance for mushroom hunters to identify new species. As many as 95 percent of the planet's fungal species have yet to be described, according to a 2023 report from Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. For years now, professional mycologists and hobbyists alike have been using DNA sequencing on foraged fungi, said Mandie Quark, a mycologist and the communications lead for California's Fungal Diversity Survey, which aims to add sequences from tens of thousands of fungi to scientific databases.

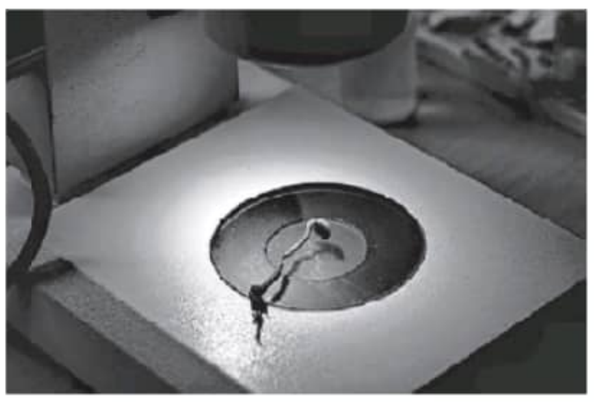
"We could probably go outside right now here in California — or really, wherever you are at in North America — and we could easily find a new species of mushroom or fungus that hasn't been described," Ms. Quark said.

At the Sonoma County Mycological Association's annual foraging camp this January, Ms. Quark and her partner, Alan Rockefeller, helped hundreds of campers identify fungi plucked from the soil in the forest near Occidental, Calif. Red-and-white paper takeout boxes, each containing a fungus rather than a corn dog or French fries, piled up on picnic tables. In a makeshift lab, volunteers demonstrated how to extract DNA from the growths. Sequencing a short region of each fungus's genetic code can tell them apart.

Once collectors receive a match for their sequence, they can enter the information on iNaturalist, a website where hobbyists can share observations of the natural world. Meanwhile, organizations like the Ohio Mushroom DNA Lab and Mycota Lab, founded by Stephen Russell, a biochemist at the University of Michigan, enter the sequences into scientific data-









The mycologists Mandie Quark and Alan Rockefeller in their garage lab in Oakland, Calif. They helped hundreds of campers identify fungi plucked from the soil in the forest near Occidental.





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More Foraging Limits Are Weighed

The effects of the harvesting of fungi and plants on public lands have raised concerns.

By JIM ROBBINS

MISSOULA, MONT. — Beneath a row of fir trees, River Shannon Aloia walks along a remote dirt road on national forest land, scanning the ground for morels.

"Find it," she commands her dog, Jasper.

The search pays off for Ms. Aloia, an avid forager: She spies a solitary honey-colored morel and plucks it.

"Foraging changes your relationship with nature," she said. "You are out in the woods using all of your senses. And it's gratifying when you can identify something and take it home and prepare it for your family."

Spring in the Northern Hemisphere is a favorite time of year for foragers like Ms. Aloia. It is especially popular in the American West because of the millions of acres of publicly owned lands that give foragers the freedom to roam and harvest to their liking.

Once the snow melts, a variety of fungi begin popping their heads above ground — oyster mushrooms, king boletes and several types of morels. A profusion of flowers and other edible and medicinal plants, including wild onions and asparagus, fiddleheads, nettles and miner's lettuce, are also highly sought.

Come summer, the berry crop beckons in the Rocky Mountain West: chokecherries, wild strawberries and plump, purple huckleberries. In late summer and fall, other wild crops emerge, such as piñon or pine nuts in the Southwest and mushrooms like chicken of the woods, shaggy manes and the prized matsutake.

Although most national parks ban commercial foraging, about three-fourths allow people to explore and collect their favorite crops for personal use. Individual parks set limits each year; some like Death Valley in California and Nevada restrict the collection of foods like nuts and berries to a quart a day, and only for personal consumption. Foraging is banned altogether in about a quarter of all national parks.

But things are changing in the woods, worrying those who for years have enjoyed the seasonal taste of food growing in the wild and foraging's connection to centuries of dependence on natural habitats.

Foraging has grown so popular since the pandemic that state and federal agencies are weighing whether to impose additional restrictions.

Some leading foragers, for both personal and commercial food, say more public lands are being declared off limits, especially in places where wildfires have devastated the forest lands.

Their concern involves a striking ecological phenomenon: Charred landscapes and disturbed grounds provide ideal conditions for morels to flourish in plentiful numbers. Often, in the spring after a big forest fire, commercial pickers swarm public lands and gather pounds of morels, perhaps one of the most coveted mushrooms.

"Here in Oregon, they rarely closed burns before the pandemic," said Trent Blizzard, president of the North American Mycological Association, who with his wife Kristen, runs The Modern Forager website. "But for the last three or four years, they have closed most of the fires, including all of the big ones."

"We're concerned about foraging access to all state and federal land, not just burns," he said.

Decisions on where and when to close national forest land are made at a local level. David Lawrence, special products program manager for the national office of the U.S. Forest Service, said that administering the commercial harvesting of any product was often low on the list of priorities. Some foragers who sell their foods are required to obtain permits.

"The first step is to ensure sustainable management," he said. That might require historical and environmental analysis for commercial mushroom picking, or the deployment of law enforcement to manage large crowds that can lead to closures if there aren't enough resources.

"I've seen that being a barrier to offering permits," he said.

It's not uncommon to have hundreds of commercial pickers show up for a giant flush of burn morels. At the matsutake harvest in Oregon, thousands have descended.

David Haupt, an official with the regional office of the U.S. Forest Service that includes Montana, Idaho, parts of North Dakota and Washington State, said no commercial mushroom gathering permits had been issued this year. "Reduction of potential environmental damage is a top consideration when assessing applications for commercial permitting," he said.

Other hazards have raised concerns, especially since all morels produced in the United States are gathered in the wild, not cultivated.

In May, Montana health officials warned residents about the dangers of morels after a series of illnesses and deaths. In the spring of 2023, 50 people were sickened and two died in Bozeman, apparently from morels that had been cultivated in China and shipped to a local restaurant. A Missoula lawyer died on a river rafting trip after he ate morels that he foraged.

Morels contain a toxic compound called hydrazine, and other mushrooms can also be poisonous. In the United States, few deaths occur annually from deadly mushrooms although dozens of people do become ill and recover each year.

Dennis Desjardin, a professor emeritus at San Francisco State University who has studied the ecology and evolution of fungi for over 40 years, said sellers of wild mushrooms should include instructions for consumption.

"The F.D.A. should require the posting of a warning that wild mushrooms should be thoroughly cooked before eating, especially morels, which are toxic when ingested raw," he said.

Although foraging, especially for mushrooms, isn't a new pastime, the pandemic fueled a quest for outdoor experiences. Traffic soared and the spotting of bountiful sites spread via social media.

