

B2 经典外刊阅读 8

阅读能力整合—长篇实战训练

外刊阅读一

PATIENCE AS A CORPORATE VIRTUE

选自 *Christian Science Sentinel* 《基督教科学箴言报》

2019 考研英语阅读原文

- ❖ Financial regulations in Britain have imposed a rather unusual rule on the bosses of big banks. Starting next year, any guaranteed bonus of top executives could be delayed 10 years if their banks are under investigation for wrongdoing. The main purpose of this “claw back” rule is to hold bankers accountable for harmful risk-taking and to restore public trust in financial institution. Yet officials also hope for a much larger benefit: more long term decision-making not only by banks but also by all corporations, to build a stronger economy for future generations.
- ❖ 英国突如其来的出台新的金融监管法案，要求从明年开始的未来十年内，凡涉及诚信调查的银行经理的保证红利一律推迟十年发放，对于银行老板们，这无异于晴天霹雳（这两句混在一起翻，因为分开会导致句子不通顺。第一句直译为英国金融法规给大银行老板们施加了异乎寻常的规则。Financial regulations 金融法案；第二句是未来十年内，董事长的保证红利搁置十年发放如果他们所在的银行涉及诚信调查。Starting next year 固定搭配，从明年开始，guaranteed bonus 保证红利，金融术语，即无论效益如何，红利发放不受影响，top executive 经理，董事长，wrongdoing 错误，刑事犯罪，显然对于银行，还是发钱的问题，不会涉及到刑事犯罪，转译为诚信，下文的“对银行的信心”也说明了这个。）这个紧箍咒的用意是希望银行老总们在风险（投资，补句）前好好想想，并设法重建公众对于银行的信心。而且英国政府的

用意更为长远：长线投资不能仅由银行，而是应该由所有（相关，补句）公司共同决定，这样才能打造经济的美好未来。

- ❖ “Short-termism” or the desire for quick profits, has worsened in publicly traded companies, says the Bank of England’s top economist. Andrew Haldane. He quotes a giant of classical economies, Alfred Marshall, in describing this financial impatience as acting like “Children who pick the plums out of their pudding to eat them at once” rather than putting them aside to be eaten last.
- ❖ 英格兰银行首席经济分析师（字面译为首席经济学家）安德鲁·霍尔丹表示，短期效益主义或者说希望快点返现这种想法会削弱上市公司（的竞争力，补句）。他引用古典经济学大师阿尔弗雷德马歇尔（经济学大师，代表著作《经济学原理》，此书为经济学方面的必读书，译注）的话，这种急于求成就好比“把要做布丁的葡萄直接吃了”，而没有等布丁做好了再吃（意译，直译为就像一个小孩子把葡萄从布丁里掏出来立刻吃了，而不是放在一边等最后再吃。意思是蛋糕还没做就先把水果吃了而不是等蛋糕做好了再吃蛋糕，相当于不懂得放长线钓大鱼）。
- ❖ The average time for holding a stock in both the United States and Britain, he notes, has dropped from seven years to seven months in recent decades. Transient investors, who demand high quarterly profits from companies, can hinder a firm’s efforts to invest in long-term research or to build up customer loyalty. This has been dubbed “quarterly capitalism”.
- ❖ 霍尔丹指出，近十年内，无论美国或英国，平均持股时间（金融术语，即股票从购入到脱手的周期）已经从七年降到了七个月。如此短的时间意味着投资人期待快速（注意 high 译为高字面上没问题，但语义有点不通，能快速挣钱即可，短期投资期待高收益显然不现实，转译为快速）获利，这会妨碍相关公司关注长线投资和回头客（因为短期投资意味着必须在最短时间内挣钱，谁管顾客能否再来，过一年说不准这个公司都关门了呢，能挣一笔是一笔，这两句略难理解）。这也被戏称为“季度资本主义”（金融术语，因为美国公司一般一季度公布一次收支状况，很多人根据这个决定是否买入卖出）。

