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1. [**Hochul Unveiled Vision for New York . Now Comes the Hard Part.**](#Bookmark_1)

2. [**Hochul Unveiled a Sweeping Vision for New York . Now Comes the Hard Part.**](#Bookmark_2)

3. [**For France ’s Muslims, a Choice Between Lesser Evils in Presidential Vote**](#Bookmark_3)

4. [**Recognition for Artists**](#Bookmark_4)

5. [**Turner Prize Was Canceled, but Organizers Still Gave Out the Cash**](#Bookmark_5)

6. [**Republicans Reel as Democrats Seethe On Politics**](#Bookmark_6)

7. [**Letter of Recommendation: Gossip**](#Bookmark_7)

8. [**Trump 2020? Moves on Iran Raise Doubts**](#Bookmark_8)

9. [**Conservatives Need Therapy, Too**](#Bookmark_9)

10. [**Best Sellers: Combined Print & E-Book Nonfiction: Sunday, February 02nd 2020**](#Bookmark_10)

11. [**Trump’s Iran Strategy May Cost Him in 2020 Election**](#Bookmark_11)

12. [**Two U.S. Marshals Shot in an Exchange of Fire With a Man in the Bronx**](#Bookmark_12)

13. [**Two U.S. Marshals Are Shot in the Bronx**](#Bookmark_13)

14. [**The Battlegrounds Within Battlegrounds: 20 Counties That Could Shape the Race**](#Bookmark_14)

15. [**Annotated by the Author: ‘It’s Never Too Late to Record Your First Album’ Mentor Texts**](#Bookmark_15)

16. [**‘Kamala Harris’s Nomination Is Everything to Me’**](#Bookmark_16)

17. [**‘The Far Left Is the Republicans’ Finest Asset’**](#Bookmark_17)

18. [**Daniel Patrick Moynihan Was Often Right. Joe Klein on Why It Still Matters. Essay**](#Bookmark_18)

19. [**Facing Turmoil, Kazakh President Chose His Path: Embrace Russia**](#Bookmark_19)

20. [**Makeover Proposed for Waterfront Complex Divides New York Leaders**](#Bookmark_20)

21. [**A Defense of Jeremy Strong (and All the Strivers With No Chill) Guest Essay**](#Bookmark_21)

22. [**Amid Crisis, Kazakhstan ’s Leader Chose His Path: Embrace Russia**](#Bookmark_22)

23. [**Discord on Iran Reinvigorates Biden and Sanders**](#Bookmark_23)

24. [**The ‘Profusely Illustrated’ Life of Edward Sorel Nonfiction**](#Bookmark_24)

25. [**Progressives Killed Amazon’s Deal in New York . Is Industry City Next?**](#Bookmark_25)

26. [**Hochul Speech Offers Road Map to Campaign That Lies Ahead**](#Bookmark_26)

27. [**Biden and Sanders Differ on Foreign Policy. They’re Happy to Tell You So.**](#Bookmark_27)

28. [**‘Grandmother, Where’d You Get So Smart?’ ‘Living, Baby. Living.’ Solver Stories**](#Bookmark_28)

29. [**A Long, Slow Slog To Get to Work**](#Bookmark_29)

30. [**Hochul’s Speech Is a Road Map to the Campaign That Lies Ahead**](#Bookmark_30)

31. [**He's Awful, but I'll Put Adams On My Ballot**](#Bookmark_31)

32. [**Do Democrats Have the Courage of Liz Cheney?**](#Bookmark_32)

33. [**What's On Monday**](#Bookmark_33)

34. [**Is the Hamptons Party Moving to Springs?**](#Bookmark_34)

35. [**Do Democrats Have the Courage of Liz Cheney? Thomas L. Friedman**](#Bookmark_35)

36. [**Eric Adams Is Awful. I’m Putting Him on My Ballot. Michelle Goldberg**](#Bookmark_36)

37. [**Writing a New Chapter for a Troubled Brussels Neighborhood**](#Bookmark_37)

38. [**Changing Brussels Neighborhood Tries to Leave Stigma of Terrorism Behind Brussels Dispatch**](#Bookmark_38)

39. [**The Equal Rights Amendment Isn't the Answer**](#Bookmark_39)

40. [**Is the Hamptons Party Moving to Springs?**](#Bookmark_40)

41. [**The Misguided Push for an Equal Rights Amendment**](#Bookmark_41)

42. [**A Taunted NBA Star Thrives Off the Court**](#Bookmark_42)

43. [**A Janitor Reinvented as a Go-To Bar Mitzvah Photographer**](#Bookmark_43)

44. [**Bill Clinton, Race and the Politics of the 1990s Jamelle Bouie**](#Bookmark_44)

45. [**Once a Janitor, Now the Bar Mitzvah Photography King of Montreal The Saturday Profile**](#Bookmark_45)

46. [**Juilliard Students Protest Tuition Increase With Marches and Music**](#Bookmark_46)

47. [**Is It All About ‘Fealty to Trump’s Delusions’? Three Writers Talk About Where the G.O.P. Is Headed. Round Table**](#Bookmark_47)

48. [**Long Way Down**](#Bookmark_48)

49. [**The Power of Community**](#Bookmark_49)

50. [**Why the New Child Tax Credit Is More Likely to Be Spent on Children**](#Bookmark_50)

51. [**The Least for Those Who Need It Most**](#Bookmark_51)

52. [**Russell Westbrook’s Complicated Homecoming**](#Bookmark_52)

53. [**Juilliard Students Protest Tuition Increase With Marches and Music**](#Bookmark_53)

54. [**Bursting U.C. Berkeley Clashes With Its Home Over California Dreams**](#Bookmark_54)

55. [**Chicago, on a Roll**](#Bookmark_55)

56. [**Warren's Wonky Appeal Can Cloud Her Populist Personal History**](#Bookmark_56)

57. [**G.O.P. Lines Up to Oppose Biden's Ambitious Aid Plan**](#Bookmark_57)

58. [**A Reinvented Le Pen Could Upend France 's Elections**](#Bookmark_58)

59. [**In G.O.P. Rebuttal, Tim Scott Accuses Biden of Pulling Nation ‘Further Apart’**](#Bookmark_59)

60. [**Berkeley vs. Berkeley Is a Fight Over the California Dream**](#Bookmark_60)

61. [**Elizabeth Warren: A Populist for the Professional Class**](#Bookmark_61)

62. [**‘La French Tech’ Arrives Under Macron, but Proves No Panacea**](#Bookmark_62)

63. [**A Reinvented Marine Le Pen Threatens to Upend French Elections**](#Bookmark_63)

64. [**Race and the Coming Liberal Jolt**](#Bookmark_64)

65. [**Teenagers in The Times: March 2022**](#Bookmark_65)

66. [**Chicago’s Signature Sandwich, Italian Beef, Gets a Multicultural Update**](#Bookmark_66)

67. [**For Macron, the Troubles of France 's Industrial Sector Hit Home**](#Bookmark_67)

68. [**Race and the Coming Liberal Crackup Bret Stephens**](#Bookmark_68)

69. [**3 Art Gallery Shows to See Right Now**](#Bookmark_69)

70. [**Galleries**](#Bookmark_70)

71. [**What a Conservative Therapist Thinks About Politics and Mental Health Guest Essay**](#Bookmark_71)

72. [**U.S. Optimistic After Yellen Makes Case for Global Tax**](#Bookmark_72)

73. [**Your Thursday Briefing**](#Bookmark_73)

74. [**Yellen Makes Case for Ireland to Join Global Tax Deal**](#Bookmark_74)

75. [**For Macron, France ’s Troubled Industries Hit Home**](#Bookmark_75)

76. [**Your Thursday Briefing**](#Bookmark_76)

77. [**What’s on TV Monday: ‘The Voice’ and ‘Gentefied’**](#Bookmark_77)

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82. [**Clashing Environmental Views Define a Presidential Contest**](#Bookmark_82)

83. [**U.K. Legal Tactic Unevenly Hits Black People**](#Bookmark_83)

84. [**Why Biden’s Polling Lead vs. Trump Isn’t as Solid as It Looks**](#Bookmark_84)

85. [**Make Americans' Crushing Debt Disappear**](#Bookmark_85)

86. [**‘It’s Embarrassing’: Marjorie Taylor Greene Tests the Limits of Some Voters**](#Bookmark_86)

87. [**With Dueling Environmental Events, Trump and Biden Define the Race**](#Bookmark_87)

88. [**Seeking Redemption on Broadway**](#Bookmark_88)

89. [**After a Life Built on Lies, a Dying Man Comes Clean Fiction**](#Bookmark_89)

90. [**U.K. Doubles Down on a Tactic Disproportionately Targeting Black People**](#Bookmark_90)

91. [**A Producer Seeks a Broadway Comeback, Mired in Offstage Drama**](#Bookmark_91)

92. [**Think Your Weekend Plans Were Ruined? Try Being a Mayoral Candidate.**](#Bookmark_92)

93. [**‘I’m in Hot Demand, Baby’: Nebraska Thrives (and Copes) With Low Unemployment**](#Bookmark_93)

94. [**Chinatown Civic Groups Hold On to Hold Off Developers**](#Bookmark_94)

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96. [**In One Queens Building, the Third Apartment Is the Charm (for Now) renters**](#Bookmark_96)

97. [**Narrow Race In New Jersey Could Push It Toward Right**](#Bookmark_97)

98. [**A Play Recreates The Drama of 'Jaws'**](#Bookmark_98)

99. [**Abbott and O'Rourke Win Their Texas Primaries, Avoiding Runoffs**](#Bookmark_99)

100. [**A New Look for New York ’s City Council New York Today**](#Bookmark_100)

101. [**Election Denier Wins Republican Primary for Pennsylvania Governor**](#Bookmark_101)

102. [**The Daily: An Audio Guide to the Election**](#Bookmark_102)

103. [**Not Bitter, Maybe Even at Peace**](#Bookmark_103)

104. [**Economic Forces Push World's Poorest to Brink**](#Bookmark_104)

105. [**The G.O.P. Senate primary in Pennsylvania remains a tossup as an election denier wins the Republican primary for governor.**](#Bookmark_105)

106. [**The 'Jaws' Shoot Was a Drama. Now It's a Play.**](#Bookmark_106)

107. [**Poor Countries Face a Mounting Catastrophe Fueled by Inflation and Debt**](#Bookmark_107)

108. [**Amid Climate Talks, Actor's Call to Action Unfolds Onstage**](#Bookmark_108)

109. [**Abbott and O’Rourke win their Texas primaries.**](#Bookmark_109)

110. [**One Journey Out of the Addictive Grip of QAnon**](#Bookmark_110)

111. [**‘Trump Just Used Us and Our Fear’: One Woman’s Journey Out of QAnon**](#Bookmark_111)

112. [**U.S. Arms Sales and Yemen**](#Bookmark_112)

113. [**The ‘Jaws’ Shoot Was a Drama. Now It’s a Play.**](#Bookmark_113)

114. [**Cuomo Is a Media Hero in the Pandemic. De Blasio Is a Scapegoat. the media equation**](#Bookmark_114)

115. [**Bill de Blasio Knows New York Is Tired of Him. He’s at Peace With It.**](#Bookmark_115)

116. [**Dutch King's Gold Coach, Reminder of Colonial Past, Incites a Modern Backlash**](#Bookmark_116)

117. [**An Actress Unafraid to Chime In**](#Bookmark_117)

118. [**Fading Glory**](#Bookmark_118)

119. [**Inflation, Kentucky , Pictures of the Year: Your Wednesday Evening Briefing**](#Bookmark_119)

120. [**Partial Measures**](#Bookmark_120)

121. [**Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Brandon Terry The Ezra Klein Show**](#Bookmark_121)

122. [**Letters**](#Bookmark_122)

123. [**Awaiting the End of the World in Style**](#Bookmark_123)

124. [**Disaster Prep Kits Get a Makeover**](#Bookmark_124)

125. [**Bogus Populism and Bad Music**](#Bookmark_125)

126. [**Russia Reopens the Last Czar’s Palace, a Century After His Execution**](#Bookmark_126)

127. [**It Seems Odd That We Would Just Let the World Burn Ezra Klein**](#Bookmark_127)

128. [**Economies Dependent On Russia Face Risks**](#Bookmark_128)

129. [**Park Slope and Staten Island : An Unlikely Political Marriage**](#Bookmark_129)

130. [**Bitcoin Comes of Age Jay Caspian Kang**](#Bookmark_130)

131. [**Yellen Steers Economy With Brooklyn on Her Mind**](#Bookmark_131)

132. [**A Renegade Pop Music Genre Challenges the Old Guard**](#Bookmark_132)

133. [**A Ban on 19 Singers in Egypt Tests the Old Guard’s Power**](#Bookmark_133)

134. [**Omicron, Instagram, Great Performers: Your Wednesday Evening Briefing**](#Bookmark_134)

135. [**Towers Rise Over London's Brick Lane, Clouding Its Future**](#Bookmark_135)

136. [**Yellen Steers the Economy With Brooklyn on Her Mind**](#Bookmark_136)

137. [**Is My Little Library Contributing to Gentrification?**](#Bookmark_137)

138. [**Ukraine , Omicron, Best Songs of 2021: Your Tuesday Evening Briefing**](#Bookmark_138)

139. [**Towers Rise Over London’s Brick Lane, Clouding Its Future**](#Bookmark_139)

140. [**On Sidney Poitier, Code Switching and the Black Voice John McWhorter**](#Bookmark_140)

141. [**Covid and the ‘Very Liberal’**](#Bookmark_141)

142. [**A Noisy, Filthy City Hangout Is Back. Cheers to That.**](#Bookmark_142)

143. [**Is My Little Library Contributing to the Gentrification of My Black Neighborhood? Guest Essay**](#Bookmark_143)

144. [**Revolutionary Model Turned Uncompromising Painter Critic’s Pick**](#Bookmark_144)

145. [**When the Majority Becomes a Plurality**](#Bookmark_145)

146. [**What the ‘Majority Minority’ Shift Really Means for America Guest Essay**](#Bookmark_146)

147. [**Samba, Cachaça and Pickled Eggs: ‘Dirty Feet’ Bars Are ‘Essence of Rio’ Rio de Janeiro Dispatch**](#Bookmark_147)

148. [**I Was the Governor of Montana . My Fellow Democrats, You Need to Get Out of the City More. Guest Essay**](#Bookmark_148)

149. [**In 100 Days as Mayor, Adams Cites Progress In the Face of Criticism**](#Bookmark_149)

150. [**Eight Decades, One Album**](#Bookmark_150)

151. [**A Reborn Steel Hub Weighs Trump**](#Bookmark_151)

152. [**New York 's Basement Bind**](#Bookmark_152)

153. [**Mayor Adams’s First 100 Days: A Focus on Crime, Covid and Crises**](#Bookmark_153)

154. [**The Psychic Contortions of the Black Mogul-Entertainer**](#Bookmark_154)

155. [**Elizabeth Warren Was the Wrong Kind of Radical**](#Bookmark_155)

156. [**In Trump's Shadow, Ohio Republicans Campaign Ahead of Primary**](#Bookmark_156)

157. [**Should Plastic Bags Be Banned Everywhere? student opinion**](#Bookmark_157)

158. [**In Trump’s Shadow, Ohio Republicans Campaign Ahead of Tuesday’s Primary**](#Bookmark_158)

159. [**Trade Barriers Nudge Northern Ireland Away From the U.K.**](#Bookmark_159)

160. [**Talk**](#Bookmark_160)

161. [**What Trump Needs Now: A Polling Error Much Bigger Than 2016's**](#Bookmark_161)

162. [**What the Rebirth of This Old Steel Center Means for Trump**](#Bookmark_162)

163. [**Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Michael Brendan Dougherty The Ezra Klein Show**](#Bookmark_163)

164. [**Upheaval in Northern Ireland , With Brexit at Its Center**](#Bookmark_164)

165. [**Modi Uses India 's Antiterror Law to Jail Critics for Years**](#Bookmark_165)

166. [**What Trump Needs to Win: A Polling Error Much Bigger Than 2016’s**](#Bookmark_166)

167. [**How Republicans Saw Inflation Coming**](#Bookmark_167)

168. [**Vinod Busjeet’s Debut Sets an Origin Story on the Island of Mauritius Fiction**](#Bookmark_168)

169. [**A Memoir of Filipino American Family Life in the Wake of Colonialism nonfiction**](#Bookmark_169)

170. [**It’s Never Too Late to Record Your First Album it’s never too late**](#Bookmark_170)

171. [**Black History Live In a 3-Story House On Staten Island**](#Bookmark_171)

172. [**Time Running Short, Trump and Biden Return to Northern Battlegrounds**](#Bookmark_172)

173. [**Leftists Replacing Right-Wing Leaders Across Latin America**](#Bookmark_173)

174. [**Trump and Biden Make Final Blitz In Midwest Tour**](#Bookmark_174)

175. [**Indian Capital Seethes With Gang Wars During Trump Visit**](#Bookmark_175)

176. [**The Thread**](#Bookmark_176)

177. [**War of Yard Signs Erupts in Region Biden Calls Home**](#Bookmark_177)

178. [**The Psychic Contortions of the Black Mogul-Entertainer The Money Issue**](#Bookmark_178)

179. [**The Brutal Truth of Boris Johnson’s Conservative Party**](#Bookmark_179)

180. [**With Johnson, the Conservatives Are Facing a Brutal Truth**](#Bookmark_180)

181. [**The Penknife: A Thanksgiving Memory**](#Bookmark_181)

182. [**Trump Shows Up in Biden’s Home Region, and a Turf War Begins**](#Bookmark_182)

183. [**Leftists Are Ascendant in Latin America as Key Elections Loom**](#Bookmark_183)

184. [**Reflections On 'The Wire' After 20 Years**](#Bookmark_184)

185. [**The Penknife: A Thanksgiving Memory**](#Bookmark_185)

186. [**New Rapport Between Albany and New York**](#Bookmark_186)

187. [**When It Comes to Eating Away at Democracy, Trump Is a Winner Guest Essay**](#Bookmark_187)

188. [**Why Eric Adams and Kathy Hochul Might Actually Get Along**](#Bookmark_188)

189. [**The New French Right**](#Bookmark_189)

190. [**Pigeon Guys Face Tough Times: ‘Who Has the Money? Who Has the Roof?’**](#Bookmark_190)

191. [**A Love Triangle and a Variety Show in Seaside England Fiction**](#Bookmark_191)

192. [**Sanders Gains in Post- New Hampshire Polling**](#Bookmark_192)

193. [**The Staten Island House Where Black History Lives**](#Bookmark_193)

194. [**Lose Yourself, in Mom's Spaghetti**](#Bookmark_194)

195. [**Map of Donors Reveals a Split On Class Lines**](#Bookmark_195)

196. [**Transforming a Nashville Enclave Leveled by Tragedy**](#Bookmark_196)

197. [**Nashville Finds Opportunity in the Hole a Bomber Left in the Heart of the City**](#Bookmark_197)

198. [**The Cities Reinventing Public Transit Climate Fwd:**](#Bookmark_198)

199. [**Another Caucus Nears, But Nevada Has Little In Common With Iowa**](#Bookmark_199)

200. [**Challenge for Democrats: How to Reclaim Blue-Collar Counties**](#Bookmark_200)

201. [**Why ‘Pivot Counties’ That Stuck With Trump May Be a Warning for Democrats**](#Bookmark_201)

202. [**More Children? No Way, Families in China Say**](#Bookmark_202)

203. [**Bring Back the Tomboys**](#Bookmark_203)

204. [**Orgies and Drugs? The G.O.P. Is Finally Drawing a Line at a Lawmaker's Tales.**](#Bookmark_204)

205. [**France ’s Far Right Turn**](#Bookmark_205)

206. [**The Sanders Coalition Is Not Quite What We Thought It Was**](#Bookmark_206)

207. [**House Republicans Tire of Madison Cawthorn’s Antics. Some in His District Have, Too.**](#Bookmark_207)

208. [**One Night at Mom’s Spaghetti**](#Bookmark_208)

209. [**Haiti Assassination Spotlights Colombia 's Growing Mercenary Industry**](#Bookmark_209)

210. [**Behind the Haiti Assassination, Colombia ’s Growing Mercenary Industry**](#Bookmark_210)

211. [**President Bernie Sanders?**](#Bookmark_211)

212. [**‘The Wire’ at 20: ‘This Show Will Live Forever’**](#Bookmark_212)

213. [**When the Only Way to Get to Work Is This Slow Bus**](#Bookmark_213)

214. [**From a Burger King to a Concert Hall**](#Bookmark_214)

215. [**From a Burger King to a Concert Hall , With Help From Frank Gehry**](#Bookmark_215)

216. [**Young Women Set the Tone for a Paris Theater Season Theater Review**](#Bookmark_216)

217. [**German Vote May Hint At a European Left Turn**](#Bookmark_217)

218. [**Do Germany ’s Election Results Signal a Left Turn for Europe?**](#Bookmark_218)

219. [**Katie Couric**](#Bookmark_219)

220. [**Is New York Still a 'Tale of Two Cities'?**](#Bookmark_220)

221. [**A Former Moderate Embraces Trump and Embodies a Changed G.O.P.**](#Bookmark_221)

222. [**Elise Stefanik, Reinvented in Trump’s Image, Embodies a Changed G.O.P.**](#Bookmark_222)

223. [**Classroom Disruptions**](#Bookmark_223)

224. [**Germany 's Would-Be Chancellor Faces a Tangle of Clashing Goals**](#Bookmark_224)

225. [**Leader of the Labor Party in Britain Struggles to Escape Johnson's Shadow**](#Bookmark_225)

226. [**Winner but Not Chancellor, Yet: The Race to Replace Merkel**](#Bookmark_226)

227. [**Inflammatory Portuguese TV Star Tries Her Hand at Politics**](#Bookmark_227)

228. [**Known for Feuding With Immigrants, a TV Star Wants to Run a Town Many Call Home**](#Bookmark_228)

229. [**U.S. Pins Its Hopes For the World Cup On a Teenage No. 9**](#Bookmark_229)

230. [**After Autocrat Falls, Kazakhs Hunger for Change**](#Bookmark_230)

231. [**Staunch Critic of the N.Y.P.D. Grapples With Deaths of 2 Officers**](#Bookmark_231)

232. [**Critic of N.Y.P.D. Grapples With Deaths of 2 Officers**](#Bookmark_232)

233. [**Katie Couric Likes Books on Paper, and Articles Onscreen By the Book**](#Bookmark_233)

234. [**Is New York Still a ‘Tale of Two Cities’?**](#Bookmark_234)

235. [**Picturing the Power of Community Picture Books**](#Bookmark_235)

236. [**Labour’s Leader Struggles to Emerge From Boris Johnson’s Shadow**](#Bookmark_236)

237. [**Hail Kevin McCarthy, People Pleaser and Trump Appeaser Michelle cottle**](#Bookmark_237)

238. [**This 18-Year-Old May Be the Key to America ’s World Cup Hopes**](#Bookmark_238)

239. [**What It’s Like to Live Next to America ’s Largest Port Amid a Global Supply Chain Crisis California Today**](#Bookmark_239)

240. [**Kazakhstan ’s Longtime Leader Is Gone, but Still Seemingly Everywhere**](#Bookmark_240)

241. [**Hong Kong Is Holding Elections. It Wants Them to Look Real.**](#Bookmark_241)

242. [**In Hong Kong , Elections Now Have Little Suspense**](#Bookmark_242)

243. [**Joaquina Kalukango Isn’t Afraid to Speak Up Anymore Spring Preview**](#Bookmark_243)

244. [**Tales of Racism and Sexism, From 3 Leading Asian- American Women in her words**](#Bookmark_244)

245. [**What’s on TV Monday: ‘The Plot Against America ’ and ‘My Brilliant Friend’**](#Bookmark_245)

246. [**After a Campaign Uprising, Morales Presses On**](#Bookmark_246)

247. [**Unity Prevails at an Israeli Hospital**](#Bookmark_247)

248. [**The Power of Being Well Groomed**](#Bookmark_248)

249. [**An Antisemite's Dangerous Fantasy**](#Bookmark_249)

250. [**What’s at Stake for the Global Economy as Conflict Looms in Ukraine**](#Bookmark_250)

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253. [**Coronavirus Update**](#Bookmark_253)

254. [**Virus Widens A Racial Gap In Longevity**](#Bookmark_254)

255. [**In Queen's Speech, Elizabeth Details Plans for Rising Conservative Party**](#Bookmark_255)

256. [**The Democrats Get the Ball Rolling**](#Bookmark_256)

257. [**The Democrats Get the Ball Rolling letters**](#Bookmark_257)

258. [**Our Health Care System Is An Engine Of Inequality**](#Bookmark_258)

259. [**Amid Climate Talks, an Actor’s Call to Action Unfolds Onstage**](#Bookmark_259)

260. [**Why Democrats Are Still Not the Party of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez news analysis**](#Bookmark_260)

261. [**Really, Talk to Your Kids About Race**](#Bookmark_261)

262. [**In a Colombian Artist's Work, and Life, Classes Collide**](#Bookmark_262)

263. [**Room to Grow in Retail's Choppy Waters**](#Bookmark_263)

264. [**An Electricity Crisis Complicates the Climate Crisis in Europe**](#Bookmark_264)

265. [**E.U. Reliance On Gas Hurts Climate Goals**](#Bookmark_265)

266. [**Why the New Monthly Child Tax Credit Is More Likely to Be Spent on Children**](#Bookmark_266)

267. [**‘Social Detonator’: In Artist’s Work, and Life, Different Classes Collide The Saturday Profile**](#Bookmark_267)

268. [**How to Raise Kids Who Won’t Be Racist Guest Essay**](#Bookmark_268)

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270. [**Brick-and-Mortar Retail in the Age of Covid, and Amazon corner office**](#Bookmark_270)

271. [**Home Grown**](#Bookmark_271)

272. [**In Their Own Words**](#Bookmark_272)

273. [**Flawed Testing Slows Goal of In-Person Classes**](#Bookmark_273)

274. [**Trump Denounces Oscar Winner 'Parasite'**](#Bookmark_274)

275. [**How a Minneapolis Suburb Turned Blue, Despite Trump’s Law-and-Order Pitch**](#Bookmark_275)

276. [**Being More Like Athletic Bilbao Rory Smith On Soccer**](#Bookmark_276)

277. [**When a School Desegregates, Who Gets Left Behind? Jay caspian kang**](#Bookmark_277)

278. [**Trump Denounces Oscar Winner ‘Parasite’**](#Bookmark_278)

279. [**Why Coronavirus Testing Is Falling Short in Many Schools Across the U.S.**](#Bookmark_279)

280. [**How a Minneapolis Suburb Turned Blue**](#Bookmark_280)

281. [**Athletic Bilbao Shows the Way to a Local Future**](#Bookmark_281)

282. [**Omicron's March Imperils Labor Peace in Schools**](#Bookmark_282)

283. [**Sick of It**](#Bookmark_283)

284. [**U.S. Arms Sales and the Yemen War letters**](#Bookmark_284)

285. [**A Big Florida Poll, Nevada Tightens, Trump on Defense: This Week in the 2020 Race**](#Bookmark_285)

286. [**The Rise of 'Woke Capital' Is Nothing to Celebrate**](#Bookmark_286)

287. [**Let's Honor the True Spirit of Labor Day**](#Bookmark_287)

288. [**Biden Tries to Keep Trump on the Defensive**](#Bookmark_288)

289. [**Colonial-Era Royal Carriage Stirs Up Modern Backlash in Netherlands**](#Bookmark_289)

290. [**Patti LaBelle, the Doyenne of Philadelphia Soul**](#Bookmark_290)

291. [**Beyond 'White Fragility'**](#Bookmark_291)

292. [**Let’s Honor the True Spirit of Labor Day Guest Essay**](#Bookmark_292)

293. [**Trump's Backup Band Didn't Need Hollywood**](#Bookmark_293)

294. [**Risking Hospital Bills So They Can Pass Bills**](#Bookmark_294)

295. [**Beyond ‘White Fragility’**](#Bookmark_295)

296. [**Among Haitians in the U.S. and Canada, Mixed Emotions, and Fear of the Future**](#Bookmark_296)

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298. [**What It’s Like to Run for Congress Without Health Insurance During a Pandemic**](#Bookmark_298)

299. [**The Rise of ‘Woke Capital’ Is Nothing to Celebrate Elizabeth Bruenig**](#Bookmark_299)

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302. [**Go See These Black Operas — Several Times John McWhorter**](#Bookmark_302)

303. [**Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Reihan Salam The Ezra Klein Show**](#Bookmark_303)

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305. [**Laverne Cox on the Red Carpet, Politics and What to Expect on Oscars Night**](#Bookmark_305)

306. [**Nothing Provokes Like a Turner Prize**](#Bookmark_306)

307. [**As Manchin Rejects Key Climate Provision, Carbon Tax Gains Support**](#Bookmark_307)

308. [**Democrats Weigh Carbon Tax After Manchin Rejects Key Climate Provision**](#Bookmark_308)

309. [**Émigrés and Exiles**](#Bookmark_309)

310. [**He Wants To Talk About Bill Cosby**](#Bookmark_310)

311. [**Here’s What America ’s Covid-Era Classrooms Look Like**](#Bookmark_311)

312. [**Still Fighting Over the Turner Prize**](#Bookmark_312)

313. [**Rental Aid Funds Remain Unused Ahead of Court Decision**](#Bookmark_313)

314. [**About 89% of Rental Assistance Funds Have Not Been Distributed, Figures Show**](#Bookmark_314)

315. [**How a Bronx Basement Highlights One of New York City ’s Biggest Problems**](#Bookmark_315)

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319. [**Rise of a Far-Right Pundit Is Scrambling French Politics**](#Bookmark_319)

320. [**Kamau Bell: Bill Cosby Is Key to Understanding America**](#Bookmark_320)

321. [**Tools for Living**](#Bookmark_321)

322. [**Captive State**](#Bookmark_322)

323. [**A Lost Album Finds the Light**](#Bookmark_323)

324. [**A Crisis For Women Of Color**](#Bookmark_324)

325. [**Working Women of Color Were Making Progress. Then the Coronavirus Hit.**](#Bookmark_325)

326. [**New Covid Divide: The Very Liberal vs. Other Liberals**](#Bookmark_326)

327. [**Sanders Apologizes to Biden for Surrogate’s Critique**](#Bookmark_327)

328. [**This Putsch Was Decades in the Making**](#Bookmark_328)

329. [**No, a Black Lives Matter Co-Founder Didn’t Partner With a Pro-Communist Chinese Group**](#Bookmark_329)

330. [**Leftist, From England's North, and Pledging to Mend Labour's Base**](#Bookmark_330)

331. [**This Putsch Was Decades in the Making**](#Bookmark_331)

332. [**Biden Tested by Gas Prices And Lag in Shifting to E.V.s**](#Bookmark_332)

333. [**A French Designer Who Celebrates Mexico ’s Popular-Design Aesthetic In Studio**](#Bookmark_333)

334. [**In Tennessee , Fears a Neighborhood Will Disappear**](#Bookmark_334)

335. [**The Meters’ Leo Nocentelli Gets a Solo Career, 50 Years Late**](#Bookmark_335)

336. [**In Society of Many Colors, Halls of Power Are White**](#Bookmark_336)

337. [**Democrats Are Not The Party of A.O.C.**](#Bookmark_337)

338. [**The Woman Who’s Shaking Up Britain ’s Labour Leadership Campaign The Saturday Profile**](#Bookmark_338)

339. [**Biden Highlights Electric Vehicles While Asking for Inquiry Into High Gas Prices**](#Bookmark_339)

340. [**A Sea of White Faces in Australia’s ‘Party of Multiculturalism’**](#Bookmark_340)

341. [**Was a Writer and Activist Too Left-Wing to Be a Saint?**](#Bookmark_341)

342. [**In North of England, Battered Towns Test A Plan to 'Level Up'**](#Bookmark_342)

343. [**3 Senators Held Stage In Voting Rights Battle**](#Bookmark_343)

344. [**When the Rich Rail Against the ‘Elites’ Jane Coaston**](#Bookmark_344)

345. [**Rebel With a Cause**](#Bookmark_345)

346. [**Colombia Captures Guerrillas Accused in Deadly Car Bombing**](#Bookmark_346)

347. [**Breaking the Rules in Pursuit of Justice in a Gritty Paris**](#Bookmark_347)

348. [**Becerra's Political Path Took Unexpected Turns**](#Bookmark_348)

349. [**‘Spiral’ Review: A Peerless Policier Takes On Its Final Case Critic’s Pick**](#Bookmark_349)

350. [**Was Dorothy Day Too Left-Wing to Be a Catholic Saint?**](#Bookmark_350)

351. [**Battered Towns in England’s North Test Johnson’s Plan to ‘Level Up’**](#Bookmark_351)

352. [**‘I Will Not Sit Quietly’: 3 Black Senators in Spotlight on Voting Rights**](#Bookmark_352)

353. [**The Real G.O.P. Agenda**](#Bookmark_353)

354. [**Xavier Becerra, H.H.S. Pick, Was California ’s Anti-Trump Attack Dog**](#Bookmark_354)

355. [**Top Demographer Has Hope For New York City 's Recovery**](#Bookmark_355)

356. [**On Politics: Watch Where Sanders Goes**](#Bookmark_356)

357. [**Liberal Superstar Builds Challenge to Democrats From the Left**](#Bookmark_357)

358. [**How N.Y. C.’s Population Expert Says the City Will Bounce Back**](#Bookmark_358)

359. [**What’s Better Than Charity? Tressie McMillan Cottom**](#Bookmark_359)

360. [**The Cinderella Myth We Can't Quit**](#Bookmark_360)

361. [**A Neighborhood Revels in the Spotlight**](#Bookmark_361)

362. [**Expecting a Surge The Morning Newsletter**](#Bookmark_362)

363. [**The Cinderella Myth We Can’t Quit face Forward**](#Bookmark_363)

364. [**Domestic Terrorism**](#Bookmark_364)

365. [**How We Conduct Our Poll**](#Bookmark_365)

366. [**Ocasio-Cortez Builds Progressive Campaign Arm to Challenge Democrats**](#Bookmark_366)

367. [**Confronting Jabs About Where He Lives, Adams Goes on the Offensive**](#Bookmark_367)

368. [**Fireworks Are Back in N.Y. C. Are We in for Another Loud Summer? New York Today**](#Bookmark_368)

369. [**Free of Protesters, Paris Theaters Reopen With Little Imagination Theater Review**](#Bookmark_369)

370. [**Under Fire Over Residency, Eric Adams Goes on the Offensive**](#Bookmark_370)

371. [**‘In the Heights’ Premiere Celebrates the Neighborhood That Started It All**](#Bookmark_371)

372. [**Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews George Saunders The Ezra Klein Show**](#Bookmark_372)

373. [**A Reunion of Two Sisters; One Is Refined, One Isn’t Movie Review**](#Bookmark_373)

374. [**5 Movies From Round the World to Watch Now**](#Bookmark_374)

375. [**Another Caucus Is Coming. But Nevada Will Look Completely Different.**](#Bookmark_375)

376. [**Gallery Weekend Brings London’s Art Scene Back to Life**](#Bookmark_376)

377. [**The Flawed Fiction of 'Asian American'**](#Bookmark_377)

378. [**Five International Movies to Stream Right Now**](#Bookmark_378)

379. [**Bring Back the Tomboys**](#Bookmark_379)

380. [**Was the Writing on the Wall? No, Krzyzewski Dictates His Own Exit.**](#Bookmark_380)

381. [**Five International Movies to Stream Right Now**](#Bookmark_381)

382. [**Lenny Kravitz, Michael J. Fox, Cicely Tyson and Gabriel Byrne — All in Their Own Words Audiobooks**](#Bookmark_382)

383. [**Biden Is Right To Go Big**](#Bookmark_383)

384. [**Cash Cushions For Americans Start to Shrink**](#Bookmark_384)

385. [**Have Three Children? No Way, Many Chinese Say.**](#Bookmark_385)

386. [**Flood Insurance Overhaul Faces Roadblock**](#Bookmark_386)

387. [**Places in New York City Where G.O.P. Candidates Even Now Stand a Chance**](#Bookmark_387)

388. [**Biden Is Right to Go Big**](#Bookmark_388)

389. [**A Times Photographer's Conversation With the World**](#Bookmark_389)

390. [**Chuck Schumer Stalls Climate Overhaul of Flood Insurance Program**](#Bookmark_390)

391. [**Pandemic and Job Losses May Turn Ohio Back Into a Tossup State**](#Bookmark_391)

392. [**The Beautiful, Flawed Fiction of ‘Asian American ’ Guest Essay**](#Bookmark_392)

393. [**Omicron Wave Overwhelming N.Y. Hospitals**](#Bookmark_393)

394. [**As More Teachers’ Unions Push for Remote Schooling, Parents Worry. So Do Democrats.**](#Bookmark_394)

395. [**The Places in New York City Where Republicans Still Stand a Chance**](#Bookmark_395)

396. [**Iowa Poll Shows Biden Leading and Ernst Struggling**](#Bookmark_396)

397. [**Will Trump’s Troubles Turn Ohio Back Into a Tossup State?**](#Bookmark_397)

398. [**More Patients, Fewer Workers: Omicron Pushes New York Hospitals to Brink**](#Bookmark_398)

399. [**500,000 New Yorkers Owe Back Rent, With Freeze on Evictions Set to End**](#Bookmark_399)

400. [**What Happens When Your Waiter Can't Afford Rent**](#Bookmark_400)

401. [**New Life for the Wyeth Legacy Five Miles Out to Sea**](#Bookmark_401)

402. [**Democrats’ Best News**](#Bookmark_402)

403. [**Texas Republicans Fight For a Democratic Bastion**](#Bookmark_403)

404. [**This Special Election Is Testing Republican Efforts to Court Latino Voters**](#Bookmark_404)

405. [**‘Diamond Sweet 16’ Party Leaves 37 Infected and 270 in Quarantine**](#Bookmark_405)

406. [**Hands On**](#Bookmark_406)

407. [**A Living Painting of Masculinity**](#Bookmark_407)

408. [**What Happens When Your Waiter Can’t Afford Rent**](#Bookmark_408)

409. [**Dianne Morales Faced a Campaign Uprising. Will It Matter to Voters?**](#Bookmark_409)

410. [**Woman’s Search for Her Birth Parents Leads to a Story of Murder**](#Bookmark_410)

411. [**Past Tense**](#Bookmark_411)

412. [**Ida Delivered New Blow To Jazz Scene**](#Bookmark_412)

413. [**German Candidate Moves Ahead in Polls by Promising Continuity**](#Bookmark_413)

414. [**At War With Ourselves**](#Bookmark_414)

415. [**Transcript: Ezra Klein and Aaron Retica Discuss the 2022 Midterm Elections The Ezra Klein Show**](#Bookmark_415)

416. [**Did the Civil Rights Movement Go Wrong? nonfiction**](#Bookmark_416)

417. [**'Doubling Down on New York ' and Bringing a Neighborhood Back**](#Bookmark_417)

418. [**Meet Me Downtown**](#Bookmark_418)

419. [**Contrasting Plans, Contrasting Styles New York Today**](#Bookmark_419)

420. [**I’m a Trauma Surgeon in Israel . In My Hospital, We Are in This Together. Guest Essay**](#Bookmark_420)

421. [**‘Doubling Down on New York ’: A Manhattan Neighborhood Bounces Back**](#Bookmark_421)

422. [**Which Is The Radical Party Now?**](#Bookmark_422)

423. [**Biden's Message for the Labor Movement**](#Bookmark_423)

424. [**Israel ’s Real Existential Threat Guest Essay**](#Bookmark_424)

425. [**Remembering a 100-Year-Old Battle for Coal Miners' Rights**](#Bookmark_425)

426. [**California Resumes a Virus Fight That It Thought It Had Won**](#Bookmark_426)

427. [**Biden Is Saying Things Amazon Doesn’t Want to Hear**](#Bookmark_427)

428. [**A Century Ago, Miners Fought in a Bloody Uprising. Few Know About It Today.**](#Bookmark_428)

429. [**Who’s Radical Now? The Case of Minimum Wages**](#Bookmark_429)

430. [**No Surrender on the Garden**](#Bookmark_430)

431. [**Thanks for This, No Thanks to That**](#Bookmark_431)

432. [**Steps Forward For Tango Fans**](#Bookmark_432)

433. [**Coronavirus Briefing: What Happened Today**](#Bookmark_433)

434. [**What We Give Thanks for and What We Say No Thanks To The Conversation**](#Bookmark_434)

435. [**I Will Not Rest Until This Garden Grows**](#Bookmark_435)

436. [**Omicron Sowing Doubt And Fear About Economy**](#Bookmark_436)

437. [**In a Firm Voice, Queen Opens U.K. Parliament**](#Bookmark_437)

438. [**Dancing Cheek to Cheek Again: New York ’s Tango Scene Rebounds**](#Bookmark_438)

439. [**Queer Exile: Three Novels About Émigrés, Lovers and Family The Shortlist**](#Bookmark_439)

440. [**Racism and the Hollowing Out of America**](#Bookmark_440)

441. [**As Cases Surge in New York , Adams Cancels His Inauguration Gala**](#Bookmark_441)

442. [**President and Incumbent Senator Are on Defense in Iowa**](#Bookmark_442)

443. [**‘The Sum of Us’ Tallies the Cost of Racism for Everyone**](#Bookmark_443)

444. [**Adams Cancels Inauguration Gala in Latest Sign of Omicron Surge**](#Bookmark_444)

445. [**Collins in Peril As Maine Loses Political Center**](#Bookmark_445)

446. [**Shakespeare, Solo Shows And Other Smart Stuff**](#Bookmark_446)

447. [**The Booker Prize Goes to 'Shuggie Bain'**](#Bookmark_447)

448. [**Substantial Turnout Powered Democrats' Gains in Georgia**](#Bookmark_448)

449. [**Douglas Stuart Wins Booker Prize for ‘Shuggie Bain’**](#Bookmark_449)

450. [**Why Warnock and Ossoff Won in Georgia**](#Bookmark_450)

451. [**Surviving in a New World, via a New Medium**](#Bookmark_451)

452. [**How the Pandemic Worsened the Housing Crisis in the Bronx**](#Bookmark_452)

453. [**10 Years After Arab Spring, Tunisians Confront Failed Promises**](#Bookmark_453)

454. [**Biden Is Going Big, and Americans Are With Him**](#Bookmark_454)

455. [**Biden Is Going Big, and Americans Are With Him**](#Bookmark_455)

456. [**Theater to Stream: Revivals, One-Man Shows and Docu-Theater**](#Bookmark_456)

457. [**The One Thing We Couldn't Talk About**](#Bookmark_457)

458. [**How the Pandemic Worsened a Housing Crisis in the Bronx**](#Bookmark_458)

459. [**Harvard's Chief Chaplain Is an Atheist**](#Bookmark_459)

460. [**‘What Have We Done With Democracy?’ A Decade On, Arab Spring Gains Wither**](#Bookmark_460)

461. [**The New Chief Chaplain at Harvard? An Atheist.**](#Bookmark_461)

462. [**The One Thing We Couldn’t Talk About Modern Love**](#Bookmark_462)

463. [**Abolish Debt!**](#Bookmark_463)

464. [**Why a Rhodes Scholar’s Ambition Led Her to a Job at Starbucks**](#Bookmark_464)

465. [**Over the Edge: The Fall of Kidd Creole**](#Bookmark_465)

466. [**Why a Rhodes Scholar Took a Job at Starbucks**](#Bookmark_466)

467. [**Make Americans’ Crushing Debt Disappear Guest Essay**](#Bookmark_467)

468. [**As Masks Begin to Come Off, A Delicate Dance Takes Form**](#Bookmark_468)

469. [**The Best (and Worst) Theater in Europe in 2021**](#Bookmark_469)

470. [**Men Should Speak Up for Family Leave**](#Bookmark_470)

471. [**She Mocked Men’s Bluster. Then Came the Complaints.**](#Bookmark_471)

472. [**Mask On or Off? Life Is Getting Back to Normal, and We’re Rusty.**](#Bookmark_472)

473. [**The Fall of Kidd Creole: Inside a Rap Pioneer’s Tragic Descent**](#Bookmark_473)

474. [**If This Country Won’t Listen to Moms, I’m Asking Men to Start Shouting Jessica Grose**](#Bookmark_474)

475. [**America ’s Anti-Democratic Movement The Morning Newsletter**](#Bookmark_475)

476. [**A Repudiation That Never Came**](#Bookmark_476)

477. [**Recalling the Strands of a Life Amid Locks**](#Bookmark_477)

478. [**Jack Welch and the Rise of C.E.O.s Behaving Badly**](#Bookmark_478)

479. [**We Waited in Vain for a Repudiation That Never Came**](#Bookmark_479)

480. [**Broadway’s Hair Master Puts Away the Wigs Exit Interview**](#Bookmark_480)

481. [**How Jack Welch’s Reign at G.E. Gave Us Elon Musk’s Twitter Feed**](#Bookmark_481)

482. [**The Secondhand Clothing Boom**](#Bookmark_482)

483. [**How Malaysia Got in on the Secondhand Clothing Boom**](#Bookmark_483)

484. [**Crackdown Erases a Pro-Democracy Landslide in Hong Kong**](#Bookmark_484)

485. [**Silver-Spoon Socialists**](#Bookmark_485)

486. [**‘Our Hands and Feet Are Tied’: Hong Kong ’s Opposition Quits in Droves**](#Bookmark_486)

487. [**$650,000 Homes in South Carolina , Nebraska and New Jersey What You Get**](#Bookmark_487)

488. [**Prime Minister Helps Change 'So Long' of British Soccer Clubs to 'So Sorry'**](#Bookmark_488)

489. [**'Stoker,' 'Synchronic' and More Hidden Streaming Gems**](#Bookmark_489)

490. [**What We Know (So Far) About New York ’s Altered Political Landscape On Politics**](#Bookmark_490)

491. [**The Rich Kids Who Want to Tear Down Capitalism**](#Bookmark_491)

492. [**In Chaos of Super League Fiasco, Johnson Seizes an Opportunity to Score**](#Bookmark_492)

493. [**‘Stoker,’ ‘Synchronic’ and More Hidden Streaming Gems**](#Bookmark_493)

494. [**Inquiry Decades Later Further Tangles Case Of Woman's Murder**](#Bookmark_494)

495. [**The Inheritance**](#Bookmark_495)

496. [**Fervent Base Props Up Netanyahu in Face of Corruption Charges**](#Bookmark_496)

497. [**He Escaped Prison in 2015. Did He Kill a Young Mother Decades Before?**](#Bookmark_497)

498. [**Ace of Base: Why Netanyahu Seems Unsinkable News analysis**](#Bookmark_498)

499. [**A School Where the Student Body Is Obsessed With Student Bodies Fiction**](#Bookmark_499)

500. [**A Wide-Ranging Sampler of British Dance**](#Bookmark_500)



# [***Hochul Unveiled Vision for New York. Now Comes the Hard Part.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64HX-NSY1-JBG3-61PX-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 12

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**Byline:** By Luis Ferré-Sadurní and Grace Ashford

**Body**

After laying out her priorities in the State of the State address, Gov. Kathy Hochul must now work with the Legislature to back her with funding and new laws.

ALBANY, N.Y. -- When Gov. Kathy Hochul unveiled her policy agenda for New York last week, she appeased unions with her commitment to boost wages, appealed to business leaders with business-friendly rhetoric and threw in crowd-pleasers, such as proposals to fix potholes and allow bars and restaurants to sell to-go drinks.

But her most explicit overtures were directed at one audience: state lawmakers.

Promising a ''new era'' of collaboration, Ms. Hochul pledged to ''share success'' and ''find common ground'' with legislators, declaring that ''the days of governors disregarding the rightful role of this Legislature are over.''

Over the coming months, Ms. Hochul, a moderate Democrat, will need to court and cajole state lawmakers to turn her expansive policy aspirations into reality when she negotiates her first state budget with Democrats who control the statehouse.

Many of her core priorities align in principle with those of Democratic leadership, but she will have to contend with an emboldened Legislature that has become increasingly liberal and could pressure her to move in the same direction.

Ms. Hochul is betting that actively engaging lawmakers as governing partners will help her reach consensus, in sharp contrast to the confrontational approach of her predecessor, former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo.

''It's not going to be totally chaos-free because it's a multibillion-dollar budget, so there's always going to be dissension,'' said Crystal D. Peoples-Stokes, the Democratic majority leader in the Assembly. ''But I believe we will have a smoother budget process.''

Indeed, most Democratic lawmakers appear optimistic about working with Ms. Hochul and minimizing differences, but she will still have to wade through emerging rifts on a number of measures she laid out in her State of the State address last week. That effort could turn into a political minefield as she runs for a full term as governor this year and juggles pressure from her left and right.

Andrea Stewart-Cousins, the Democratic majority leader in the State Senate, has already signaled that her members intend to pursue a proposal to expand child care that is more far-reaching than the one Ms. Hochul put forth. ''It's time for us to make universal, affordable child care a reality in our state,'' Ms. Stewart-Cousins said in remarks last week.

The details of the child care proposal Senate Democrats will coalesce around remain unclear, but Ms. Hochul's version -- targeting about 100,000 low-income families -- appeared to be more restrained than a universal approach.

Carl E. Heastie, the speaker of State Assembly, has also expressed reservations about Ms. Hochul's proposal to impose term limits on governors. Indeed, his second-in-command, Ms. Peoples-Stokes, said that ''term limits will need to be hashed out because, from my perspective, there's not a lot of tolerance for that.''

That measure would require a constitutional amendment, a lengthy process that requires lawmakers pass the measure in two consecutive legislative sessions before putting it to voters in a referendum.

Ms. Hochul also unveiled a proposal to build more housing by increasing residential density in the suburbs, and a pledge, similar to Mr. Cuomo's, to build or preserve 100,000 affordable and 10,000 supportive housing units over five years.

But those plans did little to placate the party's left wing, which has clamored for more sweeping protections for renters, including legislation to make it harder for landlords to evict tenants and raise rents.

''I think it's good, but I think it's a low number for a state where we have 20 million people,'' said State Senator Jessica Ramos, a Democrat from Queens, who also lamented the governor's silence on replenishing the excluded workers fund, which provided cash payments to workers who did not receive federal relief during the pandemic. ''It's a much bigger problem.''

Other flash points may soon emerge around efforts to amend the state's contentious bail law, as well as potential financing for the construction of a stadium for the Buffalo Bills, Ms. Hochul's hometown football team, with taxpayer money.

The state is negotiating with the Bills and Erie County officials over whether and how much to invest in building a stadium. The outlay, which is expected to be substantial, could rekindle an old debate over whether governments should be in the business of funding professional sports arenas to keep teams from seeking greener pastures.

How the governor intends to finance and implement many of the policies laid out in her address and an accompanying 237-page briefing book will become clearer when Ms. Hochul releases her budget proposal on Tuesday.

She will then have to haggle with the Legislature, which must approve the final state budget, in a monthslong process that is supposed to culminate by April. That will mean reconciling her spending priorities with those of the Legislature in negotiations where governors traditionally have held an upper hand.

''The question is, fundamentally, what will be delivered, what we can afford and how impactful will those programs be,'' said Andrew Rein, the president of the Citizens Budget Commission, a fiscal watchdog.

This year, the state's coffers are overflowing, partly after an influx of federal funding, with state officials now projecting balanced budgets through 2025, a starting negotiating position for Ms. Hochul that Mr. Rein described as ''virtually unprecedented.''

It remains to be seen how much Democrats will seek to push Ms. Hochul to the left, especially in a year when state lawmakers and the governor face election tests amid concerns about Republicans making inroads. Still, the party's most leftward faction has expressed no desire to pull back.

''What the governor could have done with the State of the State is build on the momentum of last year's historic budget,'' said Assemblywoman Phara Souffrant Forrest, a first-term democratic socialist. ''This year is an election year, and I know she's really concerned about gaining the support of Black ***working-class*** people, and if she truly wants that then she should join us in fighting for our agenda.''

Yet for all their differences, most Democratic lawmakers appeared to embrace the pillars of Ms. Hochul's agenda, cheering proposed investments in the health care work force, the expansion of tuition assistance programs and good- government priorities like ethics reform and voting rights.

They welcomed her willingness to take on messy but consequential issues such as rehabilitating the state's university system and addressing the disruptive cultural and physical legacy of infrastructure projects like the Cross-Bronx Expressway in New York City and the Kensington Expressway in Buffalo.

''There's a certain amount of political courage that comes from recognizing problems, because once you recognize them you become obligated to fix them,'' said State Senator Sean Ryan, a Democrat from Buffalo, who called Ms. Hochul's vision ''a real pragmatic approach.''

Many lawmakers mentioned instances when the governor had called them to consult on a bill or had reached out to offer support when she was in their district -- signals, they said, that Ms. Hochul's vows of collaboration could be more than political rhetoric.

Mr. Cuomo, in contrast, was known to call lawmakers to berate and intimidate them in pursuit of his objectives, fostering alliances that were born from fear, rather than good will.

But even the best working relationships must contend with challenges, and the upcoming session will have its share for the governor.

The increase in violent crime during the pandemic will continue to be an issue for Ms. Hochul, who will have to decide whether or not to revisit legislation from 2019 that abolished cash bail for most crimes. Moderate Democrats like Eric Adams, the New York City mayor, and Representative Thomas Suozzi, who is challenging Ms. Hochul in the primary for governor, have called for changes to the bail law.

Ms. Stewart-Cousins said last week that Senate Democrats have no intention of amending it, raising the specter of a bitter intraparty clash if Ms. Hochul seeks to change the law. Republicans, who support a full repeal, are already using the issue as a cudgel in the governor's race.

And all the proposals will need to be approved by the Legislature in the state budget -- a complex process that is seen as the true test of a governor's priorities.

''I philosophically believe that government is intended to do good, invest in capital infrastructure. That's what we're here for,'' said Liz Krueger, a Senate Democrat who leads the Finance Committee. ''But I really do need to understand where we're getting the money to pay for it.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/13/nyregion/kathy-hochul-budget-agenda.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/13/nyregion/kathy-hochul-budget-agenda.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Promising a ''new era'' of collaboration, Gov. Kathy Hochul said, ''the days of governors disregarding the rightful role of this Legislature are over.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY CINDY SCHULTZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Hochul Unveiled a Sweeping Vision for New York. Now Comes the Hard Part.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64HR-2211-DXY4-X48J-00000-00&context=1519360)

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Over the coming months, Ms. Hochul, a moderate Democrat, will need to court and cajole state lawmakers to turn her [*expansive policy aspirations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/05/nyregion/kathy-hochul-state-of-ny-speech.html) into reality when she negotiates her first state budget with Democrats who control the statehouse.

Many of her core priorities align in principle with those of Democratic leadership, but she will have to contend with an emboldened Legislature that has become [*increasingly liberal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/24/nyregion/progressive-primaries-ny-legislature.html) and could pressure her to move in the same direction.

Ms. Hochul is betting that actively engaging lawmakers as governing partners will help her reach consensus, [*in sharp contrast*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/30/nyregion/kathy-hochul-cuomo.html) to the [*confrontational approach*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/22/nyregion/cuomo-new-york-covid.html) of her predecessor, former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo.

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The state is negotiating with the Bills and Erie County officials over whether and how much to invest in building a stadium. The outlay, which is expected to be substantial, could rekindle an [*old debate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/11/nyregion/stadiums-arenas-funding-nyc.html) over whether governments should be in the business of funding professional sports arenas to keep teams from seeking greener pastures.

How the governor intends to finance and implement many of the policies laid out in her address and an accompanying [*237-page briefing book*](https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2022-01/2022StateoftheStateBook.pdf) will become clearer when Ms. Hochul releases her budget proposal on Tuesday.

She will then have to haggle with the Legislature, which must approve the final state budget, in a monthslong process that is supposed to culminate by April. That will mean reconciling her spending priorities with those of the Legislature in negotiations where governors [*traditionally*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/16/nyregion/quid-pro-quo-from-cuomo-prompts-battle-with-lawmakers-over-state-budget.html) have held an [*upper hand.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2002/01/18/nyregion/court-s-budget-ruling-hands-pataki-a-big-victory.html)

“The question is, fundamentally, what will be delivered, what we can afford and how impactful will those programs be,” said Andrew Rein, the president of the Citizens Budget Commission, a fiscal watchdog.

This year, the state’s coffers are overflowing, partly after an influx of federal funding, with state officials now projecting balanced budgets through 2025, a starting negotiating position for Ms. Hochul that Mr. Rein described as “virtually unprecedented.”

It remains to be seen how much Democrats will seek to push Ms. Hochul to the left, especially in a year when state lawmakers and the governor face election tests amid [*concerns about Republicans making inroads*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/republican-election-results-new-york.html). Still, the party’s most leftward faction has expressed no desire to pull back.

“What the governor could have done with the State of the State is build on the momentum of [*last year’s historic budget*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/05/nyregion/taxes-rich-budget-new-york.html),” said Assemblywoman Phara Souffrant Forrest, a first-term democratic socialist. “This year is an election year, and I know she’s really concerned about gaining the support of Black ***working-class*** people, and if she truly wants that then she should join us in fighting for our agenda.”

Yet for all their differences, most Democratic lawmakers appeared to embrace the pillars of Ms. Hochul’s agenda, cheering proposed investments in the health care work force, the expansion of tuition assistance programs and good- government priorities like ethics reform and voting rights.

They welcomed her willingness to take on messy but consequential issues such as rehabilitating the state’s university system and addressing the disruptive cultural and physical legacy of infrastructure projects like the Cross-Bronx Expressway in New York City and the Kensington Expressway in Buffalo.

“There’s a certain amount of political courage that comes from recognizing problems, because once you recognize them you become obligated to fix them,” said State Senator Sean Ryan, a Democrat from Buffalo, who called Ms. Hochul’s vision “a real pragmatic approach.”

Many lawmakers mentioned instances when the governor had called them to consult on a bill or had reached out to offer support when she was in their district — signals, they said, that Ms. Hochul’s vows of collaboration could be more than political rhetoric.

Mr. Cuomo, in contrast, was [*known to call lawmakers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/17/nyregion/nursing-homes-cuomo-ron-kim.html) to berate and intimidate them in pursuit of his objectives, fostering alliances that were born from fear, rather than good will.

But even the best working relationships must contend with challenges, and the upcoming session will have its share for the governor.

The increase in violent crime during the pandemic will continue to be an issue for Ms. Hochul, who will have to decide whether or not to revisit legislation from 2019 that abolished cash bail for most crimes. Moderate Democrats like Eric Adams, the New York City mayor, and Representative Thomas Suozzi, who is challenging Ms. Hochul in the primary for governor, have called for changes to the bail law.

Ms. Stewart-Cousins said last week that Senate Democrats have no intention of amending it, raising the specter of a bitter intraparty clash if Ms. Hochul seeks to change the law. Republicans, who support a full repeal, are already using the issue as a cudgel in the governor’s race.

And all the proposals will need to be approved by the Legislature in the state budget — a complex process that is seen as the true test of a governor’s priorities.

“I philosophically believe that government is intended to do good, invest in capital infrastructure. That’s what we’re here for,” said Liz Krueger, a Senate Democrat who leads the Finance Committee. “But I really do need to understand where we’re getting the money to pay for it.”

PHOTO: Promising a “new era” of collaboration, Gov. Kathy Hochul said, “the days of governors disregarding the rightful role of this Legislature are over.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY CINDY SCHULTZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[***For France’s Muslims, a Choice Between Lesser Evils in Presidential Vote***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:658W-KHG1-JBG3-62H4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 22, 2022 Friday 11:44 EST

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**Length:** 1753 words

**Byline:** Norimitsu Onishi and Aida Alami

**Highlight:** French Muslims face a decision between Emmanuel Macron, whose presidency some of them view as harmful, and Marine Le Pen, whose far-right party has a history of anti-Muslim positions.

**Body**

French Muslims face a decision between Emmanuel Macron, whose presidency some of them view as harmful, and Marine Le Pen, whose far-right party has a history of anti-Muslim positions.

Follow our [*live updates of the French runoff election*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/04/24/world/french-election-runoff-results) between Macron and Le Pen.

BONDY, France — Abdelkrim Bouadla voted enthusiastically for Emmanuel Macron five years ago, drawn by his youth and his message of transforming France. But after a presidency that he believes harmed French Muslims like himself, Mr. Bouadla, a community leader who has long worked with troubled young people, was torn.