"The number of people foraging exploded in number," Ms. Aloia said. "Everybody wanted to go to the places that are easy to get to, and those places are wiped out. Then they go on to the next place and the next place."

Ms. Aloia oversees a Facebook page devoted to foraging. She said newcomers didn't always understand the unwritten etiquette of foraging, and many gave away "honey holes" — places rich in mushrooms — on social media. Or, she said, they invaded places that, while on public lands, others had considered their sacred, secret spots.

"The learning curve of what used to be esoteric knowledge, which took years to cobble together, has been flattened by social media," said Langdon Cook, who teaches foraging in the Seattle region and who wrote "The Mushroom Hunters," a book about the underground subculture of commercial foragers. "You can even get coordinates as a first-time picker out there, finding mushroom species that maybe in the past it took amateurs year to figure out."

Picking wild mushrooms and berries in state and federal forests and parks has grown more popular.

Uncontrolled crowds have prompted those trying to rein in foragers to take action. Because of soaring numbers, Salt Point, the only state park in California that allows mushroom foraging, recently lowered its collection limit to two pounds per person from five pounds. Minnesota is considering new limits on gathering mushrooms for personal use in state parks, too.

Climate change is also upending some aspects of mushrooming. "The number of species and abundance has diminished quite a bit," Dr. Desjardin said. "And it's gotten drier and the season has gotten later."

This is the time of year when morels and other foraged ingredients make their way to the table. "A lot of menus have morels on them because the season's just kicking in," said Chris DiMaio, a chef in Whitefish, Mont. "We went out a few days ago and picked a few pounds, and I'll incorporate them into this weekend's menus."

Urban foraging has long been popular, too. The well-known "Wildman" Steve Brill has taught the practice in Central Park for decades, and a group in Los Angeles called Hollywood Orchard gathers fruit that grows in abundance and often goes to waste, and preserves it in pop-up kitchens to donate to local charities.

Indigenous and Native American tribes have long embraced foraging as a way to healthier diets and as part of a food sovereignty movement to restore traditional foods. Some studies suggest that eating wild foods can provide essential nutrients. "With food sovereignty, we are looking at the ability to put healthy foods and ancestral foods, which we used to survive for thousands of years, back on the table," said Jill Falcon Ramaker, an assistant professor of community nutrition and sustainable food systems at Montana State University.

Sean Sherman, known as the Sioux Chef, and the founder of the Indigenous restaurant Owamni in Minneapolis, is among those who are adapting foraged food for the modern palate.

"We're not cooking like it's 1491," Mr. Sherman said on the NPR program "Fresh Air," referring to the period before European colonization. Two signature dishes that rely on foraging are roast turkey with a berry-mint sauce and black walnuts and a wild rice pilaf with wild mushrooms, cranberries and chestnuts.

Mushrooms get most of the attention from the foraging community. "Everybody wants to find fungi these days," said Mr. Cook, the author and Seattle forager. "They're sexy and hip and the poster child for foraging."

Fungi play a key role in natural systems, and they have a symbiotic relationship with the forest. Some are the product of a vast web of mycelium that laces tree roots and that gathers water and nutrients and shuttles it to the tree in exchange for sugar. The mushrooms pop to the surface where they release spores that are borne by the wind, as part of mycelium reproduction. Other fungi break down dead plant material and send jolts of phosphorous and nitrogen into the roots of growing trees.

Picking mushrooms doesn't harm the forest or future mushroom harvests, as long as the underground mycelium isn't damaged. "The only thing that would be adverse is that you are also removing a food source of lots of insects and other small animals and deer that feed on them," Dr. Desjardin said.

Foraged produce can be pricey. Wild chanterelles were recently selling for $32 a pound at Far West Fungi, a mushroom store in San Francisco, while porcinis fetched $56 a pound and morels for $36 per pound.

Another valuable and unusually tasty mushroom is the matsutake, or pine mushroom. They have a distinctive aroma — many compare their smell to a combination of dirty socks and Red Hots candy. Others say the smell is reminiscent of cinnamon, with subtle floral and citrus nuances. They grow in pine forests around the West and can be collected on public lands beneath the pine needles and forest duff beneath pine trees from early September until early November. National forest land near Chemult, Ore., is one of the top spots for pickers who come from around the country to harvest them during the two-month-long season.

There is a Mushroom Trail in the West that itinerant pickers follow seasonally, a path Mr. Cook has written about.

If you drew a circle around the Pacific Northwest and into British Columbia and the Yukon, "you could pick mushrooms somewhere inside that circle every day of the year," Mr. Cook said.





PHOTOGRAPHS BY TAILYR IRVINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES





From top: River Shannon Aloia, an avid forager, hunting for morels with her dog, Jasper, near Missoula, Mont.; Ms. Aloia's bounty of morels; and a warning about the danger of undercooked morels.