- ❖ In addition, new digital technologies have allowed more rapid trading of equities, quicker use of information, and thus shortens attention spans in financial markers. “There seems to be a predominance of short-term thinking at the expense of long-term investing,” said Commissioner Daniel Gallagher of the US Securities and Exchange Commission in speech this week.
- ❖ 另外，数字技术的发展使得炒股更容易（equity 有个意思就是股票），信息获取更快，这也导致市场不愿意在一个项目上投入过多（意译，直译为减少关注时间在投资风险方面，这个地方有点绕弯，投资既然有风险，说明投资需要较多的时间进行评估，现在不花那么多时间，说明在有风险的投资领域希望尽快脱出。financial marker 很冷僻的一个词组，一般字典上估计查不到，投资风险，如果倒过来就是风险投资）。美国证监会委员丹尼尔加拉赫也在本周的一次访谈中表示（US Securities and Exchange Commission 美国证券交易监督委员会，securities 可不是安全，是有价证券的意思），“现在的主流就是短线投资（意译，直译为看来占多数的是短期思维在长线投资方面，short-term thinking 短期思维，long-term investing 长期投资）。”
- ❖ In the US, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 has pushed most public companies to defer performance bonuses for senior executives by about a year, slightly helping reduce “short-termism.” In its latest survey of CEO pay, The Wall Street Journal finds that “a substantial part” of executive pay is now tied to performance.
- ❖ 美国（也意识到了短期投资的问题，补句），2002 年，美国通过萨班斯-奥克斯利法案（著名的 SOA 法案，在安然公司破产后美国迅速通过了这部法案以加强对大公司监管力度），要求上市公司对公司高层的绩效工资延迟一年左右发放（performance bonuses 绩效工资），这在一定程度上遏制了“短期效益主义”。根据华尔街日报最新的 CEO 薪酬调查显示，公司高管们收入的“相当一部分”现在和公司绩效直接挂钩（a substantial part 固定搭配，相当一部分）。
- ❖ Much more could be done to encourage “long-termism,” such as changes in the tax code and quicker disclosure of stock acquisitions. In France, shareholders who

hold onto a company investment for at least two years can sometimes earn more voting rights in a company.

- ❖ 不过（补句），想要推动市场关注长期投资还需要做很多事情，比如税收减免（tax code 税务代码，就是交税时用的公司对应编码，英式英语指免税）、股票交易更便捷透明（stock acquisition 股票购置），等等。像法国（这方面就需要改进，补句），股东需持股两年以上才能有更多的话语权。
- ❖ Within companies, the right compensation design can provide incentives for executives to think beyond their own time at the company and on behalf of all stakeholders. Britain's new rule is a reminder to bankers that society has an interest in their performance, not just for the short term but for the long term.
- ❖ 对于一家公司而言，合理的薪酬有助于激励公司高管别总是盯着自己的一亩三分地（注意 beyond，超越自己的时间），而是要更多为全体股东谋划。英国这项法律对银行家们是个警示，说明公众一直在关注着他们的表现，不仅在短期投资方面，还有长期的。

外刊阅读二

‘FRIENDS’ IS TURNING 25.

HERE'S WHY WE CAN'T STOP WATCHING IT.

选自 *New York Times* 《纽约时报》

- ❖ Once upon a time, we made do with less television. Three broadcast networks dominated everything. (Channels weren't flipped so much as triangulated.) We had a local public station and whatever oldies a UHF signal could tune in. Now? Now, we romanticize our cable-assisted, internet-borne so-called golden age and carp about the galactic girth of the streaming era. Somebody even lent the girth a fretful name: "peak TV" — the "money can't buy happiness" of screen life.