He likened the choice confronting him in France’s presidential runoff on Sunday — featuring Mr. Macron and [*Marine Le Pen*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/world/europe/marine-le-pen-french-elections-macron.html?searchResultPosition=4), whose far-right party has a long history of anti-Muslim positions, racism and xenophobia — as “breaking your ribs or breaking your legs.”

Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen are now fighting over the 7.7 million voters who backed [*Jean-Luc Mélenchon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/26/world/europe/melenchon-france-election-left.html), the leftist leader who earned a strong third-place finish in the[*first round*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/10/world/europe/french-presidential-election-macron-le-pen.html?searchResultPosition=4) of the election. Were they to break strongly for one of the candidates, it could prove decisive.

Nearly 70 percent of Muslims voted for Mr. Mélenchon, the only major candidate to have consistently condemned discrimination against Muslims, according to the polling firm [*Ifop*](https://www.ifop.com/publication/le-vote-des-electorats-confessionnels-au-1er-tour-de-lelection-presidentielle-2/).

By contrast, Mr. Macron garnered only 14 percent of Muslim voters’ support this year, compared with 24 percent in [*2017*](https://www.ifop.com/publication/le-vote-des-electorats-confessionnels-au-1er-tour-de-lelection-presidentielle/). Ms. Le Pen got 7 percent in the first round this year. Nationwide, according to Ifop, the turnout of Muslim voters was a couple of percentage points higher than the average.

As the two candidates battle it out in the closing days of a tight race, Mr. Macron’s prospects may rest partly on whether he can convince Muslim voters like Mr. Bouadla that he is their best option — and that staying home risks installing a chilling new anti-Muslim leadership.

In Mr. Bouadla’s telling, however, that will take some doing.

“If I vote for Macron, I’d be participating in all the bad things he’s done against Muslims,” Mr. Bouadla, 50, said over the course of a long walk in Bondy, a city just northeast of Paris. He vacillated between abstaining for the first time in his life or reluctantly casting a ballot for Mr. Macron simply to [*fend off someone*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/11/world/europe/french-presidential-election-macron-le-pen-far-fight.html?searchResultPosition=2)he considered “worse and more dangerous.”

Most [*polls*](https://www.ifop.com/presidentielle-2022/) show that Mr. Macron’s lead, about 10 percentage points, provides a comfortable path to re-election, but it is far narrower than his 32 percentage point margin of victory over Ms. Le Pen in 2017.

But as Éric Coquerel, a national lawmaker and a close ally of Mr. Mélenchon, said, the turnout by Muslim voters could tip the balance if the race “becomes extremely tight.”

Much of Muslim voters’ anger toward Mr. Macron centers on his pushing a widely condemned 2021 law and the subsequent closing of more than 700 Muslim institutions that the authorities say encouraged radicalization, a charge that many Muslims and some human rights groups dispute. But it remains unclear how this resentment might be transformed into a political force.

France’s estimated six million Muslims account for 10 percent of the population, but their political influence has long been undermined by high abstention rates and divisions based on class and ancestry. Given that history, Mr. Mélenchon’s strong Muslim backing may have signaled a shift, analysts say.

Julien Talpin, a sociologist at the National Center for Scientific Research, said that the mobilization by Muslims behind a single candidate was “something entirely new.”

“In the past, there were only vague calls to vote for candidates favorable to Islam,” he said.

Mr. Mélenchon scored his biggest victories nationwide in Bondy and in the rest of Seine-Saint-Denis, the department just north of Paris that has strong concentrations of the capital region’s poor, immigrant and Muslim populations.

The source of much of the service work force of the capital, the department also inspires fear and anxiety especially among older French people, whose feelings about immigration and crime are fanned by the [*right-wing news media*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/14/world/europe/france-cnews-fox-far-right.html?searchResultPosition=5) and politicians. [*Éric Zemmour*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/world/europe/eric-zemmour-macron-france-election.html), the far-right TV pundit who came in fourth in the first round, following a campaign focused on attacking Islam, described the department as a “foreign enclave” suffering from “religious colonization.”

In Bondy, a strong turnout was reported in the first round in neighborhoods with historically low voting levels.

“The number of young people, families and especially the people waiting in line — something was happening,” said Mehmet Ozguner, 22, a local organizer for Mr. Mélenchon’s party.

Many imams, social media influencers and other community leaders called on Muslim voters to unite their ballots in favor of Mr. Mélenchon.

“There was no formal organization, but many ad hoc alliances, mobilization by union activists and antiracism activists,” said Taha Bouhafs, 24, a journalist with a large online following and an ally of Mr. Mélenchon’s party, who is planning to run in the election for Parliament in June.

In 2017, Mr. Macron had reassured many Muslims that he would be more open on issues of French secularism, known as “[*laïcité*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/world/europe/france-secularism-laicite-macron.html?searchResultPosition=4), diversity and multiculturalism,” said [*Vincent Tiberj*](https://www.cairn.info/revue-la-pensee-2015-4-page-45.htm), a sociologist at Sciences Po Bordeaux university who has studied the voting patterns of French Muslims. Mr. Macron even called colonization a “crime against humanity” during a visit to Algeria.

In a [*major speech*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/02/world/europe/macron-radical-islam-france.html) on what Mr. Macron described as an Islamist-driven separatist movement in French society, Mr. Macron acknowledged that successive governments had encouraged the trend by settling immigrants in areas of “[*abject poverty and difficulties*](https://www.elysee.fr/en/emmanuel-macron/2020/10/02/fight-against-separatism-the-republic-in-action-speech-by-emmanuel-macron-president-of-the-republic-on-the-fight-against-separatism),” like Seine-Saint-Denis.

But Mr. Tiberj said that there was a gap “between what he said as president and what his government did in his name.”

Mr. Macron [*hardened his positions*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/16/world/europe/france-macron-right.html?searchResultPosition=7) after the beheading of a middle-school teacher, [*Samuel Paty*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/world/europe/france-decapitate-beheading.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article), by an [*Islamist fanatic*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/26/world/europe/france-beheading-teacher.html) angry that the teacher had shown caricatures of Prophet Muhammad in a class on blasphemy.

In response, Mr. Macron pushed forward his anti-separatism law despite widespread criticism from [*international*](https://www.amnesty.org/fr/latest/news/2021/03/france-republican-values-law-risks-discrimination/) and [*national*](https://www.ldh-france.org/tribune-collective-il-est-encore-temps-publiee-sur-liberation/) human rights organizations, including the government’s [*National Human Rights Commission*](https://www.cncdh.fr/fr/actualite/avis-sur-le-projet-de-loi-confortant-le-respect-des-principes-de-la-republique). The law gave the government greater power over religious establishments, schools and other associations.

After the law’s adoption in August 2021, the authorities carried out 24,877 investigations through last January, according to the [*government*](https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2022/01/12/compte-rendu-du-conseil-des-ministres-du-mercredi-12-janvier-2022). They closed 718 mosques, Muslim schools and associations for encouraging separatism, seizing assets worth 46 million euros.

But many establishments have been closed for vague, unwarranted reasons, according to an [*investigation*](https://www.lacoalition.fr/Une-nouvelle-chasse-aux-sorcieres-contre-les-associations-l-enquete-de-l) of 20 cases by an umbrella group of academics and rights groups, the Observatory of Associative Liberties.

Mr. Talpin, the sociologist and a co-author of the report, said that the law “and the debate surrounding it contributed to stigmatizing Muslims.”

In a [*TV debate*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9xOTDveRUI) over the law, the interior minister, Gérald Darmanin, tried to outflank Ms. Le Pen on the right, accusing Ms. Le Pen of being “soft” against Islamism. The minister overseeing public schools further alienated Muslims by saying that the hijab, or head scarf, was “not desirable in society.” And the minister of higher education ordered an investigation into what she called “[*Islamo-leftism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/world/europe/france-universities-culture-wars.html)” in academic research.

Feeling betrayed, some Muslims have even voted for Ms. Le Pen as a way to punish Mr. Macron.

“I vote against Macron,” said Ahmed Leyou, 63, a taxi driver in [*Trappes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/08/world/europe/france-mayor-teacher-islam-secularism-laicite.html?searchResultPosition=3), a city southwest of Paris, who voted for Ms. Le Pen in the first round and planned to do it again on Sunday. “I’m Muslim, an Arab, but French. Marine Le Pen can’t tell me to go back home. She can’t do anything against me.”

In Bondy, Muslims were not the only ones to criticize Mr. Macron’s policies.

“The law against separatism is dangerous,” said the Rev. Patrice Gaudin, 50, the priest of the Roman Catholic parish in Bondy. “We have to acknowledge that Muslims don’t feel welcome in France because they’re Muslim. This law can provoke feelings that lead to radicalization.”

“You can’t humiliate people,” Father Gaudin said, referring to the 2021 law and criticizing the recurring political debate over whether Muslim women [*should be allowed to wear head scarves*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/17/world/europe/france-islam-le-pen-head-scarf.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article) and in what circumstances.

At a campaign [*stop*](https://www.bfmtv.com/politique/elections/presidentielle/presidentielle-la-question-du-voile-fait-irruption-dans-l-entre-deux-tours_AN-202204150581.html) last week, Mr. Macron praised a young Muslim woman’s decision to wear a head scarf as a feminist choice made of her own volition — a change from 2018 when he described it as not “[*in keeping with the civility in our country*](https://rmc.bfmtv.com/actualites/societe/ce-n-est-pas-conforme-a-la-civilite-ce-qu-emmanuel-macron-disait-sur-le-voile-en-avril-2018_AV-201910250407.html)” and against the equality between men and women. In a TV debate between the two candidates on Wednesday, Mr. Macron said that Ms. Le Pen’s position on the hijab — to ban it in public — would lead to “civil war.”

Put on the [*defensive*](https://www.bfmtv.com/politique/marine-le-pen-interpellee-par-une-femme-voilee-lors-de-sa-deambulation-au-marche-de-pertuis_VN-202204150279.html), Ms. Le Pen said in the past week that the issue was a “complex problem” that the National Assembly would have to debate and that she was not “close-minded.” Her top aides eventually said that banning the wearing of the hijab was not a priority.

The candidates’ quickly shifting positions on the head scarf can be explained by the presence of voters like Islam Menyane, 29, who was buying sweets from a bakery near Bondy’s train station to break the Ramadan fast.

Ms. Menyane, who works in food service, voted for Mr. Mélenchon in the first round and was now leaning toward Mr. Macron, though she felt France had “stagnated” during his presidency.

Ms. Menyane does not wear a headscarf, but Ms. Le Pen’s positions on Islam worried her. Otherwise, she liked Ms. Le Pen’s economic policies and her focus on helping ***working-class*** and young voters like her. She also preferred the personality of Ms. Le Pen, who has succeeded in softening her image in the past couple of years.

“She’s a human being, she’s a mom, she seems to want to defend her country,” Ms. Menyane said, adding that she did not fear a Le Pen victory. “Maybe it could be a nice surprise.”

PHOTOS: Prayers in Angers, France. A 2021 law closed hundreds of mosques and Muslim schools.; A poster of Samuel Paty, the teacher killed after he showed cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); A mosque in Bondy, France, north of Paris. The residents are largely poor, immigrant and Muslim.; Campaign posters for Jean-Luc Mélenchon, who drew 7.7 million votes in the first election round.; Abdelkrim Bouadla, third from left, with youths in Bondy. He has deep concerns over both presidential candidates. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES HILL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 24, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Recognition for Artists***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:609B-R3K1-DXY4-X0Y5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 7, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 3

**Length:** 523 words

**Byline:** By Alex Marshall

**Body**

The organizers of the British art award are giving out 10 grants to support artists.

LONDON -- A photographer who captures Black British life, an artist who works with industrial air-conditioners and a mixed-media practitioner who made his mother the star of a show are among 10 artists being given grants of 10,000 pounds each (about $12,500) as a replacement for this year's Turner Prize.

The prize, perhaps Britain's most prestigious art accolade, is usually awarded each December after an exhibition displaying the work of four shortlisted artists. This year's edition was canceled in May because of the coronavirus pandemic, and Tate Britain, its organizers, asked the jury to select artists to receive grants instead.

''Gallery closures and social distancing measures are vitally important, but they are also causing huge disruption to the lives and livelihoods of artists,'' Alex Farquharson, the director of Tate Britain, said in a statement at the time.

He said that J.M.W. Turner -- the 19th-century British artist the prize is named after -- would have approved of sharing the prize money out so widely, since he ''once planned to leave his fortune to support artists in their hour of need.''

The grant recipients include Liz Johnson Artur, a Ghanaian-Russian who photographs members of the African diaspora in London in settings like schools and night life; Oreet Ashery, an Israeli artist who has made films about preparing for the afterlife; and Shawanda Corbett, an American artist based in Oxford, England, who makes ceramics and performances, some of which have commented on slavery.

Sean Edwards, another recipient, is a Welsh artist who received media attention in Britain last year for an exhibition at the Venice Biennale that focused on his ***working-class*** upbringing. Every day during the show, his mother read a monologue from her home in a Wales housing project, and it was relayed to Venice and played aloud in a grand exhibition space.

The other winners are Arika, a political art collective based in Scotland; Jamie Crewe; Sidsel Meineche Hansen; Ima-Abasi Okon; Imran Perretta; and Alberta Whittle. (Ms. Okon is the artist who has worked with air-conditioners.)

The Turner Prize was once a major event in Britain, though in recent years public interest has waned. Past winners have included Damien Hirst, Grayson Perry and Steve McQueen, the director of the movies ''12 Years a Slave'' and ''Widows.''

But British newspapers still often use the prize as an excuse to poke fun at the art world, characterizing it as bizarre, overly political or out of touch. Last year, a decision to award the prize to all four shortlisted artists drew mixed reactions from commentators. In a statement, the artists said their work was ''incompatible with the competition format, whose tendency is to divide and individualize.''

This year's sum of £100,000, given out on Thursday, is more than double the usual total prize money. Usually, a winner receives £25,000 and the others on the shortlist get £5,000 each.

In a news release, Mr. Farquharson said he hoped the Turner Prize would return to its usual format in 2021.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/02/arts/design/turner-prize-coronavirus-bursaries.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/02/arts/design/turner-prize-coronavirus-bursaries.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Oreet Ashery and Ima-Abasi Okon are among the artists who will receive grants that are being awarded instead of Britain's Turner Prize, which was canceled this year because of the pandemic. Ms. Ashery's work includes ''Revisiting Genesis,'' top

Ms. Okon's work includes ''Infinite Slippage,'' below. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY OREET ASHERY/THE WELLCOME COLLECTION

IMA-ABASI OKON

ANDY KEATE)

**Load-Date:** July 7, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Turner Prize Was Canceled, but Organizers Still Gave Out the Cash***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6089-HRT1-JBG3-60K9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 7, 2020 Tuesday 00:27 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 582 words

**Byline:** Alex Marshall

**Highlight:** The organizers of the British art award are giving out 10 grants to support artists.

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PHOTOS: Oreet Ashery and Ima-Abasi Okon are among the artists who will receive grants that are being awarded instead of Britain’s Turner Prize, which was canceled this year because of the pandemic. Ms. Ashery’s work includes “Revisiting Genesis,” top; Ms. Okon’s work includes “Infinite Slippage,” below. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY OREET ASHERY/THE WELLCOME COLLECTION; IMA-ABASI OKON; ANDY KEATE)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Republicans Reel as Democrats Seethe; On Politics***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61PV-56J1-JBG3-64K2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 8, 2021 Friday 07:00 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1655 words

**Byline:** Giovanni Russonello

**Highlight:** Recrimination, resignations and removal talk in Washington: This is your morning tip sheet.

**Body**

A day after professing his “love” for them, Trump condemns the supporters who ransacked the Capitol. It’s Friday, and this is your politics tip sheet. [*Sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) to get On Politics in your inbox every weekday.

Where things stand

* Just a few weeks ago, President Trump had lost the presidential election — whether he admitted it or not — but it still looked as if he had pulled off a remarkable feat: His take-no-prisoners, reality-bending style as the Republican Party’s leader had been at least somewhat vindicated by the results on Nov. 3.

1. With him at the top of the ticket, Republican turnout had surged, allowing G.O.P. candidates down the ballot to avoid the major losses that many had predicted. The Trump campaign’s strategy of driving up turnout among ***working-class*** white voters, including many who hadn’t voted in past elections, seemed to have paid off — at least enough to light a path forward for the Republican Party.

* The events of this week have turned all that sideways. The Senate has now flipped Democratic, after Georgia’s Republican senators lost runoff elections marred by Trump’s squabbles with the state’s Republican leaders.

1. And then on Wednesday, in what will go down as a dark day in the country’s history, Trump directed a flock of his supporters to march on the Capitol and “show strength.” Hundreds stormed the building and ransacked the Senate chamber, in an unsuccessful attempt to prevent Congress from ratifying Joe Biden’s legitimate election victory.
2. The chaos left five people dead, including a Capitol Police officer whose passing was announced late last night, as the nation looked on aghast. All of a sudden, Trump’s grip on the party appeared to be loosening. So where does that leave Republican leaders?
3. In a word, uncomfortable. Shaken by Wednesday’s violence — and well aware of how damaging the rampage could be to the party’s reputation among more moderate voters — a number of Republicans in Congress backed off their support for Trump’s challenge to the election results.
4. But nearly 150 G.O.P. lawmakers, including more than 100 in the House, did end up registering their objection to the Electoral College results, setting an extraordinary precedent.
5. The reality is that Trump remains the most popular and influential public figure among Republican voters.
6. Polls since November have consistently shown that most Republicans say they believe the president’s falsehoods about widespread election fraud — reflecting not only his personal influence, but also the willingness of his supporters to choose Trump-friendly narratives over faith in civic institutions. (Read [*Jeremy W. Peters*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline)’s short essay below, on how conservative pundits are already reframing Wednesday’s events to absolve Trump of blame.)
7. Further complicating things is the fact that Biden has aggressively courted moderate Americans, including the kinds of suburbanites and center-right voters that the Republican Party had heavily relied upon just a decade ago.
8. Many Republican officials now recognize that without the support of anti-institutional, white, ***working-class*** voters — who remain broadly loyal to Trump — they would be left without any base at all.
9. Still, G.O.P. leaders are feeling the heat. After Wednesday’s melee, [*some prominent members of Trump’s administration resigned*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline), including Betsy DeVos, the education secretary, and Elaine Chao, the transportation secretary and the wife of Senator Mitch McConnell, the Republican leader.
10. The resignations were essentially symbolic, since the administration will be around for only another 12 days, and they mostly felt like an attempt by those officials to wipe their hands clean and walk away after steadily standing at the president’s side for the past four years.
11. Some observers have called upon members of Trump’s cabinet to invoke the 25th Amendment to strip him of his powers, and at least one House Republican said yesterday that he would back such a move.
12. John Kelly, Trump’s estranged former chief of staff, said on CNN yesterday that if he were still in the cabinet, he would support using the 25th Amendment to oust Trump.
13. Vice President Mike Pence, however, [*would oppose such an action*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline), a person in his inner circle told [*Maggie Haberman*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline). According to the text of the amendment, Pence and a majority of the cabinet would need to agree in order to remove Trump from power before Jan. 20.
14. Teleprompter Trump is back. Heeding the outrage of the G.O.P.’s top brass, the president [*released a brief video address*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) last night in which he read somberly from prepared remarks, belatedly committing himself to a peaceful transfer of power.
15. Barely over 24 hours after he released a [*video*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) expressing “love” for his supporters at the Capitol and calling them “very special people,” Trump declared himself “outraged by the violence, lawlessness and mayhem.”
16. Contrary to reports that he had resisted sending in additional forces to take back the Capitol, Trump claimed that he had “immediately deployed the National Guard and federal law enforcement to secure the building.”
17. By now, this cycle of binge and bust has become familiar: First, Trump breaks a norm of American governance. Then he stays mum while outrage ensues, seemingly basking in the confusion he has unleashed. Finally, after 24 hours or so, he offers a staid and well-rehearsed statement of compunction.
18. The next step in the process usually involves Trump hopping back onto social media and picking up where he left off, lobbing bombs at his opponents and complaining about “unfair” treatment. But he may not have quite the same opportunity to do that this time.
19. Facebook said yesterday that [*it would block Trump from using its platforms*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) at least until he leaves office. Twitter had locked Trump out for nearly 24 hours, after he released his video on Wednesday praising supporters, although his access was later restored.
20. With just a dozen days left until Biden’s inauguration, it appears Trump is finally allowing official transition business to take place.
21. He [*issued a letter yesterday to his ambassadors and other political appointees*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline), instructing them to step down — a move that a typical departing president would have undertaken weeks ago.

* The chief of the U.S. Capitol Police, Steven Sund, said yesterday that he would resign next week. A wide array of critics, including Speaker Nancy Pelosi, [*had raised questions*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) about why his officers weren’t better prepared for the attack on the Capitol.

1. Many also pointed out that officers had appeared to stand aside while rioters ransacked the building, and they questioned why so many of the intruders had not been arrested.

Photo of the day

A bust of President Zachary Taylor in the Capitol building was covered yesterday after being defaced the day before.

Even after the Capitol chaos, conservative commentators deflect and shift blame away from Trump.

Trump is far more isolated than at any prior moment in his presidency, abandoned by allies ranging from Republican senators to [*The Wall Street Journal’s editorial board*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) after he provoked a violent siege at the Capitol this week.

But it is far less certain how harshly his supporters will judge him for it.

Beyond Congress, many of his allies in the conservative media and right-wing politics have largely absolved him of fault for the surreal and frightening attack.

The president’s defenders downplayed the violence as acts of desperation by people who felt lied to by the news media and ignored by their elected representatives. They deflected by drawing false equivalencies about the Democratic Party’s embrace of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Some even tried to dispute that Trump supporters were the perpetrators, suggesting without evidence that far-left activists had infiltrated the crowd.

“To any insincere, fake DC ‘patriots’ used as PLANTS — you will be found out,” [*wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) Sarah Palin, the Republican Party’s vice-presidential nominee in 2008, who demanded that the news media look into the allegiances of the people who smashed their way into the Capitol.

Palin’s surfacing amid the fury was a reminder that no matter how many Republican officials speak out against Trump’s dangerous insinuations, the party has often looked the other way as grass-roots activists and far-right leaders used militant language and imagery to rally their followers. An early figure in the Tea Party movement, Palin often summoned Revolutionary War metaphors and other phrases in her speeches and social media posts that led critics to accuse her of glorifying violence, like “[*Don’t retreat, reload*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline).”

Many Trump sympathizers tried to shift the focus away from the mob scene in Washington and revive months-old stories about the fires and looting that accompanied some protests over police brutality after the killing of George Floyd in May.

The Fox News host Laura Ingraham urged people not to rush to judgment about the demonstrators as a whole — a kind of generosity she and many other conservatives hardly displayed when describing the millions of Americans who protested peacefully last summer. Ingraham described speaking to pro-Trump demonstrators on Wednesday “who are extremely upset that they are being lumped in with individuals who would break windows.”

A good number of the president’s followers seem likely to continue to reward aggressive and over-the-line conduct — and even expect it — well after he leaves the White House.

“He’s not going away,” said Frank Luntz, a Republican strategist who has been critical of Trump. Luntz said he believed the president had given every indication that he intends to remain active in Republican primaries.

“He’s going to make the next four years a nightmare for the G.O.P.,” Luntz said.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**End of Document**



[***Letter of Recommendation: Gossip***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:631G-N2Y1-JBG3-62KK-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 968 words

**Byline:** Kristen Radtke

**Highlight:** As it says in Proverbs: “The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels.”

**Body**

As it says in Proverbs: “The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels.”

In middle school I learned how to solve for the hypotenuse and identify properties of an atom, but the most enduring skill I picked up was how to gossip. Eighth grade in particular was consumed by chatter and rumors — my classmates and I had spent nine years together, witnessing one another’s staggered entrances into puberty. As a class of 26, we had perhaps more access to one another than is advisable at such a vulnerable age.

Our homeroom teacher, Ms. Deehr, a severe Catholic-school teacher who resembled a sitcom stereotype, had no tolerance for what she called “talking behind each other’s backs.” She quoted from Proverbs: “A whisperer separates close friends.” I burned with shame over my recess gossip, fearing that eternal flames awaited me if I didn’t stop. Yet, I whispered relentlessly and often without cruelty. My friends and I talked about a classmate’s parents’ divorce when we were trying to understand our own parents’ fighting. We speculated about someone’s trip to Victoria’s Secret while poking at our own training bras, which were really just for show. We were trying to understand things about ourselves, and the tiny world we inhabited, the only way we knew how: by observing one another and making sense of those observations together. Ms. Deehr failed to mention a verse that came later, also from Proverbs: “The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels.”

For an adolescent, gossip was about currying favor, remaining on the inside of a group as a pimply teen terrified of being pushed outside. The anthropologist Robin Dunbar has proposed that humans developed spoken language not to more effectively hunt or build or conquer [*but to gossip*](https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/97/03/09/reviews/970309.09angiert.html). If we’re going to maintain our position within a group, we need to learn what personal behavior could jeopardize our standing there.

When I first moved to New York as a young literary publicist, I often had drinks with agents and editors who relayed the kind of casual industry gossip that emerges after a round or two. Someone’s roommate rarely spent the night with his girlfriend, though they were perceived as a literary power couple; a novelist who trumpeted his ***working-class*** sensibility on Twitter actually came from a family fortune; someone’s charming New Zealand accent was a bit put on. Gossip like this was often presented with a halfhearted “don’t repeat this” tone, to which I nodded sensitively and murmured, “I would never,” while already thinking of texting my best friend about it on the subway ride home.

My friend and I moved to New York around the same time, and we were gleeful observers to a whole city of complex rules and norms, which we made sense of by deconstructing them together. I wanted to know everything about an industry that allowed me to live in the place whose skyline I had stenciled on my bedroom wall in childhood, and trading information felt like an opportunity to accrue capital in a world in which we had none, providing the promise of insiderness when we were not yet inside. With each piece of information we shared — the slit on someone’s skirt was too risqué, and at first we recoiled but then admired it, and what did that say about us? Another assistant had asked for a raise, and was it time we did the same? — we reinforced our solidarity.

Sometimes she would text me the next day and say she felt terrible for saying so much about so many people; it gave her an uneasy feeling that if she remained overly invested in other people’s lives, she would never pay enough attention to her own. “It’s like candy,” she said. “If you eat too much, you feel a little gross.” I would try to convince her then that gossip was different from the indiscriminate spilling of secrets: The latter is an undeniable breach of trust, and the kind of gossip we relished — often secondhand or thirdhand knowledge — consisted of minor social grievances that could be aired without betraying confidential information. That doesn’t mean gossip is ever moral or fair or even true; it’s just that it can also be an enormous amount of fun.

The internet complicates that fun. Trash talk is disseminated so quickly via coded subtweets and rows of ecstatic bulging side-eye emojis that it makes Page Six look restrained. While whispering over drinks creates the sensation of being granted access to something you’re not supposed to know, internet gossip reads like a power grab in which a person announces one’s status as someone “in the know.” Social media platforms reward our meanest, least empathetic selves and push us toward extreme positions. In this context, the benign exaggerations of gossip can morph into catastrophic untruths.

The internet also obliterates the privacy of a personal network, undermining in-person gossip’s primary pleasure: In disclosing something to someone one on one, you’re also saying that you trust them. If humans did indeed develop language in order to gossip, it’s because gossiping creates interpersonal bonds and offers context about the lives we lead.

Despite her many attempts, my friend never completely kicked her gossip habit, and I remain hopeful that I can coax her off the wagon for good. Although I’m now less intrigued by much publishing-world whispers — how large a debut novelist’s book advance was, who chewed who out in a marketing meeting — gossip persists as a way that I formulate my understanding of the world and my place in it.

Kristen Radtke is the author of the forthcoming graphic nonfiction book “Seek You: A Journey Through American Loneliness” (Pantheon, July 2021).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Gwendle Le Bec FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Trump 2020? Moves on Iran Raise Doubts***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y1C-B761-JBG3-6284-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Jeremy W. Peters

**Body**

Part of President Trump's appeal reflected his criticisms of America's entanglements abroad. The uncertainty in the Middle East could threaten his re-election chances.

DUBUQUE, Iowa -- Almost exactly four years ago, Donald J. Trump touched down at an airport hangar here, delivered a donation to a group that provides service dogs to veterans and, before inviting a few kids to run around on his Boeing 757, criticized the wars in the Middle East that many local families had sent their sons and daughters to fight in.

''I'm the guy that didn't want to go to war,'' he told a crowd of several hundred. ''It's just unjust, it's a mess,'' Mr. Trump went on, promising that if he ever did deploy the military anywhere, it would be ''so strong, so powerful that nobody is going to mess with us anymore.''

That November, Dubuque County voted Republican in the presidential election for the first time since 1956, when Dwight Eisenhower was on the ballot.

Mr. Trump's success in places like Dubuque -- heavily white, ***working class***, union-friendly and Catholic -- remade the Republican electorate. And his path to a second term depends heavily on whether those voters turn their backs on the Democratic Party again.

But the specter of a new conflict in the Middle East -- this time with Iran -- threatens the political coalition that Mr. Trump built in 2016 by running against a national Republican Party that many voters came to see as indifferent and unresponsive, particularly when it came to the human cost of war.

''All he's been saying is, 'We're getting out of there, we're getting out of there, we're getting out of there,''' said Mark Blume, a contractor in Dubuque who stopped into the local American Legion after work one evening last week for a beer.

Mr. Blume, who was raised in a Democratic household in New York and said he voted for Republicans and Democrats in presidential elections but did not vote for either Mr. Trump or Hillary Clinton in 2016, expressed fatigue with the president's erratic style. If it weren't for that, he would be less uncertain about voting for Mr. Trump, who he believes has done a better than expected job as president.

''He's putting those kids in harm's way,'' Mr. Blume added. ''What he says and what he does are two different things, and that's what I don't like about him.'' (In fact, Mr. Trump did not always oppose going to war with Iraq as he has insisted; he initially expressed support for it after the invasion began in 2003.)

As tensions with Iran remain high, Mr. Trump risks becoming the wartime president he claimed he never wanted to be. And he has struggled to reconcile the inconsistencies in his foreign policy, leaving some voters wondering what he really is as a commander in chief: the president who crushed the Islamic State and will stop ''endless wars,'' as he claims, or a volatile decision maker who in the span of three months orders troops to pull out of Syria and then deploys thousands more to prepare for a possible conflict with Iran after taking out one of its top generals in a drone strike.

His provocations with Iran have further divided a country in which many voters say they are already exhausted by three years of constant political combat. ''I just get heartsick with all this political tribalism,'' said Ray Harrington, an Iowa National Guard veteran and self-described moderate Republican who served in Afghanistan. He is torn about the president's recent moves, he explained one recent afternoon as he kicked up his feet on a chair in the kitchen of the Veteran's Freedom Center in Dubuque, which provides resources and assistance to veterans.

Part of him wants to be over there, he said, alongside the troops. ''But I get concerned. My son's 18. He's draft age,'' Mr. Harrington added.

While Mr. Trump's 2016 victory is often tied to his nationalist rallying cries to curtail immigration, restrict trade and restore America to a bygone ''greatness,'' one of the more overlooked pieces of the ''America First'' agenda he promised was his vow to end what he called ''reckless, interventionist globalism.''

His contention that the political establishment was careless with American lives -- just as he said both parties were indifferent to the suffering of middle-class Americans while pushing policies that helped almost everyone else, from big corporations to undocumented immigrants -- was especially powerful.

The resonance was profound in Iowa and elsewhere across the Midwest, according to one study, where he broke through Democrats' ''blue wall'' in Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania by a minuscule 77,000-vote margin.

One factor that helped put him over the edge in these states was the communities that have paid a steep toll from nearly 20 years of war.

A study of military casualty rates at the state and county level found that Mr. Trump won significantly more votes than the 2012 Republican nominee, Mitt Romney, in places that suffered disproportionately high casualty rates.

The authors, Douglas Kriner of Cornell University and Francis Shen of the University of Minnesota Law School, then factored out demographic characteristics that tend to overlap with Mr. Trump's base -- race, level of education, income and population density. And they determined that even in counties predisposed to support Mr. Trump because they were more white, rural, poor and less educated, he still significantly outperformed Mr. Romney.

This not only helped Mr. Trump win the election, they concluded, but also could have decided the race. If casualty rates were only slightly lower in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin, their model determined that all three states could have voted for Hillary Clinton.

''The parts of the country that have seen this war most intensely -- they were looking for someone who would end the damn wars,'' Mr. Shen said in an interview. ''And in Trump they found someone who at least told them that's what he would do.''

The way Mr. Trump talks about the cost of war and American foreign policy that preceded him echoes the other class-based divisions that have defined his populist political appeal.

In doing so, he expanded his party's base of support, even as he upended decades of status quo among Republicans favoring a more active and heavy-handed approach to the use of American troops.

But his recent bellicosity toward Iran has unsettled some of his supporters who were drawn to the noninterventionist aspect of his ''America First'' promises.

''We were going to get out of these wars, focus on America first,'' said Allen Chesser of Spring Hope, N.C., about 40 minutes from Raleigh. ''That's what I think everybody thought they were getting.''

Mr. Chesser, who served for 11 months in Iraq in 2005 and 2006 and returned to work in law enforcement before running an unsuccessful campaign for Congress, said he and others who took Mr. Trump at his word on foreign policy had become dismayed as the Republican Party largely fell in line behind him after the killing of Maj. Gen. Qassim Suleimani, the powerful Iranian commander.

''These are what you would call conservatives, they're patriots. They've fought and paid,'' he said. Now, he said, ''because I disagree I'm somehow anti-Trump, which somehow makes me anti-Republican and lessens my patriotism? I don't get it.''

The threat voters like Mr. Chesser pose to Mr. Trump is if they do not vote for a presidential candidate at all, or vote third party.

''These are not left-wing, antiwar people,'' Mr. Kriner said. In the study on military casualties and Trump voters, he and Mr. Shen warn, ''If Trump wants to win again in 2020, his electoral fate may well rest on the administration's approach to the human costs of war.''

Some of Mr. Trump's most prominent allies are warning him of the political risks inherent in escalating the conflict with Iran any further.

''It's important that the president listens to his judgment here -- that he doesn't listen to the same people who got us sucked into Iraq in the first place,'' Laura Ingraham, the Fox News host, said the other night on her program.

Others, like Ms. Ingraham's Fox colleague Tucker Carlson, have noted with dismay Mr. Trump's apparent reliance on advice from what they characterize as the same ''deep state'' intelligence officials he has said need to be purged from the government.

''If you say so, Mr. Unnamed C.I.A. official, I'm happy to send my kid to the Middle East a week after Christmas,'' Mr. Carlson fumed on his program recently.

The political risk in taking too provocative an approach with Iran is even greater because the realignment now taking place between the two parties -- with Republicans attracting more ***working class***, white voters who once leaned Democratic, and Democrats appealing to higher-income Americans -- is still in its early stages.

''They may be learning to be Republicans, much as Reagan Democrats learned to be Republicans, so long as Republicans kept faith with them,'' said Henry Olsen, a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center and the author of a book on the realignment called ''The ***Working Class*** Republican.''

''That doesn't mean,'' Mr. Olsen added, ''that the process is complete. And one way to stop the process or reverse it is to break faith on a core issue that Trump was an outlier on.''

Still, for those who have watched the political poles reverse in Dubuque over the years, there is a sense that Mr. Trump is retaining his hold on most of his voters.

At the Veteran's Freedom Center, Jim Wagner, a 71-year-old veteran of the Vietnam War and a lifelong Democrat, said he could not fathom how anyone believed Mr. Trump when he said he would end the wars. ''Trump is so way far out there, they think it's cool,'' he said. ''They think it's funny. See, I don't.''

Democrats like him have made something of a comeback in Dubuque. In the 2018 midterm elections, a local Democrat who emphasized her family's blue-collar, union roots, Abby Finkenauer, beat the incumbent Republican congressman in Iowa's First Congressional District.

As Mr. Blume ordered another round at the American Legion, he considered the last three years under Mr. Trump. ''He's made my life better,'' he said, citing the steady stream of contracting work he had been getting because of the healthy economy. ''I haven't lacked.''

Mr. Blume contemplated the possibility that Mr. Trump might get re-elected -- and that he might even vote for him.

''It's not going to be the end of the world,'' he said, catching himself.

''Well,'' he added, with a nervous laugh.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/13/us/politics/trump-iran-war.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/13/us/politics/trump-iran-war.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Ray Harrington, a National Guard veteran and self-described moderate Republican who served in Afghanistan is torn about the president's recent dealings with Iran. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIEL ACKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

''We were going to get out of these wars'' said Allen Chesser of Spring Hope, N.C., an Iraq veteran. (PHOTOGRAPH BY VEASEY CONWAY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2020

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[***Conservatives Need Therapy, Too***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66MK-D1F1-JBG3-605Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 3054 words

**Byline:** By Meghan Daum

**Body**

Partisanship and polarization are everywhere in America these days, from classrooms to board rooms. Americans are sorting themselves into worlds separated by their political beliefs. Why would therapists' offices be any different? One reason: Therapists seem to be overwhelmingly liberal.

Do people struggling with mental health issues need to agree with their therapists' political views to find help? Do conservative therapists have a different perspective on mental illness from their liberal counterparts? What would a conservative therapist say about the anxiety that followed, for some Americans, the election of Donald Trump?

As part of It's Not Just You, Times Opinion's project on mental health and society in America, the writer Meghan Daum spoke with Dea Bridge, a therapist in Grand Junction, Colo., who lists her services on conservativetherapists.com, which helps conservative patients find treatment with politically sympathetic professionals. The two spoke about what conservative therapy might look like and how Ms. Bridge views the state of mental health in America today.

This conversation has been edited.

Meghan Daum: The home page of the Conservative Therapists site says: ''Half of Americans have conservative values, yet approximately 90 percent of therapists, psychologists and psychiatrists are guided by a liberal or even socialist value system, creating a barrier for conservatives who would prefer talking with a professional who supports their values.'' Does that sound right to you? Do you feel therapists tend to be on the left politically?

Dea Bridge: From what I've seen, yes.

I'm a little careful about what I say in certain circles because I just don't know how well my views will be received. I kind of test the room a little bit before I open my mouth too wide. My affiliations -- between the military and the law enforcement communities and some of those more hard-line traditional conservative values -- really are uncomfortable for some people who are not conservative.

But I guess I didn't realize how much it came up until Covid. I put my name on that website and I had people from other states calling me to say, ''Oh my gosh, I've had this kind of experience and so now I'm looking for somebody whose values align more closely with mine,'' and that's really when I started thinking, ''Wow!''

Daum: What kinds of experiences were they talking about?

Bridge: Basically, that they'd had liberal therapists who tried to tell them that their value system was wrong and they should think differently and then their lives would be different. When you're basically slamming somebody's belief system -- how can you have a therapeutic relationship like that?

Daum: Can you give some examples? Were they talking about situations with friends? How much of it was very particular to this moment, this political climate, as opposed to something that could have been going on, say, 10 years ago?

Bridge: I would say the people who came to me talked very specifically about what is happening now. Whatever was happening before, for whatever reason, wasn't as big a presence in everybody's life. Just everywhere you look, there's so much divisiveness. We spend a lot of time, even now, in individual and group sessions talking about how to manage the divisiveness.

Daum: And they feel they can't say that to another therapist? They are actually saying something that is as anodyne as what you just said wouldn't land well with a lot of therapists?

Bridge: Some people say, ''I couldn't work with this therapist,'' and there's probably others who are just afraid to say anything, because they don't know if that person will be able to be professional and be objective and allow them to just be who they are regardless of their personal views.

Daum: When did you go to school to be a therapist?

Bridge: I started in 2014. Before that, I was in human resources and a whole bunch of other things. I have a really long résumé, different fields. I decided at 50 this is what I want to do.

Now I'm a licensed professional counselor. I did my training through a program at a private Christian college.

Daum: How is that different from a secular program?

Bridge: Religion and spirituality were very much woven into things -- looking at and using scripture. But it wasn't so overbearing that people who maybe didn't have a strong sense of faith would be put off by it. It didn't overburden the program and the learning, but it came from a Christian worldview.

Daum: So let's take an example: If a couple comes in for marriage counseling -- to a therapist like you, someone who takes a conservative or Christian approach -- would you say that the goal, ideally, would be to keep this couple together? And might this be different from how another therapist might approach this same couple?

Bridge: That's kind of a loaded question. I don't do marriage counseling because I don't want to be in that position. I have done some couples work, but in fact, the one couple that really sticks out in my mind divorced. I met with them individually, and after meeting with the wife, her vision of the marriage was so oppressive to her -- it was making her ill. And we talked about her willingness to be in the relationship. So I would never be the one to say you have to make it work at all costs because this is what God wants. That's not my job.

Daum: Do you think that conservatives are less likely to go to therapy in the first place?

Bridge: I would say yes. I don't know if that's a truth or just something I feel, but if you look at the ideology around conservatives, particularly out West, it's this up-by-the-bootstraps, don't-need-your-damn-help kind of thing. I've even met with people from the East Coast who've come out and done presentations and they say, ''Wow, everybody's really resistant out here to help.'' It's a very different mentality.

I would say the stigma that has been with mental health for a long time is decreasing; people are more open and they're talking about mental health issues more now than they ever did. But, by and large, I would say conservatives are less likely to seek out therapy.

Daum: If you were a conservative Christian, you would be more likely to go to Christian counseling, right? That would be the first stop you would make instead of therapy.

Bridge: Perhaps, or even just go to the church and seek counsel but not counseling.

Daum: It sounds like you're not letting your personal values intrude on the work you're doing with the client. Is there an example of any type of problem or issue that you would just not be comfortable engaging with because of your views?

Bridge: I had a transgender client, but we weren't working on transgender issues. It was somebody who we took in as a result of a probation contract [Ms. Bridge's practice works with people who are involved with the criminal justice system]. I could have passed this person off to someone else, but I didn't because we weren't there to talk about transition-related issues. Obviously, those issues enter into the person's life but that wasn't really the primary focus of treatment -- so we focused on the main issue.

I don't intentionally seek out people needing services for those types of things because it's just not my forte, and it doesn't align with my values.

Daum: Hypothetically, if clients did come to you and they were transgender or if they were coming to you because their child was identifying as transgender, would you say, ''I'm going to refer you to somebody else?'' Or do you think you would try to work with them?

Bridge: I think it would be in their best interest for me to refer them to someone else from the get-go, because if I give it a go for my own curiosity and it fails miserably, then I haven't done the client justice. They need to get to somebody who is going to give them the best chance of success.

Daum: If somebody came to you and was pregnant and strongly considering getting an abortion -- how would you handle that? Would you share your opinions at all?

Bridge: I think I would just help these clients figure out what they could live with. I obviously have a conservative value about that, but I also realize my life is not going to be affected by their choice. They have to figure out what's in the best interest of everyone involved and what they are going to be able to live with, what their conscience will tolerate. It's not my job to bang on the Bible and say, ''You're going to hell.''

Daum: We're hearing a lot now about a mental health crisis among everybody, but especially among young people. Do you have any thoughts about that? I know that's a huge question.

Bridge: I have a lot of thoughts about this. Kids spend way too much time on social media and not enough time in relationships. Not enough time outside. Not enough time eating good, healthy food. There's a lot of this mental health crisis that I think is related to environment and unhealthy modeling of relationships.

Daum: Do you see that as a conservative outlook?

Bridge: I just think it's a people outlook. It doesn't matter what ideology you have -- if kids are stuck on a computer all the time and eating junk food, they're not going to be good, healthy individuals.

Daum: Everything you just said sounds pretty logical to me, but I'm wondering if another kind of therapist would say, ''Well, we have to meet these kids where they are and maybe they want to have a life where they sit in front of their screens and we need to adjust.''

Bridge: I think everybody talks about healthy choices. But I think in general we've lost the ability as a society to have good boundaries. I think, just in general, we overshare.

Daum: Do you think that people want to have psychological disorders when they don't? There is this phenomenon on TikTok where these kids are performing having certain kinds of diagnoses -- Tourette's syndrome or obsessive-compulsive disorder -- and there's a social currency in having a diagnosis. What do you think that's about?

Bridge: I do think there's this labeling that takes place. I've actually had clients resist getting a diagnosis because they don't want the label and then I've had ones who can sit there and read off a list of all the disorders they have because they know that if they're ill, then they're not responsible for their choices.

Daum: And you would be inclined to tell them to be responsible for their choices.

Bridge: Absolutely. You have the responsibility to be responsible. You are given free will -- don't squander it.

Daum: So what kinds of problems do people come to you with?

Bridge: A lot of anxiety, depression, adjustment disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder. I don't take on people with acute mental disorders like schizophrenia and things like that.

Daum: I'm glad you mentioned PTSD. What does PTSD mean to you? How does one qualify for that diagnosis?

Bridge: There's a very specific list of criteria. You know when you find yourself unable to live daily life because you have certain recurring thoughts. These things that happen that are intrusive in your life to the point that you can't go out of your house anymore -- all you want to do is engage in substance abuse because you can't stand the thought of reality or you can't keep the demons away at night, you can't sleep because of your ruminating thoughts. Those are some hallmarks of PTSD. I'm talking about things that are beyond the normal response to an adverse situation. Two people can see the same horrible thing and one might have PTSD as a result and the other might not. It's how you process the situation.

Daum: Do you think the word trauma gets overused?

Bridge: Yes, absolutely. There's trauma little t and trauma big T. I do think ''trauma'' gets thrown around and I don't know if it is used because people think, ''She has trauma so we should be gentle. We can excuse her behavior.'' We're back to that labeling thing again. Did you just experience something that was really awful and you're having a normal reaction to a really crappy thing and you're going to get over it? I don't think we breed resilience into people anymore.

Daum: I was going to ask you about resilience. I guess in some people's minds, it maybe falls into the category of up-by-the-bootstraps. On the other hand, it's pretty important. Is it something that you talk about directly in your sessions with people?

Bridge: Absolutely. Even though we endure horrible things, we need to learn how to move through them. Part of building resilience is falling flat on your face and figuring out how to build your life better.

Daum: Do you think your clients tend to be less resilient than people 30 years ago?

Bridge: Gosh, 30 years ago? I wasn't a therapist then. But just looking at people in general and the environments that I have worked in, I would say that we're not as resilient on a whole, because we really haven't had to be. There are so many things that are provided and given -- all with really good intentions. But there's also really something valuable about touching the stove and learning don't ever touch it again. We can't always just give you an oven mitt.

Daum: What do you think is making everybody so unhappy these days?

Bridge: It's been decades in the making. We don't need to do a lot of things that we used to need to do to survive. We're not really rooted in our own well-being. We're rooted in self-gratification and, quite frankly, laziness.

A long time ago, I thought about having some sort of a program for people with eating disorders: We would have a garden plot. We would plant the garden. We would put our hands in the dirt. We would grow things, we would cook things, we would make nutritional things -- a whole-body experience. Because I don't think that we get enough of those things in our lives.

Daum: But what is somebody supposed to do if they are working in a cubicle and they need to keep doing that to survive? They're trying to find a life partner but they're dealing with dating apps or they're just dealing with the world as it currently exists. I think a lot of people feel like it's just become unmanageable -- maybe even unlivable -- and you can't really tell somebody, ''OK, go back to the land and grow a garden and that will solve everything.''

Bridge: I think that's the key: How can you make even the intolerable tolerable? There's just so much negativity out there. People get stuck in it and they build themselves a prison. You have to find your own will and your own meaning and your own reason to wake up in the morning. Whatever it is -- the goldfish or the plant in your apartment or volunteer work or helping Mrs. Jones with her groceries. You need to find something to make yourself useful and get off the pity pot.

Daum: On the Conservative Therapists site, you said: ''I am a counselor with strong conservative beliefs. While I do work with a wide variety of adult clients, I don't compromise my beliefs in the course of my work.'' What would compromising your beliefs entail?

Bridge: Well, here's an example: If somebody does come to me with this very victim-oriented mentality, somebody who refuses to take any responsibility for his own well-being. We're going to work with that until I feel like I don't have anything else to say. I'm not going to suddenly coddle somebody because he thinks that's what I should do for him. We get to a point where I don't think this is working anymore for either one of us. That's a value I have.

And there's a difference between that and somebody who's severely depressed. I get if you're depressed. You can come off like a victim because you're just not in a place to see it any other way.

Daum: Do you think that Donald Trump made everybody go crazy?

Bridge: What do you mean by ''made everybody go crazy''?

Daum: In my world, I know a lot of people who were so distressed about the election of Trump that they had to go on anxiety medication. They couldn't sleep. It dominated their lives, their goals, their thoughts, their relationships, their conversations for four years and even to this day.

Bridge: That is the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard. Why would you let one person in the world control your life? Are you that weak?

Daum: They would say, ''Well, he is the president of our country.''

Bridge: There were people who thought that Barack Obama was the Antichrist, too. They lived through that. People don't agree with Joe Biden now, either. If you really give that much control to someone, there are a lot more deficits in your life than you recognize.

Daum: What do you think would improve the mental health of Americans? There seems to be a huge crisis. We're having people die deaths of despair. Especially among men, especially in the ***working class***. Probably a lot of the sort of population you deal with. Where do we begin to try to solve this?

Bridge: I read an article within the last six months that really looked at multiple areas of society and compared it to how things used to be, 40 or 50 years ago. We're very far removed from moral absolutes. We're very far removed from knowing how to set good boundaries, how to manage our time. We're very reactive. We're not necessarily proactive.

We've lost the ability to be in the present moment. There are so many things that we could do differently. You know, I have a work phone and a personal phone and on the weekends and evenings, I have very specific business hours. I set boundaries because if I don't, I'm not going to be healthy. I can't be an unhealthy therapist.

Daum: So here's my last question: What is the best thing people can do for their mental health?

Bridge: Fix your diet; examine how you're spending your free time and who you're spending it with; just take responsibility for your choices and stop blaming other people for your feelings.

Meghan Daum (@meghan\_daum) is the host of ''The Unspeakable Podcast: and the author, most recently, of ''The Problem With Everything: My Journey Through the New Culture Wars.''

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**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID WILLIAMS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (SR14-SR15) This article appeared in print on page SR14, SR15.

**Load-Date:** October 16, 2022

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[***Best Sellers: Combined Print & E-Book Nonfiction: Sunday, February 02nd 2020***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y4B-4W61-DXY4-X0W2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 2, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk

**Length:** 493 words

**Body**

About the Best Sellers:

These lists are an expanded version of those appearing in the February 02, 2020 print edition of the Book Review, reflecting sales for the week ending January 18, 2020. An asterisk (\*) indicates that a book's sales are barely distinguishable from those of the book above it. A dagger (?) indicates that some retailers report receiving bulk orders. For an explanation of our methodology, visit [*http://www.nytimes.com/best-sellers*](http://www.nytimes.com/best-sellers).

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|  |  | Weeks | Best Sellers: Combined Print & E-Book Nonfiction |
| This | Last | On |  |
| Week | Week | List |  |
| 1 | 2 | 21 | JUST MERCY, by Bryan Stevenson. (Spiegel & Grau) A law professor and MacArthur grant recipient?s memoir of his decades of work to free innocent people condemned to death. |
| 2 | 1 | 100 | EDUCATED, by Tara Westover. (Random House) The daughter of survivalists, who is kept out of school, educates herself enough to leave home for university. |
| 3 |  | 1 | TIGHTROPE, by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. (Knopf) The Pulitzer Prize-winning authors examine issues affecting ***working-class*** Americans. |
| 4 |  | 1 | RUNNING AGAINST THE DEVIL, by Rick Wilson. (Crown Forum) The Republican strategist offers his insights on how to potentially defeat President Trump in the upcoming election. |
| 5 | 3 | 19 | TALKING TO STRANGERS, by Malcolm Gladwell. (Little, Brown) Famous examples of miscommunication serve as the backdrop to explain potential conflicts and misunderstandings. |
| 6 | 4 | 59 | BECOMING, by Michelle Obama. (Crown) The former first lady describes her journey from the South Side of Chicago to the White House, and how she balanced work, family and her husband?s political ascent. |
| 7 |  | 1 | UNCANNY VALLEY, by Anna Wiener. (MCD/Farrar, Straus & Giroux) A millennial?s memoir is interwoven with a look at changes within Silicon Valley. |
| 8 | 5 | 23 | MAYBE YOU SHOULD TALK TO SOMEONE, by Lori Gottlieb. (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) A psychotherapist gains unexpected insights when she becomes another therapist?s patient. |
| 9 | 7 | 9 | CATCH AND KILL, by Ronan Farrow. (Little, Brown) The Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter details some surveillance and intimidation tactics used to pressure journalists and elude consequences by certain wealthy and connected men. |
| 10 | 6 | 7 | THE BODY KEEPS THE SCORE, by Bessel van der Kolk. (Penguin) How trauma affects the body and mind, and innovative treatments for recovery. |
| 11 | 8 | 90 | SAPIENS, by Yuval Noah Harari. (Harper) How Homo sapiens became Earth?s dominant species. |
| 12 | 9 | 3 | WHY WE SLEEP, by Matthew Walker. (Scribner) A neuroscientist uses recent scientific discoveries to explain the functions of sleep and dreams. |
| 13 | 15 | 9 | SAY NOTHING, by Patrick Radden Keefe. (Doubleday) A look at the conflict in Northern Ireland known as the Troubles. |
| 14 |  | 1 | AMERICAN OLIGARCHS, by Andrea Bernstein. (Norton) An investigative journalist traces the proliferation of the Trump and Kushner dynasties |
| 15 | 11 | 14 | THE BODY, by Bill Bryson. (Doubleday) An owner?s manual of the human body covering various parts, functions and what happens when things go wrong. |

**Load-Date:** February 3, 2020

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[***Trump’s Iran Strategy May Cost Him in 2020 Election***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y01-GNH1-DXY4-X2WX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 13, 2020 Monday 14:35 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1799 words

**Byline:** Jeremy W. Peters

**Highlight:** Part of President Trump’s appeal reflected his criticisms of America’s entanglements abroad. The uncertainty in the Middle East could threaten his re-election chances.

**Body**

Part of President Trump’s appeal reflected his criticisms of America’s entanglements abroad. The uncertainty in the Middle East could threaten his re-election chances.

DUBUQUE, Iowa — Almost exactly four years ago, Donald J. Trump touched down at an airport hangar here, delivered a donation to a group that provides service dogs to veterans and, before inviting a few kids to run around on his Boeing 757, criticized the wars in the Middle East that many local families had sent their sons and daughters to fight in.

“I’m the guy that didn’t want to go to war,” he told a crowd of several hundred. “It’s just unjust, it’s a mess,” Mr. Trump went on, promising that if he ever did deploy the military anywhere, it would be “so strong, so powerful that nobody is going to mess with us anymore.”

That November, Dubuque County voted Republican in the presidential election for the first time since 1956, when Dwight Eisenhower was on the ballot.

Mr. Trump’s success in places like Dubuque — heavily white, ***working class***, union-friendly and Catholic — remade the Republican electorate. And his path to a second term depends heavily on whether those voters turn their backs on the Democratic Party again.

But the specter of a new conflict in the Middle East — this time with Iran — threatens the political coalition that Mr. Trump built in 2016 by running against a national Republican Party that many voters came to see as indifferent and unresponsive, particularly when it came to the human cost of war.

“All he’s been saying is, ‘We’re getting out of there, we’re getting out of there, we’re getting out of there,’” said Mark Blume, a contractor in Dubuque who stopped into the local American Legion after work one evening last week for a beer.

Mr. Blume, who was raised in a Democratic household in New York and said he voted for Republicans and Democrats in presidential elections but did not vote for either Mr. Trump or Hillary Clinton in 2016, expressed fatigue with the president’s erratic style. If it weren’t for that, he would be less uncertain about voting for Mr. Trump, who he believes has done a better than expected job as president.

“He’s putting those kids in harm’s way,” Mr. Blume added. “What he says and what he does are two different things, and that’s what I don’t like about him.” (In fact, Mr. Trump did not always oppose going to war with Iraq as he has insisted; he initially expressed support for it after the invasion began in 2003.)

As tensions with Iran remain high, Mr. Trump risks becoming the wartime president he claimed he never wanted to be. And he has struggled to reconcile the inconsistencies in his foreign policy, leaving some voters wondering what he really is as a commander in chief: the president who crushed the Islamic State and will stop “endless wars,” as he claims, or a volatile decision maker who in the span of three months orders troops to [*pull out of Syria*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/13/us/politics/mark-esper-syria-kurds-turkey.html)and then deploys thousands more to prepare for a possible conflict with Iran after taking out one of its top generals in a drone strike.

His provocations with Iran have further divided a country in which many voters say they are already exhausted by three years of constant political combat. “I just get heartsick with all this political tribalism,” said Ray Harrington, an Iowa National Guard veteran and self-described moderate Republican who served in Afghanistan. He is torn about the president’s recent moves, he explained one recent afternoon as he kicked up his feet on a chair in the kitchen of the Veteran’s Freedom Center in Dubuque, which provides resources and assistance to veterans.

Part of him wants to be over there, he said, alongside the troops. “But I get concerned. My son’s 18. He’s draft age,” Mr. Harrington added.

While Mr. Trump’s 2016 victory is often tied to his nationalist rallying cries to curtail immigration, restrict trade and restore America to a bygone “greatness,” one of the more overlooked pieces of the “America First” agenda he promised was his vow to end what he called “reckless, interventionist globalism.”

His contention that the political establishment was careless with American lives — just as he said both parties were indifferent to the suffering of middle-class Americans while pushing policies that helped almost everyone else, from big corporations to undocumented immigrants — was especially powerful.

The resonance was profound in Iowa and elsewhere across the Midwest, according to one [*study*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/13/us/politics/mark-esper-syria-kurds-turkey.html), where he broke through Democrats’ “blue wall” in Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania by a minuscule 77,000-vote margin.

One factor that helped put him over the edge in these states was the communities that have paid a steep toll from nearly 20 years of war.

A study of military casualty rates at the state and county level found that Mr. Trump won significantly more votes than the 2012 Republican nominee, Mitt Romney, in places that suffered disproportionately high casualty rates.

The authors, Douglas Kriner of Cornell University and Francis Shen of the University of Minnesota Law School, then factored out demographic characteristics that tend to overlap with Mr. Trump’s base — race, level of education, income and population density. And they determined that even in counties predisposed to support Mr. Trump because they were more white, rural, poor and less educated, he still significantly outperformed Mr. Romney.

This not only helped Mr. Trump win the election, they concluded, but also could have decided the race. If casualty rates were only slightly lower in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin, their model determined that all three states could have voted for Hillary Clinton.

“The parts of the country that have seen this war most intensely — they were looking for someone who would end the damn wars,” Mr. Shen said in an interview. “And in Trump they found someone who at least told them that’s what he would do.”

The way Mr. Trump talks about the cost of war and American foreign policy that preceded him echoes the other class-based divisions that have defined his populist political appeal.

In doing so, he expanded his party’s base of support, even as he upended decades of status quo among Republicans favoring a more active and heavy-handed approach to the use of American troops.

But his recent bellicosity toward Iran has unsettled some of his supporters who were drawn to the noninterventionist aspect of his “America First” promises.

“We were going to get out of these wars, focus on America first,” said Allen Chesser of Spring Hope, N.C., about 40 minutes from Raleigh. “That’s what I think everybody thought they were getting.”

Mr. Chesser, who served for 11 months in Iraq in 2005 and 2006 and returned to work in law enforcement before running an unsuccessful campaign for Congress, said he and others who took Mr. Trump at his word on foreign policy had become dismayed as the Republican Party largely fell in line behind him after the killing of Maj. Gen. Qassim Suleimani, the powerful Iranian commander.

“These are what you would call conservatives, they’re patriots. They’ve fought and paid,” he said. Now, he said, “because I disagree I’m somehow anti-Trump, which somehow makes me anti-Republican and lessens my patriotism? I don’t get it.”

The threat voters like Mr. Chesser pose to Mr. Trump is if they do not vote for a presidential candidate at all, or vote third party.

“These are not left-wing, antiwar people,” Mr. Kriner said. In the study on military casualties and Trump voters, he and Mr. Shen warn, “If Trump wants to win again in 2020, his electoral fate may well rest on the administration’s approach to the human costs of war.”

Some of Mr. Trump’s most prominent allies are warning him of the political risks inherent in escalating the conflict with Iran any further.