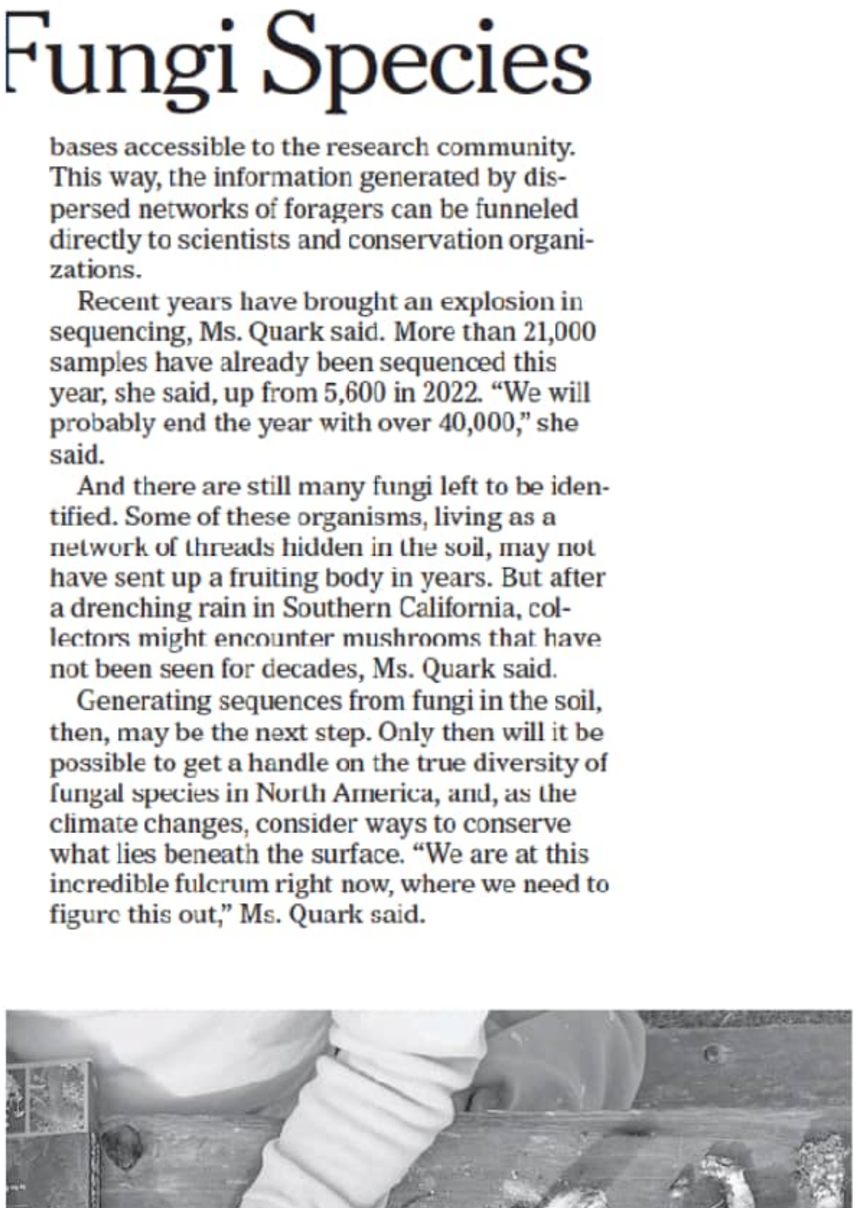
Fungi Species

bases accessible to the research community. This way, the information generated by dispersed networks of foragers can be funneled directly to scientists and conservation organizations.

Recent years have brought an explosion in sequencing, Ms. Quark said. More than 21,000 samples have already been sequenced this year, she said, up from 5,600 in 2022. "We will probably end the year with over 40,000," she said.

And there are still many fungi left to be identified. Some of these organisms, living as a network of threads hidden in the soil, may not have sent up a fruiting body in years. But after a drenching rain in Southern California, collectors might encounter mushrooms that have not been seen for decades, Ms. Quark said.

Generating sequences from fungi in the soil, then, may be the next step. Only then will it be possible to get a handle on the true diversity of fungal species in North America, and, as the climate changes, consider ways to conserve what lies beneath the surface. "We are at this incredible fulcrum right now, where we need to figure this out," Ms. Quark said.





Top, George Reiner, far right, a mushroom expert in California, showing a specimen to enthusiasts at Salt Point State Park and above, pointing out species differences. Left, mushroom foragers learning how to DNA bar code their findings.

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Well

Ask Well

I use spray sunscreens all summer because they're so easy to put on. But are they as good as lotions?

There are many things to love about spray sunscreens. But if you think just a few haphazard spritzes will provide adequate protection against the sun's harmful rays, think again, dermatologists say.

Spray sunscreens are popular because they're so easy to use, said Dr. Jean Charles, a dermatologist in Cedar Park, Texas. Spraying lets you target large swaths of the body, including hard-to-reach spots like your back.

Sprays tend to be lighter, less "sticky, oily and heavy," and less likely to leave a white residue than lotions, said Dr. David Kim, a cosmetic dermatologist at Idriss Dermatology in New York City.

However, sometimes it's difficult to tell if the sunscreen is evenly distributed, said Dr. Maral Kibarian Skelsey, a clinical associate professor of dermatology at Georgetown University Medical School. When you apply it on a windy day, more might float into the air than onto your body.

"There's always a risk that you are going to miss spots," Dr. Charles said. With lotions, you can see where it's going.



JOYCE LEE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Many popular products also contain flammable gases like propane, butane or isobutane, which propel the sunscreen onto your skin and could pose a burn hazard if applied or worn while smoking or near an open flame.

Some spray sunscreens also contain alcohol, which can irritate and dry out the skin, Dr. Charles said.

Spray sunscreens have the same active ingredients as lotions, Dr. Skelsey said, so they should be just as protective as lotions — if used correctly.

If you have sensitive skin, Dr. Skelsey recommended mineral-based spray or lotion sunscreens with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide as their active ingredients; they're less likely to cause irritation or allergic reactions. And note that a more expensive, high-end or luxury product is not necessarily better than a cheaper one, she said. "You can get a very good sunscreen at a drugstore."

According to the American Academy of Dermatology, you need about an ounce of sunscreen to cover your entire body. This amount can be hard to gauge with a spray, so the academy recommends holding the nozzle about an inch from your body and spraying until your skin glistens.

The most important step is to rub in the sunscreen after applying it. If you don't, the skin may not be evenly covered, Dr. Kim said. "I've seen people on the beach just spray it and that's it."

Another option: Spray it onto your hands and smear it over your body. Then, reapply it as you would any sunscreen, every two hours — or more frequently if you're swimming or sweating.

Be careful not to inhale spray sunscreen; the A.A.D. suggests applying it to your hands first and then rubbing it onto your face. And the Food and Drug Administration recommends not leaving sunscreen in direct sunlight because it can reduce its effectiveness. Instead, keep the containers in the shade or wrapped in a towel.

"The best sunscreen is the one that you will actually use," Dr. Kim said, so choose any type of product you like. If that's a spray sunscreen, "go for it," he said.

However, all of the experts said they typically recommend lotion over sprays, since most people tend to apply spray sunscreens incorrectly. But that doesn't mean sprays aren't effective, they said.

"I don't think one's necessarily better than the other," Dr. Charles added, "as long as it's being rubbed in and the application is even." *ERICA SWEENEY*

Exercise to Strengthen Your Bones

Women are at a higher risk for osteoporosis than men. Strategic workouts can help.

By DANIELLE FRIEDMAN

When Barbara Hannah Grufferman was in her early 50s, a bone density scan showed that she was on a path to developing osteoporosis. If she didn't change her lifestyle, her bones would become increasingly brittle, putting her at high risk for spine, hip and other life-altering fractures.

Ms. Grufferman had always been active, chasing after her two daughters and walking her dog around Manhattan. But she hadn't done much formal exercise since "the Jane Fonda days" of her 20s, she said.

Once she learned about her low bone density, she began training to run-walk the New York City Marathon and started doing daily planks and squats. She practiced standing on one foot whenever she could, to improve her balance. Today, more than 15 years later, her bone density has held steady and she's training for her 18th marathon.

"I'm a walking, talking, breathing example that it's never too late to take action," Ms. Grufferman, 67, said.

But you don't have to run marathons to protect your bones. Simply adding a few strategic exercises to your routine can support them — now and in the future.

"People think of bone as this static thing," said Dr. Andrea Singer, the chief medical officer of the Bone Health and Osteoporosis Foundation. But "it's a living, dynamic organ that is constantly remodeling."

As with your muscles, the more you strategically stress your bones with exercise, the stronger they become, she said.