- ❖ 曾几何时，我们就将就着看那一丁点电视节目。彼时是三个广播电视网的天
下。（所谓换台无非就是一个三角形轮转。）我们有当地的公共台，还有
UHF 天线可以收到些老旧内容。现在？现在，我们把这个有线电视为辅、互
联网传播的所谓黄金时代浪漫化，对流媒体时代的海量内容吹毛求疵。有人
甚至给这些内容起了个烦人的名字：“巅峰电视”——堪称观视生活中的“金
钱买不到幸福”。
- ❖ In retrospect, less television has come to imply lesser — by volume, by value, by
verisimilitude. But what was “Friends” lesser than? There are 236 episodes of it,
merely one fewer than a combined tally of “Game of Thrones,” “House of
Cards,” and “Orange Is the New Black.” Most of those episodes are perfect as
tidy comedies. Maybe it’s hard to think of “Friends” as perfect, let alone as great,
because it looked easy.
- ❖ 如今看来，贫乏年代的电视，就是从数量、品质和真实程度来说都要差一些。
但是《老友记》又比谁差呢？该剧共有 236 集，仅比《权力的游戏》、《纸
牌屋》和《女子监狱》总和加起来少一集。其中大部分作为干干净净的喜剧
都是完美的。你可能很难把《老友记》想成一个完美的剧，伟大就更别提了，
因为它看上去难度并不大。
- ❖ Most “old TV” looked easy — even when characters broke up, bled and
died. That’s because, even when they did, they were obviously not in a movie. TV
now *is* the movies, so we love it more. We believe it more. For its entire existence,
the American sitcom was anti-cinematic, beholden to the demands of advertisers.
- ❖ 大多数“老电视”看起来都不难拍——即便里面的人物会分手、流血、死亡。
这是因为，即使他们出了这种事，他们显然也不是置身电影之中。而现在，
电视就是电影，所以我们更喜欢电视了。我们更相信电视。美国情景喜剧从
头到尾都是反电影的，这要归功于广告商的要求。
- ❖ Before there was too much TV, there was simply a lot, including a lot of NBC’s
“Friends.” Think about the effort required to make about 24 episodes in a

nine-month season (certain scripted shows somehow made *more*). This was impossible work that we at home took for granted. A network like NBC could turn “granted” into “mandatory” with maximal FOMO threat. “Let’s all be there,” it demanded in the 1980s. A decade later, we had to be there for “Must See TV.” Technologically, it was an uncertain age. If you missed an episode, who knew when you’d be able to catch it again?

- ❖ 在电视节目变得过多之前，其实也有不少节目，就包括 NBC 的《老友记》。想想在 9 个月的一季里制作 24 集需要做多少工作（某些有剧本的剧居然比这还要多）。这是一项难以置信的工作，我们这些看客却当成理所当然。像 NBC 这样的电视网可能会把“当然”变成“必须”，让你觉得错过它就是天大的事。1980 年代，它要求“大家都来看”。10 年后，我们不得不看那些“必看不可的电视”。从技术上讲，那是一个不确定的年代。如果你错过了一集，谁知道什么时候还能再看一遍？
- ❖ “Friends” was easy TV at an elite level. So many jokes, so much body comedy, so many surprises and awwws, and squeals of live-studio audience excitement. Hairdressers were doing — and not infrequently botching — the Rachel. Coffee shops became people’s second homes. Tens of millions of Americans watched all of that writing and directing and acting, all of that seemingly effortless effort, for all 10 of its years. That work and a country’s devotion to it feels like proof of a golden age of *something*.
- ❖ 《老友记》是精英级别的“简单电视”。那么多的笑话，那么多的肢体喜剧，那么多的意外和感动，还有现场观众的兴奋尖叫。美发师们都在做瑞秋的造型——能做成的并不多。咖啡馆成了人们的第二家园。在过去的 10 年里，数以千万计的美国人观赏了所有这些编剧、导演和表演，这一切看上去都是毫不费力的。这项工作和一个国家对它的投入，感觉像是某种东西的黄金时代的证明。
- ❖ “Friends” debuted on NBC in the fall of 1994, ran for an entire decade, typically had around 25 to 30 million viewers a week (sometimes many more) and now

airs in Nickelodeon's Nick @ Nite block, which my cable conglomerate has stationed near the top of the channel pyramid. That means if you're a chronologist like me, the five-channel trip from NY1 — past the local news, TNT and "The Simpsons" — always terminates at Chandler, Joey, Monica, Phoebe, Rachel and Ross. Laziness is a factor. (Do *you* use the number keys on your remote? I'll bet you don't even *have* a remote at this point.)