“It’s important that the president listens to his judgment here — that he doesn’t listen to the same people who got us sucked into Iraq in the first place,” Laura Ingraham, the Fox News host, said the other night on her program.

Others, like Ms. Ingraham’s Fox colleague Tucker Carlson, have noted with dismay Mr. Trump’s apparent reliance on advice from what they characterize as the same “deep state” intelligence officials he has said need to be purged from the government.

“If you say so, Mr. Unnamed C.I.A. official, I’m happy to send my kid to the Middle East a week after Christmas,” Mr. Carlson fumed on his program recently.

The political risk in taking too provocative an approach with Iran is even greater because the realignment now taking place between the two parties — with Republicans attracting more ***working class***, white voters who once leaned Democratic, and Democrats appealing to higher-income Americans — is still in its early stages.

“They may be learning to be Republicans, much as Reagan Democrats learned to be Republicans, so long as Republicans kept faith with them,” said Henry Olsen, a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center and the author of a book on the realignment called “The ***Working Class*** Republican.”

“That doesn’t mean,” Mr. Olsen added, “that the process is complete. And one way to stop the process or reverse it is to break faith on a core issue that Trump was an outlier on.”

Still, for those who have watched the political poles reverse in Dubuque over the years, there is a sense that Mr. Trump is retaining his hold on most of his voters.

At the Veteran’s Freedom Center, Jim Wagner, a 71-year-old veteran of the Vietnam War and a lifelong Democrat, said he could not fathom how anyone believed Mr. Trump when he said he would end the wars. “Trump is so way far out there, they think it’s cool,” he said. “They think it’s funny. See, I don’t.”

Democrats like him have made something of a comeback in Dubuque. In the 2018 midterm elections, a local Democrat who emphasized her family’s blue-collar, union roots, Abby Finkenauer, beat the incumbent Republican congressman in Iowa’s First Congressional District.

As Mr. Blume ordered another round at the American Legion, he considered the last three years under Mr. Trump. “He’s made my life better,” he said, citing the steady stream of contracting work he had been getting because of the healthy economy. “I haven’t lacked.”

Mr. Blume contemplated the possibility that Mr. Trump might get re-elected — and that he might even vote for him.

“It’s not going to be the end of the world,” he said, catching himself.

“Well,” he added, with a nervous laugh.

PHOTOS: Ray Harrington, a National Guard veteran and self-described moderate Republican who served in Afghanistan is torn about the president’s recent dealings with Iran. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIEL ACKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); “We were going to get out of these wars” said Allen Chesser of Spring Hope, N.C., an Iraq veteran. (PHOTOGRAPH BY VEASEY CONWAY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** January 15, 2020

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[***Two U.S. Marshals Shot in an Exchange of Fire With a Man in the Bronx***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61FJ-R8H1-JBG3-60MW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 5, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 18

**Length:** 707 words

**Byline:** By Ali Watkins and Edgar Sandoval

**Body**

The marshals were wounded in an exchange of fire with a man wanted for the shooting of a state trooper in Massachusetts. The suspect was killed.

The streets were still dark when two deputy U.S. Marshals knocked on the door of a modest brick residence in the Wakefield section of the Bronx on Friday morning.

The marshals had spent days trying to locate Andre K. Sterling, a 35-year-old man wanted in connection with the shooting of a state trooper in Massachusetts two weeks ago.

The marshals had tracked Mr. Sterling to the two-story building on Ely Avenue in the Bronx, where he was possibly staying with a friend, a law enforcement official said, speaking anonymously to discuss an open investigation. When the marshals knocked at 5:30 a.m., an unknown man opened the door and invited them inside.

Moments later, the gunfire shattered the quiet morning. Mr. Sterling had emerged from another part of the home and opened fire, the official said, striking two of the marshals and touching off a shootout that left four people injured and Mr. Sterling dead.

One of the marshals was wounded in the leg, the other in the leg and arm, according to a statement from the United States Marshals Service. A New York Police Department detective was also injured when he fell while carrying one of the wounded deputies to a police car.

Mr. Sterling was killed as he exchanged fire with the deputies, the official said. The other man, who answered the door, sustained a head injury but was expected to survive.

The marshals had been searching for Mr. Sterling because the authorities in Massachusetts had issued an arrest warrant for him, seeking to charge him for the shooting of a rookie state trooper on Cape Cod last month.

In that incident, Mr. Sterling was pulled over in a stolen car by the young trooper around 11:30 p.m. near the village of Hyannis, the Massachusetts State Police said.

Mr. Sterling brandished a gun and fired, striking the trooper, John Lennon, the state police said. The bullet went through Mr. Lennon's hand and hit his bulletproof vest. Though seriously injured, the trooper recovered after several days in a Boston hospital.

The shooting touched off an interstate manhunt for Mr. Sterling, whom authorities described as ''armed and dangerous.''

Investigators found evidence leading them to the Bronx and determined that Mr. Sterling might be staying at the house on Ely Avenue, the Massachusetts State Police said in a statement. Four state troopers from Massachusetts were present during the pre-dawn operation.

Mr. Sterling, a native of Jamaica, was also wanted on two other warrants in Massachusetts, including one for identity theft, as well as a narcotics charge in Wyoming, the state police in Massachusetts said.

It remained unclear on Friday if Mr. Sterling had a permanent residence.

Residents in the ***working-class*** neighborhood where the shootout happened woke up to the sounds of helicopters hovering above the street, which is lined mostly with single-family homes.

Jimmy Wright, 77, said he ''knew right away they were looking for somebody'' when loud sirens startled him early in the morning.

''The helicopters were flying up and down the street,'' Mr. Wright said. ''I knew something was not right.''

Noel Murray, 67, said he was waking up when he heard what sounded like four gunshots. The sound of sirens then filled the neighborhood, he said, as numerous police officers and ambulances arrived.

''This is usually a quiet neighborhood,'' he said. ''You don't see this everyday.''

Israel Quiñones, 50, who lives near the building on Ely Avenue, said she also woke up to the sound of gunfire saw several officers running down the avenue. ''I closed my curtain and made sure no bullets were coming this way,'' she said.

Later in the morning, police lights were still flashing in front of the house where Mr. Sterling was killed. Police officers canvassed the street and sealed off several blocks.

Another local resident, Sandra Thomas, who lives on Edenwald Avenue, shook her head in dismay. ''Everyone is in shock,'' she said.

Derrick Bryson Taylor contributed reporting. Susan C. Beachy contributed research.Derrick Bryson Taylor contributed reporting. Susan C. Beachy contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/04/nyregion/marshals-shot-bronx.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/04/nyregion/marshals-shot-bronx.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Andrew Sterling was killed in a shootout, an official said. Four people were hurt. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MASSACHUSETTS STATE POLICE)

**Load-Date:** December 5, 2020

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[***Two U.S. Marshals Are Shot in the Bronx***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61FC-70Y1-DXY4-X26C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 4, 2020 Friday 13:33 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 720 words

**Byline:** Ali Watkins and Edgar Sandoval

**Highlight:** The marshals were wounded in an exchange of fire with a man wanted for the shooting of a state trooper in Massachusetts. The suspect was killed.

**Body**

The marshals were wounded in an exchange of fire with a man wanted for the shooting of a state trooper in Massachusetts. The suspect was killed.

The streets were still dark when two deputy U.S. Marshals knocked on the door of a modest brick residence in the Wakefield section of the Bronx on Friday morning.

The marshals had spent days trying to locate Andre K. Sterling, a 35-year-old man wanted in connection with the shooting of a state trooper in Massachusetts two weeks ago.

The marshals had tracked Mr. Sterling to the two-story building on Ely Avenue in the Bronx, where he was possibly staying with a friend, a law enforcement official said, speaking anonymously to discuss an open investigation. When the marshals knocked at 5:30 a.m., an unknown man opened the door and invited them inside.

Moments later, the gunfire shattered the quiet morning. Mr. Sterling had emerged from another part of the home and opened fire, the official said, striking two of the marshals and touching off a shootout that left four people injured and Mr. Sterling dead.

One of the marshals was wounded in the leg, the other in the leg and arm, according to a statement from the United States Marshals Service. A New York Police Department detective was also injured when he fell while carrying one of the wounded deputies to a police car.

Mr. Sterling was killed as he exchanged fire with the deputies, the official said. The other man, who answered the door, sustained a head injury but was expected to survive.

The marshals had been searching for Mr. Sterling because the authorities in Massachusetts had issued an arrest warrant for him, seeking to charge him for the shooting of a rookie state trooper on Cape Cod last month.

In that incident, [*Mr. Sterling was pulled over in a stolen car by the young trooper*](https://turnto10.com/news/local/mass-state-trooper-shot-suspect-on-the-loose) around 11:30 p.m. near the village of Hyannis, the Massachusetts State Police said.

Mr. Sterling brandished a gun and fired, striking the trooper, John Lennon, the state police said. The bullet went through Mr. Lennon’s hand and hit his bulletproof vest. Though seriously injured, the trooper recovered after several days in a Boston hospital.

The shooting touched off an interstate manhunt for Mr. Sterling, whom authorities described as “armed and dangerous.”

Investigators found evidence leading them to the Bronx and determined that Mr. Sterling might be staying at the house on Ely Avenue, the Massachusetts State Police said in a statement. Four state troopers from Massachusetts were present during the pre-dawn operation.

Mr. Sterling, a native of Jamaica, was also wanted on two other warrants in Massachusetts, including one for identity theft, as well as a narcotics charge in Wyoming, the state police in Massachusetts said.

It remained unclear on Friday if Mr. Sterling had a permanent residence.

Residents in the ***working-class*** neighborhood where the shootout happened woke up to the sounds of helicopters hovering above the street, which is lined mostly with single-family homes.

Jimmy Wright, 77, said he “knew right away they were looking for somebody” when loud sirens startled him early in the morning.

“The helicopters were flying up and down the street,” Mr. Wright said. “I knew something was not right.”

Noel Murray, 67, said he was waking up when he heard what sounded like four gunshots. The sound of sirens then filled the neighborhood, he said, as numerous police officers and ambulances arrived.

“This is usually a quiet neighborhood,” he said. “You don’t see this everyday.”

Israel Quiñones, 50, who lives near the building on Ely Avenue, said she also woke up to the sound of gunfire saw several officers running down the avenue. “I closed my curtain and made sure no bullets were coming this way,” she said.

Later in the morning, police lights were still flashing in front of the house where Mr. Sterling was killed. Police officers canvassed the street and sealed off several blocks.

Another local resident, Sandra Thomas, who lives on Edenwald Avenue, shook her head in dismay. “Everyone is in shock,” she said.

Derrick Bryson Taylor contributed reporting. Susan C. Beachy contributed research.

Derrick Bryson Taylor contributed reporting. Susan C. Beachy contributed research.

PHOTO: Andrew Sterling was killed in a shootout, an official said. Four people were hurt. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MASSACHUSETTS STATE POLICE)

**Load-Date:** December 5, 2020

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[***The Battlegrounds Within Battlegrounds: 20 Counties That Could Shape the Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:616B-MFB1-JBG3-64P0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 1, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 26

**Length:** 1493 words

**Byline:** By Keith Collins, Trip Gabriel, Stephanie Saul and Guilbert Gates

**Body**

Wisconsin The state's politics are shaped by the liberal cities of Milwaukee and Madison; the rural north and west of the state; and the affluent and predominantly white suburbs that lie in between. WISCONSIN BATTLEGROUND COUNTIES Michigan Historically Democratic, Michigan provided one of Mr. Trump's most surprising victories in 2016. He won the state by 0.3 points MICHIGAN BATTLEGROUND COUNTIES NORTH CAROLINA BATTLEGROUND COUNTIES ARIZONA BATTLEGROUND COUNTIES The Battlegrounds Within Battlegrounds: 20 Counties That Could Shape the Race This traditional Republican stronghold -- home to Grand Rapids, where President Gerald Ford was raised -- has moved away from the Republican Party in the Trump era. A former Democratic stronghold, this economically depressed county went for Mr. Trump in 2016. The prize will likely go to the candidate most popular among the Lumbee Indians, the county's largest group. Mr. Trump held a rally here in October, and both campaigns pledged to support the tribe's quest for federal recognition. In 2016, Mr. Trump easily won this suburban Republican bastion near Charlotte.

Republicans remain dominant, but signs of disaffection with the president, along with an upswing in ''unaffiliated'' voters, give Democrats hope they can trim Mr. Trump's margin. One of the nation's fastest-growing counties, Wake has shifted steadily leftward over the past 20 years, supporting Hillary Clinton in 2016 by more than 100,000 votes. An influx of out-of-staters since then stands to boost the Democrats even more, potentially offsetting high Republican numbers in rural areas. Home to Phoenix and more than 60 percent of the state's electorate, it is Arizona's most important county. It went narrowly for Mr. Trump in 2016, but two years later supported a Democrat, Kyrsten Sinema, for senator. The question is whether the county's changing demographics will tip the state to a Democratic president for the first time since 1996. This is home to the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and it's where Democrats surged in an April 2020 race for the State Supreme Court. Nearly as many votes were cast here as in Milwaukee County, even though Dane has less than 60 percent of Milwaukee's population. Heavy turnout in early voting suggests Mr. Biden is claiming those votes. The state's third-largest county is a Republican redoubt. Mr. Trump will have to turn out enough rural white voters to help protect the 3.5-point margin he won the state with in 2016. Kent County 2008 45% Obama 54% 2012 50 Obama 49 2016 52 Trump 41 2008 62% McCain 37% 67 Romney 2012 32 2016 60 Trump 33 Among the top counties that will decide the state's winner is the home of vote-rich Green Bay. It's a swing county that in 2018 voted for the Republican candidate for governor, Scott Walker, and the Democrat for Senate, Tammy Baldwin. Mr. Trump won blowout margins here compared with Mitt Romney in 2012. It is the largest of Milwaukee's suburban counties. Long a Republican stronghold, the county underperformed for Mr. Trump in 2016. Mr. Biden has forged inroads here, but it's not clear how deep they are. Waukesha County Brown County Union County Robeson County Wake County Maricopa County Dane County RESULTS OF LAST 3 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN THIS COUNTY 2008 37% Obama 61% 2012 42 Obama 56 2016 51 Trump 41 Emblematic of southwest Wisconsin, it is one of the state's swingiest regions, where weak partisan identity saw voters shift from Mr. Obama to Mr. Trump. Grant County Pinal County 2008 43% Obama 57% 2012 41 Obama 58 2016 51 Trump 47 2008 56% McCain 42% 2012 57 Romney 41 2016 56 Trump 37 RESULTS OF LAST 3 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN THIS COUNTY 2008 63% McCain 36% 2012 65 Romney 34 2016 63 Trump 33 2008 42% Obama 57% 2012 44 Obama 55 2016 37 Clinton 57 2008 54% McCain 44% 2012 54 Romney 44 2016 48 Trump 45 RESULTS OF LAST 3 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN MICHIGAN 2008 41% McCain Obama 57% 2012 45 Romney Obama 54 2016 47.3 Trump Clinton 47.0 RECENT POLLING 2020 43% Trump Biden 51% RESULTS OF LAST 3 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN NORTH CAROLINA 2008 49.4% McCain Obama 49.7% 2012 50 Romney Obama 48 2016 50 Trump Clinton 46 RECENT POLLING 2020 47% Trump Biden 49% RESULTS OF LAST 3 PRESIDENTIAL

North Carolina The state has cities with large communities of Black voters, moderate professionals and college students and also big stretches that are more rural, white and conservative.

Arizona One of the fastest-changing states on the electoral map, Arizona has gone from being a Republican stronghold to a true battleground.

Many of the places that were critical to President Trump's victory four years ago will also decide whether he wins a second term or loses to Joseph R. Biden Jr. Take a look at where Mr. Trump won in 2016. The most contested battles this year will take place in six states: Arizona, Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. Mr. Trump won some of them by razor-thin margins. Within these states are 20 counties that will help decide who wins enough electoral votes to reach the White House. They represent groups of voters both candidates are seeking. Here's what to watch for in these battlegrounds within battlegrounds.

Florida A diverse but conservative-leaning state that is almost always close in presidential elections. It's likely this year's race will again be decided by a percentage point or two. 2008 45% Obama 53% 2012 47 Obama 51 2016 54 Trump 42 RESULTS OF LAST 3 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN THIS COUNTY 2008 42% Obama 56% 2012 45 Obama 53 2016 43 Clinton 51 FLORIDA BATTLEGROUND COUNTIES Heavily unionized and mostly white, the state's third largest county has picked the statewide winner in the last seven elections for governor and president. Once solidly Republican, it is a more affluent neighbor of Macomb County and has been trending Democratic. It is a prime example of the changes that are taking place in many of the nation's suburbs. In 2018, it gave Gov. Gretchen Whitmer the biggest margin for a Democrat in 20 years. The home of Tucson, Democrats typically run up the score here. A Democratic stronghold, it is not a county Mr. Trump would hope to win. But this majority-Hispanic county was a disappointment for Democrats in 2018, especially in heavily Cuban-American precincts. Younger Cuban voters have started identifying as Trump Republican here. Perhaps the biggest swing county in the state, which backed Mr. Trump after twice backing Barack Obama, it is a Florida microcosm: solid Democrats in St. Petersburg and Midwestern retirees elsewhere. Part of the greater Orlando area, it is increasingly Hispanic. Conservative retirees have been joined by hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans, who did not register in expected numbers to give Democrats an advantage in 2018, and so far, are lagging behind other groups in early voting. Oakland County Macomb County Pima County Pinellas County Osceola County Miami-Dade County 2008 39% Obama 59% 2012 41 Obama 57 2016 48 Trump 46 2008 40% Obama 59% 2012 37 Obama 62 2016 36 Clinton 60 2008 42% Obama 58% 2012 38 Obama 62 2016 34 Clinton 63 2008 45% Obama 53% 2012 47 Obama 52 2016 48 Trump 47 RESULTS OF LAST 3 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN THIS COUNTY 2008 46% Obama 52% 2012 46 Obama 53 2016 40 Clinton 53 2008 58% McCain 41% 2012 61 Romney 38 2016 64 Trump 33 2008 45% Obama 54% 2012 49.4 Romney 49.2 2016 43 Clinton 52 Pennsylvania Pennsylvania has two huge Democratic cities, big swaths of formerly Republican suburbs and a deeply conservative rural middle. This year's election may hinge on this state, one of three that Mr. Trump won by less than one percentage point in 2016. PENNSYLVANIA BATTLEGROUND COUNTIES Typical of other counties where Mr. Trump outperformed with white ***working-class*** voters four years ago, this area near Pittsburgh is where he must win even bigger margins to counter a likely Democratic surge in the suburbs. Democrats must continue their 2018 midterm surge in this suburban Philadelphia county, especially with college-educated women, or Mr. Trump could carry Pennsylvania again. One of three counties in the state that Mr. Trump flipped in 2016, its mix of a ***working-class*** post-industrial economy and rural towns makes it ''the oracle of Pennsylvania,'' in the words of a Democratic strategist. Erie County Westmoreland County Chester County 2008 16% Obama 83% 2012 14 Obama 85 2016 15 Clinton 82 The big question here is whether Mr. Biden can re-energize Black voters -- Democrats' core supporters -- after Hillary Clinton's lackluster showing in 2016. Mr. Biden will have to boost the numbers to counter Mr. Trump's margins with rural white voters. The Trump campaign has taken on aggressive tactics, like videotaping voters at ballot drop boxes. Philadelphia County RESULTS OF LAST 3 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN PENNSYLVANIA 2008 44% McCain Obama 54% 2012 47 Romney Obama 52 2016 48.2 Trump Clinton 47.5 RECENT POLLING 2020 45% Trump Biden 51% RESULTS OF LAST 3 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN FLORIDA

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/31/pageoneplus/1rex3.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/31/pageoneplus/1rex3.html)

**Load-Date:** November 1, 2020

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[***Annotated by the Author: ‘It’s Never Too Late to Record Your First Album’; Mentor Texts***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6489-0YB1-JBG3-62S0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** LEARNING

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**Byline:** The Learning Network

**Highlight:** Chris Colin offers tips on how to do a “Q. and A.” profile, from researching to asking effective questions to finding a focus.

**Body**

Chris Colin offers tips on how to do a “Q. and A.” profile, from researching to asking effective questions to finding a focus.

Our new [*Profile Contest*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/02/learning/putting-personality-on-paper-our-new-profile-contest.html) invites students to interview and photograph an interesting person in their community, then tell us about the person in the form of a short Q. and A., or question and answer, article.

To show you how, we asked Chris Colin, a freelance writer, to break down his recent Q. and A. with Russ Ellis. This article is part of a series called “[*It’s Never Too Late*](https://www.nytimes.com/series/its-never-too-late)” about people who have switched gears and changed their lives. Like all the articles in the series, it follows the simple structure that we’re asking students to use: Begin with a catchy headline and photograph, follow that with a short introduction that focuses on one aspect of the person’s life, then end with a series of questions and answers that tells us more.

Below, Mr. Colin annotates his interview with a fascinating man who, at 85, has just recorded his first album. The paragraphs from the original article are in bold, appearing with the same links and images as in the original piece. Mr. Colin’s comments follow each bold section.

You can read [*two*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/us/prison-college-graduate-devon-simmons.html) [*more*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/31/style/martha-prewitt-opera-farm-kentucky.html) “It’s Never Too Late” profiles Mr. Colin has written, and you can find out much more about him on his [*website*](http://www.chriscolin.com/).

And if you’d like more “Annotated by the Author” pieces, check out our [*Mentor Text*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-mentor-texts) column, where we ask both Times journalists and teenage winners of our contests to tell us about their work.

“[*It’s Never Too Late to Record Your First Album*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/17/style/adult-record-first-album.html)”

By Chris Colin

One day a couple years back, the woman who has long cleaned Russ Ellis’s house in Berkeley, Calif., showed up with a new helper. Mr. Ellis did not think to ask her name.

Typically when I’m writing about someone, it begins with my hearing about something interesting that the person did. This happens in all kinds of ways, and I can never predict when or how. Maybe I’m chatting with someone in a bar and they mention some astounding person they know. Maybe I fall into a random conversation at the dog park, or a cafe, or a party, or the dentist’s office, or my kids’ school, and that’s where I hear about it. No rhyme or reason except this: It’s almost never from Google. You think you can Google your way to a beguiling, unknown corner of the universe, but in my experience it seldom happens. Every time I re-remember this truism, it’s a nudge to get off the couch and go out into the world, hit up some more dog park randos.

Having said all that, I came to know about Russ’s story through none of the above. It was his daughter who saw the wonderfulness of his story and sent in a tip. You know you’re delightful when even your own offspring recognize it.

Perhaps he forgot. Or maybe the recovering academic — a celebrated architecture [*professor*](https://ced.berkeley.edu/ced/faculty-staff/william-ellis) at the University of California, Berkeley, later a vice chancellor — had other things on his mind. Whatever the case, the lapse rattled him.

“Russell Ellis, your father’s mother was born into slavery,” he said to himself. “You have the right to invisibilize no one.”

I was glad we got to include this line, about his grandmother being born into slavery. Russ is a pretty ebullient guy, and the project we were discussing — recording an album at the age of 85 — is a pretty happy thing. The risk with a combination like that is that it all glosses as a garden-variety feel-good story. I mean, this story does feel good, but Russ also brings a great deal of depth and dimensionality to everything he does. I was happy we could flick at those.

He not only learned the woman’s name then and there — Eliza — but pledged to sing it next time she came by. With that pledge, something strange shook loose in him.

“A song walked right in. Eliiiiiza. Eliiiiiiiiiza. And then the urge kept coming.”

Calling on experienced musician friends to help, Mr. Ellis spent the following year recording “Songs from My Garden,” his first-ever album. He was 85. (He turned 86 in June.) It consists of 11 original songs, [*released online*](https://berkeleycatrecords.com/category/russ-ellis/) with an extremely local label, in a variety of genres.

The experience delighted him at a new level — he got to explore all new terrain, with a creative abandon he’d never known. Then, with that, he was delighted to conclude his brief recording career. (The following interview has been edited and condensed.)

My prep for interviews is rigorous: After researching every little corner of the universe I’m about to enter, I map out the full arc of the conversation I’d like to have, writing out all the questions, in precise order, that’ll get me there. Then I pick up the phone and immediately forget that entire vision.

Or at least that’s how it is when the conversation is open and alive and free-range, as it was with Russ. Sometimes as a journalist you just have to call someone to find out the price of broccoli in 1891, and things aren’t quite as improvisational. But Russ has one of those electric and penetrating minds. Ostensibly this was just an interview about cutting an album, but I guess neither of us was in a terrible hurry, and maybe each of us had an itch for a deeper exchange, so that’s what happened.

Q: Tell me about your life before the “Eliza” moment.

A: I never bit down on any one thing. Over the years I’ve been an athlete, a parent, a friend, a lover. “In the golden sandbox” — that’s how I think of my life in California. As a kid growing up in the ***working-class*** Black world, you wanted a secure job at the post office or teaching school. But doing new things has always been part of my life.

After retiring, I got into stone carving, then modeling clay, then steel work and painting. Sometimes I’d see former colleagues from Berkeley and they were still kind of wearing the clothes of the old office. I couldn’t have been happier to let go of all that.

I love the length of these “[*Never Too Late*](https://www.nytimes.com/series/its-never-too-late)” pieces. They’re bite-size. But every now and then I lament some of what gets left on the cutting room floor.

I asked Russ about his life before the “Eliza” moment — eight decades, in other words. Well, he told me about them, and it should be a movie. He’s born in Southern California in 1935. World War II breaks out and his mother runs off to the East Coast, and his father goes off to fight. He’s sent to live on a windy little farm in San Bernardino County, outside this little steel town called Fontana. The stories he tells me about being a ***working-class*** Black kid on the West Coast, finding his way, discovering his dreams — they’re very much stories about America itself, stories you don’t hear enough.

That’s a long way of saying that sometimes it’s a little painful having to trim someone like Russ. But I do love how contained these interviews are. You can read them while you eat your breakfast. They don’t pile up unfinished by your bedside, shaming you for not finishing them.

Q: How hard was it to start writing music for the first time?

A: Not hard at all. The songs just started coming, easily and naturally. I have always been a laborer, but I suddenly had the experience of a muse saying, “I gotcha, I’m taking over.”

Q: What did it feel like, doing this entirely new thing?

A: Having that muse — it’s like I was accompanied by another self, more sophisticated and supple than I was. I’m an empiricist. But if I had to romanticize, I’d say it was a spirit that came to visit. It was one of the best experiences of my life. What a joy to have stuff flow like that.

One side effect: You know how you get a song in your head sometimes? I now get whole orchestrated movements. New doors still open as you age. Along with creaky limbs, interesting things happen, too.

Usually when you read an interview with someone, the interviewer has edited this person into 17 percent greater succinctness and cogency than you’d find in the wild. In Russ’s case it’s the opposite. Editing does a disservice to this guy. He’s such a lovely, fascinating talker — The Times really should install some kind of tube that goes directly from his mouth to the paper. He’d just pick it up and tell a story from 1952 or 1965 or 1971 or 1989, it gets automatically transcribed and boom, instant feature. (I just thought of that! Didn’t even go to business school.)

Also, the dude gets entire orchestrated movements stuck in his head. I feel compelled to underscore that.

Q: How did you learn about recording and songwriting?

A: I’m kind of connected to the musical world through my children and their friends. I exploited any contacts I had: Would you mind helping me with this for free? Everyone was very generous.

Q: Were you nervous, taking the first steps into this new world?

A: There are benefits to age. Not a lot, but some. I’m too old to get nervous. And nothing was riding on this.

Q: What kinds of challenges did you encounter at the beginning?

The hardest thing was the blues. Recording my song “Night Driver (The Next-to-Last Old-Ass Black Man’s Bragging Blues)” was intimidating. Singing the blues ain’t just something you stand up and do. You have to be in it, you have to mean it, you have to deliver it in a way that people get into it themselves.

My first time typing “old-ass” in The New York Times.

While I’m here: It’s worth noting that at this point in the interview, Russ and I had been talking forever. He was incredibly generous with his time, and as every interviewer knows, you get the best material after your interviewee has exhausted the canned patter. We all have canned patter, no matter how genuine and spontaneous we might try to be. But it seems that we only have about half an hour of it. That’s the rule of thumb they teach you: half an hour of tape loop and then a person has no choice but to dig within for new material. That’s when you get the authentic, unprocessed stuff. If I ever had to interrogate any spies, I’d put it in my contract that I need 40 minutes with them, minimum.

Q: How did this album change you?

A: A big surprise to me about aging is that you do keep changing. I think doing the album made me a kinder person. Having my kids’ clear respect and support with it — it helped me feel better about myself, and when you feel better about yourself, you feel better about other people.

Also, I was onstage for a living, teaching classes for 150 students, then representing the university in my administrative role. Before that I was a track star at U.C.L.A., from ’54 to ’58. If I ran a good race, my stroll across campus was an act of celebrity.

This is an example of one story leading to another. It’s just a footnote here, this mention of Russ’s track career. In fact it was a huge, huge deal. There was a time, in the 1950s, when Russ Ellis was the fastest quarter-miler on the planet. He nearly qualified for the 1956 Olympics. When he didn’t, it was a crushing blow, one that haunted him for more than half a century, despite a life overflowing with joy and goodness and achievement on so many levels. He described it as “a colossal burden” he had to contend with, and likened it to having a tattoo on his forehead that only he could see.

There wasn’t room to explore that here, but as interviewers often do, I made a note of it. Later, after the piece was done, I called him up again. We ended up chatting for a couple more hours about that chapter in his life. It was astonishing. I ended up helping him make it into a [*podcast*](https://meditativestory.com/russ-ellis/). Anyway, I love when an interview yields a little thing that later opens into an enormous thing.

All that stage time was not good for me. I felt somewhat unreal. I realized, when I finished this album, that was my last expression of my desire for it. I have been happy to get offstage.

Q: What’s next for you?

A: My wife is suffering some significant health problems. It’s normal trouble, as they say — but it’s not trivial. Right now my life is about caregiving.

Q: What would you tell someone who’s feeling stuck in their life?

A: Do something that involves other people. Even one other person. Getting out of a groove — sometimes you just need company.

There’s this fantasy that creativity is something you do alone, by candlelight. No! Do something with other people who are as genuinely interested as you are.

Q: What do you wish you’d known about life when you were younger?

A. That doesn’t involve sex?

Life is shorter than you think and longer than you think. My two best friends are also Black men in their 80s. We marvel about our actuarial improbability. I’m happy to have used my time in so many different ways — ways that connected me to the world, to people.

I love Russ’s answer to this question, but I hesitated before asking it. I try to avoid Big Questions, by and large.

When I was starting out as a journalist, I thought Big Questions are the way you get to Big Answers. Not so, at least in my experience. Overly ambitious and reaching questions often shut people down — it’s just too much pressure to come up with the meaning of life or whatever. Far more effective, I think, is when you ask them about smaller details. What did your room look like when you were a kid? What kind of stuff was on your wall? Did you like being in there or not really? Non-small information invariably bubbles up between the cracks.

Q: Were there experiences before the album that helped prepare you for it?

A: Over the last 10 years I’ve actually had a bit of an art career. In the process I discovered that I wasn’t as vulnerable as I thought. At one point I had a piece in a group show, at a gallery. I walked by it just as a guy was saying, “This painting sucks.” And I didn’t die! I actually went over and, without telling him I was the artist, asked why he said that. Turned out he was a painter, and he told me his reasons. I learned a whole bunch.

Q: Any other lessons you can pass on?

A. Take note of what’s interesting in your life. Don’t keep every little scrap of paper. But take note.

I loved ending on this. Not just the advice to take note of what’s interesting, but also don’t keep every little scrap of paper. I took that to mean: Be curious but also discerning.

Of course Russ was talking to anyone anywhere, but I think his words function as specific advice for journalists, too. Just as it’s easy to become numb to what’s interesting in the world, you can also slip into an everything-is-interesting frame of mind. Not the worst way to be, but I think you can hit that switch only now and then. If you just become a baleen whale, drifting around inhaling anything and everything and getting entranced with all of it, well, that can be as tedious as being interested in nothing. The job of the journalist is to be the baleen part of the baleen whale, filtering out the bad stuff.

(My first time typing “baleen whale” in The New York Times.)

PHOTO: At the age of 85, after a long career in academia, Russ Ellis decided to record an album. Chris Colin asked him about it in an interview. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Aubrey Trinnaman for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 23, 2021

**End of Document**



[***‘Kamala Harris’s Nomination Is Everything to Me’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60KP-X641-DXY4-X2HC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1367 words

**Byline:** Rachel L. Harris

**Highlight:** For some, the senator’s being on the Democratic ticket is about more than just the vice presidency.

**Body**

For some, the senator’s being on the Democratic ticket is about more than just the vice presidency.

Joe Biden’s selection of Senator Kamala Harris to be his running mate is historic. She is the first Black woman and the [*first person of Indian descent to be on a major-party ticket*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/16/world/asia/kamala-harris-india.html) and, should Biden win, stands that much closer to becoming the first female president in our nation’s history. It’s no surprise that many Americans are emotional about her being chosen.

We asked readers what seeing Senator Harris on the Democratic ticket meant to them. “She looks like me!” and “It’s about time!” punctuated the most enthusiastic responses. Others talked about the importance of seeing a Black woman in high office after years of experiencing discrimination and racism themselves.

A selection of their responses follows. They have been edited for length and clarity.

‘She represents my story — my past and my future.’

Kamala Harris’s nomination is everything to me, a first-generation Indian-American working mother, fighting for equity and justice each day through education while raising my biracial Indian and Mexican-American sons. She represents my story — my past and my future. She is hope that one day my family and I will be fully visible and seen in our unique beauty. She gives me the courage to dream big! — Anita Thawani Bucio, 39, Glenview, Ill.

She doesn’t accept nonsense and is a total powerhouse. More important, she looks like me! I never thought I’d see the day when my next V.P. shared the same skin color, no-nonsense attitude, and even the same middle name. Here I am in the unrelenting chaos of 2020 finding hope and representation even in the darkest of times. I am so grateful to see this day and can’t wait to see us flood the polls in November! — Shakunthala Devi Shiwnath, 29, Boston

My feelings about Kamala Harris are mixed. It is difficult to reconcile her consistently progressive voting record in the Senate with her more problematic law enforcement record as attorney general of California. Human beings are complicated, and she seems to be a politician whose positions are more fluid.

For today, however, I’m choosing to be proud of the historical significance of her nomination as a biracial Black, Asian woman. She is the face of the Democratic Party and representative of the changing face of this nation. — Sophia Kwong Myers, 35, Dallas

When you tell people your parents are immigrants, they make a lot of assumptions about you. It’s awkward, hurtful and perplexing. I’ve had close friends tell ethnic jokes in my presence and then say sheepishly, “But that’s not your family — you’re like totally American.” No, not totally.

The upside of experiencing the world this way is that you can’t be an ideologue. The nuances are deep in your muscle memory. That insider/outsider perspective can be your superpower. I see that in Harris and I like it. It’s about time. — Alexandra Acosta, 60, Chevy Chase, Md.

She reflects ‘the most powerful force within the Democratic Party: Black women.’

I am old enough to remember Shirley Chisholm’s run for the presidency. I also remember [*Barbara Jordan’s speech*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/16/world/asia/kamala-harris-india.html) at the 1976 Democratic Convention. I also remember the slight when she was not chosen for a cabinet post. We do not have a Black woman on the Supreme Court. It is time to validate that we are a very important part of the political framework of the U.S. — Judy Washington, 63, New Jersey

Senator Harris is already well known to the electorate, and her formidable skills in fighting for the people make her an excellent campaigner and debater, and will extend into her public service and leadership working for Joe Biden. Her deep roots as a child of the civil rights movement so well represent and honor the most powerful force within the Democratic Party: Black women. — Patti Fink, 58, Dallas

This was my first moment of genuine, unreserved joy in 2020. It felt like too much to ask for. I found myself thinking, “Now they will see how we get things done.” I am thrilled that an HBCU graduate, and an Alpha Kappa Alpha soror, will be sitting in the heart of America power. — Lydia York, 60, Wilmington, Del.

To me, Harris’s nomination means that the country will begin acknowledging Black history and the role that African-Americans have played in building this country on our backs — without the benefit of minimum wage! — Odessa Walker Hooker, 90 in two months, Atlanta

‘Representation matters. Role models matter.’

I belong to a grass-roots organization in Indiana. We have two interns on staff, one Indian-American and one Chinese-American, both smart, capable young women who are working hard for white, Black and brown people, helping to move us closer to a multiracial democracy in our state. Senator Harris’s inclusion on the ticket lifts my spirit as I see a brighter future unfolding for these young women, one that feels like more of a real possibility, not just a pipe dream. Representation matters. Role models matter. — Georg’ann Cattelona, 61, Bloomington, Ind.

I am a first-generation Indian-American woman. Kamala Harris’s nomination is meaningful to me. Representation matters, I acknowledge that. But she is nowhere near as far left as people are imagining her to be. Black and Indian women as demographics are far further to the left than she is on many policy topics that, for me, are deal breaking. She means a lot to me and I will proudly vote for her, but I want to acknowledge the ways in which she has harmed ***working-class*** (specifically Black ***working-class***) communities. — Divya Bharadwaj, 27, Seattle

‘I like the flare she brings and the fire.’

I feel like I am always having to apologize — for my power, for my decision making, for my ambition, for when things go bad and even for when they go good. It’s all on my back. So I’ve been trying not to do it anymore. Ms. Harris does not come off apologetic. We need to see that. — Eva Lake, 63, Portland, Ore.

I watched Kamala Harris during the Kavanaugh hearing and felt great pride. One of my frustrations with the Democratic Party is how willing it is to be cordial and polite to outlandish and rude members of the opposite aisle. I like the flare she brings and the fire I have been waiting for. — Adrian Perez, 21, Chicago

‘This ticket is a model for men who are used to being in power.’

I am an African-American man. My wife is Sri Lankan. We have an 18-month-old daughter whose ethnic background is reflected on the Democratic ticket in the 2020 election. Biden, to his credit, picked a woman of color who came hard for him on the national stage during the primaries. Instead of holding a grudge or using that as an excuse to pick someone with whom he had a closer relationship, he overcame his ego and said, “I admire what Harris brings to the table, and I think that together we can lead.” As a new parent, I appreciate just how much symbols and words, like actions, matter. This ticket is a model for men who are used to being in power, to learn how to share it with strong women. — William K. Stone, 30, New York, N.Y.

‘A new infusion of energy.’

Kamala Harris is, like Obama, a person with multiple cultural influences. I think that’s great! It means she’s likely to be flexible, independent, less dogmatic and more curious about the world. Her presence on the ticket is healing and forward-looking. Finally, 100 years after my grandmother was first able to vote, there’s a good chance of a woman becoming president. — Marian De Walt Morgan, 72, London

Kamala Harris is indicative of a shift, a sign that we deserve better than what we’ve got. She gives me hope. It’s time for a new infusion of energy, a fresh legacy, something we as exhausted Americans so desperately need. To put it simply, Harris’s nomination has me stoked. Let’s do this. — Megan Leigh Venzin, 34, Jersey City, N.J.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/16/world/asia/kamala-harris-india.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/16/world/asia/kamala-harris-india.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/16/world/asia/kamala-harris-india.html).

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PHOTO: U.S. Senator of California, Kamala Harris. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Demetrius Freeman for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***‘The Far Left Is the Republicans’ Finest Asset’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:619Y-9NF1-JBG3-652B-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

An intense battle between moderates and progressives has already spilled into public view.

The Democratic Party is struggling with internal contradictions, as its [*mixed performance*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) on Election Day makes clear.

Analysts and insiders are already talking ­— sometimes in apocalyptic terms — about how hard it will be for Joe Biden to hold together the coalition that elected him as the 46th president. But it’s important to remember that conflicts are inherent in a party that seeks to represent constituencies running the gamut from [*Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html)’s [*14th district in New York*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) (50 percent Hispanic, 22 percent non-Hispanic white, 18 percent Asian, 8 percent Black) to [*7th generation Utahan*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) Ben McAdams’s [*4th District in Utah*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) (74 percent white, 1 percent Black, 3 percent Asian, 17 percent Hispanic.)

[*Jonathan Rodden*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html), a political scientist at Stanford who has explored the structural difficulties facing Democrats in his book “[*Why Cities Lose*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html),” wrote in an email that the concentration of liberals in urban communities creates a built-in conflict for the party:

“The ‘presidential wing’ of the party,” he said, referring to the wing most concerned with winning the national election for the White House, “faces no incentives to worry about the geography of Congressional or state legislative districts at all.” The ideal platform for winning presidential elections, Rodden continued,

might be one that hurts the party in pivotal Congressional races. This dynamic might be even more pronounced if the ”presidential wing” decides to pursue a strategy of mobilizing the urban base in order to win those pivotal states.

Race, Rodden added,

only enhances this effect. Given the urban concentration of African- Americans in Northern cities, the Democratic political strategy that maximizes the probability of winning the electoral votes of a pivotal state is probably more responsive to the policy priorities of African-American voters than the strategy that would maximize the probability of winning the mostly white pivotal exurban district in that state.

[*Julie Wronski*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html), a political scientist at the University of Mississippi, put the problem this way:

The Democratic Party’s intraparty schism is closely tied to the nationalization of Congressional elections. What works in local campaigns between urban, suburban and rural areas cannot be neatly packaged into a one-size-fits-all national message. You end up with this tension between what drives national media coverage and donations, and what actually works on the ground for a particular district’s constituents. This is part and parcel of the breadth and heterogeneity of the Democratic Party’s electoral coalition.

A Democratic operative with experience working on elections from the presidency on down to local contests emailed me his views on the complexities involved in developing Democratic strategies. He insisted on anonymity to protect his job: “I do think that defund the police and socialism hurt in Trump-leaning swing districts with more culturally conservative swing voters,” he wrote, but, he continued,

it’s not clear what one can do about it as you can’t reject your own base. You do need progressive politicians to be a bit more “OK” with centrists denouncing their own base. And you need centrist politicians being OK that the grass roots will have ideas that they don’t like.

Achieving this delicate balance is no easy task. This strategist continued:

This all needs to be more of a "wink wink do what you need to do” arrangement, but it’s not there right now — it’s all too raw and divisive. So as someone involved in campaign strategy, that is frustrating. But to me, this is less of a campaign and message issue, and more of a political one — it’s about organizing and aligning the various constituencies of our party to work together. If we can do that, then we can figure out how to solve the message puzzle. But if you don’t do that, then this conflict will continue.

The strategist stressed his own ambivalence:

We need to extend the tent and extend the map further in some way — out of necessity. That’s where I sympathize with the centrists. You also need a strong, passionate, determined base. That’s where I sympathize with the progressives.

The Democratic Party, he noted, is inherently

hard to manage. From race, to culture, to socioeconomic status. All of these items — knowledge professions vs. ***working class***, young vs. old, rural vs. suburban vs. urban — makes us far more complex to manage than the G.O.P.

The intraparty dispute burst out full force on Nov. 5 during a three-hour [*House Democratic Caucus telephone meeting*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) — a tape recording of which was put up on the Washington Post website.

Moderates angrily lashed out at liberals, accusing them of allowing divisive rhetoric such as “[*defund the police*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html)” and calls for socialism to go largely unchallenged. Those on the left pushed right back, accusing centrists of seeking to downgrade the demands of minorities, including those voiced at Black Lives Matter protests.

[*Abigail Spanberger*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html), who represents the 7th Congressional District in Virginia — which runs from the suburbs of Richmond through the exurban and rural counties in the center of the state — voiced her instantly famous [*critique*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) of the liberal wing of her party during the phone call: “We have to be pretty clear about the fact that Tuesday — Nov. 3 — from a congressional standpoint, was a failure,” she told her Democratic colleagues. “The number one concern that people brought to me” during the campaign “was defunding the police.”

Spanberger, who barely survived her bid for a second term — [*50.82 percent to 49.0 percent*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) — was relentless.

We need to not ever use the words ‘socialist’ or ‘socialism’ ever again because while people think it doesn’t matter, it does matter. And we lost good members because of that.

If House Democrats fail to address these liabilities, she continued, “we are going to get torn apart in 2022,” Sparnberger said, intensifying her comment with a word that can’t appear here.

Representative Rashida Tlaib, whose Michigan district is among [*the poorest in the country*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html), and who is a member of the [*Democratic Socialists of America*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) — [*directly countered*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) Spanberger and other moderates: “To be real, it sounds like you are saying stop pushing for what Black folks want.”

Other Democrats who describe themselves as democratic socialists, including the former Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders, have become a substantial Democratic constituency. In addition to [*Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) and Tlaib, there are multiple members of Democratic Socialists of America in state legislature and City Councils. The number of D.S.A. college chapters has [*more than tripled*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) in the past five years.

In March 2020, [*Gallup found*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) that “a slight majority of Americans, 51 percent, say they would not vote for an otherwise well-qualified person for president who is a socialist while 47 percent say they would.” Some 65 percent of Democrats said they have a favorable view of socialism, compared to 9 percent of Republicans and 41 percent of independents.

The realities of maintaining a liberal, multiracial coalition are complex.

[*Tom Emmer*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html), chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee, [*told*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) The Wall Street Journal that the attack on Democrats over defunding the police was effective “everywhere that it was used,” adding: “You can’t equivocate. You either support the men and women of law enforcement or you don’t.”

[*Marc Farinella*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) — a frequent adviser to [*Democratic campaigns*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) for Senate and governor and now the executive director of the University of Chicago’s Center for Survey Methodology — voiced his concerns in an email:

The party is being pushed too far to the left, thereby jeopardizing Democratic candidates and incumbents in suburban districts. Many Democratic candidates are feeling compelled to give lip-service to — or at least not take issue with — unrealistic and out-of-the-mainstream policy proposals in order to avoid running afoul of the activist minority who dominate primaries and who could make the difference in general elections.

Race, according to Farinella, continues to be problematic terrain for Democrats:

This year, some major Democratic candidates [*forcefully pledged*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) to “build wealth for Black families.” Of course, we must do that. But, upon hearing this pledge, I bet many white middle-class families wondered if these candidates were calling for an expensive new social welfare program to help ‘someone else,’ and wondered why government isn’t also helping their families build wealth since many non-Black families are struggling, too.

To remain competitive, Farinella argued,

Democrats have to focus more on policies that lift all boats and that give everyone — not just targeted groups — a chance for a better life. Fighting to ban exclusion for pre-existing conditions is a step in the right direction. So is protecting Medicare. The reason these policies work so well for Democrats is, at least in part, because they are not perceived as giving special treatment to one group over another.

Farinella stressed that he is

absolutely not suggesting that Democrats abandon their commitment to fight for disadvantaged or oppressed groups. But I am suggesting that being the champion of each struggling group individually is not a substitute for being the champion of the ***working class*** and middle class collectively.

[*Dane Strother*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html), a Democratic consultant whose firm has represented candidates in states from New Hampshire to Montana, was more outspoken in his view:

Four years ago, Democrats’ final messaging was “which bathroom one could use.” This year it was Defund the Police. The far left is the Republicans’ finest asset. A.O.C. and the squad are the “cool kids” but their vision in no way represents half of America. And in a representative democracy 50 percent is paramount.

[*Bruce Cain*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html), a political scientist at Stanford, agreed that “it is pretty clear that the Republican characterization of the Democratic Party as radically left leaning worked to mobilize support for Trump in 2020.”

In an email, Cain argued that “Biden and the Democratic leadership will have a plausible case for reining in the far left,” unless the party is successful in the two Georgia Senate runoffs. In that case, the Democrats would have control of both the White House and Congress, and pressure would increase for the enactment of liberal policies, according to Cain’s analysis:

If the Democrats do flip the Georgia seats, it will make coalition management a little harder and raise tensions between factions, but even then, I do not think the votes in the Senate will be there due to defections from Joe Manchin and others representing purple states.

[*Bernard Grofman*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html), a political scientist at the University of California-Irvine, shares Strother’s assessment but is still more assertive in his belief that the far left has inflicted significant damage on Democratic candidates. He wrote by email:

“Defund the police” is the second stupidest campaign slogan any Democrat has uttered in the twenty first century. It is second in stupidity only to Hillary Clinton’s 2016 comment that half of Trump’s supporters belong in a “basket of deplorables.”

Moreover, Grofman continued,

the antifa “take back the neighborhood’” in Seattle, where a part of the city became a police no-go zone, with the initial complicity of Democratic office holders, hasn’t helped either, especially after someone was killed within the zone. That allowed the Democrats to be seen as in favor of antifa, and, worse yet, to be portrayed as in favor of violence.

Even more damaging, in Grofman’s view,

have been the scenes of rock throwing demonstrators and boarded up stores that Republicans have regularly used for campaign fodder and that were a long-running story on Fox News. Every rock thrown, every broken window, is one more Republican vote.

[*Darren Kew*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html), a professor in the University of Massachusetts-Boston Department of Conflict Resolution, pointed out that the internal tensions within the Democratic Party are exacerbated by polarization between the parties: “Political culture is often that part of the system that is hardest to see — the values, norms, and patterns of behavior that govern our actions within the context of institutions — but it’s the glue that holds it all together,” Kew wrote by email, noting that

20-30 percent of Americans on either end of the political spectrum are getting their information from highly politicized sources and are therefore not agreeing on the basic facts of whether an event has even happened or not.

The left has not remained silent in this debate. On Nov. 10, four key progressive groups — [*New Deal Strategies*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html), [*Justice Democrats*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html), [*Sunrise Movement*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) and [*Data for Progress*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) — released a seven-page report, “[*What went wrong for Congressional Democrats in 2020*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html).”

The report observes that Democratic have in the past been wary of “the simple statement ‘Black Lives Matter,’” of “being too closely associated with Colin Kaepernick and Black athletes kneeling during the national anthem.”

In this context, the report suggests,

the latest choice for Democrats to locate our fear and blame is the slogan from many Black and young activists who marched the streets this summer: “Defund The Police.” Conservative Democrats may change the terms and people we blame and fear year-by-year, but Democrats must take on the Republican Party’s divide-and-conquer racism head-on and not demobilize our own base.

The Democratic base, the report contends, was crucial:

This election, the Black youth leading the Black Lives Matter movement have turned their power in the streets into votes and have helped secure Biden’s victory in key cities.

The report turns its fire on the Democratic leadership:

Democratic leadership has failed over the years to make sustained investments in field organizing, forcing grass roots organizations to carry the bulk of organizing work in key battleground states on their own.

The Democratic leadership, according to What Went Wrong, also failed in other ways:

When Democratic leaders make unforced errors like showing off two subzero freezers full of ice cream on national television or cozy up with Wall Street executives and corporate lobbyists while Trump tells voters we are the party of the swamp, it is not surprising that we lose.

The report refers to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s [*late night TV appearance*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) in which she showed off her subzero refrigerator freezer, filled with upscale ice cream bars. The appearance became the subject of a [*Trump ad*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) that declared:

Not everyone has a $24,000 stocked fridge. Pelosi snacks on ice cream while millions of Americans lose their paychecks, “Let them eat ice cream” — Nancy Antoinette.

The report argues, furthermore, that

scapegoating progressives and Black activists for their demands and messaging is not the lesson to be learned here. It was their organizing efforts, energy and calls for change needed in their communities that drove up voter turnout.

The authors of “What Went Wrong” acknowledge that “there is no denying Republicans levied salient rhetorical attacks against Democrats,” but argues that

these will continue to happen as they do every cycle. We cannot let Republican narratives drive our party away from Democrats’ core base of support: young people, Black, Brown, ***working class***, and social movements who are the present and future of the party.

[*Michael Podhorzer*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html), senior adviser to Richard Trumka, president of the AFL-CIO, emailed to voice his across-the-board criticism of all those seeking to place blame for the Democrats’ setbacks in downticket races:

It is far too early to make any kind of comprehensive judgment about the results of the election. But, distressingly, those who had axes before the election are grinding them with cherry picked data points that provide no credible causal evidence for their case.

While Podhorzer faulted all those making judgments, the focus of his critique appeared to be more on complaints from the center/moderate wing of the party:

They are asking us to believe that after four years of colossal disasters, with more than 200,000 dead from mismanaged Covid, with millions waiting without hope for needed relief to continuing mass unemployment, with more than $14 billion in spending, with massive disruptions to established norms and a President who made this a referendum on four more years of the same, what made the difference was this or that position advocated in the debate that neither Biden nor House Democrats endorsed.

[*Eitan Hersh*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html), a political scientist at Tufts and the author of the book “[*Politics is for Power*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html),” is not persuaded of the good faith and ultimate commitment of the affluent left. In addition to arguing that “moderate Democrats don’t want their brand tied to progressive policy priorities,” Hersh questioned the depth of conviction of the so-called progressive elite:

Many of the supporters who say they want big liberal policies at the national level don’t really mean it. For example, well-to-do liberals in fancy suburbs who say they prioritize racial equality but do not want to actually level the playing field in educational opportunities between their districts and majority-minority districts.

He cited his own state, Massachusetts:

Here there’s tons of liberal energy and money to support taking big progressive fights to Washington. Meanwhile, our schools are segregated, our transit system is broken, our housing is unaffordable, our police force is a mess of corruption and there’s little pressure being put on the state legislature and governor to fix any of it.

What, Hersh asks, “to make of all this?” His answer: “The push for big progressive policy is something of a facade.”

The political reality, however, is that the constituency Hersh criticizes so sharply has become a crucial part of the Democratic coalition, one that cannot be excised or dismissed without endangering future majorities.

[*Dani Rodrik*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html), a Harvard economist, suggests that any reconciliation of the Democratic Party’s internal conflicts requires an upheaval in contemporary liberal thinking. In “[*The Democrats’ Four-Year Reprieve*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html),” an essay published Nov. 9 on Project Syndicate, Rodrik argues that the central question is:

How did Donald Trump manage to retain the support of so many Americans — receiving an even larger number of votes than four years ago — despite his blatant lies, evident corruption, and disastrous handling of the pandemic?” It is clear, Rodrik continued, “that the election does not resolve the perennial debate about how the Democratic Party and other center-left parties should position themselves on cultural and economic issues to maximize their electoral appeal.

What is also apparent, in Rodrik’s view, is that “Political leaders on the left need to fashion both a less elitist identity and a more credible economic policy.”

Parties on the left everywhere, he continued,

have increasingly become the parties of educated metropolitan elites. As their traditional ***working-class*** base has eroded, the influence of globalized professionals, the financial industry, and corporate interests has risen. The problem is not just that these elites often favor economic policies that leave middle and lower-middle classes and lagging regions behind. It is also that their cultural, social, and spatial isolation renders them incapable of understanding and empathizing with the worldviews of the less fortunate.

In an email, Rodrik wrote:

The first priority of the Democratic Party ought to be to have a sound program for economic transformation — one that promises to increase the supply of good jobs for all, including the lagging regions of the country.

Both strategically and substantively, Rodrik may be dead on, but his argument raises a set of questions that have no easy answers: The Democratic Party represents an enormous group of competing constituencies, running the gamut from trade unionists to feminists, from minorities to environmentalists, from secular Americans to LGBT advocates, a list that can be extended to multiple pages, with many people in the party answering to several of these descriptions, further complicating matters.

It is the very determination of each of these blocs to place a priority on its own agenda that casts doubt on the ability of the Democratic Party to unite in support of the kind of economic platform Rodrik describes, a step that would require the subordination of narrower interests in favor of the party’s collective interest. Unfortunately, this demand for a willingness to sacrifice or compromise factional interests comes at a time when there has been a steady erosion of a national commitment to collective responsibility.

In a way, this is yet another tragic legacy of the Trump administration. Liberal advocacy groups have become more in-your-face, more intense, partly in reaction to the intransigence of the Trump regime, a development that is in turn irrevocably linked to the intensity of the conflicts across the country and within the Democratic Party itself.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html). And here&#39;s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/14/politics/house-republicans-elections-analysis/index.html).

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[***Daniel Patrick Moynihan Was Often Right. Joe Klein on Why It Still Matters.; Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62NW-YWX1-JBG3-6321-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Joe Klein

**Highlight:** How a politician who died in 2003 continues to dominate much of today’s political discussion.

**Body**

“The central conservative truth is that it is culture, not politics, that determines the success of a society,” Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York said during a lecture at Harvard in 1986. “The central liberal truth is that politics can change a culture and save it from itself.” Moynihan, an apostle of complexity, lived at the intersection of those two truths, a place where he was free to become one of the most creative American thinkers of the late 20th century. He sensed, and then came to know, that the social problems of what was being called “postindustrial” society would be different from those that came before. He identified these problems, sometimes controversially. In so doing, he predicted the dislocations of the 21st century with uncanny accuracy. He did it with elegance and wit and — this may be a surprise — transcendent humility. His spot-on sense of what truly mattered deserves to be revisited now, if we’re to grope our way past the mess we’ve become as a society.

I knew Moynihan. He was a mentor. He was a delight. He gave me lists of books to read; and encouraged me when, as a young journalist, my reporting ran afoul of convenient assumptions, left and right. Today, nearly 20 years after his death, hardly a week goes by when some new public outrage doesn’t remind me of his prescience — the persistence of ethnicity and racial caste in American life (and in the world), the migration of ***working-class*** whites from the Democratic to the Republican Party (which he predicted in 1970), climate change (which he predicted in 1969), the plague of mass shootings, the difficulty of improving public education for the poor, the fragility of family structure in the postindustrial world — and of the aphorisms that he seemed to toss off effortlessly: “Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not his own facts.” He was equal parts éminence grise and enfant terrible — an intellectual éminence terrible.

He had two defining insights. The first, which he shared with the Harvard sociologist Nathan Glazer, was the persistence of ethnicity in American life. Together — well, it was mostly Glazer — they published “Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City” in 1963. “The notion that the intense and unprecedented mixture of ethnic and religious groups in America was soon to blend into a homogeneous end product has outlived its usefulness and also its credibility,” they observed. “The point about the Melting Pot … is that it did not happen.”

Thirty years later, in “Pandaemonium,” Moynihan took the notion global. The Soviet Union had shattered into ethnic states, as he, almost alone, predicted in the 1970s. Tribalism — the most primitive form of “culture” — was on the rise throughout the world. There were, suddenly, places called Eritrea and Kurdistan. But Kurdistan was not a state and Eritrea was. He was puzzled by this: What determined self-determination? What was to prevent the world from atomizing into ethnic slivers? He had identified the problem, but was boggled by a solution. So are we.

Moynihan’s second great insight evolved gradually. It was the notion that an affluent society where technology was replacing jobs — where the pursuit of happiness had metastasized into the relentless marketing of pleasure — was creating a new form of poverty. “By 1989, it seemed to me to be reasonably clear that the discontents roiling through the land over the seeming incapacity of government to get anything right,” he wrote in one of his last books, “Miles to Go,” in 1996, “might be eased if it were understood that … issues had emerged which old remedies seemingly could not resolve.”

Moynihan’s path to his “postindustrial” insight began in the mid-1960s when he was a not-quite-senior member of the Lyndon B. Johnson administration, the assistant secretary of labor for policy and planning. A problem loomed: Civil rights legislation had established legal equality for Black people. But the toxic legacies of slavery and bigotry, which he called the white “racist virus,” made true equality extremely difficult. “The principal challenge of the next phase of the Negro revolution is to make certain that equality of results will now follow,” he wrote in 1965. “If we do not, there will be no social peace in the United States for generations.”

But there were social impediments to equality. There was racism, of course, but also the cultural change that came with the large Black migration from the rural South to Northern cities. Technology was beginning to limit the number of blue-collar manufacturing jobs. Sexual attitudes were changing, loosening across the society. Something was happening, as Moynihan loved to say. He studied the statistics and found this: The rates of divorce, abandonment and out-of-wedlock births were soaring in the Black community. This was creating a “tangle of pathology” — not his phrase, but that of the Black psychologist Kenneth B. Clark. Moynihan predicted increased social dislocation, violent crime, drug use, unemployment, out-of-wedlock births. “The policy of the United States,” he proposed, should be “to bring the Negro American to full and equal sharing in the responsibilities and rewards of citizenship.”

What could be controversial about that?