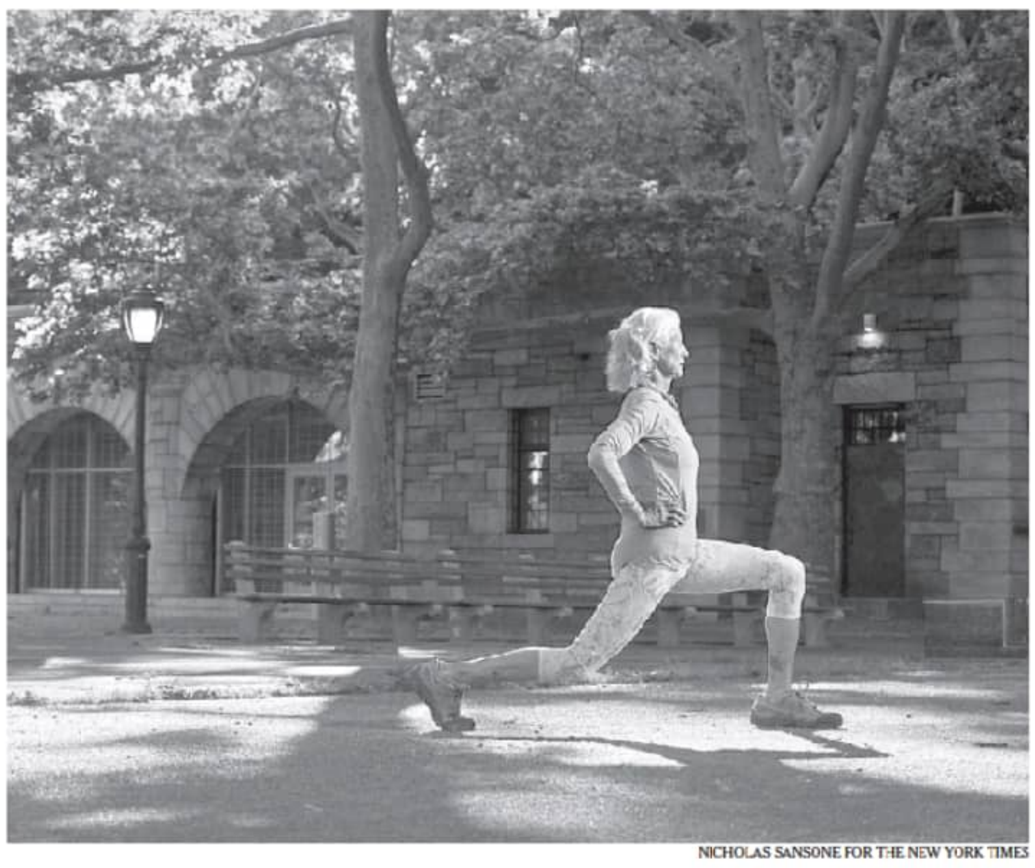
Everyone's bones weaken with age, but 80 percent of Americans with osteoporosis are women, and half of women over 50 will break a bone because of the disease. Women reach their peak bone density in their early 20s. The biggest decline happens in the five to seven years following menopause, when levels of estrogen, which help to keep bones robust, plummet.

The earlier in your life you start building bone strength, the better — but it's also never too late, experts said. If you have already been diagnosed with low bone density, if you've fractured bones in the past or if you have osteoporosis, speak to your doctor about the best workout plan before starting anything new.

While most exercise is good for your bones, workouts that require your body to support its own weight are especially effective for bone strength, experts said. This helps explain why astronauts' bones weaken in space and why they spend two hours a day exercising.

"Bone is very, very adaptive," said Rebekah Rotstein, a Pilates instructor and creator of Buff Bones, a fitness program to help women build bone strength, who has worked with hospitals across the country. "It responds to external forces by getting stronger, and the lack of force will weaken it."

If you're new to aerobic exercise, or getting back into the swing of it — or if you've already been diagnosed with low bone density — start by walking, said Dr. Mary O'Connor, emerita professor of orthopedics at the Mayo Clinic and the chief medical officer for the telehealth company Vori Health. Carrying hand weights can help to strengthen the bones in your upper body.



NICHOLAS SANSONE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

If you work out regularly and haven't been diagnosed with low bone density, cardio that puts more force on your body is ideal for preserving or strengthening bone. Running and jumping exercises (for example, box jumps or jumping jacks) are good options. Workouts that involve moving in multiple directions — think dance, tennis or pickleball — are even better.

"Surprising your body with new movements, in different directions, has a better, more efficient effect in building bone than doing hours and hours of repetitive activity," said Dr. Kathryn Ackerman, an associate professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School who studies bone health.

If your bones are already fragile, high-impact exercises may put you at greater risk of fracture, "because they're putting more stress on the bone," Dr. O'Connor said. So speak with your doctor about what your body can handle.

Regularity is also key, since bones must be stressed constantly to stay strong. Rather than stacking workouts on the weekends, do roughly 30 minutes of daily weight-bearing cardio to support bone health.

Resistance training strengthens your bones in addition to your muscles — which, in turn, strengthen your bones *more* by putting additional force on them, experts said.

"We used to be really nervous about older women, in particular, and having them do too much" or lift too much, Dr. Ackerman said. "We did them a little disservice because they got nervous to move, because they thought they would break."

As part of her Buff Bones program, Ms. Rotstein recommends regular squats, hip hinges, lunges, calf raises, planks and push-ups — pay extra attention to form, so that your joints and bones are in proper alignment.

These exercises strengthen the muscles that are essential for daily activities, Ms. Rotstein said, including sitting and standing, bending to pick up objects and reaching for items on a shelf.

Consider free weights or machines as well, Dr. Ackerman said, but start slow. As you age, these daily activities can lead to fractures if your bones and muscles aren't strong yet.

A well-rounded bone health workout should also include exercises designed to keep you stable on your feet. This can help to prevent falls, which can be particularly devastating to your bones as you age, Dr. Ackerman said.

Single-leg balances, weight shifts, Pilates and yoga are all helpful for cultivating balance, experts said. And research suggests tai chi may be particularly effective.

Finally, if you've already been diagnosed with osteoporosis, avoid movements that involve bending all the way forward from the waist and quick twists. "Most hip fractures in older, osteoporotic women — what we would call fragility hip fractures — happen before the fall," Dr. O'Connor said. "So someone stands, they turn, their hip breaks, and they fall."

"Our bones are weakest in torsion," she added.

But try not to let fear of fracture discourage you from moving at all, she said. With a few precautions, staying active now is what will keep you active for years to come.

Feel Uneasy? Caffeine May Be Why.

Experts say the stimulant can make you anxious, but there are ways to mitigate that.

By HANNAH SINGLETON

Brian Byrne, a tour manager in Los Angeles, was sipping a cold brew a few years ago when he started feeling clammy. Soon, his symptoms worsened: shallow breathing, a hollow feeling in his chest and a rapid, thumping heartbeat. He went outside to get air. "At that point, I was having racing thoughts, feeling like I was having a heart attack," he said.