- ❖ 《老友记》于 1994 年秋季在 NBC 首播，播出了整整 10 年，每周通常有大约 2500 万到 3000 万观众（有时更多），现在，它在 Nickelodeon 的 Nick @ Nite 版块播出，这个台在我家的有线台列表上位于前列。这意味着，如果你和我一样喜欢挨着次序换台，从 NY1 出发，往下看五个台——经过当地新闻、TNT 和《辛普森一家》——最后总是停在钱德勒、乔伊、莫妮卡、菲比、瑞秋和罗斯上。懒惰是原因之一。（你还用遥控器上的数字键吗？我敢打赌你现在连遥控器都没有了。）
- ❖ But, really, it's simplicity. "Friends" actually *is* enormously easy to watch. "The genius of "Seinfeld" (and "The Simpsons," too) has everything to do with the "com" arising from the "sit." What trouble will Jerry and the gang instigate? Whether you're watching an episode for the first time or the 27th, the inciting premise is a major element of the pleasure. The premise of "Friends" is the friends.
- ❖ 但真正的原因就是易看。《老友记》是一个极其易看的剧。《宋飞正传》(Seinfeld)——还有《辛普森一家》——的天才之处和“情景”中产生的“喜剧”息息相关。杰里和那伙人会惹什么麻烦呢？不管你是第一次看还是第 27 次某一集，这种鼓动性的前提都是一个主要的愉悦元素。而《老友记》的前提是朋友。
- ❖ Matters of behavior and economic inequality only seemed to bring them together. Take the show's 29th episode. Everybody goes out for a nice dinner to celebrate Monica's promotion, and Phoebe, Joey and Rachel order the cheapest items on the menu, then balk at evenly dividing the bill. Income turns those three against

the other three, until Monica loses her job and Joey valiantly offers to pay for her \$4 coffee — with Chandler's money. The theme song didn't lie: They really were there for each other, punch lines and all. That thereness was the show's intangible hook. The writers could engineer plots for the directors to orchestrate. But these six actors working together, on anything, on nothing — it was the highlight of many a person's week. That thereness was phenomenally elastic, too. These were six people who could snipe at one another, who could fight and lie and practice what we'd now call radical honesty yet keep so many secrets, who can break up (many times, in many ways) but, as a sextet, keep snapping back together. I like them that way, as half a dozen. I like them in tandems and trios, as human math problems, as chemistry experiments. Maybe 10 times I've watched Chandler, Joey and Monica break down and confess to the other three that, yes, Chandler did pee on Monica's jellyfish sting.

- ❖ 行为处事和经济不平等的各种问题，似乎只是让他们彼此之间的关系更加紧密。以第 29 集为例。为了庆祝莫妮卡升职，大家出去吃了一顿丰盛的晚餐，菲比、乔伊和瑞秋点了菜单上最便宜的菜，却不愿平分账单。收入问题导致这三个人同那三个人产生矛盾，直到莫妮卡失去了工作，乔伊大胆地提出为她付 4 美元的咖啡账单——用钱德勒的钱。主题曲没有说谎：他们的确时刻为彼此准备着，去当笑料之类。这种陪伴是这部剧无形的魅力所在。编剧可以设计情节，让导演来编排。但是这六个演员在一起做点什么，或什么也不做——这是许多人一周中最开心的时刻。这种陪伴也具有极大的灵活性。这六个人可以互相攻击，可以打架，可以撒谎，可以像我们现在所说的那样，对彼此“极端”诚实，同时又保守着很多秘密，他们可以分手（很多次，以很多方式），但是作为一个六人组，他们又可以和好如旧。我喜欢他们这样六个人在一起。我也喜欢他们两人一组或者三人一组行动，像是排列组合，像是化学反应实验。有一次，钱德勒、乔伊和莫妮卡防线崩溃，向另外三个人坦白，莫妮卡被水母蜇到的时候，钱德勒确实往她的伤口上撒尿了，这个情节我重看了可能有十次。