But this was the famous Moynihan Report, “The Negro Family: The Case for National Action.” The report was “secret” — that is, an internal government document. It leaked instantaneously, and inaccurately. Moynihan was accused of making a moral judgment about Black people, of “blaming the victim.” But he hadn’t done that. He had used harsh words like “structural distortions” and “pathology,” but he hadn’t blamed anyone. He simply reported statistics — which, in itself, was a new sociological field, and one Moynihan would champion as a way of identifying, if not solving, social problems. (There hadn’t even been accurate unemployment statistics during the Great Depression, he noted.) One of the few balanced reactions to the report came from Martin Luther King Jr., who said it posed “dangers and opportunities.” The opportunities came from the accuracy of its assessment. King hoped the “case for action” would lead to action. A War on Poverty, perhaps. But, he added: “The danger will be that problems will be attributed to innate Negro weaknesses and used to justify neglect and rationalize oppression.”

The report did give aid and comfort to racists at a moment of white backlash against the civil rights movement. But there were other problems: Liberal academics rejected the painful realities Moynihan had described. Black militants reacted intemperately, and personally, against the messenger. “Just because Moynihan believes in middle-class values doesn’t mean they are good for everyone,” Floyd McKissick, the director of the Congress of Racial Equality, said. “Moynihan thinks that everyone should have a family structure like his own.”

Quite the opposite. Moynihan believed that no one should have a family structure like his own. He was born in Tulsa, Okla., in 1927, and spent his early youth in Indiana and the New York suburbs. His father, an alcoholic journalist, abandoned the family when Pat was a preteen — and the Moynihans experienced one of the most dreaded forms of American poverty: falling out of the middle class. They pitched up in Hell’s Kitchen, in New York City, at the time an Irish slum, where his mother tended bar. Pat shined shoes (he once told me that he set up his kit next to Woody Guthrie, who was busking in Bryant Park). He worked the docks, he graduated from Benjamin Franklin High School in East Harlem. He started at City College, then joined the Navy — World War II was on — which paid for most of his education. “A 5-year-old boy needs a father,” he wrote in the early days of the controversy. “If he has to live without one, he has been cheated. It does not matter if he goes on to become a Supreme Court justice or a brain surgeon. He has been cheated.”

Moynihan was a cornucopia of incongruities, flagrantly Irish — but with the style of an English toff. He considered himself a ***working-class*** guy, but he had studied at the London School of Economics and undergone years of psychotherapy. He considered himself “the last Sachem of Tammany Hall,” the famed political machine; but he was too protean for strict partisanship. My favorite Moynihan story came from Tim Russert, who was the senator’s driver in the late 1970s. One evening in New York, Russert went to pick up Moynihan at the Carlyle Hotel. He was about to knock on Moynihan’s door when he heard a distinctive, percussive laugh: “Ah! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!” Russert paused. Another peal of laughter. Finally, he knocked and Moynihan opened the door. He had been watching “The Honeymooners,” that grand urban Irish comedy of manners.

A period of bitterness followed the report. Moynihan was flushed from the Department of Labor, exiled to academia, ran for City Council president in New York and lost. In 1969, he published “Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding,” a sour account of the War on Poverty, a rumination on the failure of the liberal “truth” that government could make things better. “The War on Poverty was not declared at the behest of the poor; it was declared in their interests by persons confident of their own judgment in such matters,” he wrote. A new layer of government was proposed during the Johnson administration, Community Action Programs (CAPs). They would involve “maximum feasible participation” of the poor, perhaps even “community control” of antipoverty funds. But many of the CAPs came to be run by left-leaning radicals and eventually Black militants, who tried to organize the slums against the local municipal governments, which was not what President Johnson had in mind. “The antipoverty program came to be associated with the kind of bad manners and arrogance that are more the mark of the rich than the poor,” Moynihan wrote. Indeed, it was the antics of the college-educated leftists that defined “that slum of a decade,” as he later called the ’60s.

Of course, the “bad manners and arrogance” Moynihan complained about were also being directed at him. His home in Cambridge, Mass., was under police guard. The Moynihan Report was canceled by the academic left, ignored for nearly 20 years; its truths would be resurrected only in 1987 by the Black sociologist William Julius Wilson in “The Truly Disadvantaged.” In the meantime, Moynihan went through a period where he found succor among neoconservative intellectuals — former liberals skeptical of Johnson’s Great Society initiatives and appalled by the excesses of the New Left. “The great strength of political conservatives at this time,” he wrote, “is that they are open to the thought that matters are complex. Liberals have got into a reflexive pattern of denying this.”

His outrage led to what seemed to many of his liberal friends a betrayal: He joined the Nixon administration as assistant to the president for urban affairs. He remained a New Deal liberal, nonetheless. In fact, as early as 1965 — in an article for the Catholic magazine America — he proposed an answer to the family problems he had described in the report: Give poor people a guaranteed income. At the very least, they would feed their children. At the most, men wouldn’t have an incentive to leave their homes. (The existing welfare system gave money only to women who had been abandoned.) This was the Family Assistance Plan that Richard Nixon introduced and nearly passed. It was the predicate for what Moynihan proposed as a period of “benign neglect” of the Black community — a truly unfortunate phrase — that would allow the wounds of the 1960s to heal. Moynihan’s idea of giving people money, as opposed to giving them bureaucrats intent on reforming their behavior, had legs. It has been pursued by President Biden in the form of an expanded child support tax credit, which even some Republicans want to make permanent. Biden’s program may cut child poverty in half.

When Moynihan proposed “solutions” like the Family Assistance Plan, they were simple ones: Give poor people money. Give them jobs. Give everyone health care. The New Deal proved government could do that. But government, he knew, was not so good at changing the way people behaved. He scorned “the desperate notion that possibly the federal government could keep guns out of schools.” He was boggled by drug addiction, though he was able to compare — in his impossibly erudite fashion — the social devastation of high-powered drugs like heroin in the 20th century to the crime wave caused by the development of blended whiskey in the 19th. He assayed hope, without great conviction: “We are going to have to work our way through these issues. It doesn’t follow that we will, but I don’t know that we won’t.” A quarter-century after he wrote those words, we haven’t.

Moynihan remained a neoconservative hero through the 1970s, especially during his stint as United Nations ambassador, when he battled on Israel’s behalf against those who would have equated Zionism with racism. He was elected to the Senate in 1976 and served for 24 years, with broad popular support. But he quickly grew impatient with the neoconservatives, especially as they bloated the Soviet threat and supported Ronald Reagan, who wanted to gut programs for the poor. “I watched all this with a combination of incredulity, horror and complicity,” he wrote in “Pandaemonium.” The Soviet Union — and the Marxist fantasy — was collapsing, and yet Reagan persisted in a war against Communism in Nicaragua: “all this in the cause of fighting a Cold War that was over.”

By the 1990s, Moynihan began to mesh his two great insights. Ethnic and caste conflicts were on the rise in the United States and the world, accompanied by the postindustrial social issues he had anticipated. Could these be linked? The problems seemed worse than ever, and had extended to the white ***working class***, where the out-of-wedlock birthrate was higher than it had been in the Black community when he wrote the Moynihan Report — indeed, poverty was becoming entwined with cultural behavior patterns passed from one generation to the next. Gun crime was epidemic, fueled, in part, by crack cocaine, a disastrous new drug technology. The Clinton administration’s response to these problems was, he believed, punitive: more prison for Black men and less welfare for Black women. He was infuriated by Clinton’s welfare reform plan: He called it “boob bait for bubbas.” He predicted millions of children would be sleeping on subway grates, which proved an exaggeration — although thousands did slip through the holes in the new, less sturdy safety net. “We are at the point of knowing a fair amount about what we don’t know,” Moynihan wrote in “Miles to Go.” “The past quarter-century has been quite productive in this regard. On the other hand, our social situation is considerably worse.” Deviancy — by which he meant antisocial behavior — was being “defined down.”

Twenty-five years later, we live in a world that was Moynihan’s nightmare: Postmodern tribes — with their own fake “facts” — have gone virtual; affinity groups are organized by cable news networks and social media platforms. Cynicism about government’s ability to do anything useful abounds. It remains to be seen if Joe Biden’s postindustrial version of the New Deal — which Moynihan would have voted for enthusiastically, as it reduces inequality with a minimum of social engineering — will heal the wounds. He would, I suspect, be busily foraging for statistics to prove that tax increases have little or no impact on economic growth. Both George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton proved that (and even Ronald Reagan raised taxes when few were looking).

Moynihan didn’t leave us many policy prescriptions, but he did bequeath a method: the gathering of statistics about family and poverty, accompanied by a cleareyed analysis of what they indicated. “Progress begins on social problems when it becomes possible to measure them,” he wrote. Statistics might even, from time to time, contain some good news — and, in fact, the past 40 years have seen great progress in the area that concerned him most: equality for African-Americans. In his 1970 “benign neglect” memo to Nixon, he foresaw “extraordinary progress” for Black people. And that has happened. There is now a solid Black middle and professional class — nearly half of African-American families have incomes over $50,000 — although disproportionate rates of poverty persist and wealth disparities remain.

Racism persists, too; uglier than ever, as the white majority fades. But even culture can change over time. The Black out-of-wedlock birthrate stands at 70 percent, but Black women are graduating from college at a stunning rate — and they are making mature choices about when and how to have children (teenage births have plummeted). According to the Princeton sociologist Kathryn Edin, many of these women are “stabilizing their family arrangements” and finding partners over time. It would be fascinating to know Moynihan’s thoughts about this. He might even be pleased.

“With any luck — and why not? — there will be examples of successful adaptation, compromise, evolution,” he wrote in “Pandaemonium.” “Not every [change] will be without grief. But humor and intellect help.”

♦

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BEYOND THE MELTING POT: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians and Irish of New York City (1963), with Nathan Glazer. The breakthrough study of ethnicity in America.

THE MOYNIHAN REPORT AND THE POLITICS OF CONTROVERSY (1967), by Lee Rainwater and William L. Yancey. The original text of Moynihan’s report on the Black family crisis, with commentary by those who denounced it.

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SECRECY (1998)

Joe Klein is the author of seven books, including “Primary Colors,” “Woody Guthrie: A Life” and “Charlie Mike.”

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL HOSEFROS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (BR1); Moynihan in his office at Harvard, 1971. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE TAMES/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (BR16)

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* [*Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the Anti-Trump of American Politics*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/11/opinion/sunday/daniel-patrick-moynihan.html)

1. [*An Idea by Moynihan Rises Like a Phoenix: Relocating Pennsylvania Station*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/11/opinion/sunday/daniel-patrick-moynihan.html)
2. [*The Professor Goes to Washington*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/11/opinion/sunday/daniel-patrick-moynihan.html)

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[***Facing Turmoil, Kazakh President Chose His Path: Embrace Russia***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64GW-R391-JBG3-60K2-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Valerie Hopkins

**Body**

With his government under siege, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Kazakhstan's president, turned to Russia's Vladimir V. Putin for support. The choice could realign Central Asia's politics.

MOSCOW -- The embattled president of Kazakhstan has the pedigree of an international technocrat. The son of prominent intellectuals, he studied in Moscow at a premier academy for diplomats, and later worked in the Soviet Embassy in Beijing. He served as a key adviser to the strongman who ruled the oil-rich Central Asian country as a fief for nearly three decades -- and then, in 2019, became his heir.

The rise of Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to the presidency was looked at as a possible model by other authoritarian regimes on how to conduct a leadership transition without losing their grip on power. Instead, Kazakhstan erupted in violence this week and Mr. Tokayev has overseen a ruthless crackdown on protesters while ousting his former benefactor, Nursultan Nazarbayev, 81, from his last foothold of authority, as head of the nation's powerful security council.

For support, Mr. Tokayev has turned to another autocrat: President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia.

It is too soon to know for certain whether Kazakhstan's moment of crisis will be a victory for Mr. Putin, who quickly responded to Mr. Tokayev's request for help by sending troops as part of a Russia-led effort to quell the uprising. Moscow has a history of sending ''peacekeeping'' forces to countries that never leave. And Mr. Putin is intent on maintaining a sphere of Russian influence that includes former Soviet republics like Kazakhstan.

But analysts and experts on Central Asia say that when his government was under siege and his own position was teetering, Mr. Tokayev, 68, was neither powerful enough nor independent enough to go it alone. And his swift alignment with Moscow portends potentially transformative changes in a region that has seen fierce jockeying for influence among the United States, Russia and China.

In effect, analysts said, against a backdrop of chaos and violence, Mr. Tokayev chose Russia to ensure his own political survival.

The Kazakh president ''traded his country's sovereignty to Russia for his own power and the interests of kleptocratic elites,'' said Erica Marat, a professor at National Defense University, a military university in Washington.

This move ''is really about making Kazakhstan a more submissive, more loyal partner,'' she said, adding that Kazakhstan would ''have to be more aligned with Russia against the West in geopolitical and global matters.''

In a menacing speech on Friday, in which he warned that government security forces could shoot to kill to suppress protests, Mr. Tokayev displayed deference to Mr. Putin, offering special thanks to the Russian leader for providing assistance ''very promptly and, most importantly, warmly, in a friendly way.'' He again expressed ''special gratitude'' to Russia in a phone call with Mr. Putin on Saturday, the Kremlin said.

But the relationship between the two leaders features a significant imbalance in stature: At a news conference last month in Moscow, Mr. Putin seemed unable to remember Mr. Tokayev's name.

Mr. Tokayev took office, handpicked by Mr. Nazarbayev, pledging to turn the autocracy into a ''listening state'' that was ''overcoming the fear of alternative opinion.''

His transformation almost three years later to a leader promising this week to ''fire without warning'' at the protesters, is a drastic one, said Luca Anceschi, a professor of Eurasian Studies at the University of Glasgow. ''He has become a truly authoritarian leader, projecting power which he doesn't really have,'' Dr. Anceschi said.

''If you have to rely on power from Russia, are you powerful?'' he added.

When protests turned violent this week, Mr. Tokayev responded by dismissing his cabinet and ousting Mr. Nazarbayev, who had retained great influence as the ''leader of the nation,'' the chairman of the ruling Nur Otan party and the head of the nation's security council.

Mr. Tokayev also fired Mr. Nazarbayev's key allies from prominent roles in the country's vast security apparatus. Then pitched battles broke out.

The timing of the shift from the initial, peaceful protests in the country's West to the violence and looting in Almaty -- which intensified after Mr. Nazarbayev and his loyal head of the country's powerful intelligence agency, Karim Masimov, were fired -- has given rise to widespread speculation that the rioters were organized by proxies for feuding factions of the political elite, pitting Mr. Nazarbayev and his allies against Mr. Tokayev.

Into the security vacuum, at Mr. Tokayev's request, came elite troops -- mostly Russian -- from a Kremlin-sponsored alliance called the Collective Security Treaty Organization, Russia's version of NATO.

Internally, Mr. Tokayev's decision to welcome the soldiers, tanks and airplanes from the alliance could further erode public trust in the president.

Many ***working-class*** Kazakhs have long been furious at the corruption that funnels the wealth from Central Asia's biggest economy to an elite few. Seeing a leader who supported and benefited from that system, and now chooses to be propped up by Moscow instead of listening to genuine grievances, will infuriate ordinary Kazakhstanis, Dr. Marat said.

''People did not come on the streets to ask for Russian interference in their daily lives,'' she said.

For Mr. Putin, dispatching troops to Kazakhstan represents ''a low-cost engagement with high returns,'' Dr. Marat said.

For decades, Mr. Tokayev built a reputation as an effective technocrat adept at helping Mr. Nazarbayev balance Kazakhstan's foreign policy between its increasingly assertive neighbors, China and Russia, and its powerful economic investor, the United States.

And for 28 years, he was effectively Mr. Nazarbayev's understudy.

Since taking office, Mr. Tokayev has not had to contend with real political competition. Under his leadership, there has been a significant crackdown on opposition parties, human rights groups say. And genuine opposition figures are ''consistently marginalized,'' according to the watchdog Freedom House, while ''freedoms of speech and assembly remain restricted.''

But now, the president has to contend with apparent rivals inside the top echelons of government -- some of the people closest to Mr. Nazarbayev, several analysts said.

Days after the protests began on Jan. 2 over ballooning inflation and rising fuel prices, Mr. Tokayev said he would rescind the price increases. But demonstrators had already begun demanding the end of the kleptocratic political system that Mr. Nazarbayev had built and maintained since the country declared independence from the Soviet Union in 1991.

By midweek, protesters were shouting, ''Shal ket!'' -- or ''Old man out!'' -- in reference to Mr. Nazarbayev. But then Mr. Tokayev fired the former president and the intelligence agency chief, Mr. Masimov, along with Mr. Nazarbayev's nephew, who was the agency's second in command.

Mr. Masimov was detained on suspicion of ''high treason'' on Thursday, the agency -- known as the National Security Committee -- said in a statement on Saturday.

Rioters soon broke into at least one government weapons depot, where they met little resistance, according to local news reports. They raced to take over government buildings and the airport in Almaty, Kazakhstan's largest city and economic center, where most of the unrest took place. (Elsewhere in the country, especially the West, protests remained peaceful.)

Akezhan Kazhegeldin, who served as prime minister of Kazakhstan from 1994 to 1997 but resigned over concerns about corruption, said it was likely that Mr. Tokayev determined that he had ''lost control over the military and law enforcement bodies,'' leading him to dismiss Mr. Nazarbayev, Mr. Masimov and the government.

Mr. Kazhegeldin, who has been in exile for decades, said he was still holding out hope that Mr. Tokayev, who served as his chief of cabinet when he was prime minister, could turn things around.

But he warned that it would be a mistake for Mr. Tokayev to continue seeking help from Russia, with whom Kazakhstan shares a 4,750-mile land border. Kazakhstan maintains close relations with Russia, and is a member of the single-market Eurasian Economic Union. Mr. Putin, though, has at times played down Kazakh independence, employing messaging similar to his recent statements on Ukraine.

Many Kazakhs view the Soviet era with ambivalence, with some seeing it as an extension of colonial rule.

''We don't need any Russian or Belarusian help to settle the situation in one city, Almaty,'' Mr. Kazhegeldin said. ''We can use our nation.''

Dr. Anceschi, from the University of Glasgow, suggested that the only one with a true choice amid the chaos was Mr. Putin, who decided to back Mr. Tokayev instead of Mr. Nazarbayev and Mr. Masimov. But for Mr. Tokayev, the turn to the Kremlin was an existential choice.

The president, Dr. Anceschi said, ''didn't choose Russia, he chose himself.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/08/world/europe/kazakhstan-russia.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/08/world/europe/kazakhstan-russia.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev of Kazakhstan at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing in 2019. Left, a police officer holding two protesters at gunpoint on Saturday in Almaty, Kazakhstan. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK SCHIEFELBEIN

VASILY KRESTYANINOV/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

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[***Makeover Proposed for Waterfront Complex Divides New York Leaders***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60K8-78F1-DXY4-X4YW-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1438 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Body**

The fight over a rezoning plan in Brooklyn has pitted progressives and mainstream Democrats against each other.

A plan to bring tens of thousands of jobs to an overlooked corner of the city just outside Manhattan has become another battleground for New York City leaders. Progressives are attacking mainstream Democrats about their competing visions for the city. A powerful business is on the defensive.

Last year, it was an Amazon campus in Queens. Now it is Industry City, a 19th-century warehouse complex in Brooklyn that has been reborn as a 21st-century hub for small businesses, artists and visitors.

Developers want to further transform the waterfront industrial area, and are pursuing a zoning change in the ***working class*** neighborhood of Sunset Park that would allow Industry City to expand into a shopping and office behemoth. But a number of local political leaders, including Carlos Menchaca, the city councilman who represents the neighborhood, strongly oppose the proposal.

In normal times, Mr. Menchaca's opposition would be enough to kill the plan; tradition holds that City Council members can essentially veto any rezoning in their districts.

These are not normal times. Mr. Menchaca's colleagues say that the prospect of adding 20,000 jobs during an economic crisis is too important, and they might attempt to go around him.

The collapse of the Amazon deal is still fresh on some lawmakers' minds, and there are still hurt feelings on both sides. Ritchie Torres, a Democratic councilman from the Bronx who won a competitive congressional primary race this summer, said the city should not make the same mistake again.

''Amazon 2.0 in a time of Depression-level unemployment strikes me as deeply irresponsible,'' Mr. Torres said in an interview.

The showdown over Industry City is a fight over the future of development in New York City -- an especially urgent debate given the job losses of the pandemic.

The rezoning proposal has also exposed complex tensions among Democrats over gentrification, the power of the real estate industry and who will lead the city as it recovers from its worst crisis in half a century.

Mr. Menchaca, who is part of the Council's progressive caucus, called Industry City a ''luxury mall'' that could worsen gentrification in Sunset Park, where half of residents are Hispanic and Asian, and about one in five lives in poverty.

''We're not anti-development at all -- we're anti-gentrification,'' he said. ''We have so many ideas for developing the waterfront in a vein of equity and economic justice.''

The developers of Industry City, using the Brooklyn Navy Yard as a template, want to expand their ''innovation hub for creative companies,'' and add more space for retail and parking. They say the rezoning could create 20,000 jobs and $100 million a year in tax revenue. (Amazon promised 25,000 jobs and $27 billion in tax revenue over two decades.)

Mayor Bill de Blasio, whose second and last term ends in 2021, has not taken a position on the rezoning proposal.

''Obviously, it would bring a lot of jobs and that's something we would appreciate in this city, but again, that's really between the private developer and the Council to work that through,'' he said last week on NY1.

Corey Johnson, the Democratic City Council speaker who is running for mayor, has also not said whether he supports the rezoning. Another Democratic mayoral candidate, Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, had expressed concerns about the project. Now he wants the full City Council to decide its fate.

''The Industry City proposal could create the kind of jobs and economic boost that New York City needs right now -- and so it at least deserves an up-or-down vote in the City Council,'' Mr. Adams said in a statement.

Over the last year, Democratic factions have fought over a long list of issues, including a proposal to institute a tax on millionaires, plans for a train to La Guardia Airport, and the extent of police reforms.

A rezoning of the Inwood neighborhood in northern Manhattan was highly contentious and raised similar concerns over pushing out longtime residents. Other city leaders want to build a huge development over the Sunnyside rail yard in Queens.

The conflict over Industry City could figure prominently in the Democratic mayoral primary next year, and has even raised questions about the unspoken tradition of allowing a council member to torpedo proposals in their district. Last week, Mr. de Blasio said the tradition, known in the Council as ''member deference,'' was ''not a hard and fast rule.''

''I do think we have to think about some of the overwhelming dynamics we're dealing with right now,'' the mayor told reporters. ''We're in the middle of a pandemic, and we've got to get people back to work.''

Indeed, despite Mr. Menchaca's opposition, the developer has not withdrawn its rezoning application, and it is expected to be voted on next month by the city's planning commission. If it passes, it would then advance to the Council.

Industry City is a century-old industrial complex on the waterfront covering more than five million square feet. It was built by the industrial tycoon Irving T. Bush in the 1890s and formerly known as Bush Terminal.

In 2013, Jamestown, the developer that owns Chelsea Market, and its partners bought a nearly 50 percent stake in the 16-building complex. Jamestown renovated the buildings, which were engulfed by more than 20 million gallons of water during Hurricane Sandy.

The complex grew to include more than 500 businesses, including a food hall, a film-production company and a training center for the Brooklyn Nets basketball team. Under the rezoning, the developers could expand the complex and add more buildings. They agreed not to build hotels as originally planned.

In a letter to the City Council, Andrew Kimball, chief executive of Industry City, said there were currently 8,000 jobs at the complex. The rezoning would allow for 15,000 total jobs at the site, he said, and another 8,000 in the neighboring community.

Elizabeth Yeampierre, the leader of Uprose, an environmental justice group, said residents of Sunset Park, where many small businesses have been hit hard by the pandemic and might not reopen, were worried that they would not be hired for the new jobs. She questioned the wisdom of building in a storm surge zone, and said the developers had made promises about community engagement, including proposing a public high school, without listening to feedback from residents.

''None of their recommendations came from the community, and they are inconsistent with our community needs,'' she said.

In one demonstration of the community's preference, a recent Democratic primary for State Assembly was won by Marcela Mitaynes, a candidate who ran against the rezoning plan and was endorsed by United States Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

The tension over the rezoning proposal has led to unusually prickly exchanges on the City Council, a body that is often collegial. Mr. Torres and Donovan Richards, a councilman who won the Democratic primary for Queens borough president, wrote in an opinion piece supporting the rezoning that Mr. Menchaca should not act as a ''feudal lord'' overseeing a ''personal fiefdom.''

Mr. Menchaca, who questioned whether the developer's job claims were inflated, said it was unfair for council members from other boroughs to tell his community what was best for them.

''It's beyond disrespectful; it's anti-democratic,'' he said.

Mr. Richards, who is part of the progressive caucus but supported the Amazon deal, responded to criticism that he was meddling. ''Yes,'' he wrote on Twitter, ''I'm weighing in on a project the way Brooklyn members did on a project that cost Queens 25,000 jobs.''

Jonathan Westin, director of New York Communities for Change, a progressive organizing group, fired back that Mr. Richards was ''unapologetically in the pocket of developers.''

Despite the economic repercussions of the pandemic, the developers are still committed to the rezoning. Mr. Kimball spearheaded the Brooklyn Navy Yard's transformation from an abandoned industrial wasteland to a creative hub with tech start-ups.

''Just like I did at the Navy Yard, we're taking a decrepit site and bringing it back to life,'' he said in an interview.

Mr. Kimball said he had been down a ''very windy road'' with Mr. Menchaca in negotiating the rezoning and hoped to win him over. But he did not seem too disheartened by his opposition.

''We are very encouraged by the growing support,'' he said, ''and very encouraged to move forward.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/12/nyregion/industry-city-zoning-amazon-nyc.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/12/nyregion/industry-city-zoning-amazon-nyc.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The developer of Industry City wants a zoning change that it says would create 20,000 jobs and millions in tax revenue. Councilman Carlos Menchaca, left, says the plan would gentrify the neighborhood at the expense of the ***working-class*** residents. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEPHEN YANG/REUTERS

STEPHEN SPERANZA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Using the Brooklyn Navy Yard as their template, the developers want to expand Industry City. (PHOTOGRAPH BY VICTOR J. BLUE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 13, 2020

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[***A Defense of Jeremy Strong (and All the Strivers With No Chill); Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64GX-4WD1-DXY4-X3YY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 9, 2022 Sunday 13:05 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; culture

**Length:** 1369 words

**Byline:** Elizabeth Spiers

**Highlight:** The actor’s “careerist drive” was remarked upon in a recent profile. It’s an elitist attitude that I’ve encountered too.

**Body**

In a December [*New Yorker profile*](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/12/13/on-succession-jeremy-strong-doesnt-get-the-joke) of the actor Jeremy Strong, who plays Kendall Roy on the HBO show “Succession,” colleagues, friends and classmates painted him as a person who, in internet-speak, “has no chill.” His intense and sometimes extreme devotion to his craft was extensively documented and skewered.

One critique particularly stood out to me when I read it. A classmate of Mr. Strong’s at Yale, where he studied with financial aid, said, “I’d never met anyone else at Yale with that careerist drive.”

In this respect, the version of Mr. Strong in the profile felt very relatable. Like me, he grew up ***working class***: He was the son of a juvenile jail employee and a hospice nurse in Massachusetts. My dad was a local lineman for a utilities company in Alabama, and my mom worked at my school, first as a janitor, then later as a lunch lady in the cafeteria. I also went to a fancy college on enough financial aid to rival the G.D.P. of a small European country. I have felt dismissed at times as an ambitious striver, or because I wasn’t an obvious fit in a room full of wealthy, overeducated people, with my rednecky accent and teeth unmolested by modern orthodontics. My freshman year at Duke University, a lacrosse player coming from a prestigious boarding school overheard me talking and asked, “Where the [expletive] are you from?” It was clear that he wasn’t just asking for a geographic location.

There’s an unmistakably negative connotation to the word “careerist.” It is a dismissive insult often deployed against people who have the temerity to transcend their economic class. Every time I’ve heard it used, it has been by someone who has enough privilege that needing to work and worrying about advancement are alien experiences. The target is generally someone like Mr. Strong, whose path to success was long and difficult, and sometimes involved extreme displays of devotion to his craft. (As recounted in the New Yorker profile, Mr. Strong once drove to Canada as Daniel Day-Lewis’s assistant on a film shoot, the great actor’s prop mandolin strapped into the passenger seat like he was “guarding a relic.”)

Only one person has ever called me a careerist to my face, and it was over a decade ago. An ex-boyfriend who was also a writer was piqued that I got a nice magazine assignment and that I had the gall to be enthusiastic about it. He was European and had gone to expensive prestigious schools, paid for by his parents. He saw my focus on my journalism career as a gaudy Americanism that carried the stench of effort. Given his sneering reaction, you would think I had murdered all of my professional peers and scaled a pile of their dead bodies in order to get the work.

In fact, I had simply been offered the assignment as part of a contract I had at the time as a columnist at Fortune magazine. I had perhaps done some Jeremy Strong-level striving to get the contract, though. After I discovered that no one in media wanted to assign me stories about business and finance, despite my having worked as an equity analyst, I started a Wall Street blog called Dealbreaker that was read by a lot of young finance professionals, and ultimately, the guy who hired me at Fortune. I was young, a woman and my background wasn’t typical for a finance columnist. A colleague wanted to know how I got the gig. I hadn’t even done an internship, he pointed out.

And I hadn’t. Internships in media were mostly unpaid, and often won via connections or nepotism. I had no connections and no money at the beginning of my media career. Besides, starting a media company from scratch — launching it, writing it, hiring other people, building an audience — might be more difficult than doing an internship! It was certainly not the easy way in. My colleague’s implication that I must have cheated my way in somehow, showed me quite clearly how elites often view people who they see as interlopers in their rarefied spaces.

Class resentment is often discussed as if it’s a one-way phenomenon: The lower classes resent the upper classes. But it works in the other direction, too. Wealthy elites in an institution full of other wealthy elites view each other as allies. I, or Jeremy Strong, might be a threat.

A study from 2018 illustrates this problem: Researchers asked European university students about attitudes toward immigrants. When university-educated immigrants were perceived as a competitive threat to the surveyed group, [*they were rated more negatively*](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5901394/) than those with less education.

In the United States, we love a good Horatio Alger story, in which a person who starts out with very little applies hard work and ambition and becomes a success — but only in the abstract. In real life, American elites abhor a try-hard as much as any European aristocrat might.

In our national mythology, class doesn’t matter, but in practice, our widely held belief in the myth of meritocracy reinforces inequality. Americans tend to overestimate the nation’s economic mobility, as [*research from Harvard University*](https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/alesina/files/alesina_stantcheva_teso_mobility.pdf) has shown, and they have [*great faith in the fairness*](https://qz.com/883348/americans-continue-to-kid-themselves-that-if-you-work-hard-you-can-climb-the-ladder/) of their economic system, despite ample evidence of [*racial and other bias*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/03/27/upshot/make-your-own-mobility-animation.html). In certain circles at least, coming from a modest background and nakedly wanting more is a moral deficiency, a form of greed.

The classism of this attitude isn’t always apparent because there’s plenty to legitimately criticize about America’s hustle culture, in which overwork is valorized and we’re all expected to rise and grind. The Covid pandemic and [*rethinking of work culture*](https://time.com/6051955/work-after-covid-19/) that it forced has spawned a backlash and a slew of think pieces about the end of ambition and [*whether careers really matter*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/womens-careers-covid-19-toll-11632506362) when people are dying and the planet is burning.

But that’s not a critique of striving itself; it’s a critique of a corporate culture that still relies upon unsustainably long work hours, cutthroat competitiveness, and exploitative labor practices.

The real question, then, is what is worth striving for? There is a difference between pointlessly toiling away for a company and working hard because you enjoy it, or you care about what you do, or most crucially, you are trying to economically advance. There’s nothing wrong with wanting to do better than your parents did. Making an effort — even an over-the-top effort like Mr. Strong’s — should not be embarrassing. We strivers understand this because we’ve never been able to achieve great successes without that effort.

Elites are often socialized into affecting “ease” and eschewing displays of effort. But it’s a mistake to see the disconnect in terms of personal style or etiquette. We strivers cannot behave as if things come easily because pretending that they do often requires resources we lack. We are “unchill” because we have neither the time nor the money to assemble the accouterments of chill, or to perform it.

It’s worth noting that “Succession,” the show where Mr. Strong’s remarkable performance has made him a star worthy of a New Yorker profile, centers on a striver, Logan Roy, who grew up without wealth in Scotland and built a media empire. His children, on the other hand, inhabit a world of wealthy people who disdain striving in just the way that Mr. Strong’s Yale classmates quoted in The New Yorker appear to.

This disconnect is represented most glaringly in Tom Wambsgans, a much-mocked social climber who married into the family, and effectively, the family business. But in the season finale, the strivers seem to win the day: Tom joins forces with Logan in a corporate maneuver that blindsides the Roy children — who are left with only their stunning sense of entitlement about what they deserve, without doing anything so crass as earnestly striving for it.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Amy Dickerson for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Amid Crisis, Kazakhstan’s Leader Chose His Path: Embrace Russia***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64GP-5KX1-DXY4-X34N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Valerie Hopkins

**Highlight:** With his government under siege, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Kazakhstan’s president, turned to Russia’s Vladimir V. Putin for support. The choice could realign Central Asia’s politics.

**Body**

With his government under siege, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Kazakhstan’s president, turned to Russia’s Vladimir V. Putin for support. The choice could realign Central Asia’s politics.

MOSCOW — The embattled president of Kazakhstan has the pedigree of an international technocrat. The son of prominent intellectuals, he studied in Moscow at a premier academy for diplomats, and later worked in the Soviet Embassy in Beijing. He served as a key adviser to the strongman who ruled the oil-rich Central Asian country as a fief for nearly three decades — and then, in 2019, became his heir.

The rise of Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to the presidency was looked at as a possible model by other authoritarian regimes on how to conduct a leadership transition without losing their grip on power. Instead, Kazakhstan erupted in violence this week and Mr. Tokayev has overseen a ruthless crackdown on protesters while ousting his former benefactor, Nursultan Nazarbayev, 81, from his last foothold of authority, as head of the nation’s powerful security council.

For support, Mr. Tokayev has turned to another autocrat: President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia.

It is too soon to know for certain whether Kazakhstan’s moment of crisis will be a victory for Mr. Putin, who quickly responded to Mr. Tokayev’s request for help by sending troops as part of a Russia-led effort to quell the uprising. Moscow has a history of sending “peacekeeping” forces to countries that never leave. And Mr. Putin is intent on maintaining a sphere of Russian influence that includes former Soviet republics like Kazakhstan.

But analysts and experts on Central Asia say that when his government was under siege and his own position was teetering, Mr. Tokayev, 68, was neither powerful enough nor independent enough to go it alone. And his swift alignment with Moscow portends potentially transformative changes in a region that has seen fierce jockeying for influence among the United States, Russia and China.

In effect, analysts said, against a backdrop of chaos and violence, Mr. Tokayev chose Russia to ensure his own political survival.

The Kazakh president “traded his country’s sovereignty to Russia for his own power and the interests of kleptocratic elites,” said Erica Marat, a professor at National Defense University, a military university in Washington.

This move “is really about making Kazakhstan a more submissive, more loyal partner,” she said, adding that Kazakhstan would “have to be more aligned with Russia against the West in geopolitical and global matters.”

In a menacing [*speech*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/07/world/asia/kazakhstan-protests.html) on Friday, in which he warned that government security forces could shoot to kill to suppress protests, Mr. Tokayev displayed deference to Mr. Putin, offering special thanks to the Russian leader for providing assistance “very promptly and, most importantly, warmly, in a friendly way.” He again expressed “special gratitude” to Russia in a [*phone call*](http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67563) with Mr. Putin on Saturday, the Kremlin said.

But the relationship between the two leaders features a significant imbalance in stature: At a [*news conference*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L4eS7bsOYME&amp;ab_channel=Sputnik%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BC) last month in Moscow, Mr. Putin seemed unable to remember Mr. Tokayev’s name.

Mr. Tokayev took office, handpicked by Mr. Nazarbayev, [*pledging*](https://kazakhembus.com/domestic-policy/elections-political-reforms/political-reforms) to turn the autocracy into a “listening state” that was “overcoming the fear of alternative opinion.”

His transformation almost three years later to a leader promising this week to “fire without warning” at the protesters, is a drastic one, said Luca Anceschi, a professor of Eurasian Studies at the University of Glasgow. “He has become a truly authoritarian leader, projecting power which he doesn’t really have,” Dr. Anceschi said.

“If you have to rely on power from Russia, are you powerful?” he added.

When protests turned violent this week, Mr. Tokayev responded by dismissing his cabinet and ousting Mr. Nazarbayev, who had retained great influence as the “leader of the nation,” the chairman of the ruling Nur Otan party and the head of the nation’s security council.

Mr. Tokayev also fired Mr. Nazarbayev’s key allies from prominent roles in the country’s vast security apparatus. Then pitched battles broke out.

The timing of the shift from the initial, peaceful protests in the country’s West to the violence and looting in Almaty — which intensified after Mr. Nazarbayev and his loyal head of the country’s powerful intelligence agency, Karim Masimov, were fired — has given rise to widespread speculation that the rioters were organized by proxies for feuding factions of the political elite, pitting Mr. Nazarbayev and his allies against Mr. Tokayev.

Into the security vacuum, at Mr. Tokayev’s request, came elite troops — mostly Russian — from a Kremlin-sponsored alliance called the Collective Security Treaty Organization, Russia’s version of NATO.

Internally, Mr. Tokayev’s decision to welcome the soldiers, tanks and airplanes from the alliance could further erode public trust in the president.

Many ***working-class*** Kazakhs have long been furious at the corruption that funnels the wealth from Central Asia’s biggest economy to an elite few. Seeing a leader who supported and benefited from that system, and now chooses to be propped up by Moscow instead of listening to genuine grievances, will infuriate ordinary Kazakhstanis, Dr. Marat said.

“People did not come on the streets to ask for Russian interference in their daily lives,” she said.

For Mr. Putin, dispatching troops to Kazakhstan represents “a low-cost engagement with high returns,” Dr. Marat said.

For decades, Mr. Tokayev built a reputation as an effective technocrat adept at helping Mr. Nazarbayev balance Kazakhstan’s foreign policy between its increasingly assertive neighbors, China and Russia, and its powerful economic investor, the United States.

And for 28 years, he was effectively Mr. Nazarbayev’s understudy.

Since taking office, Mr. Tokayev has not had to contend with real political competition. Under his leadership, there has been a significant crackdown on opposition parties, human rights groups say. And genuine opposition figures are “consistently marginalized,” according to the watchdog [*Freedom House*](https://freedomhouse.org/country/kazakhstan/freedom-world/2021), while “freedoms of speech and assembly remain restricted.”

But now, the president has to contend with apparent rivals inside the top echelons of government — some of the people closest to Mr. Nazarbayev, several analysts said.

Days after the protests began on Jan. 2 over ballooning inflation and rising fuel prices, Mr. Tokayev said he would rescind the price increases. But demonstrators had already begun demanding the end of the kleptocratic political system that Mr. Nazarbayev had built and maintained since the country declared independence from the Soviet Union in 1991.

By midweek, protesters were shouting, “Shal ket!” — or “Old man out!” — in reference to Mr. Nazarbayev. But then Mr. Tokayev fired the former president and the intelligence agency chief, Mr. Masimov, along with Mr. Nazarbayev’s nephew, who was the agency’s second in command.

Mr. Masimov was detained on suspicion of “high treason” on Thursday, the agency — known as the National Security Committee — said in a statement on Saturday.

Rioters soon broke into at least one government weapons depot, where they met little resistance, according to local news reports. They raced to take over government buildings and the airport in Almaty, Kazakhstan’s largest city and economic center, where most of the unrest took place. (Elsewhere in the country, especially the West, protests remained peaceful.)

Akezhan Kazhegeldin, who served as prime minister of Kazakhstan from 1994 to 1997 but resigned over concerns about corruption, said it was likely that Mr. Tokayev determined that he had “lost control over the military and law enforcement bodies,” leading him to dismiss Mr. Nazarbayev, Mr. Masimov and the government.

Mr. Kazhegeldin, who has been in exile for decades, said he was still holding out hope that Mr. Tokayev, who served as his chief of cabinet when he was prime minister, could turn things around.

But he warned that it would be a mistake for Mr. Tokayev to continue seeking help from Russia, with whom Kazakhstan shares a 4,750-mile land border. Kazakhstan maintains close relations with Russia, and is a member of the single-market Eurasian Economic Union. Mr. Putin, though, has at times [*played down*](https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/09/01/kazakhs-worried-after-putin-questions-history-of-countrys-independence-a38907) Kazakh independence, employing messaging similar to his recent [*statements*](http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66181) on Ukraine.

Many Kazakhs view the Soviet era with [*ambivalence*](https://carnegieendowment.org/2011/11/30/kazakhstan-s-soviet-legacy-pub-46096), with some seeing it as an extension of colonial rule.

“We don’t need any Russian or Belarusian help to settle the situation in one city, Almaty,” Mr. Kazhegeldin said. “We can use our nation.”

Dr. Anceschi, from the University of Glasgow, suggested that the only one with a true choice amid the chaos was Mr. Putin, who decided to back Mr. Tokayev instead of Mr. Nazarbayev and Mr. Masimov. But for Mr. Tokayev, the turn to the Kremlin was an existential choice.

The president, Dr. Anceschi said, “didn’t choose Russia, he chose himself.”

PHOTOS: President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev of Kazakhstan at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing in 2019. Left, a police officer holding two protesters at gunpoint on Saturday in Almaty, Kazakhstan. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK SCHIEFELBEIN; VASILY KRESTYANINOV/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** January 9, 2022

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[***Discord on Iran Reinvigorates Biden and Sanders***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y1C-5WJ1-JBG3-6037-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Sydney Ember and Katie Glueck

**Body**

Both men have seemed energized by a renewed debate on war and peace, but no two candidates better illustrate the divisions among Democrats about what American leadership abroad should look like.

DECORAH, Iowa -- Hours after an American drone strike killed Iran's top military commander, Joseph R. Biden Jr. stood in a barnlike building in Independence, Iowa, thundering about the importance of electing an experienced president as America faces tumult abroad -- and ''maybe, God forbid,'' war.

About 70 miles away, Senator Bernie Sanders was just as passionate as he denounced military spending and encouraged international diplomacy.

''Maybe what we should be doing is figuring out how as a planet we work together instead of going to war with each other,'' Mr. Sanders told the crowd on Friday inside a building on the Winneshiek County fairgrounds. Earlier in the day, he emphasized the need to ''get our priorities right'' by investing in issues at home rather than on military action abroad.

Amid signs that both Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders have found their footing in Iowa after months of being overshadowed here, they are now aggressively seizing on the escalating tensions with Iran to press their starkly divergent cases for the presidency as they compete for an overlapping slice of the electorate.

Both men seemed newly energized on the campaign trail, treating the Iran confrontation as a clarifying political moment, as well as a tailor-made opportunity to showcase their long records on international affairs. And yet no two candidates better illustrate the sharp divisions in the Democratic Party about what American leadership abroad should look like.

Mr. Biden, the former vice president, has focused on highlighting his decades-long résumé in foreign policy and his relationships overseas, casting himself as the candidate best prepared to assume the commander-in-chief title ''on Day 1.''

In contrast, Mr. Sanders is emphasizing his long-held aversion to war while steadfastly promoting a domestic political agenda for America's ***working class***.

The rising tensions with Iran have also afforded Mr. Sanders a fresh opportunity to highlight his diplomacy-centered vision for foreign policy -- and in particular his opposition to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, a stance that underscores his contrast with Mr. Biden, who voted to authorize that war.

''Joe Biden has prided himself on foreign policy experience for the last several decades,'' said Sean Bagniewski, the Democratic chairman in Polk County. ''I've heard Iowans say they think this election may focus more on foreign policy than many of us expected and that he's now their guy.''

He added, ''On the flip side, Bernie was one of the few Democrats to vote against the war in Iraq. I've heard folks say that reinforces their decision to support someone who they think had been right all along.''

The competition to gain the upper hand on national security played out in vivid relief on the campaign trail over the weekend, as tensions escalated between the two candidates over their judgment on matters of war and peace. Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders both delivered forceful remarks in several of the same towns and cities in eastern Iowa, offering sharpened messages about America's role in the world and their visions of presidential leadership.

In temperament, ideology and style on the campaign trail, the gregarious, gaffe-prone, relatively moderate Mr. Biden and the disciplined, democratic socialist Mr. Sanders could not be more different. Yet polling and interviews on the ground demonstrate that they have some overlapping appeal here, especially with the white, ***working-class*** voters who are skeptical of Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., the other two front-runners in Iowa who have done well with college-educated voters.

Less than one month before the caucuses, as Ms. Warren struggles to regain her momentum in the state, Mr. Biden is drawing notably more energized crowds -- even if they are often smaller than those of his chief rivals -- and attendees at his events frequently say that he makes them feel safe. Mr. Sanders, lifted by his loyal supporters, has displayed enduring political strength despite having a heart attack in October.

Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders both appear to be ''doing fairly well'' in Dubuque, a heavily Catholic, blue-collar city along the Mississippi River where they campaigned this past week, said Steven Drahozal, the Democratic chairman of Dubuque County.

''This is the type of community, I think, that actually, interestingly, plays well to both of them,'' Mr. Drahozal said. Mr. Biden, a Catholic, has longstanding relationships in the city, but Mr. Drahozal added that Dubuque also had a ''very vocal, very active, very progressive community that is very supportive of Senator Sanders.''

Mr. Sanders views his consistent diplomacy-over-conflict stance -- dating to his opposition to the Vietnam War and his anti-interventionist foreign policy as mayor of Burlington, Vt. -- as an advantage with ***working-class*** Americans who are frustrated with the country's involvement in costly and distant wars.

''I know that it is rarely the children of the billionaire class who face the agony of reckless foreign policy -- it is the children of working families,'' he said on Friday, reading from prepared remarks at an event in Anamosa.

Aides to Mr. Sanders view him as well positioned against Mr. Biden -- who in many ways embodies the centrist Washington establishment Mr. Sanders dislikes -- and they have urged him for months to go after the former vice president more directly. With foreign affairs, Mr. Sanders's campaign sees an opportunity not just to call attention to the senator's consistent resistance to war but also to draw an easy-to-grasp contrast between the two candidates.

Even before the airstrike in Iraq last week, Mr. Sanders's aides had been eager to highlight his foreign policy views. But though he speaks on the trail about his opposition to America's support for Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen, foreign policy has so far taken a back seat in his campaign to domestic policy proposals like ''Medicare for all'' and tuition-free public college.

At an event in Dubuque on Saturday, however, Mr. Sanders called on Congress to ''take immediate steps to restrain President Trump from plunging our nation into yet another endless war.''

His foreign policy views have struck a chord with voters in Iowa like Peggy Ross, 67, a bookseller from Decorah. ''I think he has the right idea,'' she said after seeing Mr. Sanders speak. ''No one likes war.''

Yet Mr. Sanders's dovish stances and his emphasis on domestic matters could also prove to be liabilities with voters who want a firmer response to foreign aggression than he appears to promote. They could also weaken his standing among Americans who are clamoring for an experienced hand in the international arena at a moment of global turmoil.

A CNN poll from late November found that 48 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning voters thought Mr. Biden was best equipped to handle foreign policy; Mr. Sanders was a distant second at 14 percent.

Mr. Biden, who chaired the Senate Foreign Relations Committee when he represented Delaware, is perhaps at his most fluent and comfortable when discussing international affairs, and he has made that issue a centerpiece of his message in a race that has been largely limited to domestic debates.

His campaign has run ads emphasizing his national security experience, and on Friday posted some of them on Twitter after news broke of the drone strike. On Sunday, the campaign announced endorsements from three Democratic members of Congress, all of whom are military veterans.

Mr. Biden's allies say that renewed national focus on foreign policy allows him to strike a clear contrast with both Mr. Trump and his Democratic rivals, and injects fresh urgency into the question of who is the most electable candidate.

The gravity of the moment ''propels deep interest among people in seeing the strongest candidate against Trump,'' said Thomas E. Donilon, who was former President Barack Obama's national security adviser and is supporting Mr. Biden.

And Mr. Biden, he said, was ''a natural person to look to as a steady, experienced hand to deal with these issues on Day 1.'' (Mr. Donilon's brother, Mike Donilon, is Mr. Biden's chief strategist.)

Throughout his latest Iowa bus tour, Mr. Biden frequently emphasized his relationships abroad and depth of experience as he warned against war in the Middle East. The next president, he said, will ''inherit a country that is divided, and a world that's in disarray.''

He added, ''There can be no time for on-the-job training'' -- a message that could apply, he has suggested, to any of his leading rivals.

''With all due respect, I think I'm best prepared'' on leadership matters compared to ''anybody running,'' Mr. Biden told an applauding crowd of about 700 on Saturday night in Des Moines.

It was not always a message delivered crisply, or accurately; on several occasions he suggested that Iran had a population of around 40 million people even though it is a nation of more than 80 million people. He also cited Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi leader, when he intended to refer to Osama bin Laden, the Al Qaeda leader.

In Des Moines, when Mr. Biden was pressed by an attendee on his foreign policy record, he noted, as he often does, that he had quickly grown disillusioned with the Bush administration's handling of Iraq and that he had become a vocal opponent of the war. A CNN fact-check published Monday found his remarks about when his opposition to the war began to be misleading.

He was also questioned on his view of the raid that killed bin Laden; Mr. Biden's answer on that issue has changed over the years.

''It's not to suggest I haven't made mistakes in my career, but I will put my record against anyone in public life in terms of foreign policy,'' Mr. Biden said.

At weekend events for both Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders, attendees viewed the unfolding developments in Iran with anxiety, if not grave apprehension.

''We don't need to waste any more time,'' said Korlu P. Jallah, 22, who attended an event for Mr. Biden in Waterloo on Saturday morning and said she was supporting him because of his experience. ''We're in a huge mess given the fact that we could possibly go to war with Iran.''

Still, she said, Mr. Sanders is her second choice.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/06/us/politics/joe-biden-bernie-sanders-iran.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/06/us/politics/joe-biden-bernie-sanders-iran.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Joseph R. Biden Jr. in Independence, Iowa. He has highlighted his long résumé in foreign policy. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRITTAINY NEWMAN/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Senator Bernie Sanders in Dubuque, Iowa. He emphasizes a diplomacy-focused foreign policy. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RUTH FREMSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The ‘Profusely Illustrated’ Life of Edward Sorel; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6452-H0T1-DXY4-X0XV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 24, 2021 Wednesday 20:26 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1230 words

**Byline:** Sadie Stein

**Highlight:** The legendary illustrator has written a memoir, which tells the story of his Bronx youth through a varied career at the center of the New York media world.

**Body**

PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED

A Memoir

By Edward Sorel

Toward the end of Edward Sorel’s new memoir, “Profusely Illustrated,” the veteran artist describes first seeing, in these pages, a cover review, written by Woody Allen, of his 2017 book “Mary Astor’s Purple Diary.” “To say that it made me ‘very happy’ would be an understatement,” he writes of the glorious moment. To Mr. Sorel, then, apologies in advance: I can only assume that seeing this byline will be pretty anticlimactic — or perhaps his habitual modesty has rubbed off. But if there’s one thing I learned from his memoir, it’s that the guy’s a mensch, and one with a solid regard for jobbers on a deadline.

Sorel, 92, has indeed had a profusely illustrated life. Over the past six decades, you’ve probably seen his many New Yorker covers, his political satire in The Nation, his cartoons in New York magazine, his caricatures in Vanity Fair. Perhaps you’re familiar with Ramparts magazine’s bestiaries, which lampooned the political follies of the 1960s, or “Sorel’s Unfamiliar Quotations” in The Atlantic Monthly. Maybe one of his many books? And all that’s to say nothing of the thousands of sketches and commissions and album covers and illustrations that animate the margins of a working artist’s career. Of course there’s no question your chances of recognizing his distinctively wavy drawing style are a lot better if you’re what he’d call an “Old Lefty.”

Sorel came into the world as Edward Schwartz in 1929. He adored his smart and beautiful Romanian-born mother; meanwhile his father, who’d immigrated from Poland, was “stupid, insensitive, grouchy, meanspirited, faultfinding, and a racist.” Their ***working-class*** Bronx neighborhood was pretty evenly divided between card-carrying Communists, Communist sympathizers and New Deal Democrats; Aunt Jeanette, the self-anointed family intellectual, “felt compelled, when there was a band playing at one of her sisters’ weddings, to use her long scarf to do a solo dance in the manner of Isadora Duncan — another fervent supporter of the Communist regime in Russia.” His world was shtetl-tiny but filled with opportunity; provincial but progressive; jaundiced, but optimistic — “a city where being Jewish, far from setting you apart, was a reminder of just how ordinary you were.”

This was a depression-era New York of Third Avenue Els, Friday night chicken soup, Saturday matinees and — lest we get nostalgic — no penicillin. When 7-year-old Edward contracted double pneumonia, it meant an at-home oxygen tent and a year’s convalescence, during which time he started drawing on shirt cardboards. He attended art classes funded by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, before moving to a public arts high school in Harlem and the Cooper Union, both of which emphasized abstraction and modernism with an unrelenting zeal that nearly killed the young man’s enthusiasm for figurative drawing. After a few lackluster design jobs in an art world still reeling from Cold War paranoia, Sorel — who had swapped his despised father’s common surname for that of a romantic Stendhal protagonist — co-founded Push Pin Studios with his art school classmates Milton Glaser and Seymour Chwast.

In Sorel’s telling, he was the least talented of the three — and certainly the least dedicated undergrad — but despite his self-deprecation, Sorel’s success is a testament as much to his multifaceted skill as to his persistence and luck. While he claims he didn’t pull his full weight at Push Pin — and always dreamed of doing political work in the mold of the cartoonist Jules Feiffer — in fact his time peddling the studio’s portfolio serves the reader well; the nuts-and-bolts descriptions of midcentury Madison Avenue are one of the book’s pleasures.

From the time he went freelance, in 1956, Sorel worked more or less steadily — often for financially precarious left-wing publications of the era: The Realist, Monocle, Ramparts. (At a time when, it must be remembered, he could get a Manhattan apartment for $28 a month — albeit with a shared bathroom — and take dates to the all-night chess parlor in Times Square.) Increasingly, he was developing a reputation as an irreverent — and sometimes lacerating — satirist of the nation’s sacred cows.

Indeed, in a sense, “Profusely Illustrated” is really an easygoing history of the left at a particular moment, with Sorel moving like a haimish Forrest Gump through print media New York. He was at Bill Golden’s gray-flannel-suited CBS and the cool-cat Push Pin. When Esquire published Gay Talese’s “Frank Sinatra Has a Cold,” it was Sorel’s portrait — also done without the subject’s cooperation — that graced the cover. An early contributor to The National Lampoon, Sorel would illustrate the iconic Truman Capote cover for Clay Felker’s New York and be a mainstay of the golden-age Village Voice. Victor Navasky — a colleague since the 1950s — brought him on board at The Nation. Later, he joined Tina Brown’s early-90s New Yorker, and then Graydon Carter’s Vanity Fair. Do I even need to say that he did the mural at the Waverly Inn?

In between, of course, he had a life: four children, and two marriages — the second a lasting personal and professional partnership. There was a long stint in the country, a return to the still-uncharted TriBeCa, and many, many lifelong friendships. (While the chapter devoted to Sorel’s friends is doubtless a labor of love, I’m not sure how much interest it holds to readers outside of his own circle.) The book’s not just a who’s who of liberal luminaries, but of cartoon-world royalty as well. I can pay the author no greater compliment than to say that, through it all, he does not come off as an operator.

As should perhaps be obvious, the memoir is overtly political. Indeed, Sorel makes a point of giving a highly opinionated “exposé” of every administration in his lifetime. (A choice he later writes he’s “beginning to regret,” given the research involved.) But really, nothing provides so vivid a record of the events he lived through as the cartoons, caricatures and drawings that do, yes, profusely illustrate every chapter. He’s not proud of all of them (“awfully heavy-handed,” he writes of a 1970 cartoon of Richard Nixon that got him in hot water; “overworked,” he says of another), but together they concisely convey the passions and pieties of their moment.

Despite the deceptive neatness inherent in any retrospective glance backward, Sorel’s has not been an uncomplicated life. There are personal challenges, professional setbacks, regrets, controversy. There’s the loss of his beloved wife, Nancy. By his own account, this is a book about the failures of 13 administrations. And yet, the takeaway’s not a grim one.

In an introductory author’s note, Sorel states his aim: “to save a few of my drawings from the oblivion that awaits all protest art, and almost all magazine illustrations.” He does more than this. Warm, affectionate, often angry but never cruel, cynical but not without a certain faith in people, Sorel gives us a life — and a world — in pictures. It made me very happy.

Sadie Stein was the deputy editor of The Paris Review. PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED A Memoir By Edward Sorel Illustrated. 272 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. $30.

PHOTO: Edward Sorel’s cover for the April 1966 issue of Esquire, which contained Gay Talese’s article “Frank Sinatra Has a Cold.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY Edward Sorel FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 22, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Progressives Killed Amazon’s Deal in New York. Is Industry City Next?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60K3-C021-DXY4-X3M0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 12, 2020 Wednesday 01:11 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1498 words

**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Highlight:** The fight over a rezoning plan in Brooklyn has pitted progressives and mainstream Democrats against each other.

**Body**

The fight over a rezoning plan in Brooklyn has pitted progressives and mainstream Democrats against each other.

A plan to bring tens of thousands of jobs to an overlooked corner of the city just outside Manhattan has become another battleground for New York City leaders. Progressives are attacking mainstream Democrats about their competing visions for the city. A powerful business is on the defensive.

Last year, it was [*an Amazon campus in Queens*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/15/nyregion/amazon-hq2-nyc.html). Now it is Industry City, a 19th-century warehouse complex in Brooklyn that has been reborn as a 21st-century hub for small businesses, artists and visitors.

Developers want to further transform the waterfront industrial area, and are pursuing a zoning change in the ***working class*** neighborhood of Sunset Park that would allow Industry City to expand into a shopping and office behemoth. But a number of local political leaders, including Carlos Menchaca, the city councilman who represents the neighborhood, [*strongly oppose*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/15/nyregion/amazon-hq2-nyc.html) the proposal.

In normal times, Mr. Menchaca’s opposition would be enough to kill the plan; tradition holds that City Council members can essentially veto any rezoning in their districts.

These are not normal times. Mr. Menchaca’s colleagues say that the prospect of adding 20,000 jobs during an economic crisis is too important, and they might attempt to go around him.

The [*collapse of the Amazon deal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/15/nyregion/amazon-hq2-nyc.html) is still fresh on some lawmakers’ minds, and there are still hurt feelings on both sides. Ritchie Torres, a Democratic councilman from the Bronx who won a [*competitive congressional primary race*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/15/nyregion/amazon-hq2-nyc.html) this summer, said the city should not make the same mistake again.

“Amazon 2.0 in a time of Depression-level unemployment strikes me as deeply irresponsible,” Mr. Torres said in an interview.

The showdown over Industry City is a fight over the future of development in New York City — an especially urgent debate given the job losses of the pandemic.

The rezoning proposal has also exposed complex tensions among Democrats over gentrification, the power of the real estate industry and who will lead the city as it recovers from its worst crisis in half a century.

Mr. Menchaca, who is part of the Council’s progressive caucus, called Industry City a “luxury mall” that could worsen gentrification in Sunset Park, where half of residents are Hispanic and Asian, and about one in five lives in poverty.

“We’re not anti-development at all — we’re anti-gentrification,” he said. “We have so many ideas for developing the waterfront in a vein of equity and economic justice.”

The developers of Industry City, using the Brooklyn Navy Yard as a template, want to expand their “innovation hub for creative companies,” and add more space for retail and parking. They say the rezoning could create 20,000 jobs and $100 million a year in tax revenue. (Amazon promised 25,000 jobs and $27 billion in tax revenue over two decades.)

Mayor Bill de Blasio, whose second and last term ends in 2021, has not taken a position on the rezoning proposal.

“Obviously, it would bring a lot of jobs and that’s something we would appreciate in this city, but again, that’s really between the private developer and the Council to work that through,” he said last week on NY1.

Corey Johnson, the Democratic City Council speaker who is running for mayor, has also not said whether he supports the rezoning. Another Democratic mayoral candidate, Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, had expressed concerns about the project. Now he wants the full City Council to decide its fate.

“The Industry City proposal could create the kind of jobs and economic boost that New York City needs right now — and so it at least deserves an up-or-down vote in the City Council,” Mr. Adams said in a statement.