This wasn't the first time Mr. Byrne experienced a caffeine-fueled panic attack, but it was the most intense. "Drinking that coffee felt like I poured gasoline on a fire that was already smoldering," he said. For a year after, he didn't touch the stuff and didn't have another serious episode.

Many people can relate to Mr. Byrne's caffeine-related anxiety. While researchers can't definitively say that caffeine makes you anxious, it's linked to increased risk of anxiety among people with and without psychiatric diagnoses.

Caffeine is a stimulant that affects the sympathetic nervous system — the part of the body responsible for your fight-or-flight response. When it's activated, your heart rate rises, your blood pressure goes up, your muscles tense, and you may start sweating.

But caffeine isn't the only thing that arouses the nervous system. Any adrenaline-pumping activity — like exercising or riding a roller coaster — can stimulate a response.

When you're working out or on a ride, those sensations aren't a surprise. But the incongruity of sitting quietly at your desk while your heart is pounding, the way it might if you've just had some caffeine, can make some people experience that arousal as anxiety, said Joseph Trunzo, a deputy director of the School of Health and Behavioral Sciences at Bryant University. On top of that, if you subconsciously label these symptoms as anxiety, you might reinforce the effect.

Other factors can come into play, too. Caffeine acts against the brain chemical adenosine, which slows the heart rate and promotes drowsiness and relaxation. "When we ingest caffeine and it blocks those receptors, adenosine can't do its job," Dr. Trunzo said. Some scientists have speculated that the blocking of adenosine receptors might contribute to increased anxiety.



GETTY IMAGES

Caffeine can also disrupt sleep, particularly deep sleep, which helps keep anxiety at bay, said Dr. Sheenie Ambardar, a physician specializing in adult psychiatry in Beverly Hills, Calif. If the coffee is consumed within eight and a half hours of bedtime, caffeine might cause you to toss and turn, reducing the time you spend in deep sleep. Even slight disruptions in your sleep can increase anxiety levels the next day.

Caffeine affects everyone differently. If even a small amount of caffeine makes you anxious, you might have a certain genetic variant that influences how you metabolize caffeine, said Lina Begdache, a dietitian and associate professor of health and wellness studies at the State University of New York at Binghamton. In this case, you will process the caffeine more slowly, so it stays in the system longer and accumulates, potentially causing a more pronounced effect.

There's no way to flush caffeine through your system quickly, but you can take steps to manage the anxiety if it strikes. Exercise may help distract you and reduce short-term symptoms.

You could also take a less physical approach: sitting with and acknowledging the sensations, instead of trying to fight them, said Avigail Lev, a licensed clinical psychologist in San Francisco. She suggests asking yourself questions like: Where in the body am I feeling this most intensely? Does it have a size or color? When you recognize that you can live with the feelings and are not in danger, they become much less debilitating.

If you think your morning latte is making your heart race and palms sweat, there are ways to assess your intake.

KEEP A LOG "I always encourage my patients to gather data," said Dr. Ambardar, who suggested writing down how much caffeine you drink and how you feel for a month. Note your sources of caffeine and how much they contain. The Food and Drug Administration has cited 400 milligrams per day — about four or five cups of coffee — as a safe amount for adults. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends limiting caffeine intake to 200 milligrams for pregnant women.

CONSIDER TAPERING "The best way to find out what role the substance plays in your life is to stop using it and see what happens," Dr. Trunzo said.

A few years ago, Dr. Ambardar had a patient who was dealing with severe anxiety. He had a high-pressure job and was drinking caffeine around the clock. Over several weeks, he reduced his intake and felt much more at ease. "He was really surprised and said, if he had known that this was the cause, he would have cut it back much sooner," she recalled.

You don't need to go cold turkey, either. Instead, cut back slowly. If you drink four cups of coffee a day, "start really small, like three and a half cups of coffee, then half a cup of decaf," Dr. Ambardar said. After two weeks, you could drop to three cups and continue that pattern.

MAKE OTHER LIFESTYLE CHANGES When you reduce your overall anxiety, you'll be less susceptible to the effects of caffeine, Dr. Begdache said. During the year that Mr. Byrne, the tour manager, quit coffee, he started therapy and daily exercise. He now has added caffeine back in moderation.

You can also take steps to improve your energy so you're less reliant on caffeine, Dr. Begdache said. "It's really a combination of factors that help you feel more energetic," she explained. So, prioritize sleeping and exercising, staying hydrated and eating a healthy diet. With these changes, you might find that your latte is a pleasant boost instead of a source of anxiety.

Avocados In Action

The creamy fruit packs some striking nutritional benefits.

By CAROLINE HOPKINS

Ripe, creamy avocados are great on toast, salads and burgers, or just sprinkled with salt. Plus, they're healthy. But how healthy?

"Avocados are no regular fruits," said Dr. Frank Hu, a professor of nutrition and epidemiology at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. "They're nutrient dense with very little carbohydrates and high amounts of healthy fats and fiber." And they make plant-based meals more filling.

Regulate Cholesterol

Avocados' better-known benefits stem from their heart-healthy fats, said Elizabeth Klingbeil, a registered dietitian and assistant professor at the University of Texas at Austin. Most of the fats in avocados are monounsaturated, which differ from the saturated fats abundant in meats and dairy.

"Saturated fats can gunk up your blood vessels and increase your heart disease risk," Dr. Klingbeil said. If left unchecked, this gunk, called LDL or "bad" cholesterol, can lead to heart attacks or strokes.

While saturated fats increase LDL cholesterol, unsaturated fats can lower it. For this reason, avocados can help manage blood cholesterol levels, especially when you eat them in place of foods like meat, cheese and butter.



BOBBI LIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Address Heart Disease

In a study that followed more than 110,000 adults over 30 years, Dr. Hu and his colleagues showed that people who ate at least two servings of avocado per week had a 21 percent lower risk of coronary heart disease.

The researchers used statistics to account for other factors that could have affected people's heart health. Still, Dr. Hu said, it's impossible to say if avocados directly reduced the risk.

Zeroing in on one food as the cause of health outcomes is challenging, explained Dr. Martin Kohlmeier, a professor at the University of North Carolina Nutrition Research Institute.

Because avocados make great substitutions for less healthy foods, studies showing their benefits might in part reflect the benefits of cutting back on other stuff — like using avocado instead of mayonnaise on a sandwich, or adding more avocado, and less beef, to a burrito.

"Many reported effects are replacement effects, not necessarily avocado effects," Dr. Kohlmeier said.

Support Gut Microbiome

Avocados are high in fiber, Dr. Klingbeil said, which can help you maintain a healthy weight and promote a healthy gut.

When gut bacteria digest fiber, they release small molecules that affect our overall health, said Dr. Zhaoping Li, a professor of medicine and chief of the division of clinical nutrition at the University of California, Los Angeles. Healthy bacteria can also signal to our brain when we're full, Dr. Klingbeil said.