- ❖ I don't know how many takes that sequence took or how much caffeine was consumed. But it's never less than a marvel of harmonized hysterics. That kind of exclamatory, high-energy comedy could happen in any configuration of the cast because it was the best such collection in the history of television. Other hall-of-fame comedies, like "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" and "Cheers," had wits and jesters and clowns mixed in among the goody-goodies and grumps. Some, like "All in the Family" and the first few seasons of "Designing Women," were all zingers, personality and delivery before the whole thing went to schtick. A few permanently watchable jewels like "The Golden Girls" and "Frasier" sneaked in a combo platter of slapstick, vinegar and fuzzies. But the proportions were bigger on "Friends." They went for more, more often, and rarely missed.
- ❖ 我不知道这场戏拍了几条，或者摄入了多少咖啡因。但这绝对是令人捧腹大笑的奇迹。而他们之间任意的组合都可以带来这种令人惊叹、充满活力的喜剧，因为这是电视史上最好的组合。其他殿堂级喜剧，如《玛丽·泰勒·摩尔秀》(The Mary Tyler Moore Show)和《干杯酒吧》(Cheers)，都是在装模作样和牢骚中穿插着机智、玩笑和扮小丑。而《全家福》(All in the Family)和《设计女人》(Designing Women)的前几季，虽然一开始充满活力、个性和表现力，但最后整部剧还是沦为滑稽戏。在《黄金女郎》(The Golden Girls)和《欢乐一家亲》(Frasier)等剧集里，值得一看再看的珍宝偷偷藏在由打闹、尖酸和暧昧组成的大拼盘里。但在《老友记》中，珍宝的比例更高。他们想实现更多，更频繁，而且很少失败。
- ❖ For one thing, the actors had more to play with. The "Friends" friends started out as types. Rachel was a princess, Monica a control freak, Joey a dumb actor. But the types kept recombining.
- ❖ 别的不说，至少演员们有更多的东西可以发挥。《老友记》中的朋友们一开始都是类型化的人。瑞秋是公主，莫妮卡是控制狂，乔伊是傻乎乎的演员。但是这些类型不断地重新组合。

- ❖ Ross seemed like a geek because his paleontology was frequently mocked and there's something gluey in the music of David Schwimmer's whine. But Ross was sad, needy, insecure, quick to anger — dark, basically — and built like a jock. Phoebe evolved rapidly from hippie naïf to schemer, dreamer, peacekeeper, and pot-stirrer. In another era, she'd have been the “Three's Company”-era Suzanne Somers of the bunch, a hapless bombshell. But Lisa Kudrow, with her akimbo intelligence, brought the part in sideways. Not far into the show's run, actually, some of the six are watching TV and Chandler, in Matthew Perry's contagious sardonic snark, says “I think this is the episode of ‘Three's Company’ where's there's some kind of misunderstanding.”
- ❖ 罗斯看起来像个极客，因为他的古生物学专业经常成为笑柄，而且戴维·史威默(David Schwimmer)的嘟囔抱怨常常让人觉得磨磨叽叽。但罗斯伤感、渴望关注、没有安全感、容易生气——基本是个黑色人物——身材像个没脑子的运动健将。菲比迅速地从天真的嬉皮女郎变成谋划者、梦想家、和事佬和惹是生非的人。在《三人行》(Three's Company)的时代，她会成为同伴中的苏珊·萨默斯(Suzanne Somers)，一个不幸的金发美女。但丽莎·库卓(Lisa Kudrow)凭借她的超高智商，让人忽略了她的金发美女特征。实际上，《老友记》开播没多久就有这么一场戏，他们当中有几个人在看电视，马修·佩里(Matthew Perry)以他特有的、具有感染力的嘲讽口吻，假钱德勒之口说：“我觉得这是《三人行》里的一集，就是他们之间有点误会那次。”
- ❖ “Then I've already seen this,” Phoebe snaps and turns off the TV. “Friends” could easily have been “Three's Company,” where “sit” and “com” strained credibility. Chandler was so frequently presumed gay that he could have been Jack Tripper, the faux-mosexual from the other show. And Matt LeBlanc played Joey like Somers but by way of Tony Danza. That probably would have made Courteney Cox the Joyce DeWitt of “Friends” — neutrally sane. For a few episodes at least, Cox, as Monica, seemed meant as the crux of the pack. Monica was Ross's sister. Rachel was an old high-school friend who became her roommate.