Over the last year, Democratic factions have fought over a long list of issues, including a proposal to institute a tax on millionaires, plans for a train to La Guardia Airport, and the extent of police reforms.

A rezoning of the Inwood neighborhood in northern Manhattan was highly contentious and raised similar concerns over pushing out longtime residents. Other city leaders want to build a huge development over the Sunnyside rail yard in Queens.

The conflict over Industry City could figure prominently in the Democratic mayoral primary next year, and has even raised questions about the unspoken tradition of allowing a council member to torpedo proposals in their district. Last week, Mr. de Blasio said the tradition, known in the Council as “member deference,” was “not a hard and fast rule.”

“I do think we have to think about some of the overwhelming dynamics we’re dealing with right now,” the mayor told reporters. “We’re in the middle of a pandemic, and we’ve got to get people back to work.”

Indeed, despite Mr. Menchaca’s opposition, the developer has not withdrawn its rezoning application, and it is expected to be voted on next month by the city’s planning commission. If it passes, it would then advance to the Council.

Industry City is a [*century-old industrial complex*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/15/nyregion/amazon-hq2-nyc.html) on the waterfront covering more than five million square feet. It was [*built by the industrial tycoon Irving T. Bush*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/15/nyregion/amazon-hq2-nyc.html) in the 1890s and formerly known as Bush Terminal.

In 2013, Jamestown, the developer that owns Chelsea Market, and its partners bought a nearly 50 percent stake in the 16-building complex. Jamestown renovated the buildings, which were engulfed by more than 20 million gallons of water during Hurricane Sandy.

The complex grew to include more than 500 businesses, including a food hall, a film-production company and a training center for the Brooklyn Nets basketball team. Under the rezoning, the developers could expand the complex and add more buildings. They agreed not to build hotels as originally planned.

In a [*letter to the City Council*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/15/nyregion/amazon-hq2-nyc.html), Andrew Kimball, chief executive of Industry City, said there were currently 8,000 jobs at the complex. The rezoning would allow for 15,000 total jobs at the site, he said, and another 8,000 in the neighboring community.

Elizabeth Yeampierre, the leader of Uprose, an [*environmental justice group*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/15/nyregion/amazon-hq2-nyc.html), said residents of Sunset Park, where many small businesses have been [*hit hard by the pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/15/nyregion/amazon-hq2-nyc.html) and might not reopen, were worried that they would not be hired for the new jobs. She questioned the wisdom of building in a storm surge zone, and said the developers had made promises about community engagement, including proposing a public high school, without listening to feedback from residents.

“None of their recommendations came from the community, and they are inconsistent with our community needs,” she said.

In one demonstration of the community’s preference, a recent Democratic primary for State Assembly was won by Marcela Mitaynes, a candidate who ran against the rezoning plan and was endorsed by United States Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

The tension over the rezoning proposal has led to unusually prickly exchanges on the City Council, a body that is often collegial. Mr. Torres and Donovan Richards, a councilman who won the Democratic primary for Queens borough president, [*wrote in an opinion piece*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/15/nyregion/amazon-hq2-nyc.html) supporting the rezoning that Mr. Menchaca should not act as a “feudal lord” overseeing a “personal fiefdom.”

Mr. Menchaca, who questioned whether the developer’s job claims were inflated, said it was unfair for council members from other boroughs to tell his community what was best for them.

“It’s beyond disrespectful; it’s anti-democratic,” he said.

Mr. Richards, who is part of the progressive caucus but supported the Amazon deal, responded to criticism that he was meddling. “Yes,” he wrote on Twitter, “I’m weighing in on a project the way Brooklyn members did on a project that cost Queens 25,000 jobs.”

Jonathan Westin, director of New York Communities for Change, a progressive organizing group, [*fired back*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/15/nyregion/amazon-hq2-nyc.html) that Mr. Richards was “unapologetically in the pocket of developers.”

Despite the economic repercussions of the pandemic, the developers are still committed to the rezoning. Mr. Kimball spearheaded the Brooklyn Navy Yard’s transformation from an abandoned industrial wasteland to a creative hub with tech start-ups.

“Just like I did at the Navy Yard, we’re taking a decrepit site and bringing it back to life,” he said in an interview.

Mr. Kimball said he had been down a “very windy road” with Mr. Menchaca in negotiating the rezoning and hoped to win him over. But he did not seem too disheartened by his opposition.

“We are very encouraged by the growing support,” he said, “and very encouraged to move forward.”

PHOTOS: The developer of Industry City wants a zoning change that it says would create 20,000 jobs and millions in tax revenue. Councilman Carlos Menchaca, left, says the plan would gentrify the neighborhood at the expense of the ***working-class*** residents. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEPHEN YANG/REUTERS; STEPHEN SPERANZA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Using the Brooklyn Navy Yard as their template, the developers want to expand Industry City. (PHOTOGRAPH BY VICTOR J. BLUE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 13, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Hochul Speech Offers Road Map to Campaign That Lies Ahead***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64GD-WD81-DXY4-X1CW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 7, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 18

**Length:** 1410 words

**Byline:** By Katie Glueck

**Body**

Gov. Kathy Hochul sought to exude decisiveness in crisis, previewing her efforts to run as the steady-hand candidate as she seeks her first full term.

As Gov. Kathy Hochul delivered her most consequential speech since becoming chief executive of New York, she did not discuss the contested Democratic primary she is navigating to retain her seat, nor did she mention the likelihood of an expensive general election against a well-funded Republican.

But in tone and substance, her address on Wednesday and accompanying 237 pages of policy proposals offered a road map to how she is approaching both dynamics.

In her State of the State remarks, her first as governor, Ms. Hochul often emphasized core Democratic priorities, from combating climate change to expanding access to affordable child care. But she also moved to blunt more conservative messaging on matters of public safety, the economy and the culture wars that have raged around how to handle the coronavirus pandemic.

''During this winter surge, our laser focus is on keeping kids in school, businesses open and New Yorkers' lives as normal as possible,'' she said, even as some Republicans seek to paint the Democratic Party as the party of lockdowns.

Ms. Hochul assumed the governorship last August, taking over after former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo resigned in disgrace, and she is running for her first full term as governor this year at yet another moment of staggering challenges for the state.

As coronavirus cases spike, parents grapple with uncertainty around schools,and the Omicron variant upends the fragile economic recovery, Ms. Hochul acknowledged the pain and exhaustion gripping many New Yorkers. But she also emphasized a record of accomplishment, in particular around vaccination rates, and sought to exude competence and decisiveness in crisis, offering a preview of her efforts to run as the steady-hand, above-the-fray candidate.

A number of Democrats are seeking to challenge that image.

Representative Thomas Suozzi of Long Island, a former Nassau County executive who has positioned himself to Ms. Hochul's right on some issues and in tone, is sharply questioning her executive experience. He sometimes refers to the state's first female executive as the ''interim governor'' -- a move that could backfire with some voters -- and he is working to cut into her base in the suburbs.

''New York needs a common-sense governor who has executive experience to manage Covid, take on crime, reduce taxes and help troubled schools,'' Mr. Suozzi said in a statement after her speech.

Jumaane D. Williams, the New York City public advocate who lost the 2018 lieutenant governor's race to Ms. Hochul by 6.6 percentage points, is running as a self-declared ''activist elected official'' with close ties to New York's left-wing political movement, which can play an important role in energizing parts of the primary electorate. He said on Wednesday that some of her proposals were not sufficiently ''bold'' to meet the challenges of the moment -- a view echoed by leaders of a number of left-wing organizations.

''Discussion of these issues is important, acknowledged and appreciated,'' Mr. Williams said in a statement. ''But that discussion must be accompanied by the political courage to envision and enact transformational change for New York City and across the state.''

Former Mayor Bill de Blasio of New York City has also taken steps toward a run.

Attorney General Letitia James had been Ms. Hochul's most formidable opponent, but she dropped her bid for governor last month, and on Wednesday she stood next to the governor, applauding. Ms. James's exit cleared the way for Ms. Hochul to rapidly lock down more institutional support from unions and elected officials, and she is expected to post a formidable fund-raising haul later this month.

Ms. Hochul, who has referred to herself as a ''Biden Democrat,'' on Wednesday sounded by turns like a centrist who welcomes big business and an old-school politician keenly focused on the needs of ***working-class*** New Yorkers.

For example, she called for efforts to bolster the salaries of health care workers ''so those doing God's work here on Earth are no longer paid a minimum wage.''

But at another point, she pledged that New York would be ''the most business-friendly and worker-friendly state in the nation.''

Ms. Hochul laid out a number of measures to bolster the social safety net, and she also endorsed some left-leaning criminal justice proposals, including a ''jails-to-jobs'' program and other efforts to help formerly incarcerated people access employment and housing.

She also pledged to pursue a five-year plan to offer 100,000 affordable homes, though some housing advocates thought she should have offered far more comprehensive protections since the state's eviction moratorium is poised to expire. And she laid out a bevy of climate, infrastructure and transportation-related initiatives.

If many aspects of the speech played into concerns of rank-and-file Democratic voters and union officials, Ms. Hochul also repeatedly made overtures to a broader ideological and geographical swath of voters who will power the general election. (''I think I have a personal experience with just about every pothole in New York as well, especially on the Long Island Expressway,'' she said, referring to an important political battleground.).

Representative Lee Zeldin of Long Island is seen as the most formidable Republican contender in the governor's race, though any Republican seeking a statewide office in New York faces very long odds, and Mr. Zeldin, a staunch Trump ally, would face particular scrutiny for voting to overturn the results of the 2020 election.

Still, Ms. Hochul's speech came several months after Democrats were deeply shaken by election results around the country. In New York, Democrats suffered a spate of unexpected losses in local races in November, driven on Long Island by concerns around crime and taxes. The governor's race in neighboring New Jersey -- which was defined partly by debates over taxes -- was closer than many expected, with a stunning down-ballot loss. And the Democratic candidate in the Virginia governor's race lost a contest that was shaped by education matters, including parental frustration concerning closed schools.

The governor aimed to address all of those issues directly.

She repeatedly emphasized her commitment to combating gun violence and tackling quality-of-life issues, and she has endorsed funding for law enforcement officers and prosecutors and investments in neighborhoods where violent crime is common. She also stressed that she understood deeply held concerns around public safety, even though New York is far safer today than in earlier eras.

''This is not a return to the dark days of the '70s and '80s and '90s,'' she said. ''But that's not our metric for success. We need to get back on track.''

Ms. Hochul devoted a significant part of her speech to discussing matters of affordability. She proactively addressed the challenge of inflation, she made overtures to farmers -- not typically seen as a reliable Democratic constituency -- and she offered a number of tax proposals. She proposed accelerating tax cuts for the middle class, and her call for a property tax rebate may be especially resonant in the suburbs.

Ms. Hochul made clear she wanted those who had left the state during the pandemic -- ''an alarm bell that cannot be ignored'' -- to return and to see the state as a place of economic opportunity.

''That's the steepest population drop of any state in the nation,'' she said. ''An alarm bell that cannot be ignored.''

But she also avoided discussion of one of the state's most divisive topics: bail reform legislation passed in 2019, which has become a political lightning rod that Republicans have sought to weaponize. Her silence on the matter drew criticism from Mr. Suozzi.

Ms. Hochul took the stage in white, a color often associated with the suffrage movement. As she emphasized collaboration and suggested she did not have time for petty rivalries, she drew implicit contrasts with her predecessor, who ruled with an iron fist and resigned amid accusations of sexual harassment.

''I'm well aware of the significance of this moment,'' she said. ''The first time in New York's history that a woman has delivered this annual address. But I didn't come here to make history. I came here to make a difference.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/06/nyregion/hochul-policy-agenda-ny.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/06/nyregion/hochul-policy-agenda-ny.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Gov. Kathy Hochul emphasized Democratic priorities, from combating climate change to expanding access to affordable child care, in her State of the State remarks. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CINDY SCHULTZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Biden and Sanders Differ on Foreign Policy. They’re Happy to Tell You So.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XXH-PCR1-DXY4-X0B5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 6, 2020 Monday 20:55 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1782 words

**Byline:** Sydney Ember and Katie Glueck

**Highlight:** Both men have seemed energized by a renewed debate on war and peace, but no two candidates better illustrate the divisions among Democrats about what American leadership abroad should look like.

**Body**

Both men have seemed energized by a renewed debate on war and peace, but no two candidates better illustrate the divisions among Democrats about what American leadership abroad should look like.

DECORAH, Iowa — Hours after an American drone strike killed Iran’s top military commander, [*Joseph R. Biden Jr.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/biden-syria-airstrike-iran.html) stood in a barnlike building in Independence, Iowa, thundering about the importance of electing an experienced president as America faces tumult abroad — and “maybe, God forbid,” war.

About 70 miles away, Senator Bernie Sanders was just as passionate as he denounced military spending and encouraged international diplomacy.

“Maybe what we should be doing is figuring out how as a planet we work together instead of going to war with each other,” Mr. Sanders told the crowd on Friday inside a building on the Winneshiek County fairgrounds. Earlier in the day, he emphasized the need to “get our priorities right” by investing in issues at home rather than on military action abroad.

Amid signs that both Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders have found their footing in Iowa after months of being overshadowed here, they are now aggressively seizing on the escalating tensions with Iran to press their starkly divergent cases for the presidency as they compete for an overlapping slice of the electorate.

Both men seemed newly energized on the campaign trail, treating the Iran confrontation as a clarifying political moment, as well as a tailor-made opportunity to showcase their long records on international affairs. And yet no two candidates better illustrate the sharp divisions in the Democratic Party about what American leadership abroad should look like.

Mr. Biden, the former vice president, has focused on highlighting his decades-long résumé in foreign policy and his relationships overseas, casting himself as the candidate best prepared to assume the commander-in-chief title “on Day 1.”

In contrast, Mr. Sanders is emphasizing his long-held aversion to war while steadfastly promoting a domestic political agenda for America’s ***working class***.

The rising tensions with Iran have also afforded Mr. Sanders a fresh opportunity to highlight his diplomacy-centered vision for foreign policy — and in particular his opposition to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, a stance that underscores his contrast with Mr. Biden, who voted to authorize that war.

“Joe Biden has prided himself on foreign policy experience for the last several decades,” said Sean Bagniewski, the Democratic chairman in Polk County. “I’ve heard Iowans say they think this election may focus more on foreign policy than many of us expected and that he’s now their guy.”

He added, “On the flip side, Bernie was one of the few Democrats to vote against the war in Iraq. I’ve heard folks say that reinforces their decision to support someone who they think had been right all along.”

The competition to gain the upper hand on national security played out in vivid relief on the campaign trail over the weekend, as tensions escalated between the two candidates over their judgment on matters of war and peace. Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders both delivered forceful remarks in several of the same towns and cities in eastern Iowa, offering sharpened messages about America’s role in the world and their visions of presidential leadership.

In temperament, ideology and style on the campaign trail, the gregarious, [*gaffe-prone*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/biden-syria-airstrike-iran.html), relatively moderate Mr. Biden and the disciplined, democratic socialist Mr. Sanders could not be more different. Yet polling and interviews on the ground demonstrate that they have some overlapping appeal here, especially with the [*white,* ***working-class*** *voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/biden-syria-airstrike-iran.html) who are skeptical of Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., the other two front-runners in Iowa who have done well with college-educated voters.

Less than one month before the caucuses, as Ms. Warren struggles to regain her momentum in the state, Mr. Biden is drawing notably more energized crowds — even if they are often smaller than those of his chief rivals — and attendees at his events frequently say that he makes them feel safe. Mr. Sanders, lifted by his loyal supporters, has displayed enduring political strength despite having a heart attack in October.

Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders both appear to be “doing fairly well” in Dubuque, a heavily Catholic, blue-collar city along the Mississippi River where they campaigned this past week, said Steven Drahozal, the Democratic chairman of Dubuque County.

“This is the type of community, I think, that actually, interestingly, plays well to both of them,” Mr. Drahozal said. Mr. Biden, a Catholic, has longstanding relationships in the city, but Mr. Drahozal added that Dubuque also had a “very vocal, very active, very progressive community that is very supportive of Senator Sanders.”

Mr. Sanders views his consistent diplomacy-over-conflict stance — dating to his opposition to the Vietnam War and his [*anti-interventionist foreign policy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/biden-syria-airstrike-iran.html) as mayor of Burlington, Vt. — as an advantage with ***working-class*** Americans who are frustrated with the country’s involvement in costly and distant wars.

“I know that it is rarely the children of the billionaire class who face the agony of reckless foreign policy — it is the children of working families,” he said on Friday, reading from prepared remarks at an event in Anamosa.

Aides to Mr. Sanders view him as well positioned against Mr. Biden — who in many ways embodies the centrist Washington establishment Mr. Sanders dislikes — and they have urged him for months to go after the former vice president more directly. With foreign affairs, Mr. Sanders’s campaign sees an opportunity not just to call attention to the senator’s consistent resistance to war but also to draw an easy-to-grasp contrast between the two candidates.

Even before the airstrike in Iraq last week, Mr. Sanders’s aides had been eager to highlight his foreign policy views. But though he speaks on the trail about his opposition to America’s support for Saudi Arabia’s war in Yemen, foreign policy has so far taken a back seat in his campaign to domestic policy proposals like “Medicare for all” and tuition-free public college.

At an event in Dubuque on Saturday, however, Mr. Sanders called on Congress to “take immediate steps to restrain President Trump from plunging our nation into yet another endless war.”

His foreign policy views have struck a chord with voters in Iowa like Peggy Ross, 67, a bookseller from Decorah. “I think he has the right idea,” she said after seeing Mr. Sanders speak. “No one likes war.”

Yet Mr. Sanders’s dovish stances and his emphasis on domestic matters could also prove to be liabilities with voters who want a firmer response to foreign aggression than he appears to promote. They could also weaken his standing among Americans who are clamoring for an experienced hand in the international arena at a moment of global turmoil.

A [*CNN poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/biden-syria-airstrike-iran.html) from late November found that 48 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning voters thought Mr. Biden was best equipped to handle foreign policy; Mr. Sanders was a distant second at 14 percent.

Mr. Biden, who chaired the Senate Foreign Relations Committee when he represented Delaware, is perhaps at his most fluent and comfortable when discussing international affairs, and he has made that issue a centerpiece of his message in a race that has been largely limited to domestic debates.

His campaign has run ads emphasizing his national security experience, and on Friday posted some of them on Twitter after news broke of the drone strike. On Sunday, the campaign announced endorsements from three Democratic members of Congress, all of whom are military veterans.

Mr. Biden’s allies say that renewed national focus on foreign policy allows him to strike a clear contrast with both Mr. Trump and his Democratic rivals, and injects fresh urgency into the question of who is the most electable candidate.

The gravity of the moment “propels deep interest among people in seeing the strongest candidate against Trump,” said Thomas E. Donilon, who was former President Barack Obama’s national security adviser and is supporting Mr. Biden.

And Mr. Biden, he said, was “a natural person to look to as a steady, experienced hand to deal with these issues on Day 1.” (Mr. Donilon’s brother, Mike Donilon, is Mr. Biden’s chief strategist.)

Throughout his latest Iowa bus tour, Mr. Biden frequently emphasized his relationships abroad and depth of experience as he warned against war in the Middle East. The next president, he said, will “inherit a country that is divided, and a world that’s in disarray.”

He added, “There can be no time for on-the-job training” — a message that could apply, he has suggested, to any of his leading rivals.

“With all due respect, I think I’m best prepared” on leadership matters compared to “anybody running,” Mr. Biden told an applauding crowd of about 700 on Saturday night in Des Moines.

It was not always a message delivered crisply, or accurately; on several occasions he suggested that Iran had a population of around 40 million people even though it is a nation of more than 80 million people. He also cited Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi leader, when he intended to refer to Osama bin Laden, the Al Qaeda leader.

In Des Moines, when Mr. Biden was pressed by an attendee on his foreign policy record, he noted, as he often does, that he had quickly grown disillusioned with the Bush administration’s handling of Iraq and that he had become a vocal opponent of the war. A CNN[*fact-check*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/biden-syria-airstrike-iran.html) published Monday found his remarks about when his opposition to the war began to be misleading.

He was also questioned on his view of the raid that killed bin Laden; Mr. Biden’s answer on that issue [*has changed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/us/politics/biden-syria-airstrike-iran.html) over the years.

“It’s not to suggest I haven’t made mistakes in my career, but I will put my record against anyone in public life in terms of foreign policy,” Mr. Biden said.

At weekend events for both Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders, attendees viewed the unfolding developments in Iran with anxiety, if not grave apprehension.

“We don’t need to waste any more time,” said Korlu P. Jallah, 22, who attended an event for Mr. Biden in Waterloo on Saturday morning and said she was supporting him because of his experience. “We’re in a huge mess given the fact that we could possibly go to war with Iran.”

Still, she said, Mr. Sanders is her second choice.

PHOTOS: Joseph R. Biden Jr. in Independence, Iowa. He has highlighted his long résumé in foreign policy. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRITTAINY NEWMAN/THE NEW YORK TIMES); Senator Bernie Sanders in Dubuque, Iowa. He emphasizes a diplomacy-focused foreign policy. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RUTH FREMSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

**Load-Date:** February 25, 2021

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[***‘Grandmother, Where’d You Get So Smart?’ ‘Living, Baby. Living.’; Solver Stories***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:637N-YYM1-JBG3-64N4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 28, 2021 Wednesday 13:10 EST

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**Section:** CROSSWORDS

**Length:** 975 words

**Byline:** Mandy Shunnarah

**Highlight:** A woman with little formal education taught her granddaughter an important lesson.

**Body**

A woman with little formal education taught her granddaughter an important lesson.

I don’t come from a line of people who value traditional education. Trade school and the military are, to them, more viable options, and I bucked that tradition by being the first person in my family to go to college. Then again, spending nearly every afternoon after school with my grandmother, that’s hardly surprising — she’s seldom without a book.

I come from rural, ***working-class*** Alabama stock, where the grocery store, the dollar store and the thrift store were our bookstores. My grandmother would run her fingers along the sparse titles, on the hunt for Belva Plain and Maeve Binchy. I copied her, searching for books in the Dear America series and the Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen mystery books. The puzzle books were nearby, and she’d grab a crossword book for herself and a word search for me, in hopes of keeping me occupied and out of her crosswords.

As I grew up and she grew older, jokes were made about her slowing down and about her getting senile for coming home with all but the five things she needed from the store. Yet she still worked the crosswords like she was playing speed chess, pen racing across the paper, occasionally moving on a clue so fast that her pen nib left a tear in its wake.

A memory: My grandmother opens The Birmingham News to the weekly crossword and goes to the counter to make herself another cup of coffee. With her back turned, I quietly pick up the pen and slide the paper toward me.

“You better not be touching my crossword!” she hollers, her back still to me.

“I just want to look at it,” I whine.

“You can look without my pen in your hand.”

“I bet I know some of these.”

“Let’s see,” she says, taking her spot at the kitchen table. “‘City in Mesopotamia.’ Two letters.”

She stares, unblinking, and I falter. “You picked a hard one.”

“Ur!” she hollers.

“Huh?”

“Ur! That’s the answer.”

I shrug and write E-R in the spaces.

“No! It’s Ur! U-R! See there, I told you not to touch my crossword.” She yanks the pen from me. “How about this one: ‘A receptacle for cremation.’ Three letters.”

I shake my head again, convinced she’s making these up as she goes along.

“Urn!” she shouts, laughing.

As they were when I was 10, crossword puzzles are a mystery to me. Just when I think I’ve figured out the humor in the clues, the pun here and the sleight-of-hand misdirection there, I find myself unable to decipher even the most literal and obvious of clues.

Adults told me that I was smart, that I was adept at reading and that I had an impressive vocabulary for my age, but crossword puzzles made me feel that the people around me were lying. Crosswords feel as if they’re written in a language I don’t understand, like a walk through a fun-house, where the words are reflected back to me in the warped mirrors.

Throughout my adolescence, I watched my grandmother solve the crossword in under half an hour, using a pen and seldom applying Wite-Out to the page in order to right a wrong answer. She didn’t own a crossword dictionary and felt that using one was not only cheating, but also defeating the purpose of solving on your own. After all, the fun of working a puzzle was to figure it out.

Every so often, I’d beg her to let me give it a try, convinced that I was old enough and smart enough to finally decipher the crossword. She’d oblige me by handing me a pencil, since I hadn’t yet proven myself with a pen. Every time, I’d fill in a handful of answers and then my mind would go blank. I’d stare at the page, hoping something I’d read in a book or learned in school would help me. I felt the gears ticking in my brain. If only the answer would just come to me …

My grandmother grew impatient and pulled the newspaper back to her side of the table.

If I asked her once, I asked her a million times: “Grandmother, where’d you get so smart?”

She’d plop the finished crossword in front of me, grinning with satisfaction and say: “Living, baby. Just living.”

At another time, in another life, she might have gone to college, graduated with honors and been a writer herself, or a scientist. She had more intelligence than privilege, more potential than money. What she couldn’t have, she gave to me — buying me $100 bonds for my birthday every year, so at least some of them would mature by the time I needed them to pay my tuition. She set me up to enjoy a life she wanted but knew she’d never have.

These days, I don’t try to finish the crosswords — it would almost feel a sacrilege to her memory if I did. It was the one thing she lorded over me, the one thing I could tell she did not want me to take from her. She didn’t hesitate to give me her vintage scarves or a necklace picked up in Vietnam by her brother in the Navy. But the crossword was hers and hers alone.

I feigned annoyance at her crossword domination but, in truth, I wanted her to win as badly as she did. That was how we saw it: It was a competition between herself and the minds who created the puzzles. And every week, she proved she was on equal footing with them.

Over the years, even though I made words my life’s work, I fear I will never completely and correctly fill in a crossword with a pen like my grandmother, who was a teen mother, barely graduated high school and never went to college.

Whatever qualifications the puzzle makers might have had, she would always have the satisfaction of knowing that a grandmother in rural Alabama — with no college education — could work a crossword with the best of them.

[*Mandy Shunnarah*](https://mandyshunnarah.com/) is an Alabama native who lives in Columbus, Ohio. Her first book, “Midwest Shreds: Skaters and Skateparks of Middle America,” will be published in 2022.

Illustration by [*Bianca Bagnarelli*](https://mandyshunnarah.com/).

Join us [*here*](https://mandyshunnarah.com/) to solve Crosswords, The Mini, and other games by The New York Times.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustrated by Bianca Bagnarelli FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 28, 2021

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[***A Long, Slow Slog To Get to Work***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65KJ-FPT1-JBG3-61D9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 2, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 18

**Length:** 1983 words

**Byline:** By Ana Ley and Jose A. Alvarado Jr.

**Body**

Just beyond the reach of New York City's frenetic, round-the-clock subway, people in a slice of western Queens wait -- and wait -- to board one of the borough's slowest buses.

Many of the 2.3 million New Yorkers who live and work in Queens aren't served directly by the vast network of trains that keeps the nation's biggest metropolis moving. The borough, the city's second most populous, has less subway service relative to its size and population than the other four.

So hundreds of thousands of people here plan their lives around the only mass transit choice they have: the buses that lumber along traffic-choked streets.

One of those buses, the Q23, is among the slowest in the city. For the past four years, it has consistently traveled more slowly than the citywide average of about 8 miles per hour -- about the speed some people can run -- bogged down by an awkward path and riders who swarm two stops that connect to the subway.

It was slower than nearly all of the 76 other buses in Queens in April, and it ranked dead last in the borough in January, when it traveled at 6.5 miles per hour.

The Q23's route curls around the Tudor-style houses and lush yards of Forest Hills, then cuts through the bustling heart of multicultural Corona before turning west toward the edge of Queens to head to its last stop, near La Guardia Airport.

''Each section has its own little demon,'' John Breeden, who has driven city buses for 11 years and counts the Q23 among his routes, said as he sat behind the wheel on a spring afternoon. ''You need patience.''

More New Yorkers ride buses in this borough than in any other. On a given weekday before the pandemic, 680,000 people took a bus in Queens, making up about 32 percent of the city's overall weekday ridership of 2.2 million.

Many blue-collar workers rely on the Q23 to reach their jobs, and its frequent delays can derail their commutes and make them late to work. Some riders set out hours early to compensate.

When buses are slow, people put off basic needs such as medical care, according to a May 2020 study published in the American Journal of Public Health. They spend longer in harsh weather, and their quality of life suffers because of lost time.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which operates the city's public buses, wants to speed them up in Queens, in part by getting rid of stops and adapting to modern traffic patterns, making routes straighter and more direct.

''Most of the subway system was built when Queens still had farmlands,'' said Janno Lieber, the M.T.A.'s chairman and chief executive.

''Now we have to make the bus system do a lot of the work in Queens that the subway system does for so many other parts of the city that got more heavy rail, because of when they were developed,'' he said.

The authority released a draft plan to redesign the borough's bus network in March, and it is soliciting community input through June.

But when it sought to try an overhaul in 2019, just before the onset of the pandemic, Queens riders and elected officials protested. The agency received more than 11,000 public comments, many saying that the plan was too drastic and would eliminate or alter crucial bus lines.

Ultimately, the proposal was shelved. The authority says it considered the complaints when drafting the new version.

The pains that Q23 riders take to accommodate its delays illustrate the consequences of a broken bus system that is used primarily by low-income people who do not have cars and live far from the subway.

Their journeys begin hours before sunrise and run late into the night, at all times snarled by obstructions.

In the darkness, slowdowns build

A little before 5 a.m. on a recent weekday, Amada Sandoval, who lives in East Elmhurst, was ready to board the bus to reach her cleaning job at La Guardia Airport.

Her shift doesn't start until 7 a.m., and the airport's front doors are only about a mile away, but she doesn't take any chances.

''The 23 is the tortoise,'' Ms. Sandoval said in Spanish. ''It stops too many times. It makes too many turns. My god!''

The Q23 serves a mix of Queens residents, including many Latino and Asian immigrants in Elmhurst and Corona. Riders from Rego Park and Forest Hills tend to be whiter and wealthier.

In Elmhurst and Corona, 64 percent of residents depend on public transit to get to work -- 16 percentage points higher than the overall rate in Queens, where people who can afford a car tend to drive, and 11 percentage points higher than the citywide rate.

That morning, Ms. Sandoval, 72, made the trek from the home she shares with her son to La Guardia's outskirts on foot.

She cursed the bus under her breath as she walked past her neighbor's lawn, onto the pedestrian bridge suspended above a roaring highway and through the tangle of a construction site.

By 5:30 a.m., she finally passed through the shadows of airplanes parked at Delta's terminal.

Ms. Sandoval is in poor health -- she has a bad leg, and after her grandson died abruptly in Peru in March, her blood pressure has spiked.

But like many blue collar workers, she cannot afford not to work. And the Q23 can take as long as 25 minutes to arrive, doubling the length of her trip.

So when the bus is late and the weather is good, she walks. When there is heavy rain or snow or wind, she must wait and hope for the best.

The Q23 begins its weekday schedule at about 4 a.m. with buses spaced about a half-hour apart. The path along Forest Hills and Rego Park is mostly empty compared to the route's northern section, where ***working-class*** Corona springs to life.

People form polite lines as they wait to board, making small talk about the weather and life in their native countries.

Delivery vans and cars start squeezing onto narrow roads, building choke points along key intersections where the bus links riders to the subway at Queens Boulevard and Roosevelt Avenue.

The Q23 has typically already fallen behind schedule by the time it approaches Ms. Sandoval at the northern end of the line. The further along its route it travels, the less reliable it gets, according to an analysis of rider data by the mobility app Moovit.

A workhorse slogs down its crowded path

As the day progresses, Q23 delays get worse, especially near the two stops where it meets subway lines.

It slows down along Forest Hill's Austin Street -- a shopping district lined with synagogues, schools, chain stores and dining sheds -- and along Corona Plaza's stretch of eloteros, fruterías, panaderías and taquerías.

Sometimes buses are so stuffed they leave passengers behind.

Efrain Bonet spends 4 hours per day commuting to his minimum-wage job as a security guard in Forest Hills. He begins at 1 p.m. in Union City, N.J., where he takes a New Jersey Transit bus into the Port Authority Bus Terminal in Midtown Manhattan.

There, he connects to a subway line -- usually the E or the F -- before getting off at the Forest Hills stop to board the Q23.

''It's always late,'' Mr. Bonet said. ''Sometimes you wait 12, 15, 20 minutes.''

New York City's buses are slow and unreliable because a crush of cars, delivery trucks, pedestrians and traffic lights impede their path and dedicated bus lanes remain scarce.

It is a common trend in heavily populated places. A November 2017 analysis by the city's comptroller found that the four U.S. cities where average bus speeds are lower than 10 miles per hour -- San Francisco, Chicago, Philadelphia and New York -- are among the densest in the country.

Other global cities like London and Beijing have sped up their fleets by giving more street space to buses and making more room for cyclists and pedestrians.

''The bus is used worldwide and it needs to get respect,'' said Andrew Bata, who oversees North America for the Brussels-based International Association of Public Transport. ''It needs better enforcement of the people who are blocking it.''

Mr. Bonet deals with the tough commute because he likes his job. He guards a construction site nestled between apartment towers at Colonial Avenue and the Long Island Expressway.

''It's comfortable,'' Mr. Bonet, 61, said in Spanish. Before taking the gig two years ago, he pumped gas and did other manual labor, but an injury on his right hand has made that kind of work too difficult.

He has learned how to shave precious minutes from his commute by buying New Jersey Transit passes in bulk and figuring out which staircases tend to be less crowded to avoid bottlenecks.

By now, he knows the whims of all three transit modes. For instance, he avoids the No. 7 subway because it stops too frequently and it is often down when he needs it. And he ignores the unreliable countdown clock meant to tell him when the Q23 will arrive at Queens Boulevard and 71st Avenue.

Beyond being hampered by traffic, other factors can trip up a route's flow, like bad weather and passengers who quibble with drivers over everything from the M.T.A.'s mask policy to paying the fare.

''This rule is not law. It's your rule,'' a man said after Mr. Breeden told him to mask up before boarding.

But the rule is law. Mr. Breeden didn't budge, and the man eventually pulled his mask on.

Some riders, Mr. Breeden said, are ''just like little kids. They look for excuses not to do something. But it's a daily adventure. I like it.''

New York winds down, but obstacles linger

As the day nears its end, the traffic may wane, but other obstacles can prevent the Q23 from being on time.

Angélica Mora, 42, works the overnight shift as a server at a 24-hour restaurant and bakery off Junction Boulevard. She nearly missed the bus during a recent commute because road work blocked its usual path.

''Are you waiting for the bus?'' a woman standing outside a nearby bodega asked. ''It didn't stop here.''

Ms. Mora moved to New York about a year ago after fleeing gang violence in Colombia, where she was an economist.

Her commute is only about a mile long, but she doesn't feel safe walking. People on the street are often drunk and unruly, she said, especially as nearby bars and underground strip clubs empty out.

''Sometimes it's faster to walk, but at night, I get scared,'' Ms. Mora said in Spanish.

But she can feel unsafe waiting for the bus too, she said, especially since it can be delayed up to 40 minutes: ''It's too much time standing.''

She lives alone, and relatives back home worry about her working a late shift in a foreign city.

To put them at ease, Ms. Mora calls every time she leaves home and sends trip updates along the way.

Buses have gotten slower and less reliable citywide, prompting changes in other boroughs. The M.T.A. overhauled Staten Island's Express Bus network in 2018, and approved a redesign of the bus network in the Bronx last year.

Queens's explosive population growth has transformed the borough's demographics and travel patterns, but the transportation network has not adapted.

The M.T.A.'s proposal to redesign the Q23's route would eliminate twisted sections at either end of its path, replacing them with other bus routes.

Critics of the plan say it would not solve problems like drivers who don't follow the rules, dining sheds that make narrow streets even tighter, and construction jobs like the one that blocked Ms. Mora's route.

''Realistically, there's not much you can do,'' Mr. Breeden said. ''It's very populated over there. And then you add in the churches, then you add in the deliveries, and the people's entrepreneurship out there -- it's always going to be crowded.''

Ms. Mora struggles to understand the M.T.A.'s English-language announcements. So when the woman near the bodega flagged the problem with the bus, she pulled out her phone and toggled between navigation and translation applications to figure out where to catch it.

''I'm glad she told me,'' Ms. Mora said in Spanish. ''If not, it would have left me behind.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/31/nyregion/q23-slow-bus-queens.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/31/nyregion/q23-slow-bus-queens.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Queens's explosive population growth has transformed the borough's demographics and travel patterns, but the transportation network has not adapted.

Amada Sandoval, 72, lives about a mile from La Guardia Airport, but leaves home before 5 a.m. for a 7 a.m. shift.

''Each section has its own little demon,'' Mr. Breeden said of the Q23. ''You need patience.'' A proposal would eliminate twisted portions at both ends. (A18)

John Breeden, an 11-year veteran of the M.T.A., navigating the streets near a Q23 stop in Corona, Queens, in April. (A18-A19)

New York City's buses are slow and unreliable because cars, trucks, pedestrians and traffic lights impede their paths.

Angélica Mora fled gang violence in Colombia and works an overnight shift. She said her commute is about a mile, but she doesn't feel safe walking. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSE A. ALVARADO JR.) (A19)

**Load-Date:** June 2, 2022

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[***Hochul’s Speech Is a Road Map to the Campaign That Lies Ahead***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64G7-7R01-JBG3-61RV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1429 words

**Byline:** Katie Glueck

**Highlight:** Gov. Kathy Hochul sought to exude decisiveness in crisis, previewing her efforts to run as the steady-hand candidate as she seeks her first full term.

**Body**

Gov. Kathy Hochul sought to exude decisiveness in crisis, previewing her efforts to run as the steady-hand candidate as she seeks her first full term.

As Gov. Kathy Hochul delivered her most consequential speech since becoming chief executive of New York, she did not discuss the contested Democratic primary she is navigating to retain her seat, nor did she mention the likelihood of an expensive general election against a well-funded Republican.

But in tone and substance, her address on Wednesday and accompanying [*237 pages of policy proposals*](https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2022-01/2022StateoftheStateBook.pdf) offered a road map to how she is approaching both dynamics.

In her State of the State remarks, her first as governor, Ms. Hochul often emphasized core Democratic priorities, from combating climate change to expanding access to affordable child care. But she also moved to blunt more conservative messaging on matters of public safety, the economy and the culture wars that have raged around how to handle the coronavirus pandemic.

“During this winter surge, our laser focus is on keeping kids in school, businesses open and New Yorkers’ lives as normal as possible,” she said, even as some Republicans seek to paint the Democratic Party as the party of lockdowns.

Ms. Hochul [*assumed the governorship*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/25/nyregion/kathy-hochul-interview.html) last August, taking over after former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo resigned in disgrace, and she is running for her first full term as governor this year at yet another moment of staggering challenges for the state.

As coronavirus cases spike, parents grapple with uncertainty around schools,and the Omicron variant upends the fragile economic recovery, Ms. Hochul acknowledged the pain and exhaustion gripping many New Yorkers. But she also emphasized a record of accomplishment, in particular around vaccination rates, and sought to exude competence and decisiveness in crisis, offering a preview of her efforts to run as the steady-hand, above-the-fray candidate.

A number of Democrats are seeking to challenge that image.

Representative Thomas Suozzi of Long Island, a former Nassau County executive who has positioned himself to Ms. Hochul’s right on some issues and in tone, is sharply questioning her executive experience. He sometimes refers to the state’s first female executive as the “interim governor” — a move that could backfire with some voters — and he is working to cut into her base in the suburbs.

“New York needs a common-sense governor who has executive experience to manage Covid, take on crime, reduce taxes and help troubled schools,” Mr. Suozzi said in a statement after her speech.

Jumaane D. Williams, the New York City public advocate who lost the 2018 lieutenant governor’s race to Ms. Hochul by 6.6 percentage points, is running as a self-declared “activist elected official” with close ties to New York’s left-wing political movement, which can play an important role in energizing parts of the primary electorate. He said on Wednesday that some of her proposals were not sufficiently “bold” to meet the challenges of the moment — a view echoed by leaders of a number of left-wing organizations.

“Discussion of these issues is important, acknowledged and appreciated,” Mr. Williams said in a statement. “But that discussion must be accompanied by the political courage to envision and enact transformational change for New York City and across the state.”

Former Mayor Bill de Blasio of New York City has also taken steps toward a run.

Attorney General Letitia James had been Ms. Hochul’s most formidable opponent, but she [*dropped her bid*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/09/nyregion/letitia-james-drops-out-governor.html) for governor last month, and on Wednesday she stood next to the governor, applauding. Ms. James’s exit cleared the way for Ms. Hochul to rapidly lock down more institutional support from unions and elected officials, and she is expected to post a formidable fund-raising haul later this month.

Ms. Hochul, who has referred to herself as a “[*Biden Democrat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/25/nyregion/kathy-hochul-interview.html),” on Wednesday sounded by turns like a centrist who welcomes big business and an old-school politician keenly focused on the needs of ***working-class*** New Yorkers.

For example, she called for efforts to bolster the salaries of health care workers “so those doing God’s work here on Earth are no longer paid a minimum wage.”

But at another point, she pledged that New York would be “the most business-friendly and worker-friendly state in the nation.”

Ms. Hochul [*laid out*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/05/nyregion/kathy-hochul-state-of-ny-speech.html) a number of measures to bolster the social safety net, and she also endorsed some left-leaning criminal justice proposals, including a “jails-to-jobs” program and other efforts to help formerly incarcerated people access employment and housing.

She also pledged to pursue a five-year plan to offer 100,000 affordable homes, though some housing advocates thought she should have offered far more comprehensive protections since the state’s eviction moratorium is poised to expire. And she laid out a bevy of climate, infrastructure and transportation-related initiatives.

If many aspects of the speech played into concerns of rank-and-file Democratic voters and union officials, Ms. Hochul also repeatedly made overtures to a broader ideological and geographical swath of voters who will power the general election. (“I think I have a personal experience with just about every pothole in New York as well, especially on the Long Island Expressway,” she said, referring to an important political battleground.).

Representative Lee Zeldin of Long Island is seen as the most formidable Republican contender in the governor’s race, though any Republican seeking a statewide office in New York faces very long odds, and Mr. Zeldin, a staunch Trump ally, would face particular scrutiny for [*voting to overturn the results of the 2020 election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/08/nyregion/ny-lawmakers-trump.html).

Still, Ms. Hochul’s speech came several months after Democrats were deeply shaken by election results around the country. In New York, Democrats suffered a spate of [*unexpected losses in local races*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/republican-election-results-new-york.html) in November, driven on Long Island by concerns around crime and taxes. The [*governor’s race*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/murphy-wins-nj-governor.html) in neighboring New Jersey — which was defined partly by debates over taxes — was closer than many expected, with a [*stunning*](https://www.nj.com/politics/2021/11/sweeney-is-out-but-coughlin-will-stay-how-nj-legislative-leadership-is-changing-after-wild-election.html) down-ballot loss. And the Democratic candidate in the Virginia governor’s race lost a contest that was [*shaped by*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/14/us/elections/in-virginia-frustration-with-schooling-during-the-pandemic-played-a-part-in-youngkins-win.html) education matters, including parental frustration concerning closed schools.

The governor aimed to address all of those issues directly.

She repeatedly emphasized her commitment to combating gun violence and tackling quality-of-life issues, and she has endorsed funding for law enforcement officers and prosecutors and investments in neighborhoods where violent crime is common. She also stressed that she understood deeply held concerns around public safety, even though New York is far safer today than in earlier eras.

“This is not a return to the dark days of the ’70s and ’80s and ’90s,” she said. “But that’s not our metric for success. We need to get back on track.”

Ms. Hochul devoted a significant part of her speech to discussing matters of affordability. She proactively addressed the challenge of inflation, she made overtures to farmers — not typically seen as a reliable Democratic constituency — and she offered a number of tax proposals. She proposed accelerating tax cuts for the middle class, and her call for a property tax rebate may be especially resonant in the suburbs.

Ms. Hochul made clear she wanted [*those who had left the state*](https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/2021-population-estimates.html)during the pandemic — “an alarm bell that cannot be ignored” — to return and to see the state as a place of economic opportunity.

“That’s the steepest population drop of any state in the nation,” she said. “An alarm bell that cannot be ignored.”

But she also avoided discussion of one of the state’s most divisive topics: bail reform legislation passed in 2019, which has become a political lightning rod that Republicans have sought to weaponize. Her silence on the matter drew criticism from Mr. Suozzi.

Ms. Hochul took the stage in white, a color often associated with [*the suffrage movement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/04/us/politics/women-in-white-state-of-the-union.html). As she emphasized collaboration and suggested she did not have time for petty rivalries, she drew implicit contrasts with her predecessor, who ruled with an iron fist and resigned amid accusations of sexual harassment.

“I’m well aware of the significance of this moment,” she said. “The first time in New York’s history that a woman has delivered this annual address. But I didn’t come here to make history. I came here to make a difference.”

PHOTO: Gov. Kathy Hochul emphasized Democratic priorities, from combating climate change to expanding access to affordable child care, in her State of the State remarks. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CINDY SCHULTZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[***He's Awful, but I'll Put Adams On My Ballot***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62YC-1PT1-DXY4-X2XP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 19, 2021 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 23; MICHELLE GOLDBERG

**Length:** 917 words

**Byline:** By Michelle Goldberg

**Body**

A primary aim of American progressive politics is assembling multiracial ***working-class*** coalitions. One candidate in New York City's Democratic mayoral primary appears to be doing that. He is, unfortunately for the left, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, an ex-cop and former Republican who defends the use of stop-and-frisk, supports charter schools and is endorsed by Rupert Murdoch's New York Post.

While mayoral primaries are hard to poll -- especially this one, the first New York primary to use ranked-choice voting -- surveys show Adams is leading. If he wins, he'll do it with a coalition unlike any in the city's modern history.

David Dinkins and Bill de Blasio prevailed by uniting people of color, particularly Black voters, with white liberals. Adams would win by uniting Black voters with white moderates and conservatives against liberals, particularly the ''young white affluent people'' who he claims lead the defund-the-police movement.

An Adams administration would most likely be a head-spinning time of marginalization for the left. Just three years ago, New York City seemed an epicenter of democratic socialism with the victory of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. One year ago, mass demonstrations after the murder of George Floyd sparked national demands to reimagine policing. For New York Democrats to choose a law-and-order mayor now would be seen as a rebuke to progressives all over the country.

So I can hardly believe I'm going to put Adams on my ballot. But as Andrew Yang has grown increasingly strident about public order, I've started to think that Adams might be only the second-worst of the viable candidates.

Many progressive groups are urging people not to rank either, which makes sense if you think they're equally bad. The contest between Adams and Yang has become less urgent as Maya Wiley and Kathryn Garcia, my top two choices, have surged and Yang has faded. But it's still possible that the race could come down to the two men, and I believe in always choosing the lesser of two evils. New Yorkers can rank up to five names. I'm planning to put Adams fifth.

The writer Ross Barkan has argued that, for the left, Yang would be preferable. Lacking a real political base, Barkan wrote, Yang would be susceptible to progressive pressure. Adams, by contrast, ''would be strong enough to tell the socialists, the progressives, the Working Families Party, the NGOs and the ordinary activists shouting outside Gracie Mansion that he does not need them to run the city.''

I think Barkan is right that Yang would be less hostile to left-wing organizations. But I suspect that Adams, precisely because he's more beholden to Black voters, would end up giving us more progressive governance.

It was Yang's answers on homelessness and mental health at the final debate that finally settled it for me. Every other candidate spoke of homelessness as a disaster for the homeless. Yang discussed it as a quality of life problem for everyone else. ''Yes, mentally ill people have rights, but you know who else have rights?'' he asked. ''We do: the people and families of the city.''

For Yang, I suspect, a successful mayoralty would mean restoring Michael Bloomberg's New York, an extremely safe, pleasant place for tourists and well-off families like mine, but one where many poorer people were financially squeezed and strictly policed. Even if Yang could, as a political novice, stand up to the N.Y.P.D., he'd have little reason to, since his remit would be safety at almost any cost.

As David Freedlander wrote for New York in his excellent, damning deep dive on some of Adams's shady connections, Adams would most likely be an old-fashioned machine mayor. But at their best, the old machines delivered for their supporters. For Adams, that would mean, among other things, protecting his voters from bad policing as well as rising crime.

On Thursday, the former Harlem assemblyman Keith Wright endorsed Adams. Wright is a son of Bruce Wright, a famously liberal judge known as ''Turn 'Em Loose Bruce'' who was loathed by the N.Y.P.D. As a child, Wright said, his family used to receive packages of excrement in the mail; they believed the police sent them.

Wright said he's counting on Adams, who spoke out against police brutality from within the force, to reform the N.Y.P.D. ''The relationship between communities of color and police have been fractured at best,'' he told me. He hopes that ''a person that has served in the Police Department would know the inner workings and could address some of the problems that have become a cancer to our city.''

Given the power of the N.Y.P.D., his optimism might be misplaced. But as Freedlander acknowledged, ''To this day, those who know Adams describe him as deeply committed to racial justice.'' Christina Greer, a political scientist at Fordham University, expects an Adams administration to lack transparency and be cozy with real estate developers. But, she added, ''Do I think that he genuinely cares about Black people and people in Brooklyn and ergo the citizens of New York? I do.''

Unlike Yang, Adams can't just jump-start gentrification and declare victory. He'll owe his office to people who expect more.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/18/opinion/nyc-mayor-adams.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/18/opinion/nyc-mayor-adams.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Spencer Platt/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 19, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Do Democrats Have the Courage of Liz Cheney?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63R3-MJ81-DXY4-X1J0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 29, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 20; THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN

**Length:** 1184 words

**Byline:** By Thomas L. Friedman

**Body**

A few months ago I had the chance to have a long conversation with Wyoming Representative Liz Cheney. While we disagreed on many policy issues, I could not have been more impressed with her unflinching argument that Donald Trump represented an unprecedented threat to American democracy. I was also struck by her commitment to risk her re-election, all the issues she cares about, and even physical harm, to not only vote for Trump's impeachment but also help lead the House investigation of the Jan. 6 insurrection.

At the end of our conversation, though, I could only shake my head and ask: Liz, how could there be only one of you?

She could only shake her head back.

After all, a recent avalanche of news stories and books leaves not a shred of doubt that Trump was attempting to enlist his vice president, his Justice Department and pliant Republican state legislators in a coup d'état to stay in the White House based on fabricated claims of election fraud.

Nearly the entire G.O.P. caucus (save for Cheney and Representative Adam Kinzinger, who is also risking his all to join the Jan. 6 investigation, and a few other Republicans who defied Trump on impeachment) has shamelessly bowed to Trump's will or decided to quietly retire.

They are all complicit in the greatest political sin imaginable: destroying faith in our nation's most sacred process, the peaceful and legitimate transfer of power through free and fair elections. Looking at how Trump and his cult are now laying the groundwork -- with new laws, bogus audits, fraud allegations and the installation of more pliant state election officials to ensure victory in 2024 no matter what the count -- there is no question that America's 245-year experiment in democracy is in real peril.

Our next presidential election could well be our last as a shining example of democracy.

Just listen to Cheney. Addressing her fellow Republicans on ''60 Minutes'' on Sunday, she noted that when they abet Trump's delegitimization of the last election, ''in the face of rulings of the courts, in the face of recounts, in the face of everything that's gone on to demonstrate that there was not fraud ... we are contributing to the undermining of our system. And it's a really serious and dangerous moment because of that.''

This is Code Red. And that leads me to the Democrats in Congress.

I have only one question for them: Are you ready to risk a lot less than Liz Cheney did to do what is necessary right now -- from your side -- to save our democracy?

Because, when one party in our two-party system completely goes rogue, it falls on the other party to act. Democrats have to do three things at the same time: advance their agenda, protect the integrity of our elections and prevent this unprincipled Trump-cult version of the G.O.P. from ever gaining national power again.

It is a tall order and a wholly unfair burden in many ways. But if Cheney is ready to risk everything to stop Trump, then Democrats -- both moderates and progressives -- must rise to this moment and forge the majorities needed in the Senate and House to pass the bipartisan infrastructure bill (now scheduled for a Thursday vote in the House), a voting rights bill and as much of the Build Back Better legislation as moderate and progressives can agree on.

If the Democrats instead form a circular firing squad, and all three of these major bills get scattered to the winds and the Biden presidency goes into a tailspin -- and the Trump Republicans retake the House and Senate and propel Trump back into the White House -- there will be no chance later. Later will be too late for the country as we know it.

So, I repeat: Do Representative Josh Gottheimer, the leader of the centrist Democrats in the House, and Representative Pramila Jayapal, leader of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, have the guts to stop issuing all-or-nothing ultimatums and instead give each other ironclad assurances that they will do something hard?

Yes, they will each risk the wrath of some portion of their constituencies to reach a compromise on passing infrastructure now and voting rights and the Build Back Better social spending soon after -- without anyone getting all that they wanted, but both sides getting a whole lot. It's called politics.

And are centrist Democratic Senators Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema ready to risk not being re-elected the way Liz Cheney has by forging a substantive compromise to ensure that consequential election integrity, infrastructure and Build Back Better measures go forward? Or are they just the Democratic equivalents of the careerist hacks keeping Trump afloat -- people so attached to their $174,000 salaries and free parking at Reagan National Airport that they will risk nothing?

And, frankly, is the Biden White House ready to forge this compromise with whatever pressures, Oval Office teas, inducements, pork and seductions are needed? It could energize the public a lot more by never referring to this F.D.R.-scale social reform package as ''reconciliation'' and only calling it by its actual substance: universal pre-K, home health care for the sick and elderly, lower prescription drug prices, strengthened Obamacare, cleaner energy, green jobs and easier access to college education that begins a long-overdue leveling of the playing field between the wealthy and the ***working class***. Also, the White House needs to sell it not only to urban Democrats but to rural Republicans, who will benefit as well.

The progressives need to have the courage to accept less than they want. They also could use a little more humility by acknowledging that spending trillions of dollars at once might have some unintended effects -- and far more respect for the risk-takers who create jobs, whom they never have a good word for. If Biden's presidency is propelled forward and seen as a success for everyday Americans, Democrats can hold the Senate and House and come back for more later.

The moderates need to have the courage to give the progressives much more than the moderates prefer. Income and opportunity gaps in America helped to produce Trump; they will be our undoing if they persist.

We're not writing the Ten Commandments here. We're doing horse-trading. Just do it.

None of the Democratic lawmakers will be risking their careers by such a compromise, which is child's play compared with facing the daily wrath of running for re-election in the most pro-Trump state in America, Wyoming, while denouncing Trump as the greatest threat to our democracy.

But I fear common sense may not win out. As Minnesota Democratic Representative Dean Phillips (a relative) remarked to me after Tuesday's caucus of House Democrats: ''The absence of pragmatism among Democrats is as troubling as the absence of principle among Republicans.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/28/opinion/liz-cheney-democrats-democracy.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/28/opinion/liz-cheney-democrats-democracy.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Drew Angerer/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 29, 2021

**End of Document**



[***What's On Monday***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YF8-18Y1-DXY4-X40V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 16, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 514 words

**Byline:** By Peter Libbey

**Body**

The six-part adaptation of Philip Roth's 2004 novel debuts on HBO. And the series based on Elena Ferrante's Neapolitan novels returns for Season 2.

What's on TV

THE PLOT AGAINST AMERICA 9 p.m. on HBO. Ed Burns and David Simon's six-part adaptation of Philip Roth's 2004 novel conjures an alternative history of the 1940s in which the United States takes a dark path under the sway of a popular demagogue. In the premiere episode, the tension is already beginning to build. Charles Lindbergh, a hero to many for his solo trans-Atlantic flight in 1927, foments anti-Semitic sentiment as he campaigns to prevent the United States from declaring war on Nazi Germany. Herman (Morgan Spector) and Elizabeth (Zoe Kazan), a ***working class*** couple Jewish couple in New Jersey, try to shield sons their sons Sandy and Phillip from the growing unrest while also wrangling with more mundane family issues.

MY BRILLIANT FRIEND 10 p.m. on HBO. Spurred by the reported disappearance of the mercurial Lila, an aging Elena began to share the story of their transformative friendship at the beginning of the first season of this ongoing adaptation of Elena Ferrante's Neapolitan novels. The two met as girls in a poor neighborhood in 1950s Naples. Both were promising students but only Elena was able to pursue her education. Despite her talent and spirit, Lila was left behind to ply her father's trade and eventually accept the marriage proposal of a suitor. In the second season, based on Ferrante's ''The Story of a New Name,'' the ambivalent but deep connection between the women continues to develop as Elena's academic success takes her further from her community and Lila's troubled relationship crumbles.

What's Streaming

THE LADY FROM SHANGHAI (1948) Stream on the Criterion Channel; rent on Amazon, Google Play, iTunes, Vudu and YouTube. This film noir by Orson Welles includes just about everything one might expect: stylized black and white photography, an alluring but destructive femme fatale figure, and a plot rife with misdirection and sudden bursts of revelation. Welles stars as Michael, a sailor conscripted into a yacht trip from New York to San Francisco by Arthur, a wealthy lawyer, and his wife, Elsa (Rita Hayworth). Michael hopes to win Elsa's affection, and is drawn into a scheme to help fake the death of Arthur's partner George. But the deal Michael makes is not what it initially appears. In the hands of Welles, a master filmmaker, these conventional elements are used to explore identity, truth and desire.

THE RETURN (2003) Stream on Acorn TV. Julie Walters plays Lizzie, a recovering alcoholic who is released from prison after serving a 10-year sentence for killing her husband in a drunken haze. As she readjusts to life on the outside, Lizzie's memory of that event begins to return and she realizes that she may not have been her partner's murderer. There's an investigation, plot twists and salacious details aplenty but this film focuses on its imperfect main character's struggle to reconcile herself with a past that she largely wasn't really present for.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/16/arts/television/whats-on-tv-monday-the-plot-against-america-and-my-brilliant-friend.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/16/arts/television/whats-on-tv-monday-the-plot-against-america-and-my-brilliant-friend.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Foreground, Morgan Spector and Zoe Kazan.

Gaia Girace, left, and Margherita Mazzucco. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HBO)

Rita Hayworth and Orson Welles. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CRITERION COLLECTION)

**Load-Date:** March 16, 2020

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[***Is the Hamptons Party Moving to Springs?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6372-FKJ1-DXY4-X4D8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 25, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 974 words

**Byline:** By Alyson Krueger

**Body**

The artsy and quieter hamlet of the Hamptons has seen an influx of Manhattanites, buzzy restaurants and even celebrities.

Rita Cantina, a festive Mexican restaurant in the Hamptons, has been getting a lot of attention since opening this summer.

On a recent Wednesday night Hannah Bronfman and Brendan Fallis were seated in one corner, enjoying items like margaritas and littleneck clams. At the bar, spirited diners in fedoras and crop tops slammed back tequila and danced to Bad Bunny.

Adam Miller, 32, one of the owners, ran around taking drink orders. ''If people are there, we will stay open all night,'' he said.

The scene may feel familiar in other parts of the Hamptons, but it's foreign to Springs, a quiet bay-front hamlet just north of East Hampton Village with modest, single-family homes and dense forests. There is no major highway, just windy two-lane roads. The Financial Times once called it ''the Hamptons without socialites and celebrities.''

In the 1940s, Springs was an artists' colony for American expressionist painters including Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner. ''It was one long party,'' said Helen Harrison, the director of the Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center, a museum in Springs. ''They would catch fresh fish and clams, and then take their catch to one another's homes and have a great old time.''

In more recent decades, the neighborhood was home to about 7,000 year-round residents, many from medium- to low-income families.

''This is a very old community of fishermen and laborers and ***working-class*** folks that are the backbone of making sure the Hamptons function,'' said Mr. Miller, who has owned various restaurants in Springs for almost a decade. ''The people who do your unbelievable landscaping or install your gorgeous pool or serve you at the fancy restaurant -- they aren't living waterfront in East Hampton. They are living in Springs.''

Affluent New Yorkers in search of weekend homes tended to avoid it. ''People looking to rent or buy in the Hamptons would say they want to be in East Hampton but not Springs,'' said Adriel Reboh, a real estate agent with Compass who specializes in the Hamptons. ''They would tell me it's too far or they want to be closer to town or the ocean.''

Not anymore. Mr. Reboh said that Springs has become a desirable location for New York City residents, especially millennials, looking to buy and rent homes. They are attracted to relatively cheaper houses that come with more land.

A recent Zillow search, for example, found more than a dozen homes for sale in Springs for under $1.25 million, while the offerings in East Hampton proper are notably slimmer.