Dr. Hu said avocados can help you meet your daily fiber goals, which is important because studies show that most people don't eat enough fiber. People should aim for at least 21 to 38 grams of fiber daily, depending on their age and sex. A whole avocado is around 10 grams.

Rich in Micronutrients

The vitamin E in avocados may support healthy skin, Dr. Klingbeil said. According to Dr. Kohlmeier, the lutein in avocados may help keep your vision sharp.

And while bananas tend to get all the credit for potassium, avocados contain even more of the important mineral. Potassium helps your body reduce high blood pressure, Dr. Hu said.

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Well

Minimizing Exposure To Microplastic Particles

Tiny bits from furniture, food packaging and clothes end up inside us.

By SARAH SLOAT

Matthew Campen, a toxicologist at the University of New Mexico, wasn't surprised when his team found microplastics in human testicles during a new study. The tiny particles had already been found in human breast milk, lungs and blood. At this point, Dr. Campen said, he expects to find them in every part of the body.

The particles are so small that it's easy to ingest or inhale them. Scientists still aren't sure how that might affect human health, but some early research points to cause for concern: One 2021 study found that patients with inflammatory bowel disease had more microplastics in their feces than healthy subjects, while another recent paper reported that people with microplastics in their blood vessels had an increased risk of heart complications.

We can't directly control many of the microplastics we're exposed to — the materials used in car tires, food manufacturing, paint and many other products can all create plastic particles. But if you're worried about microplastics, there are simple steps to take to minimize your exposure somewhat, experts say.

"You're not going to get to zero, but you can reduce your levels," said Tracey Woodruff, a professor at the University of California, San Francisco, who studies how chemicals affect health.

Microplastics are produced when plastic items degrade or are intentionally added to certain products, like microbeads in body scrubs. When they get into water and soil, microplastics enter the food chain.

There are several ways to reduce your exposure through food, including by avoiding highly processed meals. One study of 16 protein types found that while each contained microplastics, highly-processed products like chicken nuggets contained the most per gram of meat. The researchers said that could be because highly processed foods have more contact with plastic food-production equipment.

"The less processed, the less plastic," said Christy Tyler, a professor of environmental science at Rochester Institute of Technology in New York.

While plastic packaging extends shelf-life and acts as a barrier to contamination, it can also generate small amounts of microplastics that may be shed into your food.

More research is needed to know if washing food can reduce these microplastics. But Dr. Woodruff said she had gradually replaced her plastic containers with glass ones. Swapping out plastic cutting boards with wooden ones could also reduce your exposure.

Heat, including from dishwashers and microwaves, can also cause plastic products to break down.

In one 2020 study, researchers prepared baby formula in bottles made of polypropylene, a soft type of plastic, and found that the bottles released microplastics when warmed. As the temperature of water increased, the concentration of microplastics did too. The study authors recommended preparing powdered formula in a glass container and letting it cool before transferring it into a bottle. Similarly, research has suggested that the hot water you use to steep tea might release particles from plastic tea bags; experts recommend using paper tea bags or loose-leaf tea instead.

Water treatment plants can get rid of some, but not all, of the microplastics in tap water. Research suggests microplastic levels are typically higher in bottled water than in tap water. This contamination might partly result from the bottling process, the plastic bottles themselves and even opening and closing the cap.

Dr. Woodruff said she would use a reusable water bottle to avoid this added exposure. There are also home water filters certified to reduce microplastics.

Plastic is often used to manufacture clothes, bedding and furniture. Synthetic fabrics like polyester and nylon can be worn down by friction, heating, lighting and general wear and tear, causing them to shed microplastic fibers. Once inhaled, these microplastics can move through the body, entering organs and the bloodstream.

Some experts recommend keeping items made of plastic, such as a sofa upholstered in polypropylene fabric, out of direct sunlight, or choosing options that aren't made of plastic.

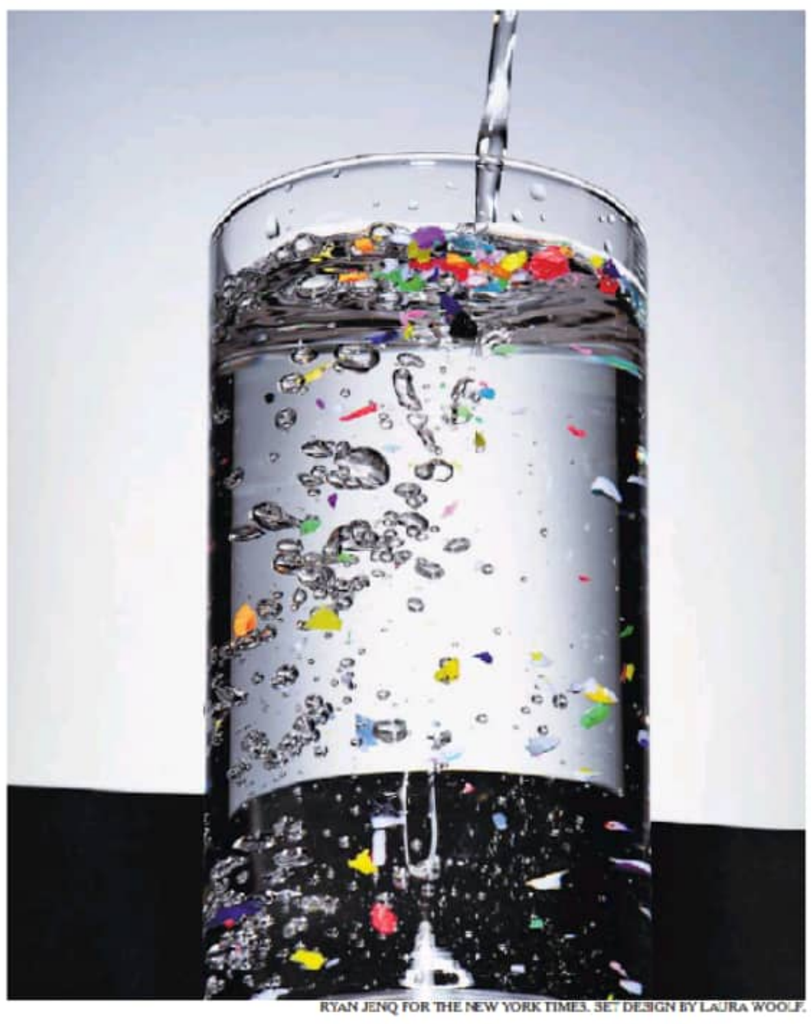
Vacuuming can also make a difference. Scientists have found that frequent vacuuming can reduce microplastic levels in household dust. Dr. Tyler recommended using a vacuum with a HEPA filter to suck up microplastics; these filters can remove airborne particles with a size of 0.3 microns. (Because some microplastics are smaller than that, the tiniest ones might still avoid capture.) She said using a damp cloth instead of a duster could also help prevent indoor microplastic spread.