- ❖ “那我已经看过了，”菲比回了一句，关上了电视。《老友记》本来很可能会成为《三人行》，后者的“情景”和“喜剧”配合得相当好。钱德勒经常被认为是同性恋，他很有可能成为杰克·特里珀(Jack Tripper)，也就是《三人行》里那个假同性恋。马特·勒布朗(Matt LeBlanc)扮演的乔伊就像萨默斯，不过是以托尼·丹扎(Tony Danza)的方式。这可能会让柯特妮·考克斯(Courtney Cox)成为《老友记》里的乔伊斯·德威特(Joyce DeWitt)——中立而又理智。至少在几集里，考克斯扮演的莫妮卡似乎是一群人中的核心。莫妮卡是罗斯的妹妹。瑞秋是她高中时的老朋友，后来成了她的室友。

- ❖ But halfway through Season 1, it was clear this boat had no captain, just a lot of oars. And the rowing Cox did has never received its due. She wasn't as rubbery a funny person as Perry and Schwimmer or as radiant and tangy in her approach to comedy as Jennifer Aniston was as Rachel. She couldn't physicalize sarcasm and shock with as much cursive and calculus as the other five. But athletic gumption launched Monica entirely beyond classification.

- ❖ 但是在第一季的中途，很明显，这艘船没有船长，只有很多划桨手。而考克斯奋力划桨，却从未得到应有的回报。她不像佩里和史威默那样风趣而又耐人寻味，也不像詹妮弗·安妮斯顿(Jennifer Aniston)饰演瑞秋时那样，充满光芒四射而又浓烈的喜剧色彩。她无法像其他五个人一样，用连笔字和微积分把讽刺和震惊具体化。但是强健的进取心让莫妮卡完全无法归类。

- ❖ I mean, I guess her type was Type A. Monica made the most psychological sense, as a former fat person who's holding on to whatever it took to shed the weight and keep it off. We can shake our heads now at the idea of the show's laughing at her size through the fat suit Cox wears in flashbacks. These flashbacks also explain why she seemed to think everything was grist for competition, why winning and losing mattered so much to her, why control was so important. And Monica lost so much control, so much cool, so much coolness. Each actor managed to do a lot with intensity, but Cox made it a state of Monica's mind.