Younger buyers are also attracted to new restaurants like Rita Cantina and Si Si, an upscale Mediterranean restaurant at EHP Resort and Marina, a boutique hotel that opened in May. Springs is also known for its calm beaches, one with a natural bayside cove and jetty.

New homeowners include Ross Matsubara, 36, a vice president and style director at Nike Communications, and his husband, Noa Santos, 33, who runs an interior design and architecture company called Nainoa. They bought their four-bedroom Greek Revival-style home in 2019.

The couple fell in love with Springs after visiting a friend who had bought a house there. ''We also liked that Springs is diverse and not super-luxe,'' Mr. Santos said. ''It's almost like living downtown in New York City. You get the grit, which is kind of fun.''

Since buying there, they have been joined by a dozen other friends. ''Most weekends we never leave the neighborhood,'' Mr. Matsubara said. ''We host cocktail parties one weekend, and the next weekend someone else hosts. We all just skip around.''

During the Fourth of July weekend, the couple hosted a party for a hundred people that included marketing executives for Chanel and Alexander McQueen, interior designers, photographers and artists. Despite the rain, guests showed up in floral shirts and spent the day sipping champagne and frolicking in the pool. ''Two years ago, not as many would have come because we live in Springs,'' Mr. Matsubara said.

The rental market is heating up, too. Lia Bartha, 37, a fitness entrepreneur, and her husband, Justin Bartha, 43, an actor who starred in ''The Hangover,'' rented a two-story house on Kings Point Road this summer. ''It was a smaller, cozy house, but it had a beautiful outdoor space with this pool that had a vintage, '70s feel,'' Ms. Bartha said. ''There was no foot traffic or cars going by. The only noise I heard were birds chirping.''

''We love how it has an upstate feel with nature and peace and quiet, so it feels like an actual vacation,'' Ms. Bartha added. ''It's also far enough from the Hamptons scene so we can go in and out of it if we want to.''

The hamlet's newfound cachet, however, present challenges for longtime residents and businesses.

''The community has changed drastically, because so many more people have moved here,'' said Kristi Hood, the owner of Springs General Store, a shop on Old Stone Highway that also rents kayaks. ''People have found it difficult to find places to rent, which creates an employee shortage. We are still open seven days a week, but we are closing earlier because of the limited staff.''

The influx of New Yorkers, especially those who moved here full-time during the pandemic, has also added to the stresses. ''Usually you have downtime in the winter to prep and reboot and get ready for the upcoming season, but this year there was no break,'' Ms. Hood said. ''Other business owners are saying the same thing.''

Eric Miller, the chef and co-owner of Rita Cantina, expressed a similar sentiment. ''We are a 65-seat restaurant, and we have 185 reservations on a Wednesday night,'' he said. ''It's like that every day. I'm a little shocked. We have to figure out how to keep up.''

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, Springs is known for more modest houses than are often seen elsewhere in the Hamptons. Above, the Si Si restaurant is among the new dining spots there. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY VICTOR LLORENTE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Do Democrats Have the Courage of Liz Cheney?; Thomas L. Friedman***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63R0-92X1-DXY4-X0NP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 28, 2021 Tuesday 13:03 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1184 words

**Byline:** Thomas L. Friedman

**Highlight:** When one party in our two-party system goes completely rogue, it falls on the other party to protect democracy.

**Body**

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Nearly the entire G.O.P. caucus (save for Cheney and Representative Adam Kinzinger, who is also risking his all to join the Jan. 6 investigation, and a few other Republicans who defied Trump on impeachment) has shamelessly bowed to Trump’s will or decided to quietly retire.

They are all complicit in the greatest political sin imaginable: destroying faith in our nation’s most sacred process, the peaceful and legitimate transfer of power through free and fair elections. Looking at how Trump and his cult are now laying the groundwork — with new laws, bogus audits, fraud allegations and the installation of more pliant state election officials to ensure victory in 2024 no matter what the count — there is no question that America’s 245-year experiment in democracy is in real peril.

Our next presidential election could well be our last as a shining example of democracy.

Just listen to Cheney. Addressing her fellow Republicans [*on “60 Minutes”*](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/liz-cheney-donald-trump-wyoming-60-minutes-2021-09-26/) on Sunday, she noted that when they abet Trump’s delegitimization of the last election, “in the face of rulings of the courts, in the face of recounts, in the face of everything that’s gone on to demonstrate that there was not fraud … we are contributing to the undermining of our system. And it’s a really serious and dangerous moment because of that.”

This is Code Red. And that leads me to the Democrats in Congress.

I have only one question for them: Are you ready to risk a lot less than Liz Cheney did to do what is necessary right now — from your side — to save our democracy?

Because, when one party in our two-party system completely goes rogue, it falls on the other party to act. Democrats have to do three things at the same time: advance their agenda, protect the integrity of our elections and prevent this unprincipled Trump-cult version of the G.O.P. from ever gaining national power again.

It is a tall order and a wholly unfair burden in many ways. But if Cheney is ready to risk everything to stop Trump, then Democrats — both moderates and progressives — must rise to this moment and forge the majorities needed in the Senate and House to pass the bipartisan infrastructure bill (now scheduled for a Thursday vote in the House), a voting rights bill and as much of the Build Back Better legislation as moderate and progressives can agree on.

If the Democrats instead form [*a circular firing squad*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/28/us/politics/pelosi-infrastructure-house-vote.html), and all three of these major bills get scattered to the winds and the Biden presidency goes into a tailspin — and the Trump Republicans retake the House and Senate and propel Trump back into the White House — there will be no chance later. Later will be too late for the country as we know it.

So, I repeat: Do Representative Josh Gottheimer, the leader of the centrist Democrats in the House, and Representative Pramila Jayapal, leader of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, have the guts to stop issuing all-or-nothing ultimatums and instead give each other ironclad assurances that they will do something hard?

Yes, they will each risk the wrath of some portion of their constituencies to reach a compromise on passing infrastructure now and voting rights and the Build Back Better social spending soon after — without anyone getting all that they wanted, but both sides getting a whole lot. It’s called politics.

And are centrist Democratic Senators Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema ready to risk not being re-elected the way Liz Cheney has by forging a substantive compromise to ensure that consequential election integrity, infrastructure and Build Back Better measures go forward? Or are they just the Democratic equivalents of the careerist hacks keeping Trump afloat — people so attached to their $174,000 salaries and free parking at Reagan National Airport that they will risk nothing?

And, frankly, is the Biden White House ready to forge this compromise with whatever pressures, Oval Office teas, inducements, pork and seductions are needed? It could energize the public a lot more by never referring to this F.D.R.-scale social reform package as “reconciliation” and only calling it by its actual substance: universal pre-K, home health care for the sick and elderly, lower prescription drug prices, strengthened Obamacare, cleaner energy, green jobs and easier access to college education that begins a long-overdue leveling of the playing field between the wealthy and the ***working class***. Also, the White House needs to sell it not only to urban Democrats but to rural Republicans, who will benefit as well.

The progressives need to have the courage to accept less than they want. They also could use a little more humility by acknowledging that there could be some unintended effects from such a big spending bill — and far more respect for the risk-takers who create jobs, whom they never have a good word for. If Biden’s presidency is propelled forward and seen as a success for everyday Americans, Democrats can hold the Senate and House and come back for more later.

The moderates need to have the courage to give the progressives much more than the moderates prefer. Income and opportunity gaps in America helped to produce Trump; they will be our undoing if they persist.

We’re not writing the Ten Commandments here. We’re doing horse-trading. Just do it.

None of the Democratic lawmakers will be risking their careers by such a compromise, which is child’s play compared with facing the daily wrath of running for re-election in the most pro-Trump state in America, Wyoming, while denouncing Trump as the greatest threat to our democracy.

But I fear common sense may not win out. As Minnesota Democratic Representative Dean Phillips (a relative) remarked to me after Tuesday’s caucus of House Democrats: “The absence of pragmatism among Democrats is as troubling as the absence of principle among Republicans.”

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Drew Angerer/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 29, 2021

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[***Eric Adams Is Awful. I’m Putting Him on My Ballot.; Michelle Goldberg***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62Y7-CVN1-JBG3-61FF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 18, 2021 Friday 19:44 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 920 words

**Byline:** Michelle Goldberg

**Highlight:** He&#39;ll be bad for progressives but still better than Andrew Yang.

**Body**

A primary aim of American progressive politics is assembling multiracial ***working-class*** coalitions. One candidate in New York City’s Democratic [*mayoral primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/19/nyregion/voting-guide-mayors-race-new-york-city.html) appears to be doing that. He is, unfortunately for the left, Brooklyn Borough President [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/19/nyregion/voting-guide-mayors-race-new-york-city.html), an ex-cop and former Republican who defends the use of stop-and-frisk, [*supports charter schools*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/19/nyregion/voting-guide-mayors-race-new-york-city.html) and is [*endorsed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/19/nyregion/voting-guide-mayors-race-new-york-city.html) by Rupert Murdoch’s New York Post.

While mayoral primaries are hard to poll — especially this one, the first New York primary to use ranked-choice voting — surveys show Adams is leading. If he wins, he’ll do it with a coalition unlike any in the city’s modern history.

David Dinkins and Bill de Blasio prevailed by uniting people of color, particularly Black voters, with white liberals. Adams would win by [*uniting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/19/nyregion/voting-guide-mayors-race-new-york-city.html) Black voters with white moderates and conservatives against liberals, particularly the “young white affluent people” who [*he claims*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/19/nyregion/voting-guide-mayors-race-new-york-city.html) lead the defund-the-police movement.

An Adams administration would most likely be a head-spinning time of marginalization for the left. Just three years ago, New York City seemed an epicenter of democratic socialism with the victory of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. One year ago, mass demonstrations after the murder of George Floyd sparked national demands to reimagine policing. For New York Democrats to choose a law-and-order mayor now would be seen as a rebuke to progressives all over the country.

So I can hardly believe I’m going to put Adams on my ballot. But as Andrew Yang has grown increasingly strident about public order, I’ve started to think that Adams might be only the second-worst of the viable candidates.

Many progressive groups are urging people not to rank either, which makes sense if you think they’re equally bad. The contest between Adams and Yang has become less urgent as Maya Wiley and Kathryn Garcia, my top two choices, have surged and Yang has faded. But it’s [*still possible*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/19/nyregion/voting-guide-mayors-race-new-york-city.html) that the race could come down to the two men, and I believe in always choosing the lesser of two evils. New Yorkers can rank up to five names. I’m planning to put Adams fifth.

The writer Ross Barkan [*has argued that*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/19/nyregion/voting-guide-mayors-race-new-york-city.html), for the left, Yang would be preferable. Lacking a real political base, Barkan wrote, Yang would be susceptible to progressive pressure. Adams, by contrast, “would be strong enough to tell the socialists, the progressives, the Working Families Party, the NGOs and the ordinary activists shouting outside Gracie Mansion that he does not need them to run the city.”

I think Barkan is right that Yang would be less hostile to left-wing organizations. But I suspect that Adams, precisely because he’s more beholden to Black voters, would end up giving us more progressive governance.

It was Yang’s answers on homelessness and mental health at the final debate that finally settled it for me. Every other candidate spoke of homelessness as a disaster for the homeless. Yang discussed it as a quality of life problem for everyone else. “Yes, mentally ill people have rights, but you know who else have rights?” he asked. “We do: the people and families of the city.”

For Yang, I suspect, a successful mayoralty would mean restoring Michael Bloomberg’s New York, an extremely safe, pleasant place for tourists and well-off families like mine, but one where many poorer people were financially squeezed and strictly policed. Even if Yang could, as a political novice, stand up to the N.Y.P.D., he’d have little reason to, since his remit would be safety at almost any cost.

As David Freedlander wrote for New York in his excellent, damning [*deep dive*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/19/nyregion/voting-guide-mayors-race-new-york-city.html) on some of Adams’s shady connections, Adams would most likely be an old-fashioned machine mayor. But at their best, the old machines delivered for their supporters. For Adams, that would mean, among other things, protecting his voters from bad policing as well as rising crime.

On Thursday, the former Harlem assemblyman Keith Wright endorsed Adams. Wright is a son of Bruce Wright, a famously liberal judge known as “[*Turn*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/19/nyregion/voting-guide-mayors-race-new-york-city.html)’[*Em Loose Bruce*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/19/nyregion/voting-guide-mayors-race-new-york-city.html)” who was loathed by the N.Y.P.D. As a child, Wright said, his family used to receive packages of excrement in the mail; they believed the police sent them.

Wright said he’s counting on Adams, who spoke out against police brutality from within the force, to reform the N.Y.P.D. “The relationship between communities of color and police have been fractured at best,” he told me. He hopes that “a person that has served in the Police Department would know the inner workings and could address some of the problems that have become a cancer to our city.”

Given the power of the N.Y.P.D., his optimism might be misplaced. But as Freedlander acknowledged, “To this day, those who know Adams describe him as deeply committed to racial justice.” Christina Greer, a political scientist at Fordham University, expects an Adams administration to lack transparency and be cozy with real estate developers. But, she added, “Do I think that he genuinely cares about Black people and people in Brooklyn and ergo the citizens of New York? I do.”

Unlike Yang, Adams can’t just jump-start gentrification and declare victory. He’ll owe his office to people who expect more.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Spencer Platt/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Writing a New Chapter for a Troubled Brussels Neighborhood***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64FS-YY91-JBG3-631Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 4, 2022 Tuesday

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4; BRUSSELS DISPATCH

**Length:** 1372 words

**Byline:** By Elian Peltier

**Body**

Molenbeek was where a terrorist cell planned attacks that killed 162 in Paris and Brussels. Six years later, residents are trying to reinvent the area as a trial rekindles an awful association.

BRUSSELS -- With children's drawings and colorful posters now adorning the walls and windows, it was easy to forget the notorious past of the red brick building, whose history still haunts a ***working-class*** Brussels neighborhood.

On a recent morning, in a former bar converted into a community center, Assetou Elabo was arranging tables for students who would soon join her for homework tutoring.

A few years earlier, the bar's owner had let drug trafficking proliferate on the site. With patrons, he would watch videos from the Islamic State. And in the basement of the bar, Les Béguines, he would chat online with a friend who had joined the terrorist group in Syria.

Then in November 2015, he detonated his explosive vest as part of a series of attacks in and around Paris.

For many, the bar epitomized all that had gone wrong in Molenbeek, the neighborhood of nearly 100,000 people that hat was home to 7 of the 20 terrorists that killed 130 people in France that November and 32 more in Brussels four months later.

But if the bar symbolized what Molenbeek had been, the community center shows what the neighborhood is trying to become.

Since being opened by local residents in 2018, the center has been dedicated to helping children, students looking for jobs and people with disabilities. Although the neighborhood remains predominantly Muslim, it is more diverse than usually portrayed, with newcomers changing its composition in recent years.

''What we do here is the opposite of what the Abdeslam brothers did,'' Ms. Elabo, a social worker, said of the bar's owner, Brahim, and his brother Salah, who helped manage it.

After the Paris attacks, Molenbeek was subjected to intense global scrutiny. Television crews from around the world broadcast for days from the neighborhood's central square or near the bar, making residents feel like they were living on a movie set.

Some journalists would stop passers-by and ask to be introduced to a jihadist. Opinion shapers and policymakers exhorting moderate Muslims to do more to combat extremism.

Six years later, many in Molenbeek have taken up the challenge. And far from the public attention, they have tried to rebuild their community, although it still faces the same endemic problems -- from poverty to unemployment to crime -- that contributed to the radicalization of some residents.

''We were ashamed after the attacks, but now I proudly say that I'm from Molenbeek,'' said Dr. Sara Debulpaep, 47, a pediatrician who has lived here for nearly three decades.

Yet as much as some residents want to put the stigma of the attacks behind them, the Molenbeek terrorists are once again in the news.

For the past several months in Paris, a trial over the 2015 bombings and shootings has examined what went wrong in Molenbeek, presenting arguments about what drove the attackers and how their plan was allowed to so horribly succeed.

In court, academics, lawyers and officials have debated for days the upbringing of the attackers and those accused of complicity. The reasons for the failure of Brussels police officers to monitor and arrest them has been dissected even more closely.

Several defendants standing trial in Paris will also appear before a Brussels court in September for the attacks on the city in 2016.

Dozens of Molenbeek residents, mostly young people, traveled to Syria and Iraq to fight alongside armed groups like the Nusra Front and ISIS in the early 2010s. At the continuing trial in Paris, one defendant said that upon his release from prison in 2014, his neighborhood felt empty: All his friends had gone to Syria and Iraq.

Of the 20 men accused in the Paris attacks, seven grew up or lived in Molenbeek. So did one of ISIS' top recruiters in Europe.

Luc Ysebaert, the head of the local police, said around 50 people were still being monitored by intelligence services in the area.

Since the attacks, the government has awarded numerous grants meant to improve life here and expand opportunities for the neighborhood's young people.

Bachir Mrabet, a youth worker at Foyer, one of the main community centers in Molenbeek, said he had begun news literacy workshops after the attacks, as well as theater workshops to let off tensions. He also now organizes youth meetings twice a month instead of once every two months before the bombings. ''We're much more vigilant,'' he said.

But resources are still tight, and residents still feel stigmatized, said Ali El Abbouti, another youth worker at Foyer who manages his own community center.

''We've been asked to do even more, to solve all the problems, but with so little resources,'' Mr. El Abbouti said. ''And we were already doing so much.'' He wants to create places where young people are encouraged to express themselves; recent projects have included a podcast in Arabic about the origins of Molenbeek's first generations of Moroccan immigrants.

Volunteers say young people need more guiding examples from older and successful local residents. ''They want mentors, they don't have that around them,'' said Meryam Fellah, a 27-year-old chemistry student who provides coaching at the community center once housing the bar.

Molenbeek's major changes aren't coming only from longtime residents, but also from some of the same outside forces that are reshaping much of Brussels.

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The neighbors of Dr. Debulpaep, the pediatrician, include Albanians, Congolese, Guineans, Italians, Poles and Palestinians. Residents say Molenbeek's diversity is what makes it unique.

For example, Molenbeek's women's soccer club last year included players from eight nationalities on one of its 12-person youth squads, said Imane El Rhifari, a coach.

Some Molenbeek residents say they are now as annoyed by the arrival of Pentecostal churches in the area as they were once worried about some mosques fostering extremism. Affluent new residents from the Dutch-speaking Flanders region of Belgium have moved into expensive housing along a gentrifying strip of artists' studios and organic shops.

In Molenbeek, one can now visit an exhibition on Belgian adult movie theaters in one of Brussels' trendiest museums. Art projects, underground concerts and cafes are gaining ground.

But integrating those patrons and the customers of the kebab restaurants and traditional Islamic wedding shops that dot the neighborhood's main street remains a challenge, residents say.

''There's very little mixing,'' Mr. El Abbouti said on a recent afternoon as he walked past a gated residential complex.

And Molenbeek remains one of the poorest and most densely populated areas in Belgium. At 21 percent, the unemployment rate is three times the country's average.

While the terrorist threat has been downgraded, cannabis trafficking has exploded, and so have violent clashes among gangs, said Mr. Ysebaert, the local police chief. ''Our problems are very similar to those of large European cities.''

During the pandemic, scores of young people have dropped out of school, quit playing sports or stopped going to community centers, youth workers and residents say.

''After 16 years old, many give up, and we lose them,'' said Touben Zouin, who counsels Molenbeek residents aged 16 to 25.

There have been some success stories, too. Just months after the attacks, Ibrahim Ouassari, a local entrepreneur, opened a tech school dedicated to dropouts, where 30 percent of the 400 students trained every year come from the neighborhood. The school, Molengeek, has since grown into one of Belgium's biggest tech successes, with branches in other Belgian cities, the Netherlands and Italy.

Yet Mr. Ouassari conceded there is still a ''culture of resignation'' in Molenbeek which pushes some young people toward petty crime and which used to tilt some of them toward radicalization. ''We haven't dried up the fertile ground,'' he said, ''that creates desperate people.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/04/world/europe/molenbeek-brussels-terrorist-attack-paris.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/04/world/europe/molenbeek-brussels-terrorist-attack-paris.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The Molenbeek section of Brussels. The area drew worldwide attention in 2015, after that year's terrorist attacks on Paris. Seven of the 20 men accused in those strikes grew up or lived in Molenbeek.

Above left, a women's soccer club in the area. Right, Ali El Abbouti, a community center manager, called for more funding for youth services. ''We've been asked to do even more, to solve all the problems, but with so little resources,'' he said.

Assetou Elabo runs a community center housed in a former bar that was owned by one of the Paris suicide bombers. Right, the town square. Molenbeek remains predominantly Moroccan, but some areas are being rapidly gentrified. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY VIRGINIE NGUYEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Changing Brussels Neighborhood Tries to Leave Stigma of Terrorism Behind; Brussels Dispatch***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64FT-04R1-JBG3-63N2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 4, 2022 Tuesday 10:05 EST

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**Byline:** Elian Peltier

**Highlight:** Molenbeek was where a terrorist cell planned attacks that killed 162 in Paris and Brussels. Six years later, residents are trying to reinvent the area as a trial rekindles an awful association.

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During the pandemic, scores of young people have dropped out of school, quit playing sports or stopped going to community centers, youth workers and residents say.

“After 16 years old, many give up, and we lose them,” said Touben Zouin, who counsels Molenbeek residents aged 16 to 25.

There have been some success stories, too. Just months after the attacks, Ibrahim Ouassari, a local entrepreneur, opened a tech school dedicated to dropouts, where 30 percent of the 400 students trained every year come from the neighborhood. The school, Molengeek, has since grown into one of Belgium’s biggest tech successes, with branches in other Belgian cities, the Netherlands and Italy.

Yet Mr. Ouassari conceded there is still a “culture of resignation” in Molenbeek which pushes some young people toward petty crime and which used to tilt some of them toward radicalization. “We haven’t dried up the fertile ground,” he said, “that creates desperate people.”

PHOTOS: The Molenbeek section of Brussels. The area drew worldwide attention in 2015, after that year’s terrorist attacks on Paris. Seven of the 20 men accused in those strikes grew up or lived in Molenbeek.; Above left, a women’s soccer club in the area. Right, Ali El Abbouti, a community center manager, called for more funding for youth services. “We’ve been asked to do even more, to solve all the problems, but with so little resources,” he said.; Assetou Elabo runs a community center housed in a former bar that was owned by one of the Paris suicide bombers. Right, the town square. Molenbeek remains predominantly Moroccan, but some areas are being rapidly gentrified. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY VIRGINIE NGUYEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The Equal Rights Amendment Isn't the Answer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y14-RKV1-JBG3-60D9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 19, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 3

**Length:** 1114 words

**Byline:** By Joan C. Williams

**Body**

There are better ways to help women, that are less prone to generating backlash.

A growing excitement surrounds Virginia's vote this week to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, guaranteeing equal legal rights for all United States citizens regardless of sex. Virginia is the 38th state to ratify the E.R.A., pushing the country over the three-quarters threshold required for a constitutional amendment -- assuming that the decisions of five states to rescind their ratification over the years don't count.

Why is the E.R.A. gaining newfound momentum decades after the ratification deadline passed and initial momentum fizzled? Perhaps in the face of #MeToo and a misogynous president, we want an insurance policy, a stopgap for rights that seem to be constantly eroding. Understandable, no doubt. But as someone who has worked for equal rights for women for nearly 40 years and has tried to provide a clear description of the ways bias impacts women's lives, I wonder whether the E.R.A. is the best fight to pick right now. Because make no mistake -- it would be a battle. President Trump's Department of Justice has already issued a 38-page opinion declaring the E.R.A. dead, dead, dead.

And this time around, it's not clear that the concrete gains would be worth the political backlash.

For one thing, Congress imposed a deadline for states' ratification of the E.R.A. -- 1982. Was that binding? Who would decide? Most likely, the Supreme Court. But Mr. Trump has tilted the court sharply to the right, and there's no guarantee it would second-guess Congress's decision.

But the deeper problem is that it would be the same Supreme Court that would interpret the Equal Rights Amendment. Do we really believe that this Supreme Court will take a bold view of the E.R.A.'s vague promises? Not likely, particularly considering what many social conservatives think about when they think of the E.R.A.

They think of bathrooms. Would the E.R.A. make gender-specific bathrooms unconstitutional? I doubt it, but that doesn't mean that a long, drawn-out fight wouldn't give conservatives a chance to use this as a galvanizing issue. According to an influential study of the successful campaign to persuade the North Carolina legislature not to ratify the E.R.A. by Jane De Hart and Donald Mathews, the bathrooms issue played a central role. Anti-ratificationists played on people's anxiety by equating gender-neutral bathrooms with the ''forced mixing'' of desegregation.

In the 1970s, Phyllis Schlafly used her campaign against the E.R.A. to fuel the culture wars that have driven American politics ever since. Ms. De Hart and two scholars who have studied fights for abortion rights, Kristin Luker and Faye Ginsburg, found that the fights over both issues pitted less-educated women against those more educated. Ms. De Hart also found that in North Carolina, advocates of the E.R.A. typically were highly educated women who considered it the key to opening up high-stakes, high-status, traditionally male professions. High-school-educated women were less work identified, more family identified, more likely to hold traditionalist views of men's and women's roles, and less likely to support the E.R.A. Even today, feminism is associated with class: Only 22 percent of adults with a high school diploma or less education identify as ''feminist,'' compared with 48 percent of those with postgraduate degrees.

The ***working-class*** mantra ''Family comes first'' reflects what I have called the ''class culture gap.'' Professional women see good jobs as their path to social power and dignity. Middle-skilled women do not, because the jobs available to them remain sharply divided into pink-collar jobs held by women and blue-collar jobs held by men. Pink-collar jobs typically have low wages and status. That helps to explain why non-elite women tend to romanticize motherhood and traditional gender roles more than elite women do.

Class scholars have documented that non-elites hold more traditional views than elites, including on ''family values.'' That's why the culture wars express class conflict: Elites embrace political issues associated with their felt entitlement to self-development (such as the right to express oneself sexually, through L.G.B.T.Q. and abortion rights). Non-elites typically put a higher value on self-discipline and respect for traditional institutions that advance self-discipline -- religion, the military and family values -- shaping the politics of what used to be called ''values voters.''

Does all this still hold in the age of President Trump? Sure does. Roughly 80 percent of evangelicals voted for Mr. Trump because they hoped he would deliver the Supreme Court, and he did. Aren't they outraged by his behavior? Not really, because they view politics as an arena where compromise is made with people unlike themselves in exchange for wins on issues that are central to their identity. They rely on church, not politics, as the arena for forming a virtuous sense of self.

My crowd, lacking church, has displaced virtue signaling onto politics. Which brings us back to the E.R.A. My fear is that a drawn-out, complicated legal fight over the E.R.A. will enhance conservatives' ability to mobilize in 2020 the very groups that delivered the White House to Mr. Trump in 2016: evangelicals and ***working-class*** whites in the Rust Belt states.

Given today's Supreme Court, the E.R.A. is likely to accomplish little. That's what drives my conclusion that feminists should focus their fervor and funds on campaigns that promise concrete results in women's lives: for example, enacting legislation such as a Pregnant Workers' Fairness Act that would give pregnant women the right to the accommodations needed to keep their jobs while pregnant and breastfeeding, or amendments to the Fair Labor Standards Act to expand the coverage of the Affordable Care Act's guarantee of reasonable break time and a clean place to pump milk at work.

The current preoccupation with the E.R.A. is just one expression of elites' obsession with using politics to enact their virtue. My advice? Use religion for that. Use politics to shape the law to make concrete improvements in women's lives. That's the path to gender equality.

Joan C. Williams is a professor of law and director of the Center for WorkLife Law at the University of California, Hastings, College of the Law.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/equal-rights-amendment.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/equal-rights-amendment.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: From far left, Hala Ayala of the Virginia House of Delegates

Eileen Filler-Corn, the chamber's speaker

and Toni Van Pelt, president of the National Organization for Women, on Wednesday, the day the state ratified the E.R.A. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIA RENDLEMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Is the Hamptons Party Moving to Springs?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:636T-XNT1-DXY4-X36F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 24, 2021 Saturday 16:02 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 996 words

**Byline:** Alyson Krueger

**Highlight:** The artsy and quieter hamlet of the Hamptons has seen an influx of Manhattanites, buzzy restaurants and even celebrities.

**Body**

The artsy and quieter hamlet of the Hamptons has seen an influx of Manhattanites, buzzy restaurants and even celebrities.

[*Rita Cantina,*](https://www.ritacantinahamptons.com/) a festive Mexican restaurant in the Hamptons, has been getting a lot of attention since opening this summer.

On a recent Wednesday night Hannah Bronfman and Brendan Fallis were seated in one corner, enjoying items like margaritas and littleneck clams. At the bar, spirited diners in fedoras and crop tops slammed back tequila and danced to Bad Bunny.

Adam Miller, 32, one of the owners, ran around taking drink orders. “If people are there, we will stay open all night,” he said.

The scene may feel familiar in other parts of the Hamptons, but it’s foreign to Springs, a quiet bay-front hamlet just north of East Hampton Village with modest, single-family homes and dense forests. There is no major highway, just windy two-lane roads. The Financial Times once called it “[*the Hamptons without socialites and celebrities*](https://www.ritacantinahamptons.com/).”

In the 1940s, Springs was an artists’ colony for American expressionist painters including Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner. “It was one long party,” said Helen Harrison, the director of the [*Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center*](https://www.ritacantinahamptons.com/), a museum in Springs. “They would catch fresh fish and clams, and then take their catch to one another’s homes and have a great old time.”

In more recent decades, the neighborhood was home to about 7,000 year-round residents, many from medium- to low-income families.

“This is a very old community of fishermen and laborers and ***working-class*** folks that are the backbone of making sure the Hamptons function,” said Mr. Miller, who has owned various restaurants in Springs for almost a decade. “The people who do your unbelievable landscaping or install your gorgeous pool or serve you at the fancy restaurant — they aren’t living waterfront in East Hampton. They are living in Springs.”

Affluent New Yorkers in search of weekend homes tended to avoid it. “People looking to rent or buy in the Hamptons would say they want to be in East Hampton but not Springs,” said [*Adriel Reboh*](https://www.ritacantinahamptons.com/), a real estate agent with Compass who specializes in the Hamptons. “They would tell me it’s too far or they want to be closer to town or the ocean.”

Not anymore. Mr. Reboh said that Springs has become a desirable location for New York City residents, especially millennials, looking to buy and rent homes. They are attracted to relatively cheaper houses that come with more land.

A recent Zillow search, for example, found more than a dozen homes for sale in Springs for under $1.25 million, while the offerings in East Hampton proper are notably slimmer.

Younger buyers are also attracted to new restaurants like Rita Cantina and[*Si Si*](https://www.ritacantinahamptons.com/), an upscale Mediterranean restaurant at [*EHP Resort and Marina*](https://www.ritacantinahamptons.com/), a boutique hotel that opened in May. Springs is also known for its calm beaches, one with a natural bayside cove and jetty.

New homeowners include Ross Matsubara, 36, a vice president and style director at Nike Communications, and his husband, [*Noa Santos*](https://www.ritacantinahamptons.com/), 33, who runs an interior design and architecture company called [*Nainoa*](https://www.ritacantinahamptons.com/). They bought their four-bedroom Greek Revival-style home in 2019.

The couple fell in love with Springs after visiting a friend who had bought a house there. “We also liked that Springs is diverse and not super-luxe,” Mr. Santos said. “It’s almost like living downtown in New York City. You get the grit, which is kind of fun.”

Since buying there, they have been joined by a dozen other friends. “Most weekends we never leave the neighborhood,” Mr. Matsubara said. “We host cocktail parties one weekend, and the next weekend someone else hosts. We all just skip around.”

During the Fourth of July weekend, the couple hosted a party for a hundred people that included marketing executives for Chanel and Alexander McQueen, interior designers, photographers and artists. Despite the rain, guests showed up in floral shirts and spent the day sipping champagne and frolicking in the pool. “Two years ago, not as many would have come because we live in Springs,” Mr. Matsubara said.

The rental market is heating up, too. Lia Bartha, 37, a fitness entrepreneur, and her husband, Justin Bartha, 43, an actor who starred in “The Hangover,” rented a two-story house on Kings Point Road this summer. “It was a smaller, cozy house, but it had a beautiful outdoor space with this pool that had a vintage, ’70s feel,” Ms. Bartha said. “There was no foot traffic or cars going by. The only noise I heard were birds chirping.”

“We love how it has an upstate feel with nature and peace and quiet, so it feels like an actual vacation,” Ms. Bartha added. “It’s also far enough from the Hamptons scene so we can go in and out of it if we want to.”

The hamlet’s newfound cachet, however, present challenges for longtime residents and businesses.

“The community has changed drastically, because so many more people have moved here,” said Kristi Hood, the owner of [*Springs General Store*](https://www.ritacantinahamptons.com/), a shop on Old Stone Highway that also rents kayaks. “People have found it difficult to find places to rent, which creates an employee shortage. We are still open seven days a week, but we are closing earlier because of the limited staff.”

The influx of New Yorkers, especially those who moved here full-time during the pandemic, has also added to the stresses. “Usually you have downtime in the winter to prep and reboot and get ready for the upcoming season, but this year there was no break,” Ms. Hood said. “Other business owners are saying the same thing.”

Eric Miller, the chef and co-owner of Rita Cantina, expressed a similar sentiment. “We are a 65-seat restaurant, and we have 185 reservations on a Wednesday night,” he said. “It’s like that every day. I’m a little shocked. We have to figure out how to keep up.”

PHOTOS: Top, Springs is known for more modest houses than are often seen elsewhere in the Hamptons. Above, the Si Si restaurant is among the new dining spots there. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY VICTOR LLORENTE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 27, 2021

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[***The Misguided Push for an Equal Rights Amendment***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y0N-D761-DXY4-X3RY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 16, 2020 Thursday 16:44 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; sunday

**Length:** 1166 words

**Byline:** Joan C. Williams

**Highlight:** There are better ways to help women, that are less prone to generating backlash.

**Body**

There are better ways to help women, that are less prone to generating backlash.

A growing excitement surrounds Virginia’s vote this week to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, guaranteeing equal legal rights for all United States citizens regardless of sex. Virginia is the 38th state to ratify the E.R.A., pushing the country over the three-quarters threshold required for a constitutional amendment — assuming that the decisions of five states to rescind their ratification over the years don’t count.

Why is the E.R.A. gaining newfound momentum decades after the ratification deadline passed and initial momentum fizzled? Perhaps in the face of #MeToo and a misogynous president, we want an insurance policy, a stopgap for rights that seem to be constantly eroding. Understandable, no doubt. But as someone who has worked for equal rights for women for nearly 40 years and has tried to provide a clear description of the ways bias impacts women’s lives, I wonder whether the E.R.A. is the best fight to pick right now. Because make no mistake — it would be a battle. President Trump’s Department of Justice has already issued a [*38-page opinion*](https://www.justice.gov/olc/file/1232501/download) declaring the E.R.A. dead, dead, dead.

And this time around, it’s not clear that the concrete gains would be worth the political backlash.

For one thing, Congress imposed a deadline for states’ ratification of the E.R.A. — 1982. Was that binding? Who would decide? Most likely, the Supreme Court. But Mr. Trump has tilted the court sharply to the right, and there’s no guarantee it would second-guess Congress’s decision.

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They think of bathrooms. Would the E.R.A. make gender-specific bathrooms unconstitutional? I doubt it, but that doesn’t mean that a long, drawn-out fight wouldn’t give conservatives a chance to use this as a galvanizing issue. According to an [*influential study*](https://www.justice.gov/olc/file/1232501/download) of the successful campaign to persuade the North Carolina legislature not to ratify the E.R.A. by Jane De Hart and Donald Mathews, the bathrooms issue played a central role. Anti-ratificationists played on people’s anxiety by equating gender-neutral bathrooms with the “forced mixing” of desegregation.

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Joan C. Williams is a professor of law and director of the Center for WorkLife Law at the University of California, Hastings, College of the Law.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.justice.gov/olc/file/1232501/download) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some   [*tips*](https://www.justice.gov/olc/file/1232501/download). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.justice.gov/olc/file/1232501/download).

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PHOTO: From far left, Hala Ayala of the Virginia House of Delegates; Eileen Filler-Corn, the chamber’s speaker; and Toni Van Pelt, president of the National Organization for Women, on Wednesday, the day the state ratified the E.R.A. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIA RENDLEMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2020

**End of Document**



[***A Taunted NBA Star Thrives Off the Court***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6568-X3X1-DXY4-X2GC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 10, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1678 words

**Byline:** By Adam Popescu

**Body**

LAWNDALE, Calif. -- ''Go home,'' Russell Westbrook yelled at a heckler seated behind the players' bench. ''Go home,'' he repeated.

The crowd at this late-February blowout to the lowly New Orleans Pelicans had turned fast. The boos and taunts were so bad that Mr. Westbrook's Los Angeles Lakers teammates looked ready to confront fans in the first row. LeBron James got into a sideline debate with one trash talker, while Trevor Ariza had to be physically restrained from confronting another.

''You're not Kobe, you're not Kobe,'' a fan slurred, said Michael Morales, who filmed the courtside exchange at the Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles.

Drunk people yelling is normal. Athletes yelling back isn't -- especially at fans in seats that run $3,500 a pop.

''I'm a die-hard Laker fan,'' said Mr. Morales, a 38-year-old postal worker who drives across town after every shift, coming to more games than Jack Nicholson and posting close-up clips that can earn him thousands of dollars on Facebook Reels. But ''right now,'' he said, ''it's hard to watch.'' Mr. Morales's pain, and extra income, will end soon: On Tuesday night, after a loss to Phoenix, the Lakers were eliminated from the postseason.

Mr. Westbrook joined the Lakers last July, after stints on the Houston Rockets and Washington Wizards marred by injury and a case of Covid, in a blockbuster trade that brought him to the team he grew up idolizing.

Though his performance this season has made him the target of angry fans, much of Mr. Westbrook's off-court life seems to be thriving. There's a revealing new Showtime film, a History Channel documentary, a recent art book, a clothing line with a new collection, along with an educational foundation and community involvement that belies his temperamental image.

All of that should come as no surprise to many who have followed his career or been involved with it. ''He knows how to be a star,'' said Simon Doonan, who spent three decades as Barneys New York's creative director.

After numerous Barneys collaborations, including with Tim Coppens and jewelry and perfume lines, and a time as True Religion's campaign creative director, Mr. Westbrook, 33, debuted his own fragrance, eyeglass brand and Honor the Gift, a unisex streetwear line he introduced at an Oklahoma City body shop in 2017.

Mr. Doonan, now a judge on the TV show ''Making It,'' calls past collections with Mr. Westbrook where he ''selected fabrics, working on and approving designs,'' and shot videos together, ''the most fun I've had in my career.''

But while Mr. Westbrook's off-court life is filled with successes, his basketball season has been so rocky that the hometown faithful have turned on the Los Angeles native -- so much so that his wife recently tweeted that the family had been sent ''death wishes.'' The former Laker Shaquille O'Neal has advised slowing down, and he's even been benched and shopped in trade talks.

Mr. Westbrook has reacted to the boos and taunts of ''Westbrick'' with defiance; speaking to a pool of reporters after the Pelicans loss, he said, ''I got three beautiful kids at my house, my wife, I ain't taking it home.''

But just days later, in a postgame interview, he shifted, saying that the taunts had gotten to him, alluding to more important things than basketball, a revelation that was a similar vein to the Showtime film, ''Passion Play,'' in which he is introspective in a way that can still be uncommon among professional athletes. ''The way I compete has made me an easy target,'' he says in the film, almost as if there are two Russells. ''In the sports world, I am the bad guy. People don't really understand who I am. I'll be lying to say it didn't affect me.''

The Return

Born in Long Beach, Calif., Mr. Westbrook grew up in Hawthorne, near South Central Los Angeles, went to high school in Lawndale, then spent two years in Westwood at the University of California, Los Angeles. He entered the N.B.A. in 2008 and immediately became known for his fiery play and fashion sense.

In the 1970s, the New York Knicks star Walt ''Clyde'' Frazier introduced player-endorsed sneakers, mink coats, Zorro hats and capes. Twenty years later, Dennis Rodman raised the bar, once wearing a wedding dress to a book signing. In the social media era, Mr. Westbrook has turned the arena tunnel into a pregame catwalk.

Being 6-foot-3 means he can shop off the rack, but he rarely plays it safe, preferring vivid patterns or, say, a white kilt at the Thom Browne spring 2022 show -- bold statements in the hyper-macho sports world.

He has embraced his role as fashion star with vigor, spending fashion weeks in New York, Paris and Milan with the likes of Anna Wintour, Carine Roitfeld, Raymond Pettibon and Tim Coppens.

''You wouldn't want to get in his way on the court. In person, he's totally different,'' said Anthony Petrillose, the associate publisher of Rizzoli New York, which published ''Russell Westbrook: Style Drivers,'' with cover art by Mr. Pettibon. ''The experience was, 'I'm here to learn, I want the best possible book -- how do we do it?'''

Honor the Gift, Mr. Westbrook's fashion brand, has done pop-ups in Los Angeles and Paris and released a collection earlier this month called the Concrete Jungle. The summer capsule collection was a homage to swap meets; last fall, it was a halcyon reimagining of the soul soundtrack to growing up in Hawthorne.

''Russell takes fashion every bit as seriously as he does being a point guard,'' said Ms. Wintour, who last saw him in November at Madison Square Garden, where he ''generously presented me with his sneakers postgame. They were a little too large for me, but fortunately I was with my 6-4 nephew, who happily took them.''

But the Lakers lost that night -- and Mr. Westbrook looks unhappy on the job. While he's worked with Nike's Jordan brand on a full-foot system for his shoes, pored over Honor the Gift designs, and carefully constructed his homecoming, the basketball fit in Los Angeles has been bumpy.

In June of last year, Honor the Gift teamed with Jordan and Mr. Westbrook's Why Not? Foundation, building a basketball court and sponsoring tech and design workshops at a Y.M.C.A. in the city's Crenshaw District. (Jordan has produced Westbrook's signature shoe and Why Not? apparel since 2018.) The nonprofit foundation, named after a favorite saying, supports social initiatives and schools.

''Style is a weapon and that doesn't end with clothing,'' said Sam Sohaili, who runs DMA United, a creative agency that has worked with Mr. Westbrook on brand deals. ''Russell's style is how he interacts with people.''

Such interactions support the two-Russells theory: relishing the villain role, then playing opposite. (Despite multiple attempts, Mr. Westbrook declined to comment for this article.)

Playing in Los Angeles also means Hollywood. ''Tulsa Burning: The 1921 Race Massacre,'' which he executive produced, premiered last May and other projects are in development.

And just when he appears to be another celebrity cashing in, he crosses over. During a grueling playing period in December, days after entering the N.B.A.'s safety protocols because of positive coronavirus tests in the team's traveling party, then testing negative for Covid, Mr. Westbrook donned a Santa hat and grinchy tracksuit, posed for photos and gave every Why Not? student new sneakers.

''Sometimes the priority ain't what you get paid for,'' noted the legendary Compton rapper DJ Quik just before the Lakers were crushed by the crosstown Clippers in March.

Leuzinger

South of the Crypto.com Arena, at Leuzinger High School in ***working-class*** Lawndale, one of the first things you see is a 50-foot mural of a soaring you-know-who plastered on the Gloria Ramos Cafeteria. Across campus, in the Thompson Gymnasium, a familiar name and jersey number hang above the court where Mr. Westbrook led the Olympians to a 25-4 record as a senior back in 2006.

''It was inevitable that he'd go to the N.B.A.,'' recalled Patrick Cleveland, a high school teammate who lived down the street from Mr. Westbrook and now coaches and works as a safety officer here.

We spoke just as the trade deadline passed and the Lakers decided not to deal Mr. Westbrook. In Lawndale he's still a prince of the city who came up hard, made good and stayed true.

To understand the two Russells means understanding a tragic what if, said Marlon Mendez, a coach from back in the day and now the school's athletic director. What if Mr. Westbrook's best friend Khelcey Barrs hadn't collapsed after a string of pickup games at Los Angeles Southwest College on May 11, 2004?

Khelcey was a 6-foot-6 sophomore headed for the N.B.A., until a heart condition ended everything at 16. ''We all had that chip on our shoulder, but Russell took it on,'' Mr. Cleveland said. ''Everybody thinks he's this high-energy guy. People don't understand what he plays for. We were all hurt, but he was the one who was able to make that name continue. I'm grateful Russell made it and carried that name with him.''

After he died, Mr. Westbrook would walk across the street and do Khelcey's chores before class. Today, he wears wristbands and shoes with the initials KB3, Leuzinger basketball is sponsored by Jordan and the onetime high school star remains a fixture.

''I grew up around him,'' said Amire Jones, a 16-year-old junior and guard from Compton. ''At school, games, Jordan events. It's crazy because an N.B.A. player went to your school and he's someone I can reach out to.''

It's not uncommon for Mr. Westbrook to drop in, said Mr. Jones, the son of the Leuzinger coach Arturo Jones, one of many formative figures Mr. Westbrook still leans on. ''His legacy provides opportunities for us. He's uplifting. Once I was working out with him, missing shots, he pulled me aside. He said: 'Confidence, don't stop. You miss 20, keep shooting.'''

What about Mr. Westbrook's own confidence? The boos?

''There's a lot of negativity around him for no reason,'' Mr. Jones said. ''He's going to keep shooting. He doesn't care. It's Russ.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/08/pageoneplus/08westbrook-rex.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/08/pageoneplus/08westbrook-rex.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: From left: The L.A. Lakers' Russell Westbrook has hometown fans on his back

Mr. Westbrook with Anna Wintour

Mr. Westbrook at the 2021 Met Gala. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK BLINCH/NBAE, VIA GETTY IMAGES

KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

NINA WESTERVELT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (ST6-ST7)

Top, Mr. Westbrook and Adriana Lima at a Tom Ford after-party. Above, the singers Maluma and Miguel with Mr. Westbrook at Louis Vuitton. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NINA WESTERVELT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

PASCAL LE SEGRETAIN/GETTY IMAGES) (ST7)

**Load-Date:** April 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[***A Janitor Reinvented as a Go-To Bar Mitzvah Photographer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64F5-2CG1-JBG3-61HS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 1, 2022 Saturday

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6; THE SATURDAY PROFILE

**Length:** 1368 words

**Body**

MONTREAL -- Braulio Rocha, a Portuguese janitor at a Montreal synagogue, was about to begin his daily floor mopping routine some years ago when he heard a frantic voice: The photographer assigned to shoot a bris, a ritual circumcision, hadn't shown up, and the baby's grandmother was panicking.

Mr. Rocha, an amateur photographer, had recently arrived in Canada from Madeira with $50 in savings and a beat-up old Canon camera that he always carried with him in his car. Wearing his gray and blue polyester janitor's uniform, a long key ring dangling from his pocket, he recalls, he summoned up the courage and asked the forlorn grandmother if he could shoot the baby's bris -- for free.

She agreed, and a new career was born.

Brisses soon led to bar mitzvahs, and six years later, Mr. Rocha, a 45-year-old Roman Catholic, has been called the bar mitzvah photography king of Montreal by rabbis and clients alike.

Mr. Rocha, who had never met a Jew before setting foot in Montreal's Shaar Hashomayim synagogue in 2015, is now so in demand that he sometimes shoots five bar and bat mitzvah ceremonies a week, is booked for bar mitzvahs into 2023, and employs a team of eight assistant photographers. He recently expanded into Hasidic weddings.

He has also traded in his antiquated Canon for a $3,200 model, bought a Volvo SUV, and moved from his cramped apartment into a four-bedroom house in the suburbs, filled with Armani clothing.

''I remember thinking, 'You're just a janitor,''' he said on a recent day, recalling his big bris break as he sat in the pews of the synagogue's imposing sanctuary. ''But I said to myself, 'It's now or never.' I guess you could say I'm the Canadian dream.''

Armed with a mix of chutzpah and a passion for photography he inherited from his father, who worked briefly as a photojournalist during Angola's war of independence in the 1970s, Mr. Rocha credited Canada's openness to immigrants for his good fortune.

Shaar Hashomayim, the oldest Ashkenazi synagogue in Canada, was founded in 1846, and shaped by immigrants from Europe, among them Lazarus Cohen, whose family went on to create one of Montreal's largest clothing businesses. (Lazarus also happened to be the great-grandfather of Leonard Cohen, the Montreal-born gravelly voiced balladeer.)

Mr. Rocha said that hearing immigrant success stories like the one about the Cohen family had helped inspire him. ''The Jews arrived in North America with nothing in their pockets, some survived genocide, and they rebuilt their lives and became successful,'' he said. ''I thought to myself: 'If they did it, so can I.'''

Gideon Zelermyer, the Shaar's cantor, who hired Mr. Rocha to shoot his son Max's bar mitzvah, observed that a janitor reinventing himself as a bar mitzvah photography maven in a foreign country is a quintessentially Jewish story.

''There is a virtue in our community of welcoming strangers as we, too, were strangers in a strange land,'' he said. ''That is the story of Passover. There are times when you have to dust yourself off and move forward with life with a lot of uncertainty, and Braulio embodies that.''

Mr. Zelermyer observed that Mr. Rocha, a Tim Burton fan who likes to re-enact scenes from Hollywood films like the Indiana Jones series and ''E.T.'' in his bar mitzvah shoots, also stood out because of his flair for the dramatic.

In one of Mr. Rocha's favorite images in his repertoire, he draws from the scene in ''Raiders of the Lost Ark'' when a shadowy light force emanates from the ark of the covenant and smites a group of Nazis. In his bar mitzvah version, however, Mr. Rocha said, the light envelopes the bar mitzvah boy or bat mitzvah girl and ''blesses, protects and guides them.''

''My job is to write with light,'' he said, explaining his craft.

The son of a salesman and a hairdresser, Mr. Rocha said his childhood in a ***working-class*** neighborhood of Funchal, Madeira's picturesque capital, was tumultuous. He said his father, who lost his journalism job after his newspaper shut down, was forced to sell building materials. He put on a suit and tie every day, and went to construction sites, uninvited, to peddle his wares. He was often rebuffed, and he took out his frustration, Mr. Rocha said, by lashing out and throwing plates.

Mr. Rocha's maternal grandmother is Black, and he said he always felt ''different'' in majority white Madeira. ''Other kids taunted me, 'Go back to Africa,''' he said. He found refuge taking nature photographs.

His home environment took its toll and Mr. Rocha, once a straight-A student, eventually dropped out of high school, getting a job as a waiter.

''I had zero ambition,'' he said. ''I was living with my mom. I spent my money on clubbing, girls and going to the gym.''

But he said his life changed forever one late evening in summer 2012 when he was bringing plastic bottles to a recycling bin in back of the restaurant, saw a woman strolling by and raced to intercept her, inviting her to have dinner. Much to his surprise, the woman, Sonia Vieira Ganança, whose family had emigrated from Madeira to Montreal, returned the next day.

The two began dating, kept in touch remotely by Skype after she went home, and six months later, she asked him to move to Canada. He was so broke, he recalled, she paid for the $1,000 plane ticket.

Mr. Rocha suddenly found himself braving a Quebec winter, jobless, isolated and unable to speak French. After an initially rocky adjustment, he proposed to Sonia at a teahouse, hiding a $150 ring in a teacup. He said he found a sense of purpose after Sonia's aunt, who worked in the Shaar's kitchen, helped get him the janitor job.

He felt immediately at home at the synagogue, he said, and was particularly drawn by the spiritual meaning of a bar or bat mitzvah, the rite of passage in which a boy or girl affirms a commitment to Judaism. He would sometimes pause from vacuuming to sit in the pews and listen, entranced, to Cantor Zelermyer's haunting voice singing prayers.

''I am a baptized Catholic, but in a synagogue I feel a very strong connection, something talks to me,'' he said.

It was while dusting the pews and observing bar mitzvah photographers at work that the idea first entered his head that photographing bar mitzvahs was his ''destiny.''

''I would see the photographers standing too close to the bar mitzvah boy, and the voice in my head would be saying: 'No, no, no, it's all wrong. You have God giving you this light, and you aren't doing anything with it,''' he recalled. ''But I was the janitor, so I kept dusting.''

Then came the bris epiphany.

The grandmother was so delighted with the resulting moody, cinematic photos that she paid him $130 for the job, an improvement on his $10-an-hour janitor salary.

Emboldened, Mr. Rocha asked the synagogue's management if he could shoot other events. Within two years, he was photographing weddings and bar mitzvahs, for as much as $8,000, and, for a while, changing afterward into his janitor's uniform to scrub toilets. Sometimes he worked such long days he slept on a synagogue pew.

After word spread in the Jewish community about the janitor with the discerning eye, he had so many assignments that he retired his uniform, quitting his janitor job in 2019.

At a recent bar mitzvah photo session, Mr. Rocha effortlessly schmoozed the family and joshed with the pensive bar mitzvah boy to get him to smile. ''So your dad doesn't know that you steal his Scotch, eh?'' he asked.

These days, Mr. Rocha, who has a 2-year old daughter, teaches bar mitzvah photography master classes to a 4,300-strong Facebook group. And now, when he enters the Shaar Hashomayim, former colleagues on the janitorial staff quip, ''Hey Mr. C.E.O.!''

He feels so connected to Judaism that he considered converting, but has hesitated: ''My family is very Catholic and I don't think they'd be happy.'' And old habits persist. Mr. Rocha frequently exclaims, ''Jesus Christ, that shot is amazing!'' when taking bar mitzvah photos in synagogue.

Whatever his religion, his career move was, in his view, divinely ordained.

''I feel so blessed for everything that has happened,'' he said. ''I see now that coming to Canada is God's plan.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/31/world/canada/montreal-bar-mitzvah-photographer.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/31/world/canada/montreal-bar-mitzvah-photographer.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Mr. Rocha in Shaar Hashomayim synagogue. He had recently arrived from Portugal when he started working there as a janitor. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NASUNA STUART-ULIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Braulio Rocha sometimes shoots five bar and bat mitzvah ceremonies a week. He has recently expanded into Hasidic weddings. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRAULIO ROCHA)

**Load-Date:** January 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Bill Clinton, Race and the Politics of the 1990s; Jamelle Bouie***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63T8-K441-JBG3-62JY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 9, 2021 Saturday 13:18 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2553 words

**Byline:** Jamelle Bouie

**Highlight:** What does “popularism” look like in practice?

**Body**

My colleague Ezra Klein [*wrote his latest column*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/opinion/democrats-david-shor-education-polarization.html) on the work of David Shor, a Democratic polling analyst whose primary message is a critique of the Democratic Party, namely that its college-educated professional class is too removed from the ***working-class***, non-college-educated voters they need to win. Here’s Ezra with a little more detail:

The Democratic Party was trapped in an echo chamber of Twitter activists and woke staff members. It had lost touch with the ***working-class*** voters of all races that it needs to win elections, and even progressive institutions dedicated to data analysis were refusing to face the hard facts of public opinion and electoral geography.

The main issue, Shor argues, is the polarization of voters by education. Voters who graduated from college have moved sharply toward Democrats, and voters who have not have moved sharply toward Republicans. The problem for Democrats is that most voters don’t attend college. The single largest cohort of voters, in fact, is white people without a college degree. And it is those voters who have flocked in droves to the Republican Party since the 2016 presidential election.

If those voters were concentrated in a few states, this would not be such an advantage. But they are everywhere, including most swing states.

Donald Trump’s Republican Party may not be able to win raw majorities in national elections, but its grip on non-college whites (as well as its inroads with non-college Black and Hispanic voters, especially men) means it can easily win power in a system where the geography of your votes is just as important as the number of votes you win. The Senate, in particular, will almost certainly return to and stay in Republican hands, and there’s no guarantee that Democrats will ever muster the votes to win it back. Here’s Ezra, channeling Shor:

If 2024 is simply a normal year, in which Democrats win 51 percent of the two-party vote, Shor’s model projects a seven-seat loss, compared with where they are now. Sit with that. Senate Democrats could win 51 percent of the two-party vote in the next two elections and end up with only 43 seats in the Senate.

To push back on education polarization, Shor believes that Democrats should talk less about issues of racial justice and immigration — which, he argues, have pushed non-college voters, especially whites, away from the Democratic Party — and align their message with the economic priorities of the non-college majority. Again, here’s Ezra:

The chain of logic is this: Democrats are on the edge of an electoral abyss. To avoid it, they need to win states that lean Republican. To do that, they need to internalize that they are not like and do not understand the voters they need to win over. Swing voters in these states are not liberals, are not woke and do not see the world in the way that the people who staff and donate to Democratic campaigns do.

Now, for all of these proscriptions, Shor does not say much about what this would actually look like and how it is distinct from current practice. When he does, he usually cites two examples, one positive, one negative. The positive example is Barack Obama’s 2012 campaign for re-election, in which Obama downplayed issues of race and immigration and focused on economic growth and the record of his opponent, Mitt Romney, who had made his fortune in private equity. The negative example is the 2016 presidential election, when Hillary Clinton tried to counter Donald Trump’s racist messaging with her own rhetoric of inclusion, a move that kept race and immigration salient and pushed non-college whites further into the Republican column.

Shor sees the 2020 presidential election, and Trump’s significant gains with Hispanic voters, as another example of what happens when race and racial issues dominate a campaign and its media environment:

“In the summer, following the emergence of ‘defund the police’ as a nationally salient issue, support for Biden among Hispanic voters declined,” Shor said in a March interview with New York magazine. “So I think you can tell this microstory: We raised the salience of an ideologically charged issue that millions of nonwhite voters disagreed with us on. And then, as a result, these conservative Hispanic voters who’d been voting for us despite their ideological inclinations started voting more like conservative whites.”

Here, I should say, I don’t think this analysis is necessarily wrong. Indeed, there is other evidence to prove the point.

[*In a piece*](https://centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/can-democrats-win-back-the-white-working-class/) for the University of Virginia’s Center for Politics (where I am a fellow), the political scientist Alan Abramowitz shows how the “deep political divide between college and non-college white voters in recent elections reflects a deep ideological divide between these two groups.” This class divide, he continues, “appears to have little or nothing to do with economic self-interest and everything to do with the diverging racial attitudes of these two groups.” Racial resentment and party identification, he finds, are by far the strongest predictors of conservative ideology.

Likewise, [*in his Substack newsletter*](https://theliberalpatriot.substack.com/p/the-democrats-hispanic-voter-problem), the demographer Ruy Teixeira unpacks new survey data from the 2020 election to find that “Hispanics opposed defunding the police, decreasing the size of police forces and the scope of their work, and reparations for the descendants of slaves by 2:1 or more.” What’s more, a majority of Hispanic voters hold what political scientists call “racially conservative” views. Specifically, Teixeira writes,

These voters agreed, by 9 points, that racial minorities have mostly fair opportunities to advance in America, by 11 points agreed that America is a fair society where everyone has a chance to get ahead and by 20 points agreed that “Irish, Italian, Jewish, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.”

Take all of this together and you have a pretty clear picture. Democrats’ perceived identification with immigration, racial liberalism and the interests of Black activists has alienated a large cohort of non-college white and Hispanic voters, as well as a smaller (but still meaningful) number of non-college Black voters.

Now is the point where I should show my cards. My problem isn’t this conclusion. If you think, as I do, that anti-Black prejudice plays a large and important part in American politics, then none of this comes as a surprise.

My problem is that I don’t think Shor or his allies are being forthright about what it would actually take to stem the tide and reverse the trend. If anti-Black prejudice is as strong as this analysis implies, then it seems ludicrous to say that Democrats can solve their problem with a simple shift in rhetoric toward their most popular agenda items. The countermessage is easy enough to imagine — some version of “Democrats are not actually going to help you, they are going to help them.”

What might move the needle is what worked for a previous generation of Democrats who fought to align their party with the white mainstream. In the early 1990s, the historian Thomas Sugrue writes in “[*Not Even Past*](https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691137308/not-even-past): Barack Obama and the Burden of Race,” liberal journalists in influential periodicals like The New Republic, The Washington Post and The New York Times argued that “the Democratic Party had lost its appeal on the national level because of backlash against the social programs of the 1960s.” Worse, Democrats had capitulated to “identity politics.”