Laundry is another factor to consider. An estimated 60 percent of the material used for clothes is plastic-based. Washing may cause this clothing to shed tiny plastic fibers that can pass through to sewage treatment plants, be dumped into rivers and the ocean, and end up back in drinking water. The plastic particles shed from clothes can also end up in your lint trap and be inhaled when you're cleaning it out, Dr. Tyler said.

You can try to capture microplastics with a laundry bag, ball or special filter that attaches to your washing machine, but there isn't conclusive evidence on how effective those are. Experts said other common-sense approaches, like doing laundry less often, washing full loads and line drying, could also help minimize microplastic shedding from your clothes.

Experts said these steps could help you limit your microplastic exposure, but only to an extent. And Dr. Tyler acknowledged that it could be difficult for people to cut out plastic entirely, particularly those who purchase synthetic clothing and highly processed foods because they are more affordable. This is why researchers are working toward understanding which plastics might be most harmful to human health.

"We have the opportunity to make the right choices, but not everybody has as much power," Dr. Tyler said. "Some of this is being smart about what you do have control over."



RYAN JENQ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. SET DESIGN BY LAURA WOOLF.



TAMARA BLAKE CHAPMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Kanwal Haq, a doula, demonstrated virtually how her client could use a scarf to relieve pressure in the hips during pregnancy.

The Doula Has Entered the Chat

Caregivers who provide support in pregnancy and childbirth have gone virtual.

By ALISHA HARIDASANI GUPTA

Kanwal Haq, a New York-based doula, was on a plane home from a vacation last September when she received a text from her client: "It's game day here."

The baby was arriving a week earlier than planned.

"They are keeping me in triage right now though because I'm only 3 cm," her client, Alyssa Coats-Clark, wrote. "But boy do these contractions hurt!"

"Let's get BABY BOY EZRA HERE!!!" Ms. Haq wrote back, adding a series of suggestions for what Ms. Coats-Clark could ask the nurses for in order to reduce her discomfort.

It was the first birth Ms. Haq, 34, had helped with. And, though she hadn't envisioned doing so while in the air, the plan was always to support Ms. Coats-Clark, who lives in Indiana, remotely.

Ms. Haq, in conversation over text with her client, as well as with Ms. Coats-Clark's husband and mother, was able to support the delivery from afar, offering guidance about labor positions, pain-relief and insights into how things would likely progress.

"I was still getting the support I needed from the people closest to me while Kanwal was giving them the tools and the things that they needed to be that support," Ms. Coats-Clark said.

Roughly 6 percent of pregnant mothers in the United States have sought the care of doulas, who have expertise in pregnancy and childbirth and offer nonmedical services. Studies have repeatedly found that in-person doula support during birth can improve circumstances for mothers, particularly women of color, including by reducing anxiety during labor, the length of labor and the chances of a premature birth.

In the same way that many therapy appointments and visits with primary care physicians went virtual during the pandemic, so did doula care. Since then, virtual sessions have become a standard part of many doulas' care packages. Data is scarce, but experts believe that even when a doula isn't physically in the room with a client — instead providing care and advice over the phone before, during and after labor — mothers may have a reduced risk of unwanted medical interventions during birth and be more likely to feel satisfied and supported during and after pregnancy.

The United States has persistently high rates of maternal health complications and deaths, and a growing number of medical professionals and lawmakers are embracing virtual doula care as a potential part of the solution. In April, Democratic senators introduced a federal act to expand Medicaid programs to cover access to doula care, including on telehealth platforms, and already, more than half a dozen state health departments have started to include virtual doula care in their programs.

Though the bulk of a doula's job is to provide physical and emotional support during labor, they also offer a range of services before and after birth. "They offer breastfeeding support, they offer birth planning, they provide emotional support, they help parents navigate the health care system — a lot of those services really lend themselves to virtual care," said Lori Uscher-Pines, a health policy researcher at the think tank RAND Corporation and a co-author of an editorial about virtual doula care that was published in a medical journal in January.

According to some estimates, more than six million women live in areas with limited or no access to maternal care, she noted, and doulas are still a luxury predominantly used by high-income white women because many insurance plans don't cover the service. Hiring an in-person doula before, during and after birth can cost a few thousand dollars out-of-pocket; virtual support is a fraction of that amount, with doulas often charging a few hundred dollars for sessions, including support during birth.



SYLVIA JARRUS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

For doulas like Angelene Love, virtual sessions have become a standard part of care packages.

Going virtual, Ms. Uscher-Pines said, also delivers access to more people across the country.

For Janay Hall, who lives in Florida, having a virtual doula during her high-risk pregnancy may have saved her life, she said. She was pregnant with her second child in 2020, at the height of the pandemic, and was diagnosed with pre-eclampsia, a potentially fatal form of high blood pressure. One day, three months before her due date, her left arm went numb while she was driving. She pulled over and called her doula, Bridgette Jerger, who is also based in Florida and works for a network called G.R.O.W. Doula.

"She was like, 'You need to call your provider right now,'" Ms. Hall recalled. "I called my provider and they told me that I needed to go to the emergency ward immediately. So I went to the hospital, not thinking anything because I was so early at that point."

Ms. Hall's blood pressure was so high she had to be admitted for about a month and, because only one visitor was allowed, her doula provided virtual care. She was monitored to see if her blood pressure would come down and, after each check up, Mr. Hall would call her doula in order to better understand her prognosis. Her doula would also offer breathing techniques to reduce stress and logistical advice for her partner, like what to bring to the hospital.

At 34 weeks, when Ms. Hall's blood pressure still wasn't coming down, she had to be induced. Ms. Jerger got on FaceTime to demonstrate the methods her partner could use, like specific back massages, to reduce Ms. Hall's pain and soothe her nerves.

In the end, Ms. Jerger watched the baby be delivered over FaceTime, too.

"A lot of people feel like 'Oh, I can just Google,'" Ms. Hall said. "But it's not like Googling because you can actually have someone hands-on walking you through the process."

Anecdotal evidence from doula networks around the country have found that the health outcomes for mothers who receive virtual support are better than those who receive no care, and are often comparable to those who receive in-person care. A study funded by Maven, a telehealth platform that offers fertility, pregnancy and postpartum care, found that out of roughly 8,900 patients on its platform, women who had at least two virtual doula visits were less likely to have a cesarean birth than those who didn't have virtual doula visits.

A collaboration between Mount Sinai Hospital, New York City's public health care system and two doula networks offers care for immigrant, low-income, homeless and incarcerated women in Queens, often via FaceTime and WhatsApp. This has allowed them to reach women in domestic violence shelters where visitation restrictions are tight, for example, and people who live in their cars.

Pregnant women in those populations are often wary of, or shut out of, formal medical systems. But those who participated in the hybrid doula program went to more doctor visits, particularly postpartum visits, compared with new mothers who didn't use the program, said Dr. Sheela Maru, an assistant professor of global health, obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive science at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and director of the doula program.