- ❖ 我的意思是，我猜她是争强好胜的 A 型性格的人，莫妮卡最有心理学上的代表意义，她曾经是个胖子，千方百计才减肥成功，并且保持下去。剧中的闪回让考克斯身穿肥大的服装，嘲笑莫妮卡曾经有多胖，我们现在当然可以对此表示不赞同。然而这些闪回也解释了她为什么觉得一切都是为了竞争，为什么输赢和控制对她来说如此重要。莫妮卡曾经如此失控，失去冷静和风度。每个演员都充满激情地诠释角色，但考克斯把这种感觉融入了莫妮卡的心态。
- ❖ People now ding “Friends” for all kinds of offenses — regarding homosexuality, mental health, race, interracial dating, ethnicity. (Here’s pregnant Rachel, exasperated by the surfeit of gift diapers at her shower: “What are we feeding this baby — Indian food?”) “Friends”-as-problematic disserves the show’s complex relationship to those issues. Sometimes it winked at them. Monica did a lot of winking, especially under a spell of casual blackness. Her cornrows and Chandler’s disdain for them were one thing. My favorite, though, is the time she comes down with a cold but refuses to give up on sex with Chandler. He’d rather not. She comes at him anyway, in a bathrobe as plush and scarlet as a Muppet, full of mucus and the R&B of Guy. “Are you saying,” she asks, thrusting her body at her man, “that you don’t wanna. Git. With. This?” It’s peak Monica: addicted to victory, unlimitedly white.
- ❖ 如今，人们会因各种各样的问题炮轰《老友记》——涉及同性恋、精神健康、种族、跨种族约会、民族认同。（怀孕的瑞秋在宝宝欢迎会上收到太多纸尿裤做礼物，恼火地说：“我们给这个宝宝喂什么——印度菜吗？”）“有问题” (problematic) 的朋友们，对该剧同这些问题的复杂关系是不利的。有时它会假装没看见。莫妮卡经常这样，尤其受到那种不经意的黑人特色的魅惑。她的玉米垄发型和钱德勒对这个发型的不屑便是一例。不过我最喜欢的，是她感冒了还硬要和钱德勒做那种事。他不太能接受。但她还是杀了过来，穿着一件如同布偶一般的猩红毛绒浴衣，满是粘液和 Guy 乐队的节奏布鲁斯。“你是在说，”她问道，一边把身体挤向她的男人。“连这，你都，不想尝尝？”那是“巅峰莫妮卡”：对胜利无限渴求的极致白人。

- ❖ There's a way to watch "Friends" so that its very whiteness — and the associated entitlement — is the problem. That magical casting configuration probably couldn't happen now without considerable umbrage — umbrage I'd understand. For a great while during "Friends"-mania, Eriq La Salle, of "ER," was just about the biggest star on a smash-hit show who wasn't white. "Friends" gave you white people who leave infants on city buses without consequence, who only rarely face a challenge to their permanent spot at Central Perk (for many years, a "reserved" card rested on the coffee table). But I'm not sure this was the show to do the labor, to open those doors with the same alacrity.
- ❖ 有一种观看《老友记》的方式可以使它的“白人”性本身——以及与之相关的优待——成为问题所在。这部剧魔幻般的选角配置，要放在现在可能免不了得罪人——我能理解这种不满。在《老友记》风靡的年代，《急诊室的故事》(ER)里的艾瑞琪·拉·塞拉(Eriq La Salle)有很长一段时间基本上就是热门剧集里最大的非白人明星。《老友记》呈现给你的，是把婴儿落在公交车上也不会尝到苦果的白人，他们在中央乐园(Central Perk)咖啡馆的固定座位只是偶尔遇到挑战（咖啡桌上常年放着一张“留座”卡）。但我不太相信，费了那么多周折，以同样的轻快姿态一次又一次打开那扇门，就是为了这样一部剧。
- ❖ "Friends" made most of its social bets on gender differences, the way men get away with being chauvinists and lust buckets and layabouts, and the women have to pick up the slack. But tweaking the stereotypes became a meaningful staple of the show. Once, the girls' failure to know the boys as well as the boys knew them cost Monica and Rachel their apartment. To be fair: Do you know what Chandler does for a living? Nonetheless, their place suddenly belongs to Joey and Chandler. It remains a shocking turn of events. I watched the early years of this show with roommates in the dorm of a college where bad housing could ruin friendships. I wasn't watching a comedy that night. I was watching a cautionary tale. The show knew our loyalties were with the women and that Monica might not survive

making breakfast in a man cave. So it refused to shake the Etch A Sketch. She unleashes a scream of “no” fit for no sitcom. It belonged in “Hamlet.”