Here’s Sugrue:

Black power radicals, aided and abetted by white leftists, alienated well-meaning, color-blind, working- and lower-middle-class whites and drove them from the New Deal coalition. The “lesson” from this history was clear: so long as the Democrats were captive to “special interests” (namely, minorities), they would never be a majority party on the presidential level. Democrats, in this view, needed to distance themselves from civil rights activists and flamboyant Black political leaders like New York’s Reverend Al Sharpton and the Reverend Jesse Jackson.

The Democrat who broke the party’s presidential losing streak, Bill Clinton, took these recommendations. He spoke about the party’s most popular policies while also taking every opportunity to show that he was not, and would not be, beholden to the interests of Black Americans. Invited to speak at Jesse Jackson’s Rainbow Coalition conference, Clinton concluded his remarks with a now-notorious denunciation of the rapper and activist Sister Souljah, an attack by proxy on Jackson, who had brought Souljah to the event. Jackson, a two-time candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, was a stand-in for the Black activist class, and Clinton’s audience got the message. “What Clinton got out of the Sister Souljah affair,” [*noted the historian Kenneth O’Reilly*](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Nixon_s_Piano/DREX_t5P7l4C?hl=en&amp;gbpv=1&amp;bsq=%22the%20day%20he%20told%20off%20that%20fucking%20jackson%22), “were votes, particularly the votes of the so-called Reagan Democrats like the North Philadelphia electrician who said ‘the day he told off that [expletive] Jackson is the day he got [mine].’”

In addition to that incident, there was Clinton’s infamous choice to fly to Arkansas, where he still served as governor, to preside at the execution of a mentally impaired Black inmate, Ricky Ray Rector, in a macabre demonstration of his “tough on crime” bona fides.

All of this is to say that if Shor’s analysis is correct, then this is what it could be like to change course. Progressives would complain, as they did in 1992, but — a proponent of this approach might say — Clinton still won 85 percent of the Black vote. And once in office, he would try to reverse course: to moderate and to show his commitment to the people who put him in the White House.

But there is no such thing as idle presidential rhetoric. Having committed himself in word as a candidate to the interests of the white mainstream against Black activists and civil right leaders, Clinton would do the same in deed as president, slashing welfare and funneling billions to prisons and law enforcement as part of a “war on crime.”

Then again, I could be wrong. Perhaps there is a way to stop the bleeding with non-college whites and Hispanics without pandering to the worst forms of racial conservatism. [*There is the “race-class” narrative*](https://www.demos.org/campaign/race-class-narrative-project), which appeals to economic interests while also trying to pre-empt division along racial lines. I can also imagine a version of Barack Obama’s strategy of publicly rebuking some Black leaders and lecturing Black audiences about “respectability.” Black politicians, in fact, might be uniquely positioned to triangulate between the racial liberalism of the Democratic Party’s professional class and the racial conservatism of the voting electorate.

My larger point is that I think this debate needs clarity, and I want Shor and his allies to be much more forthright about the specific tactics they would use and what their strategy would look like in practice.

To me, it seems as if they are talking around the issue rather than being upfront about the path they want to take. There is a template for the kind of politics they want to see from Democratic candidates, and if it isn’t the “Third Way” of Bill Clinton, then they should say what it is.

What I Wrote

I wrote [*one column*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/opinion/joe-manchin-biden.html) this week, on Joe Manchin’s fear of an “entitlement society” and what that could mean:

Indeed, even just using a word like “entitlement” speaks to a particular critique of the welfare state — in particular the view that a capitalist economy will not work without the threat of poverty and immiseration. If the market runs on the promise of reward and mobility, then to reward individuals without work is to undermine the very engine of the American economy.

Now Reading

I recently read [*this 1941 essay*](https://harpers.org/archive/1941/08/who-goes-nazi/) by Dorothy Thompson titled “Who Goes Nazi?” in Harper’s Magazine. You should read it too.

[*Richard Kreitner*](https://www.thenation.com/article/culture/james-oakes-crooked-path/) on abolition and the Constitution in The Nation.

[*Bilge Ebiri*](https://www.vulture.com/2021/10/miami-vices-journey-from-misfire-to-masterpiece.html) on Michael Mann’s “Miami Vice” in New York.

[*Laura Nahmias*](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2021/10/the-forgotten-city-hall-riot.html) on the New York city hall riot of 1992 in New York.

[*Amanda Mull*](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2021/11/free-returns-online-shopping/620169/?utm_source=twitter&amp;utm_medium=social&amp;utm_campaign=share) on clothes, waste and the supply chain in The Atlantic.

Feedback If you’re enjoying what you’re reading, please consider recommending it to your friends. [*They can sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/jamellebouie). If you want to share your thoughts on an item in this week’s newsletter or on the newsletter in general, please email me at [*jamelle-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:jamelle-newsletter@nytimes.com). You can follow me on Twitter ([*@jbouie*](https://twitter.com/jbouie)) and [*Instagram*](https://www.instagram.com/jbouie/).

Photo of the Week

It’s cliché but sometimes I go down to the university here in Charlottesville and photograph the Rotunda. This is one of my better pictures, taken on a [*Yashica-D*](https://camerapedia.fandom.com/wiki/Yashica-D) camera using Cinestill 50d film.

Now Eating: Spicy Butternut Squash Pasta With Spinach

Now, I have not actually made this yet — it’s on the menu for this weekend — but I thought I would share it anyway so that next week, we can compare notes. I will probably go a little heavy on the squash, a little easy on the cheese, and may use frozen spinach instead of fresh just to save time. If you decide to make this recipe (which comes from [*NYT Cooking*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1021535-spicy-butternut-squash-pasta-with-spinach?action=click&amp;module=Collection%20Page%20Recipe%20Card&amp;region=Fall%20Pastas%20You’ll%20Want%20to%20Make%20All%20Season%20Long&amp;pgType=collection&amp;rank=1)), please let me know what you thought and how you changed it!

Ingredients

* kosher salt

1. 3 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for serving
2. 1 medium butternut squash (about 2\xC2 pounds), peeled, seeds removed and cut into \xC2-inch cubes (about 6 cups)
3. 1 tablespoon ground cumin (see Tip)
4. \xC2 teaspoon red-pepper flakes, plus more as needed
5. 1 pound penne or other tubular pasta
6. 1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth (or water)
7. ¾ cup grated Parmesan
8. 3 packed cups baby spinach
9. 1 (8-ounce) ball fresh mozzarella, torn into bite-size chunks
10. 1 jalapeño, sliced into rounds
11. ⅓ cup flat-leaf parsley and tender stems, roughly chopped

Directions

Bring a large covered pot of heavily salted water to a boil.

Meanwhile, in a 12-inch ovenproof skillet with high sides and a tightfitting lid (or a Dutch oven), heat the oil over medium-high until shimmering. Add the squash and season with salt, cumin and red-pepper flakes. Cook, stirring every minute, until squash becomes browned in spots and feels just tender, 6 to 8 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat the oven to 400 degrees. Add the pasta to the boiling water and cook, uncovered, until not quite al dente, 3 to 4 minutes less than the package instructions. (It should be a little too firm to the bite.) Reserve 1 cup of the pasta water and drain. If the pasta is done before the squash, then stir in a drizzle of olive oil so that it doesn’t stick together.

When the squash is just tender, add the broth. Bring to an active simmer, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the squash is soft and easily mashable, 10 to 12 minutes. Turn off the heat, then use a potato masher or the back of a wooden spoon to crush about half of the butternut squash and leave the rest chunky. Season the squash to taste, keeping in mind that salty Parmesan will be added soon.

Add the cooked pasta to the skillet along with 1 cup reserved pasta water and \xC2 cup grated Parmesan, stirring vigorously to combine. Stir in the spinach one handful at a time until it shrinks a little.

Sprinkle the top with the remaining ¼ cup Parmesan, the mozzarella and jalapeño, then place in the oven, on a sheet pan if you are worried about dripping. Cook until the top is melted and browned in spots, 12 to 15 minutes. Drizzle with olive oil, top with parsley and serve.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Steve Liss/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 11, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Once a Janitor, Now the Bar Mitzvah Photography King of Montreal; The Saturday Profile***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64F0-K531-JBG3-60MX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** WORLD; canada

**Length:** 1408 words

**Highlight:** With a touch of chutzpah and “a little help from God,” Braulio Rocha, a Roman Catholic Portuguese immigrant, traded in his mop for a camera.

**Body**

MONTREAL — Braulio Rocha, a Portuguese janitor at a Montreal synagogue, was about to begin his daily floor mopping routine some years ago when he heard a frantic voice: The photographer assigned to shoot a bris, a ritual circumcision, hadn’t shown up, and the baby’s grandmother was panicking.

Mr. Rocha, an amateur photographer, had recently arrived in Canada from Madeira with $50 in savings and a beat-up old Canon camera that he always carried with him in his car. Wearing his gray and blue polyester janitor’s uniform, a long key ring dangling from his pocket, he recalls, he summoned up the courage and asked the forlorn grandmother if he could shoot the baby’s bris — for free.

She agreed, and a new career was born.

Brisses soon led to bar mitzvahs, and six years later, Mr. Rocha, a 45-year-old Roman Catholic, has been called the bar mitzvah photography king of Montreal by rabbis and clients alike.

Mr. Rocha, who had never met a Jew before setting foot in Montreal’s [*Shaar Hashomayim synagogue*](https://www.shaarhashomayim.org/) in 2015, is now so in demand that he sometimes shoots five bar and bat mitzvah ceremonies a week, is booked for bar mitzvahs into 2023, and employs a team of eight assistant photographers. He recently expanded into Hasidic weddings.

He has also traded in his antiquated Canon for a $3,200 model, bought a Volvo SUV, and moved from his cramped apartment into a four-bedroom house in the suburbs, filled with Armani clothing.

“I remember thinking, ‘You’re just a janitor,’” he said on a recent day, recalling his big bris break as he sat in the pews of the synagogue’s imposing sanctuary. “But I said to myself, ‘It’s now or never.’ I guess you could say I’m the Canadian dream.”

Armed with a mix of chutzpah and a passion for photography he inherited from his father, who worked briefly as a photojournalist during [*Angola’s war of independence*](https://www.britannica.com/place/Angola/Independence-and-civil-war) in the 1970s, Mr. Rocha credited Canada’s openness to immigrants for his good fortune.

Shaar Hashomayim, the [*oldest Ashkenazi synagogue in Canada*](http://www2.ville.montreal.qc.ca/archives/500ans/portail_archives_en/rep_chapitre8/chap8_theme2_doc15_page1.html), was founded in 1846, and shaped by immigrants from Europe, among them Lazarus Cohen, whose family went on to create one of Montreal’s [*largest clothing businesses*](http://imjm.ca/location/1080). (Lazarus also happened to be the great-grandfather of [*Leonard Cohen*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/06/arts/music/leonard-cohen-montreal.html), the Montreal-born [*gravelly voiced balladeer*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NGm8z0ykxdU).)

Mr. Rocha said that hearing immigrant success stories like the one about the Cohen family had helped inspire him. “The Jews arrived in North America with nothing in their pockets, some survived genocide, and they rebuilt their lives and became successful,” he said. “I thought to myself: ‘If they did it, so can I.’”

Gideon Zelermyer, the Shaar’s cantor, who hired Mr. Rocha to shoot his son Max’s bar mitzvah, observed that a janitor reinventing himself as a bar mitzvah photography maven in a foreign country is a quintessentially Jewish story.

“There is a virtue in our community of welcoming strangers as we, too, were strangers in a strange land,” he said. “That is the story of Passover. There are times when you have to dust yourself off and move forward with life with a lot of uncertainty, and Braulio embodies that.”

Mr. Zelermyer observed that Mr. Rocha, a Tim Burton fan who likes to re-enact scenes from Hollywood films like the Indiana Jones series and “E.T.” in his bar mitzvah shoots, also stood out because of his flair for the dramatic.

In one of Mr. Rocha’s favorite images in his repertoire, he draws from the [*scene in “Raiders of the Lost Ark”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcR9k8o4I0w) when a shadowy light force emanates from the ark of the covenant and [*smites a group of Nazis*](https://indianajones.fandom.com/wiki/Ark_of_the_Covenant). In his bar mitzvah version, however, Mr. Rocha said, the light envelopes the bar mitzvah boy or bat mitzvah girl and “blesses, protects and guides them.”

“My job is to write with light,” he said, explaining his craft.

The son of a salesman and a hairdresser, Mr. Rocha said his childhood in a ***working-class*** neighborhood of Funchal, Madeira’s picturesque capital, was tumultuous. He said his father, who lost his journalism job after his newspaper shut down, was forced to sell building materials. He put on a suit and tie every day, and went to construction sites, uninvited, to peddle his wares. He was often rebuffed, and he took out his frustration, Mr. Rocha said, by lashing out and throwing plates.

Mr. Rocha’s maternal grandmother is Black, and he said he always felt “different” in majority white Madeira. “Other kids taunted me, ‘Go back to Africa,’” he said. He found refuge taking nature photographs.

His home environment took its toll and Mr. Rocha, once a straight-A student, eventually dropped out of high school, getting a job as a waiter.

“I had zero ambition,” he said. “I was living with my mom. I spent my money on clubbing, girls and going to the gym.”

But he said his life changed forever one late evening in summer 2012 when he was bringing plastic bottles to a recycling bin in back of the restaurant, saw a woman strolling by and raced to intercept her, inviting her to have dinner. Much to his surprise, the woman, Sonia Vieira Ganança, whose family had emigrated from Madeira to Montreal, returned the next day.

The two began dating, kept in touch remotely by Skype after she went home, and six months later, she asked him to move to Canada. He was so broke, he recalled, she paid for the $1,000 plane ticket.

Mr. Rocha suddenly found himself braving a Quebec winter, jobless, isolated and unable to speak French. After an initially rocky adjustment, he proposed to Sonia at a teahouse, hiding a $150 ring in a teacup. He said he found a sense of purpose after Sonia’s aunt, who worked in the Shaar’s kitchen, helped get him the janitor job.

He felt immediately at home at the synagogue, he said, and was particularly drawn by the spiritual meaning of a bar or bat mitzvah, the rite of passage in which a boy or girl affirms a commitment to Judaism. He would sometimes pause from vacuuming to sit in the pews and listen, entranced, to Cantor Zelermyer’s haunting voice singing prayers.

“I am a baptized Catholic, but in a synagogue I feel a very strong connection, something talks to me,” he said.

It was while dusting the pews and observing bar mitzvah photographers at work that the idea first entered his head that photographing bar mitzvahs was his “destiny.”

“I would see the photographers standing too close to the bar mitzvah boy, and the voice in my head would be saying: ‘No, no, no, it’s all wrong. You have God giving you this light, and you aren’t doing anything with it,’” he recalled. “But I was the janitor, so I kept dusting.”

Then came the bris epiphany.

The grandmother was so delighted with the resulting moody, cinematic photos that she paid him $130 for the job, an improvement on his $10-an-hour janitor salary.

Emboldened, Mr. Rocha asked the synagogue’s management if he could shoot other events. Within two years, he was photographing weddings and bar mitzvahs, for as much as $8,000, and, for a while, changing afterward into his janitor’s uniform to scrub toilets. Sometimes he worked such long days he slept on a synagogue pew.

After word spread in the Jewish community about the janitor with the discerning eye, he had so many assignments that he retired his uniform, quitting his janitor job in 2019.

At a recent bar mitzvah photo session, Mr. Rocha effortlessly schmoozed the family and joshed with the pensive bar mitzvah boy to get him to smile. “So your dad doesn’t know that you steal his Scotch, eh?” he asked.

These days, Mr. Rocha, who has a 2-year old daughter, teaches bar mitzvah photography master classes to a 4,300-strong Facebook group. And now, when he enters the Shaar Hashomayim, former colleagues on the janitorial staff quip, “Hey Mr. C.E.O.!”

He feels so connected to Judaism that he considered converting, but has hesitated: “My family is very Catholic and I don’t think they’d be happy.” And old habits persist. Mr. Rocha frequently exclaims, “Jesus Christ, that shot is amazing!” when taking bar mitzvah photos in synagogue.

Whatever his religion, his career move was, in his view, divinely ordained.

“I feel so blessed for everything that has happened,” he said. “I see now that coming to Canada is God’s plan.”

Dan Bilefsky

PHOTOS: Mr. Rocha in Shaar Hashomayim synagogue. He had recently arrived from Portugal when he started working there as a janitor. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NASUNA STUART-ULIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Braulio Rocha sometimes shoots five bar and bat mitzvah ceremonies a week. He has recently expanded into Hasidic weddings. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRAULIO ROCHA)

**Load-Date:** January 4, 2022

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[***Juilliard Students Protest Tuition Increase With Marches and Music***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62WV-XMS1-DXY4-X51S-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Colin Moynihan

**Body**

After occupying parts of the school, some students were barred from entering the building. So they took the demonstration outside.

The Juilliard School, one of the world's leading performing arts conservatories, is better known for recitals than picket lines. But students protesting a planned tuition increase occupied parts of its Lincoln Center campus this week and, when they were later barred from entering a school building, led music- and dance-filled protests on West 65th Street.

The protests began Monday when a group of students, objecting to plans to raise tuition to $51,230 a year from $49,260, occupied parts of the school's Irene Diamond building and posted photos on social media of dozens of sheets of multicolored paper arranged to form the words ''TUITION FREEZE.''

On Wednesday, students said, they received an email from the administration saying that ''school space'' could not be used for nonschool events without permission. ''Posting signage, posters or fliers, tabling in the lobby, solicitation or distributing print materials also requires advance authorization,'' the message added.

Students returned to the Diamond building that day, marching through the halls and stopping outside the door of the school's president, Damian Woetzel. At one point, some said, they knocked on his door, chanting: ''We know you're in there. Will you meet students' needs and freeze tuition?''

Later, protesters said, they were barred from the Diamond building, and the school told them that it was investigating an incident that included reported violations ''pertaining to community safety.'' On Thursday, about 20 students continued their tuition protest on the sidewalk outside, waving placards and accusing the school of using heavy-handed tactics to quell dissent.

''They have made it quite apparent they will not listen to us,'' said Carl Hallberg, an 18-year-old drama student.

Rosalie Contreras, a spokeswoman for Juilliard, wrote in an email that the school was increasing financial aid and raising the minimum wage for work-study jobs on campus to $15 an hour, and that it had special funding available for students experiencing financial hardship.

''Juilliard respects the right of all community members including students to freely express opinions with demonstrations that are conducted in a reasonable time, place and manner,'' Ms. Contreras added. ''Regrettably the demonstration on Wednesday escalated to the point where public safety was called by an employee.''

Both Mr. Hallberg and another student, Gabe Canepa, said they were part of a campus group called the Socialist Penguins, which had called for the protests. They said that they had not jeopardized anyone's safety.

Mr. Canepa, a 19-year-old dance student, added that students took the tuition increase seriously because it meant they would have less to spend on ''rent, groceries, subway fares, supplies we need for school.''

An online petition by the group said that ''raising the already astronomically high cost of tuition'' hurts ***working class*** students. It added: ''We demand that Juilliard cancel their planned tuition raise.''

Students taking part in the protests said that roughly 300 current students, or about 30 percent to a third of those currently enrolled, had signed the petition.

The events at Juilliard this week appear to have been less contentious than school occupations that have taken place elsewhere in Manhattan over the years, including at New York University, Cooper Union and the New School, where police officers wearing helmets and carrying plastic shields arrested people who took over part of the school's Fifth Avenue building in 2009. But the conflict struck a discordant note.

Juilliard is also facing pressure on diversity issues. In May, CBS News quoted a Black student there saying she had been disturbed by an acting workshop in which the class members were asked to pretend they were slaves, as audio of whips, rain and racial slurs was played. Juilliard told CBS that the workshop was a ''mistake'' and that it regretted ''that the workshop caused pain for students.''

After Wednesday's protests, several students said that they had received emails from Sabrina Tanbara, the assistant dean of student affairs, letting them know that their access to the Diamond building had been suspended pending an investigation.

The next day, Juilliard's dean of student development sent an email message to all students that provided some details of what the school was looking into. Referring to the protest on Wednesday afternoon outside the president's office, Barrett Hipes, the dean, wrote: ''Yesterday Public Safety received a report regarding confrontational and intimidating student conduct that caused an administrative assistant who was working alone in an office to become concerned for their own safety.''

Unable to enter the Diamond building on Thursday, the students held a protest outside and encouraged passing motorists to honk their horns in support.

One young man vogued on West 65th Street. Mr. Hallberg strummed a guitar, and another student plucked a standup bass, leading a singalong of the labor standard ''Which Side Are You On?''

Some students said they felt they had been punished without due process.

Sarah Williams, a 19-year-old oboe student, said that she had written to Ms. Tanbara asking what, specifically, she was believed to have done that would justify barring her from the Diamond building. She said she had yet to receive a response.

''My resources have been eliminated without any explanation,'' she said.

Raphael Zimmerman, a 20-year-old clarinet student, said he had received an email from Ms. Tanbara notifying him that he would be contacted to schedule an ''investigatory meeting'' to obtain his account of activity outside the president's office late on Wednesday afternoon.

''I think saying the several minutes we spent knocking on that door and singing was harassment,'' he said, ''is essentially rejecting our right to assemble and demonstrate.''

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Juilliard students protested a planned tuition increase Monday, and expressed anger over the school's response to their concerns. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEENAH MOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 15, 2021

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[***Is It All About ‘Fealty to Trump’s Delusions’? Three Writers Talk About Where the G.O.P. Is Headed.; Round Table***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:662W-3451-JBG3-62TF-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2631 words

**Byline:** Ross Douthat, Rachel Bovard and Tim Miller

**Highlight:** How should we assess the Republican Party?

**Body**

Ross Douthat, a Times Opinion columnist, hosted an online conversation with Rachel Bovard, the policy director at the Conservative Partnership Institute, and Tim Miller, the author of “Why We Did It: A Travelogue From the Republican Road to Hell,” about the recent primaries in Arizona, Michigan and beyond, and the strength of Donald Trump’s hold on the Republican Party.

Ross Douthat: Rachel, Tim, thanks so much for joining me. I’m going to start where we always tend to start in these discussions — with the former president of the United States and his influence over the Republican Party. Donald Trump has had some bad primary nights this year, most notably in May in Georgia.

But overall Tuesday seems like it was a good one for him: In Michigan, his favored candidate [*narrowly beat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/03/us/politics/peter-meijer-michigan.html) Peter Meijer, one of the House Republican votes for impeachment. In the Arizona Republican primary for governor, Kari Lake is narrowly ahead, which would give Trump a big victory in his battle of endorsements against Mike Pence, who endorsed Lake’s main rival.

Do you agree, or is Trump’s influence just the wrong lens through which to be assessing some of these races?

Rachel Bovard: It was a good night for Trump’s endorsements, which remain critical and decisive, particularly when he’s picking candidates who can change the ideological direction of the party. No other major figure in the G.O.P. has shown they can do the same.

Tim Miller: An early agreement! The Republicans put up a slate of “Big Lie” candidates at the top of the ticket in an important swing state last night, which seems pretty important.

Bovard: I would dispute the notion that Arizona represented “a slate of ‘Big Lie’ candidates.”

Miller: Well, Lake has long brought up fraud claims about the 2020 election. Rare potential evidence of the party bucking Trump could come from the [*Third Congressional District*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/08/02/us/elections/results-washington-us-house-district-3.html) in Washington, benefited by a “jungle” primary — candidates for an office, regardless of party, run on the same ballot, and the top two candidates square off in the general election. If the Trump-endorsed candidate loses, it seems a good endorsement for that set up.

Bovard: But the Blake Masters campaign in particular represented a depth of issues that appealed to Arizona voters and could represent a new generation of Republicans.

Douthat: Let’s get into that question a little bit. One of the questions hanging over the phenomenon of Trumper populism is whether it represents any kind of substantial issue-based change in what the G.O.P. stands for, or whether it’s just all about fealty to Trump.

The Masters campaign and the Lake campaign seem to represent different answers to that question — Masters leveraging Trump’s support to try to push the party in a more nationalist or populist direction on trade, foreign policy, family policy, other issues, and Lake just promising to stop the next (alleged) steal. Or do we think that it’s all the same phenomenon underneath?

Bovard: A very significant part of Trump’s appeal, what he perhaps taught the G.O.P., was that he spoke for voters who stood outside of party orthodoxy on a number of issues. And that’s where Masters tried to distinguish himself. He had a provocative campaign message early in his campaign: American families should be able to survive on a single income. That presents all kinds of challenges to standard Republican economic policy, how we think about family policy and how the two fit together. He also seems to be fearless in the culture wars, something else that Republicans are anxious to see.

So this constant distilling into the “Big Lie” overlooks something key: A sea change is slowly happening on the right as it relates to policy expectations.

Miller: But you know who distilled the Masters campaign into the “Big Lie”? Blake Masters. One of his ads [*begins*](https://twitter.com/bgmasters/status/1458110792146952200), “I think Trump won in 2020.” This is an insane view, and I assume none of us think Masters really believes it. So fealty to Trump’s delusions is the opening ante here. Had Masters run a campaign about his niche, Peter Thiel-influenced issue obsessions but said Trump lost and he was harming Republican voters by continuing to delude them about our democracy, he would’ve lost like Rusty Bowers did.

I do think Masters has some differentiated policy ideas that are probably, not certainly, reflective of where the G.O.P. is headed, but that wasn’t the main thing here.

Douthat: So Tim, speaking for the “it’s Trump fealty all the way down” camp, what separates the Arizona results from the very different recent results in Georgia, where Trump fealty was insufficient to defeat either Brian Kemp or even Brad Raffensperger?

Miller: Two things: First, with Kemp, governing actually matters. With incumbents, primaries for governor can be somewhat different because of that. Kemp was Ron DeSantis-esque without the attention in his handling of Covid. (This does not extend all the way to full anti-Trump or Trump-skeptical governors like Larry Hogan of Maryland or Charlie Baker of Massachusetts — Kemp almost never said an ill word about Trump.)

Second, the type of electorate matters. Republican voters actually bucked Trump in another state, my home state, Colorado. What do Georgia and Colorado have in common? Suburban sprawl around a major city that dominates the state and a young, college-educated [*population*](https://www.prb.org/resources/which-us-states-are-the-oldest/).

Douthat: Does that sound right to you, Rachel? And is there anything we aren’t seeing about a candidate like Lake that makes her more than just a stalking horse for Trump’s own obsessions?

Bovard: Tim is right in the sense that there is always nuance when it comes to state elections. That’s why I also don’t see the Washington State primary race as a definitive rejection of Trump, as Tim alluded to earlier. Lake is, as a candidate, bombastic on the election issue.

Miller: “Bombastic” is quite the euphemism for completely insane. Deliberate lies. The same ones that led to the storming of the Capitol.

Bovard: Well, I don’t see that as determining how she governs. She’s got an entire state to manage, if she wins, and there are major issues she’ll have to manage that Trump also spoke to: the border, primarily.

By the way, I regularly meet with Democrats who still tell me the 2018 election was stolen, and Stacey Abrams is the rightful governor of Georgia, so I’m not as pearl clutchy about it, no.

Miller: “Pearl clutchy” is quite a way to describe a lie that has infected tens of millions of people, resulted in multiple deaths and the imprisonment of some of Trump’s most loyal supporters. I thought the populists were supposed to care about these people, but I guess worrying about their lives being ruined is just a little “pearl clutching.”

Bovard: I know we don’t want to relitigate the entirety of Jan. 6, so I’ll just say I do worry about people’s lives being ruined. And the Jan. 6 Select Committee has further entrenched the divide that exists over this.

Douthat: I’m going to enforce a pivot here, while using my moderator’s power to stipulate that I think Trump’s stolen-election narrative has been more destructive than the left’s Abrams-won-Georgia narrative or the “Diebold stole Ohio” narrative in 2004.

If Lake wins her primary, can she win the general-election race? Can Doug Mastriano win in Pennsylvania? To what extent are we watching a replay of certain Republican campaigns in 2010 — long before Trump, it’s worth noting — where the party threw away winnable seats by nominating perceived extremists?

Bovard: A key for G.O.P. candidates going forward is to embrace both elements of the cultural and economic argument. For a long time in the party these were seen as mutually exclusive, and post-Trump, I don’t think they are anymore. Glenn Youngkin won in Virginia in part by embracing ***working-class*** economic issues — leaning into repeal of the grocery tax, for example — and then pushing hard against critical race theory. He didn’t surge on economics alone.

Douthat: Right, but Youngkin also did not have to run a primary campaign so deeply entangled with Trump. There’s clearly a sweet spot for the G.O.P. to run as economic moderates or populists and anti-woke fighters right now, but can a figure like Lake manage that in a general election? We don’t even know yet if Masters or J.D. Vance, who both explicitly want to claim that space, can grab it after their efforts to earn Trump’s favor.

Tim, can these candidates win?

Miller: Of course they can win. Midterm elections have historically washed in candidates far more unlikely than nominees like Masters (and Lake, if she is the nominee) or Mastriano from tossup swing states. Lake in particular, with her history in local news, would probably have some appeal to voters who have a personal affinity for her outside the MAGA base. Mastriano might be a slightly tougher sell, given his brand, vibe and Oath Keeper energy.

Bovard: It’s long been conventional wisdom that you tack to the right in primaries and then move more to the center in the general, so if Lake wins, she will have to find a message that appeals to as many voters as possible. She would have to present a broad spectrum of policy priorities. The G.O.P. as a voting bloc has changed. Its voters are actively iterating on all of this, so previous assumptions about what appeals to voters don’t hold up as well. I tend to think there’s a lane for Trump-endorsed candidates who lean into the Trump-style economics and key culture fights.

Miller: I just want to say here that I do get pissed about the notion that it’s us, the Never Trumpers, who are obsessed with litigating Jan. 6. Pennsylvania is a critical state that now has a nominee for governor who won because of his fealty to this lie, could win the general election and could put his finger on the scale in 2024. The same may be true in another key state, Arizona. This is a red-level threat for our democracy.

A lot of Republicans in Washington, D.C., want to sort of brush it away just like they brushed away the threat before Jan. 6, because it’s inconvenient.

Douthat: Let me frame that D.C. Republican objection a different way: If this is a red-level threat for our democracy, why aren’t Democrats acting like it? Why did Democratic Party money enter so many of these races on behalf of the more extreme, stop-the-steal Republican? For example, given the closeness of the race, that sort of tactic quite possibly helped defeat Meijer in Michigan.

Miller: Give me a break. The ads from the left trying to tilt the races were stupid and frankly unpatriotic. I have [*spoken out*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4WWzPp2q4Y0) about this before. But it’s not the Democrats who are electing these insane people. Were the Democrats responsible for Mark Finchem? Mehmet Oz? Herschel Walker? Mastriano won by over 20 points. This is what Republican voters want.

Also, advertising is a two-way street. If all these self-righteous Republicans were so angry about the ads designed to promote John Gibbs, they could’ve run pro-Meijer ads! Where was Kevin McCarthy defending his member? He was in Florida shining Mr. Trump’s shoes.

Douthat: Rachel, I watched that Masters [*ad*](https://twitter.com/bgmasters/status/1458110792146952200?lang=en) that Tim mentioned and listened to his rhetoric around the 2020 election, and it seemed like he was trying to finesse things, make an argument that the 2020 election somehow wasn’t fair in the way it was administered and covered by the press without going the Sidney Powell route to pure conspiracism.

But let’s take Masters’s spirit of generalized mistrust and reverse its direction: If you were an Arizona Democrat, why would you trust a Governor Lake or a Secretary of State Mark Finchem to fairly administer the 2024 election?

Bovard: Honestly, the thing that concerns me most is that there is zero trust at all on elections at this moment. If I’m a Democrat, I don’t trust the Republicans, and vice versa. Part of that lack of trust is that we aren’t even allowed to question elections anymore — as Masters did, to your point, without going full conspiracy.

We regain trust by actually allowing questions and full transparency. This is one of the things that worries me about our political system. Without any kind of institutional trust, or trust of one another, there’s a breakdown.

Miller: This is preposterous. Arizona had several reviews of their election. The people lying about the election are the problem.

Douthat: Last questions: What do you think are the implications of the big pro-life defeat in the Kansas abortion referendum, for either abortion policy or the November elections?

Bovard: It shows two headwinds that the pro-life movement is up against. First is money. Reporting [*shows*](https://flatlandkc.org/news-issues/follow-the-money-who-is-funding-kansas-abortion-amendment-ads/) that pro-abortion advocates spent millions against the amendment, and Democrats in many key races across the country are [*outpacing*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/07/21/gops-2022-small-dollar-fundraising-sputters-democrats-lead-grows/) Republicans in fund-raising. Second, it reflects the confusion that exists around this issue post-Roe. The question presented to Kansas voters was a microcosm of the general question in Roe: Should abortion be removed from the state Constitution and be put in the hands of democratically elected officials? Yet it was sometimes presented as a binary choice between a ban or no ban. ([*This early headline*](https://web.archive.org/web/20220803032237/https://www.politico.com/news/2022/08/02/kansas-voters-block-effort-to-ban-abortion-in-state-constitutional-amendment-vote-00049442) from Politico is an example: “Kansas voters block effort to ban abortion in state constitutional amendment vote.”)

But I don’t think it moves the needle on the midterms.

Miller: I view it slightly differently. I think most voters are in a big middle that Republicans could even use to their advantage if they didn’t run to the extremes. Voters do not want blanket abortion bans or anything that can be construed as such. Something that moved the status quo significantly to the pro-life right but still maintained exceptions and abortion up to a certain, reasonable point in pregnancy would be politically palatable.

So this will only be an effective issue for Democrats in turnout and in places where Republicans let them make it an issue by going too far to the extreme.

Douthat: Finally, a different short-answer question for you both. Rachel, say Masters and Vance are both in the Senate in 2023 as spokesmen for this new culturally conservative economic populism you favor. What’s the first bill they co-sponsor?

Bovard: I’d say a large tax on university endowments.

Douthat: Tim, adding the evidence of last night to the narrative, can Ron DeSantis (or anyone else, but let’s be honest, there isn’t anyone else) beat Trump in a Republican primary in 2024?

Miller: Sad to end with a wishy-washy pundit answer but … maybe! Trump seems to have a plurality right now within the party on 2024, and many Republicans have an affinity for him. So if it were Mike Pence, Chris Christie or Liz Cheney, they would have no chance.

Could DeSantis thread a needle and present himself as a more electable Trump? Some of the [*focus groups*](https://www.thebulwark.com/republicans-explain-why-theyre-cooling-on-trump/) The Bulwark does makes it seem like that’s possible. But will he withstand the bright lights and be able to pull it off? Will Trump be indicted? A lot of known unknowns. I’d put DeSantis as an underdog, but it’s not impossible that he could pull it off.

Douthat: There is absolutely no shame in the wishy-washy pundit game. Thanks so much to you both for joining me.

Ross Douthat is a Times Opinion columnist. Rachel Bovard is the policy director at the Conservative Partnership Institute and a tech columnist at The Federalist. Tim Miller, a writer at The Bulwark, is the author of “[*Why We Did It*](https://www.harpercollins.com/products/why-we-did-it-tim-miller?variant=40138691018786): A Travelogue From the Republican Road to Hell.”

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[***Long Way Down***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:642Y-BSP1-DXY4-X4YB-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 42; NONFICTION

**Length:** 1356 words

**Byline:** By Roberto Lovato

**Body**

CONCEPCIONAn Immigrant Family's FortunesBy Albert Samaha

Albert Samaha's memoir, ''Concepcion: An Immigrant Family's Fortunes,'' stirred middle school memories of my immigrant friend André. André was a short, dark, pugnacious kid who, after breaking my nose on a basketball court, introduced me to the martial art of Filipino cussing. Like a Pinoy Prospero shipwrecked on San Francisco shores by the violent undulations of global history, André taught me to curse like Caliban, combining ''putang,'' a variation on the Spanish word for prostitute, with ''ina mo,'' a Tagalog phrase for ''your mother'' that jingled in my adolescent ears like the English ''eenie meenie miney mo.''

Though we shared Spanish words and ***working-class*** roots, André and I had no clue how our family stories echoed the ebb and tide of empires, ancient and modern. Different factors -- the profitable tropicalization of our experiences by the media, the daunting challenges of tying imperial forces to personal history, the fear and shame that self-censor us into silence about difficult truths in our families -- prevent many a diasporic writer from telling these urgently needed stories. Last year, in her prizewinning essay collection ''Minor Feelings,'' Cathy Park Hong decried this gap in literature, noting, for example, how Asian American family stories too often ''set trauma in a distant mother country or within an insular Asian family to ensure that their pain is not a reproof against American imperial geopolitics or domestic racism.'' The ''outlying forces that cause their pain,'' Park wrote, ''are remote enough to allow everyone, including the reader, off the hook.''

''Concepcion'' puts us forcefully and unapologetically on the hook of U.S. imperial history and its role in shaping Filipino and American identity -- and never lets us off. Samaha, a former defensive back at the University of San Diego raised by a Filipino mother, makes his offensive posture clear early on: ''For generations, my ancestors navigated the wakes of distant empires, adapting to distant whims, imprinted with the knowledge that their homeland served the needs of distant people, stuck on the wrong side of the colonized world until America invited us in. It seemed intuitive to me that as outsiders we had to pay an entry fee, prove ourselves worthy additions to the empire, deserving the comforts it boasted.''

Taking us far from the boorish anti-imperialist cursing of a schoolyard Caliban, ''Concepcion'' tells a sophisticated tale. Samaha, a journalist who now works as the inequality editor at BuzzFeed, combines meticulous research into the epic of Spanish, U.S. and other great powers' colonization of the Philippines with the more intimate story of his mother's family, the Concepcions, with whom he grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area.

To construct the grand narrative canal connecting the sea of global history to the river of family history, Samaha adopts a nonlinear approach, moving back and forth across time and space in each chapter. In one, for example, a retelling of Ferdinand Magellan's fateful ''discovery'' of the Philippine archipelago in 1521 flows into the contemporary migration story of his uncle Spanky. Spanky, Samaha tells us, was a popular ''rock star'' who entertained both adoring fans and the U.S.-backed dictator Ferdinand Marcos, who ruled over them in Manila, before migrating to join his family in California, where he worked as a baggage handler at the San Francisco airport.

The account of Spanky's dive from fame and fortune to a déclassé life as an airport worker is one of several such tales in Samaha's book, object lessons about the ''height of the climb and the length of the fall'' for the once-elite Concepcion family, as they pursue the American dream -- a concept, he notes, that may be ''outdated'' but nevertheless endures.

At the bighearted center of ''Concepcion'' is Samaha's desire ''to honor my elders who built the foundation I was born onto, and to offer an account of their journeys for the historical record.'' Here he succeeds ably, putting a human face and history on a huge, but mostly faceless community largely left out of the Asian American canon and U.S. literature generally.

Samaha's remedy to the endemic erasure of the Filipino diaspora -- the fourth-largest in the United States, he reminds us -- involves recounting fascinating stories, like that of his great-aunt Caridad, a student who became a spy for the Allies in Manila during World War II. In one especially poignant episode reflecting the deep roots of the anti-imperialist struggle in the Philippines, a Japanese soldier threatens to swipe at Caridad's head with his sword because he suspects her of collecting information about the American P.O.W.s to whom she is delivering food (as well as, secretly, letters, medicine and updates on the state of the war). ''Caridad kept cool,'' Samaha tells us, because ''she had imagined this moment, prepared for it as keenly as she studied for exams or brushed her loose curls before dances. For centuries her ancestors had dealt with colonizers, studied their desires and prejudices, and learned survival tactics they passed on through generations.''

''Concepcion'' also raises the galling legacy of empire that has moved some of our relatives to gush over and vote for a strongman like Donald Trump, despite his poisonous racism. Samaha portrays the complicated nature of his mother Lucy's Trumpismo in scenes between the two that open and conclude the book. Lucy raised Samaha alone while working at numerous jobs to pursue her version of the American dream: ''the best education I can give to my son.'' Samaha clearly loves his deeply religious mother, but frequently runs up against her ''impenetrable fortress of circular logic'' in some of the book's most compelling episodes. ''Concepcion'' invites us into the family's living room conversation in the industrial suburb of Vallejo. In the process, we become privy to the manner in which two separate but linked political phenomena -- the colonial history of the Philippines and the resurgence of the radical right in the United States -- act as a vise grip on the hearts and minds of our relatives who support extremists like Trump. A similar logic, we're told, leads other family members to join Samaha's uncle Pepo in supporting Rodrigo Duterte, the famously brutal Philippine dictator who once told soldiers to shoot female rebels ''in the vagina.''

''Concepcion'' is at its best when it shares the lessons Filipinos have to teach those of us grappling with life in a kingdom of the north whose growing divisions between rich and poor, and politics of extremism, increasingly resemble those it fostered and still supports in the global south.

In places, Samaha's passion for history on an epic scale overwhelms his more intimate family story, slowing his narrative and diluting its emotional heft. His book left me wanting more of the dramatic yet homey scenes featuring him and his mother, and more of the very physical but politically subtle storytelling that characterizes other recent narratives of Filipino American experience, including Grace Talusan's memoir ''The Body Papers'' and Elaine Castillo's novel ''America Is Not the Heart.'' In ''Concepcion,'' summary sometimes occupies the spaces where scenes and dialogue might have been more elucidating. In the parts of the book where Samaha does deploy these tools, the important issues he explores -- migration, racism, colonialism, identity -- burrow into us, making vivid the contradictions that define us.

Samaha is to be admired for taking on the exceptionally difficult task of navigating the abyss of imperial history in order to make clear its invisible but destiny-altering pull on all of us. ''Concepcion'' does for readers what André did for me, teaching us to curse at empire but with the one-two punch of epic and intimate history.Roberto Lovato is a journalist and the author of ''Unforgetting: A Memoir of Family, Migration, Gangs, and Revolution in the Americas.''CONCEPCIONAn Immigrant Family's FortunesBy Albert Samaha384 pp. Riverhead. $28.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/books/review/concepcion-albert-samaha.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/books/review/concepcion-albert-samaha.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Albert Samaha and his mother in December 2004. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA ALBERT SAMAHA)

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[***The Power of Community***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:642Y-BSP1-DXY4-X4YP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Matt de la Peña

**Body**

BRIGHT STARWritten and illustrated by Yuyi Morales

MY TWO BORDER TOWNSWritten by David BowlesIllustrated by Erika Meza

THE WELCOME CHAIRWritten by Rosemary WellsIllustrated by Jerry Pinkney

DREAM STREETWritten by Tricia Elam WalkerIllustrated by Ekua Holmes

We are living in a time of great polarization. We watch this cable news show or that one. We live on one side of the tracks or the other. We scowl at the unmasked parent at the playground or the parent wearing the N95-face-shield combo. Sometimes it seems we are so consumed with what separates us, what counts as a political or ideological win or loss, we forget to celebrate all that we have in common. Not even a global pandemic has changed this. Thankfully, four wonderful new picture books have come along that artfully acknowledge the impact of barriers but ultimately shine their light on the power of compassion, generosity and community.

''Bright Star,'' which might be the Caldecott honoree Yuyi Morales's best book yet, opens with an omniscient parental narrator proclaiming, ''Child, you are awake. Breathe in, then breathe out, hermosa creatura. You are alive!''

We see a fawn curled in a ball, eyes just having opened to a new life. When it stands in the next spread, Mom is there with a loving gesture that sets in motion a profound journey, told in a pleasing blend of Spanish and English, through the wonders of a desert landscape. Make no mistake, there are dangers here. But in the midst of darkness the fawn is encouraged to ''Shout it loud! Let the world know how you feel!'' In the accompanying art, it butts up against a menacing wall topped with barbed wire.

The critique is obvious, but Morales resists moral lecturing. Instead, she focuses on what positive new story might bloom in such a complicated context. In an especially stirring sequence, the fawn, staring directly at the reader, is replaced by a young girl, who also stares at the reader. On the following page she is joined by several other humans of varying ages. Morales dares us to look away, dares us not to acknowledge their humanity. ''Bright Star,'' which was simultaneously published in an all-Spanish version called ''Lucero,'' does what very few picture books can do: captivate a child while moving the adult who is reading to her.

We encounter a physical barrier again in ''My Two Border Towns,'' beautifully written by David Bowles, with vibrant illustrations by Erika Meza. In this case, however, our unnamed child narrator is able to pass through the border with little difficulty, because he and his father have U.S. passports, ''cards that give us the freedom to travel back and forth.''

While the setting in ''Bright Star'' is never specifically stated, in ''My Two Border Towns'' we know that the main character lives with his family in Texas, and that every other Saturday he and his father travel to ''el Otro Lado'' to run errands. Just before the border checkpoint, our narrator is reminded that ''Coahuiltecans once lived here, before all this was Mexico -- both riverbanks.'' Now there are two countries and they must pay to cross. This sets up one of the central themes of the book, handled masterfully by both Bowles and Meza. The ***working-class*** neighborhoods on either side of the border are mirror images of each other. Spanish is the predominant language. The streets are teeming with life and there is a powerful sense of community. Father and son are just as at home in Mexico -- grabbing breakfast at a favorite restaurant, weaving through vendor stalls, playing soccer in a vacant lot, picking up various items from local shops.

This alone would make for an evocative and relevant story, but Bowles has one final turn for us. As the father and son are waiting to cross back into America, we discover that one of the purposes of their trip is to provide goods for refugee families from the Caribbean and Central America -- people who are stuck between countries. Our narrator hops out of the idling car and visits with his friends, sharing comics and foods and medicines. The story closes with his longing for a day when they can pass back and forth between countries the way he can. ''My Two Border Towns'' is a sophisticated, heartfelt look at what life is like in the shadow of the border.

In ''The Welcome Chair,'' written by Rosemary Wells and illustrated by Jerry Pinkney, who died in October, the camera is pulled back so that we can take a more comprehensive, generational look at immigration in America. This is a wildly ambitious story, inspired by Wells's own family legends, as well as by her immigrant father's belief that ''America's door is open to suffering people from foreign lands.''

In the early 1800s, Wells's great-great-grandfather, a woodworker, leaves Bavaria to escape mounting pressure to become a rabbi like his father and grandfather. After arriving in New York, he finds work as a bookkeeper and an apprentice carpenter. When he makes a cherrywood rocking chair for his employers' new child, carving the German word ''Willkommen'' into it, the story commences.

As we watch the welcome chair pass from family to family, it becomes the backbone of the narrative, accompanied by vignettes exploring different communities and the fabric of America. Along the way, the word ''welcome'' is carved into the chair in many different languages, including Hebrew, English, Irish, Spanish and Haitian Creole. But it's Pinkney's intricate watercolor illustrations that truly bring the chair, the characters and an ever-changing America to life.

While ''The Welcome Chair'' casts a wide geographic and temporal net -- which can sometimes leave readers feeling spread thin -- the stunning ''Dream Street,'' written by Tricia Elam Walker and illustrated by Ekua Holmes, focuses on a single avenue in a special neighborhood. We get to know this dynamic Black community by getting to know some of the people who live on Dream Street.

There's stylish Mr. Sidney, a former mail carrier, who spends his mornings reading the newspaper on his stoop. He ''tips his big brown fedora and greets everyone with, 'Don't wait to have a great day. Create one.''' There's quiet Zion, a boy who spends his days in the library working his way through ''skyscraper-tall piles of books that take him on adventures around the world.'' He dreams of becoming a librarian. The Phillips family has five boys, all named after jazz musicians. On Sundays before church, their father ''lines them up on the front porch for inspection, from hats down to shined shoes.''

Walker's poetic text dances across the page and Holmes's striking collage portraits are filled with joy. Simply put, ''Dream Street'' is a triumph. Like the street itself, this book is a place where a child reader, or any reader, ''can become whatever and whoever they want, because their dreams are nourished and cared for.''

As Rudine Sims Bishop noted in her groundbreaking 1990 article, ''Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors,'' it is powerful and validating to see one's life and community reflected in a book. But it is just as essential that books provide readers with a glimpse into the lives of others. In the past, these four picture books might have been set aside for young readers who could identify with the characters and communities reflected in the stories. My hope is that today they will be celebrated by all readers.Matt de la Peña is the Newbery Medal-winning author of seven young adult novels and five picture books.BRIGHT STARWritten and illustrated by Yuyi Morales40 pp. Neal Porter/Holiday House. $18.99.(Ages 4 to 8)MY TWO BORDER TOWNSWritten by David Bowles Illustrated by Erika Meza40 pp. Kokila. $17.99.(Ages 4 to 8)THE WELCOME CHAIRWritten by Rosemary Wells Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney40 pp. Paula Wiseman/Simon & Schuster. $17.99.(Ages 4 to 8)DREAM STREETWritten by Tricia Elam Walker Illustrated by Ekua Holmes32 pp. Anne Schwartz. $17.99.(Ages 4 to 8)

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/12/books/review/yuyi-morales-bright-star.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/12/books/review/yuyi-morales-bright-star.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: From left: ''Bright Star''

''The Welcome Chair.'' (BR20)

From above: ''Dream Street''

''My Two Border Towns.'' (BR21)

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[***Why the New Child Tax Credit Is More Likely to Be Spent on Children***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:635S-9MM1-JBG3-601S-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Claire Cain Miller

**Body**

Money seems different when it shows up regularly, influencing not only how people use it, but also how they think about government aid.

Hundreds of dollars began arriving in parents' bank accounts Thursday, as the first installment of the Biden administration's monthly child tax credit. Compared with programs that require a lot of paperwork or happen only at tax time, it was hard to deny the power of government assistance in the form of a direct deposit.

It offers a psychology lesson that could inform public policy. Sending people money on a regular basis -- no paperwork to file, no strings attached -- achieves policy goals, and perhaps political ones, too. It's a powerful way to make people aware of exactly what the government is doing for them.

President Biden emphasized that aspect in a speech Thursday: ''We're proving that democracy can deliver for people, and deliver in a timely way.''

The simplicity of direct deposit -- the new credit is $300 per child under 6, and $250 per child from 6 through 17 -- is a major reversal from most safety net programs, which have work requirements and other hurdles and oblige recipients to navigate a complicated bureaucracy. (People who don't use direct deposit for their taxes are receiving checks; those who don't file taxes can sign up for the credit online.)

Also, money labeled for children -- the deposit that arrived in parents' bank accounts Thursday was called CHILD CTC -- is more likely to be spent on children, research shows. The previous child tax credit was one of many payments and credits folded into a final tax number each April, so it was easy for taxpayers to lose track of a credit meant for children.

An influential study on a child allowance sent to mothers in Britain in the 1970s found that unlike previous benefits not designated for children, it was more likely to be spent on things like clothing and toys for children. Other studies suggest that when mothers are given money, they are likely to spend it on food and other necessities for their children.

Also, labeling the purpose of the money guides people on how to spend it. The behavioral economist Richard Thaler described in 1985 the ways in which people keep mental accounts, allocating money for different purposes, even though this ''violates the economic principle of fungibility'' -- the idea that money is interchangeable. People tend to use monthly payments for daily expenses and lump sums for long-term investments, like education or a car, said H. Luke Shaefer, a professor of social work studying antipoverty policy at the University of Michigan.

Although the new tax credit is a large increase for low earners, higher earners end up receiving the same amount annually that they would have in previous years -- with half of it coming earlier in monthly installments. Still, it's likely to make a difference in what they do with it, researchers said.

''I'm an economist, so I would say money is fungible and aren't people funny being tricked by this?'' said Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach, who studies child poverty and policy at Northwestern. ''But that's how people work. You sort of have your mental accounts -- this is money I spend on food, this is money for the kids.''

A policy goal of the tax credit is to slash child poverty, and direct monthly payments have the biggest effect on the poorest families. The poorest third of children were excluded from the previous child tax credit because their parents didn't pay income taxes, and even for those who received it, a once-a-year tax refund did not help in an efficient way with daily expenses like food, child care and rent.

Since the last major changes to family welfare policy in the 1990s, and especially during the pandemic, there has been a much greater realization that families' income is rarely stable over time. People across income levels go in and out of financial stability and employment.

''When we load up so much of our aid in an annual big refund, it means so many of our families are going into the red by the end of the year,'' Professor Shaefer said. ''We used to think about poverty in the United States as static -- your income is below the poverty line -- but people's lives are very volatile.''

Politically, the more universal a program is, the more buy-in it has, because the money isn't benefiting just some people, and there is no stigma attached. Nearly nine in 10 American families qualify -- all but the richest.

Also, automatic monthly payments are a recurring reminder of government support. Both parties became more willing to send unconditional checks during the pandemic, and to seek credit for it. President Trump made sure his name was on stimulus checks, and President Biden sent letters to each family receiving the child benefit.

It's a sharp contrast with President Obama's 2009 tax cut, in which he decreased the taxes withheld from people's paychecks so they took home more money -- but they didn't necessarily realize it or give him political credit.

''I think Democrats learned their lesson under Obama,'' said Samuel Hammond, director of poverty and welfare policy at the Niskanen Center. ''Quietly reducing people's taxes may be based in theory, but doesn't win you any political favors. Democrats are very aware that the saliency of this policy will help remind voters that Democratic governments help ordinary people.''

Republican voters, generally proponents of small government, seemed as excited as anyone else to have the credit hit their bank accounts, he said. And Republican lawmakers, with a few exceptions, were mostly quiet about the policy. It reflects a growing split between social conservatives, who are increasingly open to the government financially supporting families, and economic conservatives, who prioritize limiting government spending.

Many of today's ***working-class***, socially conservative and religious Republican voters aren't as concerned about free-market economics, Mr. Hammond said. They want strong families and are likelier to favor direct payments that people can spend as they wish, rather than to support policies with more governmental involvement, like universal child care. Widespread support may also make the child credit, which is only for 2021, harder to reverse from a political perspective.

Helping families is an uncontroversial policy goal, researchers said, but there's less agreement on how to do it. In this case, the government is betting that the simplest answer -- appealing to people's satisfaction at money appearing in their bank accounts -- may be the most effective.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/16/upshot/child-tax-credit-spending.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/16/upshot/child-tax-credit-spending.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The new monthly credit is $300 per child under age 6, and $250 per child from 6 through 17, for all but the wealthiest families. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Benjamin Norman for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***The Least for Those Who Need It Most***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61JB-R771-DXY4-X1DJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1658 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** And what else you need to know today.

**Body**

And what else you need to know today.

Want to get The Morning by email? [*Here’s the sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Good morning. Today, we focus on the back story behind this week’s huge philanthropic gifts.

Alcorn State University, Santa Fe College and West Kentucky Community and Technical College are all ***working-class*** colleges. Most of their students are lower-income, and many are trying to become [*the first member*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of their family to earn a college degree.

If you spend time on any of these campuses, you are likely to come away feeling inspired. The students have often endured hardship — like a dysfunctional high school, an abusive relationship or wartime military service — and figured out how to keep going.

You may also notice something else: The colleges trying to educate these students are doing so [*on a shoestring budget*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

West Kentucky spends $7,200 annually per student on education — money that needs to cover the salaries of professors and support staff, as well as labs and other educational resources. Alcorn State (in Mississippi) and Santa Fe (in Florida) each spend less than $14,000. So does Borough of Manhattan Community College, in New York.

Want to guess how much money Ivy League colleges spend on education per student each year? About $100,000 on average, according to [*a report by Third Way*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). Elite public universities often spend more than $30,000.

These funding gaps [*exacerbate*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) both economic and racial inequality. “The dollars don’t go to the people who truly need it,” Jeff Strohl, of Georgetown University’s Center on Education and the Workforce, told me. Without enough resources, ***working-class*** colleges tend to have [*low graduation rates*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). Many of their students [*struggle to find good-paying jobs*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) and to repay their college loans.

As inspiring as the students at a place like Alcorn State may be, they can’t overcome every obstacle put in their path.

This week, the philanthropist [*MacKenzie Scott*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) — who helped shape Amazon, during the years she was married to Jeff Bezos — [*announced*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) that she had given away more than $4 billion, mostly to organizations focused on economic hardship. “This pandemic has been a wrecking ball in the lives of Americans already struggling,” [*Scott wrote on Medium*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Scott’s 384 recipients included 36 colleges, all with large numbers of lower-income students. The four colleges I mentioned above are on the list. In some cases, the gifts are [*the largest*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) that the colleges have received.

“I was stunned,” Ruth Simmons, the president of Prairie View A&amp;M, a historically Black university in Texas, [*told my colleague Anemona Hartocollis*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). When Simmons heard in a phone call that the gift would be $50 million, she wasn’t sure she had heard correctly. The caller had to clarify: “five-zero.”

Higher education experts are praising Scott for giving money to the colleges that need it the most, rather than to colleges that already have the most. Strohl called her choice of recipients “brilliant.”

But the experts are also careful to add another point: Scott’s gifts are not nearly large enough to erase the annual funding gaps created by the government. Her donations will make a difference in part because the problem they’re trying to address is so severe. The country’s higher education system often hampers upward mobility.

THE LATEST NEWS

The Virus

* The F.D.A. could [*approve Moderna’s vaccine*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) today. Moderna’s vaccine can be stored in normal freezers, making it easier to ship than Pfizer’s, which needs ultracold storage.

1. As Singapore eases virus restrictions, low-wage migrant workers [*continue to be mostly confined*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to dormitories. The government’s handling of the outbreak has renewed questions about how the country treats its foreign workers.
2. The Supreme Court [*refused to exempt*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) religious schools in Kentucky from an order that temporarily shut down schools, whether public or private, to curb the spread of the virus.
3. Representative Cedric Richmond of Louisiana, one of President-elect Joe Biden’s closest advisers, [*tested positive*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
4. Benny Napoleon, a longtime sheriff in Michigan and a former Detroit police chief, [*died from Covid complications at 65*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
5. Millions of Americans dropped out of the labor force during the first two months of the pandemic. Many have not returned. [*These nine charts show*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) how the economy is faring.

Politics

* Biden [*picked Representative Deb Haaland*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of New Mexico to lead the Interior Department, which oversees 500 million acres of public lands. Haaland, a progressive who endorsed Elizabeth Warren, would be the first Native American to lead a cabinet agency.

1. And Biden will nominate [*Michael Regan*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), North Carolina’s top environmental regulator, to lead the Environmental Protection Agency.

* Lawmakers [*are continuing to finalize*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) a $900 billion stimulus package. Democrats worked to include more emergency aid to states while Republicans moved to prevent the Federal Reserve from restarting loan programs.

Other Big Stories

* Biden [*said he would impose*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) “substantial costs” on the parties responsible for the recent hack of the U.S. government — presumably a Russian intelligence agency.

1. Prosecutors in 38 states and territories [*accused Google*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of illegally arranging its search results to push out smaller rivals. It’s the third major antitrust suit against the company in the past few months.
2. In a rare public appearance, two members of the billionaire Sackler family that owns the maker of OxyContin, [*denied personal responsibility*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) for the opioid epidemic.
3. More than 300 Nigerian schoolboys [*were released*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), six days after armed men abducted them.

* Robinhood, a stock-trading app that has attracted millions of young users, agreed to pay a [*$65 million fine*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to settle charges from the Securities and Exchange Commission that it had misled customers.

1. A Swiss court [*cut Russia’s four-year doping ban*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) from global sports in half. Russia’s teams will still miss the 2021 and 2022 Olympics.

Morning Reads

Good Spirits: How do you make Chartreuse? [*Only two people know*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) the full recipe for the French liquor — and they’re not talking.

From Opinion: A single shot of the Covid-19 vaccines, rather than the planned two doses, may protect people, potentially doubling the number of people who can be immunized, [*Zeynep Tufekci and Michael Mina argue*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Lives Lived: The composer Harold Budd was initially drawn to experimental musical styles like free jazz and early minimalism. He later broke with them to create a signature, piano-centric sound that first drew wide notice on his 1978 album, “The Pavilion of Dreams.” [*Budd died*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), from complications of the coronavirus, at 84.

The Times now offers a personalized update on coronavirus numbers. [*Click here to pick the locations you care about*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) and sign up for the email, and each morning we’ll send you the latest data.

ARTS AND IDEAS

Beyond ‘coming out’

Last month, Hulu released one of the first major Christmas movies about a same-sex couple, “Happiest Season.” The movie [*broke records*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) on the platform and received largely [*positive reviews*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) from critics. It also reopened a [*longtime*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) [*debate*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) about L.G.B.T.Q. representation: Why are queer stories in Hollywood so often about coming out?

In “Happiest Season,” Abby (played by Kristen Stewart) goes to the family home of her girlfriend, Harper (played by Mackenzie Davis), for Christmas. Harper’s family doesn’t know she is gay, and the movie centers on hiding this.