Angelene Love, a Michigan-based doula who works with Mae, a doula network that works with Medicaid in six states to provide in-person and virtual care, said that in September, she helped one of her clients via an iPad that a family member set up in the labor and delivery room.

"When she got induced, they Zoomed me," Ms. Love said. "When they got to the hospital, they Zoomed me — her mum was just, like, holding up the iPad."

When her client went into active labor, Ms. Love got back on the Zoom call and coached her through breathing exercises. It was also important "just to be in the room to hear what the providers were saying to ensure that, whatever was going on, my client completely understood it and was able to make informed decisions," she said.

There are drawbacks to virtual doula care compared to in-person support, Ms. Love said. Key among them is it hinders a patient's ability to build intimacy with their doulas. Ms. Love's preference, she said, "is that we're able to meet each other in person to make sure that we have a great connection and rapport and trust." There are also subtle signs of physical and emotional concerns that doulas can more easily pick up on in person than on a video call, she added, like when a headache might seem serious enough for medical attention or, postpartum, if the baby is showing signs of distress.

But those challenges, she said, are surmountable, particularly in situations where virtual doula care might be a patient's only option.

"For some folks, being able to get a doula that they want is just not feasible in their price range," she said. "Anything we can do to break down barriers, we have to do it."

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ORIGINS | CARL ZIMMER

Inside a Small Plant, An Extraordinary Secret



PHOTOGRAPHS BY POL FERNÁNDEZ

A fern that grows on an island in the Pacific contains 50 times as much DNA as humans do.

LAST YEAR, JAUME PELLICER led a team of fellow scientists into a forest on Grande Terre, an island east of Australia. They were in search of a fern called Tmesipteris oblanceolata. Standing just a few inches tall, it was not easy to find on the forest floor.

"It doesn't catch the eye," said Dr. Pellicer, who works at the Botanical Institute of Barcelona in Spain. "You would probably step on it and not even realize it."

The scientists eventually managed to spot the nondescript fern. When Dr. Pellicer and his colleagues studied it in the lab, they discovered it held an extraordinary secret. Tmesipteris oblanceolata has the largest known genome on Earth. As the researchers described in a study published last month, the fern's cells contain more than 50 times as much DNA as ours do.

If you find it strange that such a humble plant has such a gigantic genome, scientists do, too. The enigma emerged in the 1950s, when biologists discovered that the double helix of DNA encodes genes. Each gene consists of a series of genetic letters, and our cells read those letters to make corresponding proteins.

Scientists assumed that humans and other complex species must make a lot of different proteins and therefore have bigger genomes. But when they weighed the DNA in different animals, they discovered they were wildly wrong. Frogs, salamanders and lungfish had much bigger genomes than humans did.

It turns out that genomes are much weirder than scientists had expected. We carry about 20,000 protein-coding genes, but they make up only 1.5 percent of the three billion pairs of letters in our genome.

Another 9 percent or so is made up of stretches of DNA that don't encode proteins but still carry out important jobs. Some of them, for example, act like switches to turn neighboring genes on and off.

The other 90 percent of the human genome has no known function. Some scientists have an affectionate nickname for this vast quantity of mysterious DNA: junk.

Some species have little junk DNA, whereas others have staggering amounts. The African lungfish, for example, has about the same number of protein-coding genes as we do, but they are scattered in a giant genome that totals 40 billion pairs of DNA letters — 13 times as much DNA as our own genome holds.

In the early 2000s, when Dr. Pellicer trained as a botanist, he was intrigued to learn that a few lineages of plants have massive genomes as well. Onions, for example, have a genome five times as large as ours.

In 2010, when Dr. Pellicer began working at Kew Gardens in London, he got the chance to study a family of plants known as bunchflowers, which were known to have big genomes. He spent months mincing leaves with a razor blade, isolating cells from dozens of species and weighing their DNA.

When he weighed the genome of a plant called Paris japonica, which grows in the mountains near Nagano, Japan, he was shocked at the result. The ordinary flower had a genome containing 148 billion pairs of letters — a world record.

In the years that followed, colleagues sent him fresh samples of ferns from Australia and New Zealand to chop up. He discovered that those plants, too, had massive genomes, although not quite as big as Paris japonica.



ORIANE HIDALGO

Grande Terre, top, is an island that's part of the archipelago known as New Caledonia, east of Australia. Tmesipteris oblanceolata, a fern growing on the island, center and above, was found to have the largest known genome on Earth, with about 160 billion pairs of DNA letters.

Dr. Pellicer knew that related fern species grew on a few Pacific islands. In 2016, he began making plans for an expedition to Grande Terre, part of the archipelago known as New Caledonia.

It wasn't until 2023 that he finally made it to the island. He collected a number of species along with a team that included colleagues from Kew, his graduate student Pol Fernández and local plant experts.

Back in Barcelona, Mr. Fernández was startled to discover that Tmesipteris oblanceolata's genome contained about 160 billion pairs of DNA letters. Thirteen years after Dr. Pellicer had discovered a record-breaking genome, his graduate student was also experiencing the thrill of breaking the record.

There are two chief ways in which genomes expand over evolutionary time. Many species carry viruslike stretches of DNA. As they make new copies of their genomes, they sometimes accidentally make an extra copy of that viral stretch. Over many generations, a species can accumulate thousands of new copies, causing its genome to swell.

It's also possible for a species to suddenly end up with two genomes instead of one. One way for an extra genome to arise is for two closely related species to mate. Their hybrid offspring may inherit full sets of DNA from both parents.

Dr. Pellicer and his colleagues suspect that a combination of viruslike DNA and duplicated genomes is responsible for the huge amount of genetic material in Tmesipteris oblanceolata. But they don't know why this humble fern ended up with a record-setting genome while other species — like us — have so much less DNA.

It's possible that most species gradually accumulate DNA in their genomes without suffering any harm. "A lot of biology is 'why not?' rather than 'why?'" said Julie Blommaert, a genomicist at the New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research who was not involved in the new study.

Eventually, however, genomes may get so big that they become a burden. Cells may have to expand to house all the extra DNA. They also need more time and more nutrients to make new copies of their giant genomes. An organism with an oversized genome may lose out to a rival with a smaller one. So mutations that chop out unneeded DNA may be favored by evolution.

It's possible that animals and plants can evolve truly giant genomes only in special environments, such as in stable climates where there is little competition. "Maybe that's why they're so rare — they get ripped away because they're not efficient," Dr. Pellicer said.

Even in the most welcoming home, genomes can't grow to infinite sizes. In fact, Dr. Pellicer suspects that Tmesipteris oblanceolata may have nearly reached a genome's physical limit. "I believe we are close," he said.

Others aren't so sure.

"I don't know if we have reached an upper boundary yet," said Brittany Sutherland, a botanist at George Mason University who was not involved in the study. She noted that botanists had measured the sizes of genomes in only 12,000 species of plants, leaving 400,000 other species to study. "What we have estimates for is a drop in the bucket," she said.*

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