- ❖ 《老友记》的社会赌注大部分押在性别差异上，这样一来可以任凭男人去作性别沙文主义者、好色之徒、游手好闲的人，而女人则需要一丝不苟。但改变刻板印象成了这部剧的重要内容。有一集里，女人们对男人们的了解，不及男人们对她们的了解，这导致莫妮卡和瑞秋失去了她们的公寓。公平地说：你知道钱德勒是做什么的吗？然而她们的住处突然归了乔伊和钱德勒。这个情节转折至今令人惊讶。这部剧早期部分我是在一所大学的宿舍里和室友们一起看的，在那里，糟糕的住处是可以毁掉友谊的。那天晚上我不是在看喜剧。我在看一个警世故事。这部剧知道我们是忠于女性一边，而且莫妮卡如果要在一个男人窝里做早餐，可能是活不下去的。于是它拒绝抹掉不堪重新开始。她喊出的那一声“不”，不属于情景喜剧。它属于《哈姆雷特》。
- ❖ “Friends” left prime-time television in 2004, just as the culture began to distrust meaningful inter-gender adventure. Its offspring — “How I Met Your Mother,” “The Big Bang Theory” “The Mindy Project,” “New Girl,” the short-lived masterpiece of repartee “Happy Endings” — did their best. But “Sex and the City,” which hit HBO in 1998, and the movies that sprang from Judd Apatow’s laugh factory would so convincingly relocate the sexes into ladies’ nights and boys’ clubs that the culture never quite came to reinvest in the coed comforts of a Central Perk.
- ❖ 《老友记》是在 2004 年离开黄金时段的，当时正值文化开始不信任性别间能进行有意义的冒险。它的后代——《老爸老妈浪漫史》、《生活大爆炸》、《明迪烦事多》和《杰茜驾到》，及存在时间不长却妙语连篇的杰作《快乐结局》——都表现不俗。但 1998 年在 HBO 开播的《欲望都市》，以及从贾德·阿帕托(Judd Apatow)的逗笑工厂里蹦出的一部部电影，已经令人信服地将男男女女重新安排到女士之夜和男孩俱乐部，以至于文化再也没有重新投入于中央乐园咖啡馆这样让男女一同得到抚慰的地方。

- ❖ “Friends” wasn’t a fantasy during its original run. But I can see why so many people who weren’t alive the first time around have devoured the show on cable and streaming like it’s a tub of ice cream. (I know of a 10-year-old as “Friends” conversant as I am.) There are no sexual threats, just Monica, her robe and her cold; just a vengeful guest star, in Julia Roberts, stranding Chandler in a pair of her underwear as comeuppance for a preadolescent prank; just a last-run of Rubik’s Cube hookups and occasionally vaguely funny lechery. Otherwise, the show was an oasis: adult women hanging out with adult men, with no monsters to fear, run from or prosecute. That could explain why droves of us are addicted to it. Sure, it’s excellent Easy TV — funnier, dirtier and more audacious than you heard it was, than you remember it being. But maybe, now, “Friends” is a fantasy. If you’re looking to restore some thereness to your life, maybe it’s more than must-see TV. Maybe it’s a clue.
- ❖ 《老友记》最初播出时并不是一个幻想剧。但我能理解为什么那么多首播时还没出生的人在有线电视和流媒体上狂看这部剧，就像吞下一桶冰激凌。（我认识一个 10 岁孩子对《老友记》和我一样熟。）其中没有性爱场面，只有莫妮卡、她的长袍和她的感冒；只是朱莉娅·罗伯茨客串出演的一个复仇者，让钱德勒穿上自己内裤，作为对一次前青春期恶作剧的惩罚；只是玩最后一轮魔方勾搭，偶尔带点好笑的淫荡。此之外，这部剧就像一片绿洲：成年女性和成年男性一起玩，没有什么怪物让人惧怕、躲避或控诉。这可以解释为什么我们中的许多人对它上瘾。当然，这是一部很好的简单电视，比你所听到的、你所记得的更有趣、更肮脏、更大胆。但现在，也许《老友记》的确是个幻想剧了。如果你想让你的生活恢复一些朋友的陪伴，也许它不只是一部必看剧目。也许它是一个提示。