“There are ways to make the coming-out experience feel modern,” [*Michael Cuby wrote in the online magazine Them.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) “Throwing Kristen Stewart into a cupboard with a Roomba just so she can be found by someone who winkingly asks, ‘Abby, what are you doing in the closet?’ is certainly not one.”

At the same time, with few mainstream queer movies available, the pressures on such films are large. “I think that no matter what it did, people were going to be disappointed that it wasn’t doing something else,” Lena Wilson, who has written about film and L.G.B.T.Q. issues for The Times, said.

But the situation may slowly be changing. “Happiest Season” is one of at least six [*holiday movies with gay or lesbian leads*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) this year. As Sarah Kate Ellis, the chief executive of GLAAD, put it, “When you start to see the quantity rise, then you can have various storylines that show the different aspects and agency of the L.G.B.T.Q. community.”

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

For a weekend project, try [*Samin Nosrat’s lasagna.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)

What to Listen to

Here are this year’s [*10 best episodes of “The Daily,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) according to the team that makes the podcast.

What to Play

From Animal Crossing to Call of Duty, [*these video games*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) got Times reporters through the year. (The list could also serve as a gift guide for the gamers in your life.)

For the Love of Ballet

“On Pointe,” a six-part documentary on Disney+, shows life inside the School of American Ballet through the eyes of its dancers. Don’t expect a cliché-riddled ballet story: “Listen, I loved ‘Black Swan’ when I saw it,” the show’s director told The Times. “But that wasn’t what we were making.” [*Read the review here.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)

Words

“Doomscrolling,” “unprecedented,” “pod”: Here are [*20 phrases that defined 2020*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Late Night

Stephen Colbert [*compared President Trump’s health adviser*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to a comic book villain.

Now Time to Play

The pangrams from yesterday’s Spelling Bee were hegemony and homogeny. Today’s puzzle is above — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) if you have a Games subscription.

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), and a clue: Doofuses (five letters).

And our [*weekly news quiz*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you Monday. — David

You can see [*today’s print front page here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Today’s episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)” is about evictions during the pandemic. And on “[*The Argument*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing),” Opinion writers discuss Georgia’s Senate runoff elections.

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

PHOTO: MacKenzie Scott in Beverly Hills, Calif. in 2018. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Evan Agostini/Invision, via Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 20, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Russell Westbrook’s Complicated Homecoming***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6562-C9D1-JBG3-63XS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 9, 2022 Saturday 14:43 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1738 words

**Byline:** Adam Popescu

**Highlight:** The N.B.A. star and native Angeleno is thriving back in the city where he grew up. Just don’t ask a Lakers fan.

**Body**

LAWNDALE, Calif. — “Go home,” Russell Westbrook yelled at a heckler seated behind the players’ bench. “Go home,” he repeated.

The crowd at this late-February blowout to the lowly New Orleans Pelicans had turned fast. The boos and taunts were so bad that Mr. Westbrook’s Los Angeles Lakers teammates looked ready to confront fans in the first row. LeBron James got into a sideline debate with one trash talker, while Trevor Ariza had to be physically restrained from confronting another.

“You’re not Kobe, you’re not Kobe,” a fan slurred, said Michael Morales, who filmed the courtside exchange at the Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles.

Drunk people yelling is normal. [*Athletes yelling back*](https://www.instagram.com/p/CagwSpEv7r3/) isn’t — especially at fans in seats that run $3,500 a pop.

“I’m a die-hard Laker fan,” said Mr. Morales, a 38-year-old postal worker who drives across town after every shift, coming to more games than Jack Nicholson and posting close-up clips that can earn him thousands of dollars on Facebook Reels. But “right now,” he said, “it’s hard to watch.” Mr. Morales’s pain, and extra income, will end soon: On Tuesday night, after a loss to Phoenix, the Lakers were eliminated from the postseason.

Mr. Westbrook joined the Lakers last July, after stints on the Houston Rockets and Washington Wizards marred by injury and a case of [*Covid*](https://rocketswire.usatoday.com/2020/07/22/russell-westbrook-was-mostly-asymptomatic-from-covid-19/), in a [*blockbuster trade*](https://www.espn.com/nba/story/_/id/31913935/sources-los-angeles-lakers-nearing-deal-acquire-russell-westbrook-send-3-player-package-pick-washington-wizards) that brought him to the team he grew up idolizing.

Though his performance this season has made him the target of angry fans, much of Mr. Westbrook’s off-court life seems to be thriving. There’s a revealing new [*Showtime film*](https://www.sho.com/titles/3493656/passion-play-russell-westbrook), a [*History Channel*](https://www.history.com/specials/tulsa-burning-the-1921-race-massacre) documentary, a recent art book, a clothing line with a new collection, along with an educational foundation and community involvement that belies his temperamental image.

All of that should come as no surprise to many who have followed his career or been involved with it. “He knows how to be a star,” said [*Simon Doonan*](https://twitter.com/simondoonan), who spent three decades as Barneys New York’s creative director.

After numerous Barneys collaborations, including with [*Tim Coppens*](https://wwd.com/fashion-news/fashion-scoops/gallery/russell-westbrook-partnering-with-tim-coppens-10339261/) and [*jewelry and perfume*](https://www.dmfashionbook.com/2015/12/23/russell-westbrook-reunites-with-barneys-for-a-mens-jewelry-collection/) lines, and a time as [*True Religion’s campaign creative director*](https://www.esquire.com/style/interviews/a33117/we-talked-to-russell-westbrook-about-his-new-position-at-true-religion/), Mr. Westbrook, 33, debuted his own fragrance, eyeglass brand and [*Honor the Gift*](https://honorthegift.co), a unisex streetwear line he [*introduced at an Oklahoma City body shop*](https://www.vogue.com/article/russell-westbrook-honor-the-gift-unisex-streetwear-oklahoma-city) in 2017.

Mr. Doonan, now a judge on the TV show “Making It,” calls past collections [*with Mr. Westbrook*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4iDI5ocMCA) where he “selected fabrics, working on and approving designs,” and [*shot videos*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5BpgkI-8TU) together, “[*the most fun*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NGT9IPe1MfM) I’ve had in my career.”

But while Mr. Westbrook’s off-court life is filled with successes, his basketball season has been so rocky that the hometown faithful have turned on the Los Angeles native — so much so that his wife recently tweeted that the family had been sent “death wishes.” The former Laker Shaquille O’Neal [*has advised*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXkHxITVkYE) [*slowing down*](https://www.silverscreenandroll.com/2022/2/1/22913485/russell-westbrook-shaquille-oneal-lakers-magic-conversation-courtside-pregame), and he’s even been benched and shopped in trade talks.

Mr. Westbrook has reacted to the boos and taunts of “Westbrick” with defiance; speaking to a pool of reporters after the Pelicans loss, he said, “I got three beautiful kids at my house, my wife, I ain’t taking it home.”

But just days later, in a [*postgame interview*](https://www.espn.com/nba/story/_/id/33451151/lakers-russell-westbrook-speaks-harassment-family-subject-vows-push-back-westbrick-taunts), he shifted, saying that the taunts had gotten to him, alluding to more important things than basketball, a revelation that was a similar vein to the Showtime film, “[*Passion Play*](https://www.sho.com/video/76417/official-trailer-%7C-passion-play-russell-westbrook),” in which he is introspective in a way that can still be uncommon among professional athletes. “The way I compete has made me an easy target,” he says in the film, almost as if there are two Russells. “In the sports world, I am the bad guy. People don’t really understand who I am. I’ll be lying to say it didn’t affect me.”

The Return

Born in Long Beach, Calif., Mr. Westbrook grew up in Hawthorne, near South Central Los Angeles, went to high school in Lawndale, then spent two years in Westwood at the University of California, Los Angeles. He entered the N.B.A. in 2008 and immediately became known for his fiery play and fashion sense.

In the 1970s, the New York Knicks star [*Walt “Clyde” Frazier*](https://www.gq.com/story/walt-clyde-frazier-puma-sneakers-style) introduced player-endorsed sneakers, mink coats, Zorro hats and capes. Twenty years later, Dennis Rodman raised the bar, once [*wearing a wedding dress*](https://www.cnn.com/style/article/remember-when-dennis-rodman/index.html) to a book signing. In the social media era, Mr. Westbrook has turned the arena tunnel into a pregame catwalk.

Being 6-foot-3 means he can shop off the rack, but he rarely plays it safe, preferring vivid patterns or, say, [*a white kilt at the Thom Browne spring 2022 show*](https://footwearnews.com/2021/fashion/celebrity-style/russell-westbrook-kilt-thom-browne-new-york-fashion-week-1203177246/) — bold statements in the hyper-macho sports world.

He has embraced his role as fashion star with vigor, spending [*fashion weeks*](https://ftw.usatoday.com/2016/09/russell-westbrook-new-york-fashion-week-outfits-nba-bestbrook) in New York, Paris and Milan with the likes of Anna Wintour, Carine Roitfeld, Raymond Pettibon and Tim Coppens.

“You wouldn’t want to get in his way on the court. In person, he’s totally different,” said Anthony Petrillose, the associate publisher of Rizzoli New York, which published “[*Russell Westbrook: Style Drivers*](https://www.rizzoliusa.com/book/9780847859931/),” with cover art by Mr. Pettibon. “The experience was, ‘I’m here to learn, I want the best possible book — how do we do it?’”

Honor the Gift, Mr. Westbrook’s fashion brand, has done [*pop-ups in Los Angeles*](https://hypebeast.com/2018/2/russell-westbrook-honor-the-gift-inner-city-collection-all-star-weekend-pop-up) and [*Paris*](https://www.instagram.com/p/ByqTNQ5J8qS/?utm_source=ig_embed&amp;ig_rid=c83e7f00-961d-40bf-8244-55e12431e809) and released a collection earlier this month called the Concrete Jungle. The summer capsule collection was a homage to swap meets; [*last fall*](https://www.instagram.com/p/CUffWrMJzmd/), it was a halcyon reimagining of the soul soundtrack to growing up in Hawthorne.

“Russell takes fashion every bit as seriously as he does being a point guard,” said Ms. Wintour, who last saw him in November at [*Madison Square Garden*](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-10237575/Anna-Wintour-71-cuts-elegant-figure-watches-basketball-game-New-York.html), where he “generously presented me with his sneakers postgame. They were a little too large for me, but fortunately I was with my 6-4 nephew, who happily took them.”

But the Lakers lost that night — and Mr. Westbrook looks unhappy on the job. While he’s worked with Nike’s Jordan brand on a full-foot system for his shoes, pored over Honor the Gift designs, and carefully constructed his homecoming, the basketball fit in Los Angeles has been bumpy.

In June of last year, Honor the Gift teamed with Jordan and Mr. Westbrook’s [*Why Not? Foundation*](https://whynotfoundation.org), building a basketball court and sponsoring tech and design workshops at a Y.M.C.A. in the city’s Crenshaw District. (Jordan has produced Westbrook’s signature shoe and Why Not? apparel since 2018.) The nonprofit foundation, named after a favorite saying, [*supports social initiatives*](https://whynotfoundation.org/programming/) and schools.

“Style is a weapon and that doesn’t end with clothing,” said Sam Sohaili, who runs [*DMA United*](https://www.dmaunited.com/agency), a creative agency that has worked with Mr. Westbrook on brand deals. “Russell’s style is how he interacts with people.”

Such interactions support the two-Russells theory: relishing the villain role, then playing opposite. (Despite multiple attempts, Mr. Westbrook declined to comment for this article.)

Playing in Los Angeles also means Hollywood. “[*Tulsa Burning: The 1921 Race Massacre*](https://www.history.com/specials/tulsa-burning-the-1921-race-massacre),” which [*he executive produced*](https://www.nbcsports.com/washington/wizards/russell-westbrooks-documentary-tulsa-race-massacre-premieres-may-30), premiered last May and other projects are in development.

And just when he appears to be another celebrity cashing in, he crosses over. During a grueling playing period in December, days after entering the N.B.A.’s safety protocols because of positive coronavirus tests in the team’s traveling party, then testing [*negative for Covid*](https://www.espn.com/nba/story/_/id/32890777/russell-westbrook-clears-covid-protocol-available-los-angeles-lakers-vs-minnesota-timberwolves), Mr. Westbrook donned a Santa hat and grinchy tracksuit, posed for photos and [*gave every Why Not? student new sneakers*](https://www.instagram.com/p/CX4BwzTpAxi/).

“Sometimes the priority ain’t what you get paid for,” noted the legendary Compton rapper [*DJ Quik*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHqtpYc9or0) just before the Lakers were crushed by the crosstown Clippers in March.

Leuzinger

South of the Crypto.com Arena, at Leuzinger High School in ***working-class*** Lawndale, one of the first things you see is a 50-foot mural of a soaring you-know-who plastered on the Gloria Ramos Cafeteria. Across campus, in the Thompson Gymnasium, a familiar name and jersey number hang above the court where Mr. Westbrook led the Olympians to a 25-4 record as a senior back in 2006.

“It was inevitable that he’d go to the N.B.A.,” recalled Patrick Cleveland, a high school teammate who lived down the street from Mr. Westbrook and now coaches and works as a safety officer here.

We spoke just as the trade deadline passed and the Lakers [*decided not to deal Mr. Westbrook*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/11/sports/basketball/lakers-trade-deadline.html). In Lawndale he’s still a prince of the city who came up hard, made good and stayed true.

To understand the two Russells means understanding a tragic what if, said Marlon Mendez, a coach from back in the day and now the school’s athletic director. What if Mr. Westbrook’s best friend Khelcey Barrs hadn’t collapsed after a string of pickup games at Los Angeles Southwest College on May 11, 2004?

Khelcey was a 6-foot-6 sophomore headed for the N.B.A., until a heart condition ended everything at 16. “We all had that chip on our shoulder, but Russell took it on,” Mr. Cleveland said. “Everybody thinks he’s this high-energy guy. People don’t understand what he plays for. We were all hurt, but he was the one who was able to make that name continue. I’m grateful Russell made it and carried that name with him.”

After he died, Mr. Westbrook would walk across the street and do Khelcey’s chores before class. Today, he wears wristbands and shoes with [*the initials KB3*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K-KlGga7KO8), Leuzinger basketball is[*sponsored by Jordan*](https://www.instagram.com/leuzingerhoops/?hl=en) and the onetime high school star remains a fixture.

“I grew up around him,” said [*Amire Jones*](https://twitter.com/amirejones10), a 16-year-old junior and guard from Compton. “At school, games, Jordan events. It’s crazy because an N.B.A. player went to your school and he’s someone I can reach out to.”

It’s not uncommon for Mr. Westbrook to drop in, said Mr. Jones, the son of the Leuzinger coach Arturo Jones, one of many formative figures Mr. Westbrook still leans on. “His legacy provides opportunities for us. He’s uplifting. Once I was working out with him, missing shots, he pulled me aside. He said: ‘Confidence, don’t stop. You miss 20, keep shooting.’”

What about Mr. Westbrook’s own confidence? The boos?

“There’s a lot of negativity around him for no reason,” Mr. Jones said. “He’s going to keep shooting. He doesn’t care. It’s Russ.”

From left: The L.A. Lakers’ Russell Westbrook has hometown fans on his back; Mr. Westbrook with Anna Wintour; Mr. Westbrook at the 2021 Met Gala. KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES NINA WESTERVELT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES Top, Mr. Westbrook and Adriana Lima at a Tom Ford after-party. Above, the singers Maluma and Miguel with Mr. Westbrook at Louis Vuitton. PASCAL LE SEGRETAIN/GETTY IMAGES Top: Mr. Westbrook and Adriana Lima at the Tom Ford after-party in 2018. Above MARK BLINCH/NBAE, VIA GETTY IMAGES

**Load-Date:** April 25, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Juilliard Students Protest Tuition Increase With Marches and Music***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62WP-Y4R1-DXY4-X4PN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 11, 2021 Friday 16:49 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; music

**Length:** 1022 words

**Byline:** Colin Moynihan

**Highlight:** After occupying parts of the school, some students were barred from entering the building. So they took the demonstration outside.

**Body**

After occupying parts of the school, some students were barred from entering the building. So they took the demonstration outside.

The Juilliard School, one of the [*world’s leading performing arts conservatories*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/11/arts/music/juilliard-orfeo-opera.html), is better known for recitals than picket lines. But students protesting a planned tuition increase occupied parts of its Lincoln Center campus this week and, when they were later barred from entering a school building, led music- and dance-filled protests on West 65th Street.

The protests began Monday when a group of students, objecting to plans to raise tuition to $51,230 a year from $49,260, occupied parts of the school’s Irene Diamond building and [*posted photos*](https://steinwaygrand.com/blogs/steinway-piano-blog/juilliard-students-jam-up-65th-street-for-tuition-freeze) on social media of [*dozens of sheets of multicolored paper arranged*](https://www.instagram.com/p/CP0dDrvgchD/) to form the words “TUITION FREEZE.”

On Wednesday, students said, they received an email from the administration saying that “school space” could not be used for nonschool events without permission. “Posting signage, posters or fliers, tabling in the lobby, solicitation or distributing print materials also requires advance authorization,” the message added.

Students returned to the Diamond building that day, marching through the halls and stopping outside the door of the school’s president, Damian Woetzel. At one point, some said, they knocked on his door, chanting: “We know you’re in there. Will you meet students’ needs and freeze tuition?”

Later, protesters said, they were barred from the Diamond building, and the school told them that it was investigating an incident that included reported violations “pertaining to community safety.” On Thursday, about 20 students continued their tuition protest on the sidewalk outside, waving placards and accusing the school of using heavy-handed tactics to quell dissent.

“They have made it quite apparent they will not listen to us,” said Carl Hallberg, an 18-year-old drama student.

Rosalie Contreras, a spokeswoman for Juilliard, wrote in an email that the school was increasing financial aid and raising the minimum wage for work-study jobs on campus to $15 an hour, and that it had special funding available for students experiencing financial hardship.

“Juilliard respects the right of all community members including students to freely express opinions with demonstrations that are conducted in a reasonable time, place and manner,” Ms. Contreras added. “Regrettably the demonstration on Wednesday escalated to the point where public safety was called by an employee.”

Both Mr. Hallberg and another student, Gabe Canepa, said they were part of a campus group called the [*Socialist Penguins*](https://linktr.ee/socialistpenguins/), which had called for the protests. They said that they had not jeopardized anyone’s safety.

Mr. Canepa, a 19-year-old dance student, added that students took the tuition increase seriously because it meant they would have less to spend on “rent, groceries, subway fares, supplies we need for school.”

An online petition by the group said that “raising the already astronomically high cost of tuition” hurts ***working class*** students. It added: “We demand that Juilliard cancel their planned tuition raise.”

Students taking part in the protests said that roughly 300 current students, or about 30 percent to a third of those currently enrolled, had signed the petition.

The events at Juilliard this week appear to have been less contentious than school occupations that have taken place elsewhere in Manhattan over the years, including at New York University, Cooper Union and the New School, where police officers wearing helmets and carrying plastic shields [*arrested people*](https://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/04/10/students-occupy-new-school-building-again/) who took over part of the school’s Fifth Avenue building in 2009. But the conflict struck a discordant note.

Juilliard is also facing pressure on diversity issues. In May, CBS News [*quoted*](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/juilliard-school-race-diversity-concerns/) a Black student there saying she had been disturbed by an acting workshop in which the class members were asked to pretend they were slaves, as audio of whips, rain and racial slurs was played. Juilliard told CBS that the workshop was a “mistake” and that it regretted “that the workshop caused pain for students.”

After Wednesday’s protests, several students said that they had received emails from Sabrina Tanbara, the assistant dean of student affairs, letting them know that their access to the Diamond building had been suspended pending an investigation.

The next day, Juilliard’s dean of student development sent an email message to all students that provided some details of what the school was looking into. Referring to the protest on Wednesday afternoon outside the president’s office, Barrett Hipes, the dean, wrote: “Yesterday Public Safety received a report regarding confrontational and intimidating student conduct that caused an administrative assistant who was working alone in an office to become concerned for their own safety.”

Unable to enter the Diamond building on Thursday, the students held a protest outside and encouraged passing motorists to honk their horns in support.

One young man vogued on West 65th Street. Mr. Hallberg strummed a guitar, and another student plucked a standup bass, leading a singalong of the labor standard “Which Side Are You On?”

Some students said they felt they had been punished without due process.

Sarah Williams, a 19-year-old oboe student, said that she had written to Ms. Tanbara asking what, specifically, she was believed to have done that would justify barring her from the Diamond building. She said she had yet to receive a response.

“My resources have been eliminated without any explanation,” she said.

Raphael Zimmerman, a 20-year-old clarinet student, said he had received an email from Ms. Tanbara notifying him that he would be contacted to schedule an “investigatory meeting” to obtain his account of activity outside the president’s office late on Wednesday afternoon.

“I think saying the several minutes we spent knocking on that door and singing was harassment,” he said, “is essentially rejecting our right to assemble and demonstrate.”

PHOTO: Juilliard students protested a planned tuition increase Monday, and expressed anger over the school’s response to their concerns. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEENAH MOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 11, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Bursting U.C. Berkeley Clashes With Its Home Over California Dreams***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YW-23C1-DXY4-X0WW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 11, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1725 words

**Byline:** By Shawn Hubler, Conor Dougherty and Sophie Kasakove

**Body**

The state's complex environmental laws are being weaponized in lawsuits against the University of California, Berkeley, which is under pressure to admit more and more students.

BERKELEY, Calif. -- Kiara Bragg has spent years imagining herself at the University of California, Berkeley -- walking through Sproul Plaza, navigating crowds of students, becoming the first in her ***working-class*** family to graduate from her state's iconic flagship school.

Phil Bokovoy imagines, too. In his mind's eye, the city where he moved in 1983 as a graduate student is a college town where, if he had his way, the Craftsman homes would still be affordable for professors and campus life -- the packed living quarters, the beer-soaked parties -- would not disrupt surrounding neighborhoods.

A reasonably priced education at a world-class public university. A single-family house in a neighborhood that is clean and peaceful. For generations, these have been pillars of the California dream.

Now an epic clash between the two ideals is forcing state lawmakers to confront the limits of California's promise, as growth collides with the state's ability to sustainably house and educate its 40 million people.

Bristling at pressure to make room for escalating numbers of students, longtime Berkeley residents have leveraged state environmental law to accuse the oldest University of California campus of essentially polluting neighborhoods by admitting more students than the city can handle.

The case is ongoing but plaintiffs recently won a court order to freeze the university's enrollment at 2020 levels, potentially forcing more than 2,500 incoming students to defer enrollment, take a semester remotely, lose their slot or consider another campus.

Now, with admissions envelopes due out in weeks, state lawmakers are mulling short-term remedies to the court's order and longer-term responses to the possibility that similar lawsuits could sharply restrict enrollment.

Some policymakers see no way out except through so much remote instruction that, over time, it could severely damage the brand of the University of California. Others fear an enrollment squeeze so tight that it will crowd out racial diversity or out-of-state students. Still others want to exempt campus housing from California's environmental laws, which are famously complex and contentious.

The dispute in a famed liberal bastion has aroused passions, with some asserting that the university has finally been called to task for driving legions of students into neighborhoods not built to hold them. Others liken the lawsuit to generational theft by the older, whiter baby boomers who dominate the propertied classes in college communities throughout California.

''It's like, 'I got my piece of the pie, too bad for you,''' said Riya Master, a senior at Berkeley who is majoring in integrative biology and is a vice president of the campus's student governing body.

George Kieffer, a Los Angeles civic leader and former chair of the University of California Board of Regents, said the conflict was multifaceted.

''The residents want their community to stay the same,'' he said. ''The parents want their students to get into the U.C. The legislators want to respond to constituent needs. And then you have California law, which people have learned to use over the years to satisfy their interests.

''All good motives. And they're all competing. In an increasingly crowded place.''

California offers its high school graduates a subsidized college education, with a guaranteed spot at one of the 10 University of California campuses for the top 12.5 percent. The state's sprawling network of public campuses -- community colleges, California State University and the University of California -- enrolls more than 2.5 million students altogether.

But competition remains intense, particularly at marquee campuses such as Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Diego and Berkeley. Demand skyrocketed during the 2008 recession as in-state students flocked to the discounted tuition and the campuses sought to increase lucrative out-of-state enrollment.

Since then, legislators have exerted relentless political pressure on the university to add in-state students. Since 2011, overall system enrollment, which now stands at about 300,000, has grown by more than 63,000 students, enough to populate an 11th campus.

''Everyone has a kid, a grandchild, a nephew, a niece, a neighbor who essentially has perfect grades and a great SAT score and they didn't get in to the campus where they want to get in,'' said Kevin McCarty, a state legislator in Sacramento who chairs the Assembly subcommittee overseeing education budgets. Before the court order, the Legislature and Gov. Gavin Newsom called for yet another 7,000 or more California students to be added this fall.

Housing has not kept up, for the students or for other Californians. The state's median home price, at $800,000, is more than twice the national figure, the result of a housing shortage that dates to the 1970s.

Over the past decade, the state has added a little over three times as many people as housing units and is far below the national average in housing units per capita, according to an analysis from the Public Policy Institute of California. Planners and economists have for decades been warning the state that until supply meets demand, its housing problems will worsen. But until recently, California cities and neighborhood groups have steadfastly resisted this advice by using a mix of regulations and environmental lawsuits that kill and shrink new projects, or drag them out for years.

In response, the Legislature has passed a flurry of laws that increase how much housing cities have to plan for and make it harder for them to oppose new development. Legislators like Mr. McCarty have made more state money available for campus housing projects, and the University of California has started several housing initiatives.

But while lawmakers have sought a dizzying array of carve-outs, they have assiduously avoided calls to overhaul the landmark law most frequently weaponized to block new construction: the California Environmental Quality Act.

Also known as CEQA, the act was passed more than 50 years ago to prevent developers from ravaging the scenic state's natural resources and wildlife. When the nonprofit Save Berkeley's Neighborhoods sued the university in 2018, it argued that the university had failed to meet CEQA requirements to sufficiently analyze the impact of the additional enrollment.

''All we have ever wanted was a legally binding commitment that they add housing before they add more students,'' said Mr. Bokovoy, the president of the nonprofit and a former investment banker with a house near the campus that is worth an estimated $1.5 million. ''This is about preserving Berkeley's culture and diversity.''

The University of California system has on-campus beds for about 106,000 students, leaving roughly two out of three to compete for off-campus housing in some of the nation's most expensive housing markets. In Berkeley, the university houses about 22 percent of its undergraduates, fewer than any other campus in the system.

Even though students make up more than a quarter of Berkeley's population, the city, limited by its urban locale and attached to its low-rise aesthetic, has until recent years resisted development. Rent for a two-bedroom apartment runs about $4,000 monthly ''and that's for one that isn't even nice,'' said Ms. Master, the student government officer.

In 2005, the university projected that enrollment would be 33,450 by 2020, a number that became the basis for a long-range plan for developing the campus. But in 2017, Save Berkeley's Neighborhoods discovered that enrollment had already outstripped that estimate by 30 percent.

After the university announced a plan to convert an acre of parking into new academic space and faculty and graduate housing, Mr. Bokovoy's group sued again, this time with the City of Berkeley. They argued that the university's environmental impact report -- which found that the additional students had no significant impacts -- was inadequate.

Together, the lawsuits became the basis of a package of complex litigation over whether the university had adequately studied and mitigated the impact of its entire enrollment. Last summer, a Superior Court issued an unusual order that rolled back and capped the university's enrollment at its 2020-21 level of 42,347 students until the school significantly expanded the environment study in its long-range growth plan.

The decision still could be reversed, but because of the order -- which was left in place by the California Supreme Court last week -- the university had to cut the number of students coming to campus in the fall.

The university said it would reduce in-person fall enrollment by 2,629 students, largely by enrolling more than 1,000 incoming freshmen remotely with the understanding that they would move onto campus in January when graduating students free up some housing slots. The transfer of hundreds of students will be delayed and some students, mostly in graduate programs, will simply not be offered admission.

The continuing fight is sowing angst. Ms. Bragg, 20, said she had been nervously checking her phone for email updates ever since she received the enrollment freeze notice.

A first-generation college student, she said she had yearned to study at the University of California, Berkeley, since her early teens and has worked a full-time job to pay for the community college credits necessary to apply there.

If offered a spot as an online student, she said, she would likely accept it. Still, so much of what she has dreamed about over the years has involved exposure to peers far from her home in the desert exurbs of Riverside County.

Not long ago, she said, she visited the Berkeley campus and soaked in the culture so familiar to Californians -- the way alumni call the school ''Cal'' rather than ''U.C. Berkeley,'' the way students rushing across campus walkways avoid stepping on the Berkeley seal lest it hex their chance at a 4.0 grade-point average.

''I felt like I was just a student there,'' she said. ''I pictured myself there, one of them.''

Kirsten Noyes contributed research.Kirsten Noyes contributed research.

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHIL BOKOVOY, the president of Save Berkeley's Neighborhoods. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER PRATO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

KIARA BRAGG, on visiting the U.C. Berkeley campus. Now she faces the prospect of an online study program. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ARIANA DREHSLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Chicago, on a Roll***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64DH-4Y61-DXY4-X4RY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Priya Krishna

**Body**

In this city so protective of its traditions, a new generation of cooks is creating fresh variations on a deliciously soggy sandwich.

CHICAGO -- Do you like your Italian beef dry and sweet? Dipped and hot? Or perhaps wet, hot and sweet? Ordering the beloved Chicago sandwich is not unlike the drill at a coffee shop; there's a language to know, a culture to understand, decisions to make.

The city has several famous foods to its name, like deep-dish pizza and the Chicago hot dog. Yet Italian beef stands apart: roasted, thinly sliced meat that is bathed in its own jus and nestled in a plush roll, then topped with tart, spicy giardiniera or sweet peppers (or both), and often dipped in a rich broth of beef drippings. The broth supercharges the beefy flavor and saturates the crevices of the bread, while the peppers offer tangy relief. In one messy, intensely juicy bite comes a whole meal's worth of complex flavors.

The sandwich may not be the best-known, or most visually enticing, of those three dishes, said David Hammond, the dining and drinking editor of the local magazine Newcity, and the author of a coming book on the city's foods. But while deep dish is primarily for tourists, he said, and the hot dogs are sold in many cities, Italian beef belongs to Chicagoans.

''It is hard for me to imagine Chicago food without Italian beef,'' Mr. Hammond said.

It's a dish that speaks volumes about the city and the Italian-beef fan, said Cathy Lambrecht, a member of the Culinary Historians of Chicago. ''It is a whole reverie of memories.''

Which Italian-beef stand you prefer ''brings up, 'Where did you grow up? What part of town?''' she said. ''Or if you are Catholic, 'what parish did you grow up with?'''

Several establishments -- including Al's Beef, Serrelli's Finer Foods and Scala's Original, which closed several years ago -- lay claim to inventing the sandwich. The food historian Bruce Kraig said it's unclear who actually did, though it's likely that in the 1920s and '30s, Italian immigrants came up with the dish as a way of stretching a less expensive cut of meat to serve in large quantities at weddings.

Italian beef came to reflect the city itself -- its identity as a hub for both ***working-class*** immigrants and the meatpacking business. The sandwich made a portable, inexpensive and filling on-the-job meal.

But as the city's demographics have shifted in recent decades, a new slate of sandwiches inspired by Italian beef has emerged. These creations incorporate a variety of ingredients, from garlicky longanisa sausage at the Filipino cafe Kasama to sweet-savory bulgogi at the Korean-Polish deli Kimski, to halal meat at the 1950s-style fast-food restaurant Slim's.

If the Italian-beef sandwich mirrors the history of Italian immigrants, these adaptations tell a different kind of story, about a new generation of Chicago chefs mixing the city's traditions with their own.

In an interview before he died of cancer in December at age 43, the chef Brian Mita said he saw a kinship between Italian beef and niku dofu, a Japanese dish of thinly sliced beef and tofu cooked with soy sauce and dashi.

Like Italian beef, he said, niku dofu is a means of being economical with meat. At his restaurant, Izakaya Mita, niku dofu is stuffed into shokupan, or milk bread, and topped with giardiniera. Mr. Mita introduced the sandwich in summer 2020, making it a permanent addition two months ago because it sold so well.

''Really, it is an amalgamation,'' he said. ''I am half Japanese, half Chinese, but I grew up here in the States,'' in Chicago. ''That is a part of my culture, too.''

Chicago was once defined by its discrete immigrant enclaves, said Mr. Kraig, the food historian. ''That has all changed, as gentrification has taken place and populations have moved.''

Many neighborhoods now have more diverse populations, he said, and Chicagoans have grown up exposed to a wide array of cuisines, especially as the local restaurant scene has become more multifaceted.

Nate Hoops and Anthony Ngo's Vietnamese-inspired version of Italian beef at their restaurant, Phodega, felt like a natural outgrowth of their identities as Chicago natives who grew up in Asian American households, Mr. Hoops said.

They layer thinly sliced rib-eye on French bread, and top it with cilantro and jalapeños -- classic banh mi fixings. The dish is served with a side of pho broth for dipping. They added the sandwich, called the Pho Dip, to the menu in summer 2020.

''It's almost like a fail-safe recipe for success,'' said Mr. Hoops, 37. Locals love Italian beef, so ''you know it is going to do well.''

''I wouldn't say it is in competition'' with Italian beef, he added. ''It is definitely a different sandwich.''

Won Kim doesn't advertise the Ko-Po beef sandwich he created at Kimski as a variation on Italian beef, even though he drew inspiration from the classic dish. His version has bulgogi, sautéed shishito peppers, gochujang butter and a shower of scallions.

Chicagoans love to complain when foods don't adhere to tradition, he said. ''They are quick to judge, so I didn't want to be even close to calling it an Italian thing.''

And he's right -- people do have strong opinions.

''I am a purist,'' said Erick Williams, the chef and owner of Virtue, a Southern restaurant in Hyde Park. ''I am sure those sandwiches are probably really good, and I would be interested to try them, but I am in no hurry to replace the original version of an Italian beef.''

He doesn't make the sandwich at Virtue, but he loves it, and partnered with Al's Beef in 2020 to serve a special menu that included Italian beef.

Patti Serrelli, the owner of the longtime Italian-beef purveyor Serrelli's Finer Foods, had a harsher take on these adaptations: ''They are kind of bastardizing the original recipe.'' At Serrelli's, Italian beef is made the traditional way, the meat roasted in a secret blend of herbs and spices and dunked in its own juices.

Garrett Kern, the vice president of strategy and culinary for the Chicago-based restaurant chain Portillo's, said this territorial attitude springs from locals' desire to protect a dish that feels uniquely theirs.

''A lot of Chicagoans have this chip on their shoulder'' because the city doesn't get as much national attention as other major locales, he said. So they attach outsize levels of pride to Italian beef.

That pride explains why, when Laricia Chandler Baker added a meat-free Italian-beef sandwich to the menu at her vegan restaurant, Can't Believe It's Not Meat, in November 2020, she took great pains to ensure that it looked and tasted like the original. She thinly slices soy protein and dunks it in a vegetable broth seasoned with herbs and peppers, then slides it into a French roll.

Khurram Shamim, who sells a halal Italian-beef sandwich at his restaurant, Slim's, is also hesitant to mess with tradition. Customers want to eat Italian beef while adhering to their dietary restrictions, he said. The sandwich should feel as familiar as possible.

Familiarity has never been a problem for Portillo's, which is known throughout the city for its Italian beef. This year, the chain went public, and accelerated its national expansion, to states like Arizona and Florida.

But while locals debate over these Italian-beef adaptations, the real challenge for Portillo's, said Mr. Kern, is getting people across the country to do what Chicagoans do: adore a soggy mess of a sandwich.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/27/dining/italian-beef-sandwich-chicago.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/27/dining/italian-beef-sandwich-chicago.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, from left: A vegan Italian beef sandwich from Can't Believe It's Not Meat

at Phodega, a Vietnamese-inspired version of the sandwich

the classic at Al's, perhaps home to the Chicago original. (D1)

Clockwise, from above: A vegan alternative to the Italian beef sandwich at Can't Believe It's Not Meat

the writer David Hammond said Italian beef is more essential to Chicago's food culture than deep-dish pizza

Laricia Chandler Baker, the owner of Can't Believe It's Not Meat

the sandwich with a side of fries at Al's.

Above, Phodega serves an Italian beef sandwich inspired by the owners' Asian American upbringing in Chicago. Right, the sandwich includes thinly sliced rib-eye and comes with a side of pho broth for dipping. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANJALI PINTO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (D6)

**Load-Date:** December 29, 2021

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[***Warren's Wonky Appeal Can Cloud Her Populist Personal History***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YBP-CJ91-DXY4-X3GM-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Shane Goldmacher

**Body**

White, college-educated voters swooned. But her branding as the candidate with ''a plan for that'' eclipsed her own up-from-the-bootstraps biography.

BOSTON -- It is, without a doubt, one of the most compelling stories that Elizabeth Warren tells.

She was just a girl when her father (''my daddy,'' she calls him) had a heart attack. The family lost its station wagon and came close to losing its home. That is when her mother dug out ''the dress.'' ''You know the one,'' Ms. Warren says of the outfit that her mother saved for weddings, funerals and graduations. Muttering to herself ''we will not lose this house, we will not lose this house,'' her mother slipped it on, marched to Sears and won a minimum-wage job to keep their family afloat.

From Iowa to New Hampshire to California, most of the 100,000-plus people who have taken ''selfies'' with Ms. Warren have heard some version of the story, often listening in rapt silence. But Ms. Warren's presidential campaign has never packaged the wrenching tale into a tidy television commercial for the millions of Americans who will vote on Super Tuesday, or who voted in any other state so far.

What Ms. Warren, the senator from Massachusetts, calls her upbringing on the ''ragged edge of the middle class'' is foundational for her progressive agenda of a more assertive federal government that helps the less fortunate: a higher minimum wage, universal child care, a wealth tax. But her Oklahoma origin story -- she went by Betsy at the time -- has largely been lost in a 2020 race where she has become defined chiefly as the wonkish ''plan for that'' candidate.

''What too many voters see,'' said Paul Begala, a Democratic strategist who worked on President Bill Clinton's 1992 campaign, ''is Professor Warren from Harvard Law and not Betsy from Norman, Oklahoma.''

Mr. Begala favorably compared Ms. Warren's up-from-the-bootstraps life with his old client's: a kid from the South who grew up amid hardship, ended up in an Ivy League institution and ultimately ran for president.

Ms. Warren's relentless stream of erudite and innovation policy proposals -- her latest would address the economic and medical implications of the coronavirus -- helped lift her to front-runner status early last fall. She wowed the professional progressive class, delighted academics and activists and captured the imagination of MSNBC's attentive audience.

But her populism and popularity never fully trickled down. Even at her peak, her strongest support came from what political operatives call the ''wine track'' of Democratic politics: white, affluent and college-educated voters, especially women.

''It's both what got her to where she is but maybe prevented her from reaching beyond that,'' said Joe Trippi, who served in 2004 as campaign manager for Howard Dean, another candidate in a long history of Democrats who won over the ''wine track'' but ultimately lost the nomination.

Now, as voters head to the polls on Super Tuesday, Ms. Warren's campaign has all but admitted her pathway to winning the Democratic nomination outright has vanished. She enters March seeking to accumulate delegates for a potential contested convention and is most realistically hunting for them in more educated enclaves, like Seattle and Denver, where she recently held rallies and is investing heavily in advertising.

In many ways, the arc of the Warren candidacy is the story of her cornering an upscale demographic early, only to become confined to it, and then lose her grip on it.

Senator Bernie Sanders's democratic socialist pitch has been more effective in winning over the ***working class***, while former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. has maintained overwhelming popularity among black voters.

At her high-water mark, last October, Ms. Warren had consolidated an enviable 38 percent support from college-educated white voters, according to a Quinnipiac poll. But former Mayor Pete Buttigieg soon made serious inroads with less ideological upscale white voters and finished ahead of Ms. Warren in each of the first four voting states. Senator Amy Klobuchar sapped some support from college-educated women, particularly in New Hampshire.

The back-to-back exits of Mr. Buttigieg and Ms. Klobuchar on Sunday and Monday could help Ms. Warren win back some those votes, even as both formally endorsed Mr. Biden.

In interviews with more than 20 Warren allies, former advisers, rival campaigns and independent Democratic strategists, everyone wondered how her own narrative -- despite the fact that she starts almost every event with at least a speed-read of her biography -- ended up as a casualty of the campaign. The clearest example, most agreed, is how little of it she put in paid advertising.

Through February, the television ad that her campaign had spent the most money to air, according to data from the media-tracking firm Advertising Analytics, was about her pledge not to appoint big donors to ''cushy ambassadorships.'' Four ads that at least mentioned her Oklahoma upbringing ran fewer times combined, according to the firm's database.

The campaign said that about 40 percent of its overall television ad budget went to what it considered biographical ads, though that counted ads mostly focused on her role creating a new federal consumer agency, not her early life. A Warren adviser added that her ads were tested and the campaign aired its best-performing spots.

Of course, the days before a make-or-break moment lend themselves to 2020 hindsight, and it's possible that a ''Betsy from Oklahoma''-heavy campaign would have backfired, with rivals grumbling about authenticity.

Ms. Warren has long since graduated from her childhood economic insecurity to life with a golden retriever, Harvard tenure and a Senate sinecure. Her decision to undertake a DNA test in late 2018 to show Native American heritage haunted her candidacy in its early months, and could have complicated efforts to focus on the rest of her family story, however evocative.

The results in February plainly demonstrate the disconnect between her candidacy and the more blue-collar segments of the electorate, as her performance correlated closely with education levels, rising steadily in precincts where the share of those with college degrees was higher.

In Iowa, she emerged with the most delegates in only a single county, Johnson, the state's best educated and the home of the University of Iowa.

In New Hampshire, exit polling showed that Ms. Warren sank into a statistical tie among those without a college degree with Representative Tulsi Gabbard, who has been mostly an afterthought in the race.

In Nevada, she again struggled among those who never attended college, earning about half as much support as Tom Steyer, the billionaire businessman who, according to entrance polling, was a nonfactor in the overall race before he dropped out Saturday. Her best demographic groups? Those with advanced degrees and regular users of Twitter.

In South Carolina, exit polls showed Ms. Warren garnering only 3 percent support among those who never attended college (the same level as Mr. Buttigieg).

From the start, Ms. Warren's campaign has made efforts to connect with ***working-class*** and nonwhite voters. There was an early trip to the Mississippi Delta, a visit to Kermit, W.Va., to talk about the opioid crisis there, and, on the eve of Super Tuesday, a last stop in California in heavily Latino East Los Angeles.

Her own story -- she waited tables at 13, dropped out of college and got married at 19, had a child at 22, was divorced at 30 -- has been woven into her stump speech, too. But only a tiny fraction of the electorate will ever see a candidate in person.

''She does talk about her story on the trail, but think about who goes to rallies -- well-educated activists, not noncollege voters,'' said Meredith Kelly, who served as communications director for Senator Kirsten Gillibrand during her presidential campaign. ''A bigger and earlier spend on television to talk about her ***working-class*** roots would likely have gone a long way.''

Ms. Warren's most visible branding, instead, became around her many plans.

''She speaks my love language,'' as Representative Ayanna S. Pressley, a top surrogate and national co-chair, liked to say when introducing Ms. Warren. ''Policy.''

Some allies grumbled that such framing was an effective way to win over only postdoctoral students, not a broad-based political coalition.

Most of the contrast that Ms. Warren drew early on with her rivals was more high-minded and process-oriented than visceral. It wasn't until Michael R. Bloomberg, the former New York mayor, entered the race that her attacks turned more personal.

One of the first times she called out Mr. Buttigieg by name was to demand that he reveal his McKinsey consulting clients and open his fund-raisers to the press (there was also, along with Mr. Sanders, the ''wine cave'' fund-raising attack). There was the ambassadorships ad saying she was the only Democrat pledging not to appoint big donors.

And in Denver a week ago, she pegged the ''big diff'' between her and Mr. Sanders to be on the filibuster, talking through the arcana of how Senate parliamentary procedure is used to enact an agenda of ''big, structural change.''

'''I have a plan' -- it's an intellectual argument,'' Mr. Trippi, the Dean campaign manager, said. ''Ten-point plans just don't have as much emotional appeal.''

Mr. Begala, the former Clinton adviser who called Ms. Warren's biography ''as compelling a story as anybody in the race,'' pointed to her campaign's decision not to rely on a polling firm as a challenge that most likely made it harder to determine how the candidate best connected with voters. In 1992, he said, the Clinton campaign did not realize the power of his biography almost until deep into the race.

''You know what? I certainly hope when she goes to a doctor, she lets them use a thermometer. I'm sorry I have contempt for that view. To professionally measure and strategize is not to be inauthentic,'' Mr. Begala said. ''She doesn't go with her gut on health care or Wall Street regulations. She talks to experts -- and she is one herself.''

Running to be the first female president is another complicating factor. Allies and rivals alike acknowledged her gender has most likely played a role in how she was perceived.

One former Warren adviser said that while Ms. Warren's biography and agenda should, in concept, appeal to blue-collar types, she had long produced a similar negative reaction among noncollege white men to Hillary Clinton that was ''just not fair.''

''It's an extra challenge to be a very obviously well-educated, articulate female,'' said Barney Frank, the former Massachusetts representative, who also worked with Ms. Warren after the 2008 economic crisis. ''There is a cultural element there and she clearly is at the more high end, as things go.''

If Ms. Warren did not aggressively blanket the airwaves with her personal story, her rivals jumped at the chance to try to define her. They cast her as either talking down to or looking down at voters, often in terms that the Warren camp viewed as gendered.

Former representative Beto O'Rourke called her ''punitive.'' Mr. Biden accused her of an ''an elitism that working- and middle-class people do not share and branded her a ''my way or the highway'' politician.

Doug Rubin, a Massachusetts strategist who worked on Ms. Warren's 2012 Senate campaign and who advised Mr. Steyer during his run, said he had been surprised how absent Ms. Warren's telling of her own biography has been from the 2020 race.

''I don't see that story being told to any extent at all, and given her resources that's a surprise to me,'' he said. ''She is absolutely not this caricature of a Harvard professor. She is the exact opposite.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/03/us/politics/elizabeth-warren-super-tuesday.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/03/us/politics/elizabeth-warren-super-tuesday.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Senator Elizabeth Warren at a recent town hall-style event in Seattle, an educated enclave where she is investing heavily in advertising. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RUTH FREMSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 4, 2020

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[***G.O.P. Lines Up to Oppose Biden's Ambitious Aid Plan***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JG-5K51-DXY4-X2H8-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

The South Carolina senator did not offer a comprehensive alternative to President Biden's education and child-care plans. Instead, he called them ''big-government waste.''

WASHINGTON -- Republicans lined up in opposition to President Biden's latest ambitious economic package on Wednesday, choosing Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina to deliver an official party broadside that accused the president of abandoning his pledge to seek political consensus in favor of a divisive and partisan agenda.

Delivering his party's rebuttal to Mr. Biden's first address to a joint session of Congress, Mr. Scott signaled the bitter fight to come over the president's efforts to increase government assistance to workers, students and families. The South Carolinian panned the president's $1.8 trillion American Families Plan, branding it ''big-government waste.'' He also complained that Mr. Biden had eschewed compromise with Republicans -- who have made it clear they have no intention of supporting government aid on he scale he has called for -- to push through a one-sided agenda.

The response came after many Republicans had sat stone-faced and silent in the House chamber while Democrats stood to applaud as Mr. Biden laid out his agenda, including when he mentioned how the $1.9 trillion stimulus law -- enacted this year over unified G.O.P. opposition -- had cut child poverty by more than half.

Mr. Scott, the Senate's sole Black Republican, also used his response to raise a litany of issues Republicans have sought to use as political cudgels against Democrats, including coronavirus lockdowns that shuttered schools and churches and a nationwide conversation about systemic racism that has taken hold amid protests of police killings of Black Americans.

''America is not a racist country,'' Mr. Scott said, invoking his own experience as a Black man from the South. ''It's wrong to try to use our painful past to try to dishonestly shut down debates in the present.''

Though he did not single it out by name, Mr. Scott took aim at Democrats' landmark voting rights bill, which Mr. Biden had called on Congress to quickly pass, and suggested that he was personally offended by attempts to frame it as the modern successor to the civil rights movement.

''This is not about civil rights, or our racial past,'' he said. ''It's about rigging elections in the future.''

Mr. Scott's speech, hailed by Republicans, underscored the long odds Mr. Biden faces in fulfilling his stated goal of finding a compromise with Republicans on a roster of legislation being considered in Congress, from infrastructure to child care to a policing overhaul.

Mr. Scott, 55, was tapped to deliver the rebuttal by the Republican leaders of the Senate and House, Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky and Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, who cited his long-held belief in small government and his rising profile as a unifying figure in Congress, most recently on issues of race and police reform.

As evidence that Mr. Biden's vision of more government support for ***working-class*** Americans was misguided, Mr. Scott cited his own remarkable story -- how he was ''disillusioned and angry'' and nearly failed out of school after his parents divorced and his single mother toiled to support him and his brother.

''The beauty of the American dream is that families get to define it for themselves,'' Mr. Scott said. ''We should be expanding opportunities and options for all families, not throwing money at certain issues because Democrats think they know best.''

As he concluded his address, Mr. Scott, who is deeply religious, drew on themes of redemption and grace.

''Our best future will not come from Washington schemes or socialist dreams; it will come from the American people -- Black, Hispanic, white, Asian, Republicans and Democrats,'' he said. ''Brave police officers and Black neighborhoods. We are not adversaries. We are all in this together.''

But much of his speech focused on accusing Mr. Biden and congressional Democrats of ''pulling us further and further apart,'' and centered on a theme that Republicans believe will help them reclaim majorities in the House and Senate in 2022: portraying Mr. Biden as beholden to his party's left flank.

While last week Republicans introduced their own, drastically slimmed down answer to Mr. Biden's sprawling physical infrastructure package -- offering a $568 billion counterproposal that Democrats dismissed as inadequate -- they have not offered an education and child care bill, and are not expected to offer a comprehensive alternative to the president's latest proposals.

Instead, as they awaited his speech on Wednesday afternoon, some Republicans took to the Senate floor to preemptively denounce Mr. Biden's approach. They painted the president's two-pronged infrastructure plan -- one to bolster the nation's roads and bridges and another to expand access to education and child care, carrying a total price of just over $4 trillion -- as unnecessary, expensive and intrusive government overreach.

''Behind President Biden's familiar face, it's like the most radical Washington Democrats have been handed the keys, and they are trying to speed as far left as they can possibly go before American voters ask for the car back,'' Mr. McConnell said. ''But it's not too late. This White House can shake off its daydreams of a sweeping socialist legacy that will never happen in the United States.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/us/politics/biden-republicans-rebuttal.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/us/politics/biden-republicans-rebuttal.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Republicans cited Senator Tim Scott's long-held belief in small government and his rising profile as a unifying figure in Congress in choosing him to deliver their rebuttal to President Biden's speech. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Erin Schaff/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***A Reinvented Le Pen Could Upend France's Elections***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655V-2N41-DXY4-X4X6-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Norimitsu Onishi and Constant Méheut

**Body**

The far-right presidential candidate has opened up about her personal life and tweaked her policies to gain sympathy and credibility among more mainstream voters.

STIRING-WENDEL, France -- Marine Le Pen, the far-right leader making her third attempt to become president of France, already had the backing of voters who came to listen to her recently in Stiring-Wendel, a former coal-mining town struggling to reinvent itself.

But after a 40-minute speech focusing on the rising cost of living, Ms. Le Pen succeeded in doing what even few of her supporters would have predicted just months ago: impressing them. Voters trickling out of an auditorium into the cold evening said she had become ''less extreme,'' more ''mature'' and ''self-assured'' -- even ''presidential.''

''She has softened, she is more composed, calmer, more serene,'' said Yohan Brun, 19, a student who grew up in Stiring-Wendel and had come to listen to Ms. Le Pen because ''she cares more about the French people than the other candidates.''

As France votes on Sunday, polls are predicting that this election will be a rematch of the previous one, pitting Ms. Le Pen against President Emmanuel Macron in a second-round showdown. But that does not mean that precisely the same Ms. Le Pen is running.

Ms. Le Pen has revamped her image since the last election five years ago. She has pragmatically abandoned certain ideas that had alienated mainstream voters. She has held on to others that certify her far-right credentials. And she has shifted emphasis toward pocketbook issues.

But as important, she has self-consciously sanded the rough edges off her persona in an effort to make herself appear more presidential and voter-friendly.

The makeover is part of a long and deliberate strategy by Ms. Le Pen to ''undemonize'' herself and her party, and ultimately gain the French presidency. While the effort remains unconvincing to many who consider her a wolf in sheep's clothing, it has nonetheless succeeded in giving her a last-minute surge in the polls before Sunday's election that is worrying Mr. Macron's camp.

''Marine Le Pen appears more sympathetic than Emmanuel Macron,'' said Pierre Person, a national lawmaker of the president's party, adding that he was worried that she could win.

Ms. Le Pen had learned how to talk directly to ***working-class*** French people by showcasing a simple life not that different from the lives led by her own supporters, said Jean-Yves Camus, director of the Observatory of Radical Politics and an expert on Ms. Le Pen's party, National Rally.

''The question is whether she sounds fake or real,'' Mr. Camus said. ''And to me, she sounds real.''

She has convinced some voters, too.

''Many people are afraid when they are told they will leave Europe,'' said Kurt Mehlinger, a former miner who attended the rally with his wife, Christiane Mehlinger, referring to Ms. Le Pen's past proposals to quit the eurozone, which she dropped a few years ago. ''We're more comfortable with her current platform.''

The perception of Ms. Le Pen has no doubt been helped by the contrast with Éric Zemmour, a television pundit and rival in the race, who managed to outflank her on the far right, where previously few had thought there was much room left for a politician seeking to enter the mainstream.

He has even acted as a lightning rod for the far right's past praise of President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, allowing Ms. Le Pen to reposition herself by appearing firm against Russia's invasion of Ukraine and sympathetic toward refugees fleeing the war.

That juxtaposition has left Ms. Le Pen appearing as the more presentable and acceptable far-right candidate, though it is not clear that much actually separates them.

Ms. Le Pen has dropped her opposition to dual citizenship, a longstanding core position of the far right. But she still wants to make it harder to become French and to reserve social services for the French. She wants to cut taxes for the French by cutting services to immigrants. She wants to make it illegal for Muslims to wear head scarves or other face coverings in public, even though she recently took a selfie with a teenager who was wearing one.

''She's looking to widen her electoral base while keeping the core of her program,'' Mr. Camus said.

Still, the changes mark some evolution for Ms. Le Pen and her party, which had long been identified with her father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, an antisemitic firebrand whose politics were shaped by France's wartime and colonial history.

Even before the last election, which Ms. Le Pen lost with 34 percent of the vote to Mr. Macron's 66, she expelled her father from the party, then called the National Front, and later renamed it the National Rally.

Immediately after her defeat in 2017, Ms. Le Pen and her closest allies set out working on changing her image to broaden her appeal, said Philippe Olivier, a special adviser to Ms. Le Pen and her brother-in-law.

Back then, she was seen as a ''war machine,'' ''a bull charging ahead,'' an ''ideologue,'' ''not very human'' and acting according to ''political logic,'' Mr. Olivier said. And she had always refused to speak about her private life because she felt that she and her siblings had suffered personally from their father's political career.

''She was reticent,'' Mr. Olivier said, adding that before one recent speech in which she talked about herself, she said she had ''thought about it all day.''

But recently she has opened up -- about the lasting trauma of the apparently politically motivated bombing of her childhood home in Paris; of losing friends whose parents feared letting them play with a Le Pen; of failing to keep up a legal career because of her radioactive name.

Her relations remain complicated with her father, who last year publicly flirted with the idea of supporting Mr. Zemmour over his own daughter and even remarried in a religious ceremony that Ms. Le Pen learned of only through the news media.

Ms. Le Pen has also rhapsodized about her love of cats, which she breeds. In the fall, she sat for an Oprah-like television interview at her home, accompanied by her cats and her roommate, a childhood friend. Her mother, with whom she had been estranged for 15 years, spoke emotionally about her daughter.

She earned positive reviews last month for her performance on a popular political and entertainment show. She appeared comfortable in her own skin, even disclosing that she had been romantically unattached for the past three years and, as president, would live in the Élysée Palace with just her cats.

For voters in Stiring-Wendel, a town of 12,000 people on the border with Germany, Ms. Le Pen's proposals to cut energy taxes and get tough on crime rang sympathetic.

The town became a far-right stronghold after mines began closing in the region more than a generation ago. People talk about life before and after the mines -- about the young who left, the laid-off miners who drank themselves to premature deaths, and about the town's main commercial street, where the last bookstore shut down recently.

''You see, every two or three shops, there's a storefront that is closed,'' Olivier Fegel, a 55-year-old truck driver whose father was a miner, said in the town center, a few hours before Ms. Le Pen's campaign stop.

At her pet grooming store, Karine Barth said that her business had been struggling lately because of a rise in fuel prices. ''She would bring order to the country,'' said Ms. Barth, 43, as she shaved a Pomeranian. ''There are too many foreigners in our country.''

Ms. Le Pen's emphasis on pocketbook issues was a gambit that has paid off. Robert Ménard, a hard-right mayor who supports Ms. Le Pen and is a longtime acquaintance of Mr. Zemmour, said he had dinner this year with Ms. Le Pen as her poll numbers were plummeting.

''Of course, she was worried,'' Mr. Ménard recalled, adding that some of her lieutenants were urging her to copy Mr. Zemmour's tough line on immigration and crime.

Mr. Ménard said she ignored the calls and decided to stick to pocketbook issues.

''It's at that moment when everything hung in the balance,'' he said.

Ms. Le Pen's decision to stick to the economy, the rising cost of living and voters' weakening purchasing power proved prescient as fuel and other prices spiked with the war in Ukraine.

''I'll be the president of real life and, above all, of your purchasing power,'' Ms. Le Pen said to loud applause in Stiring-Wendel.

Tellingly, though, the loudest applause came after her attacks on what she described as an ''anarchic immigration'' that was ''feeding crime and ruining our social services,'' as well as putting France at risk of ''internal secession and civil discord.''

''A stranger who comes to our home will not take advantage of our hospitality and will respect the French,'' she said.

For Vincent Vullo, a rare Macron supporter who had come to listen to Ms. Le Pen, those words were ''pure, hard-core racism'' and further proof that she had not really changed.

''She's a liar -- she wants us to believe that she's settled down and that she's more moderate and less racist than before,'' Mr. Vullo, 62, said. ''It's just her trying to get into the second round.''

But pivoting back to the cost of living, Ms. Le Pen reminded the audience that when she publicly made it her priority in the fall, some treated the topic sarcastically. Mr. Macron, she said, was the captive of globalized elites like McKinsey and other highly paid, politically unaccountable consultants.

''The people must rise against the elite bloc, against the oligarchy personified by Emmanuel Macron,'' she said, adding, ''We will win.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/world/europe/marine-le-pen-french-elections-macron.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/world/europe/marine-le-pen-french-elections-macron.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Christiane and Kurt Mehlinger at a rally for Marine Le Pen in northeast France. ''We're more comfortable with her current platform,'' Mr. Mehlinger said.

Karine Barth said rising fuel prices were a concern for businesses like her pet grooming store. Ms. Le Pen has focused her campaign on pocketbook issues.

Ms. Le Pen during a campaign rally last week in Stiring-Wendel, a former coal town in northeastern France. She has revamped her image since the last election. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREA MANTOVANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Ms. Le Pen in the embrace of her father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, in 2012, before she expelled him, an antisemitic firebrand, from her political party. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BORIS HORVAT/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** April 8, 2022

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[***In G.O.P. Rebuttal, Tim Scott Accuses Biden of Pulling Nation ‘Further Apart’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JB-NM61-JBG3-60CD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Catie Edmondson

**Highlight:** The South Carolina senator did not offer a comprehensive alternative to President Biden’s education and child-care plans. Instead, he called them “big-government waste.”

**Body**

The South Carolina senator did not offer a comprehensive alternative to President Biden’s education and child-care plans. Instead, he called them “big-government waste.”

WASHINGTON — Republicans lined up in opposition to President Biden’s latest ambitious economic package on Wednesday, choosing [*Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina to deliver an official party broadside*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/us/politics/tim-scott-rebuttal-transcript.html) that accused the president of abandoning his pledge to seek political consensus in favor of a divisive and partisan agenda.

Delivering his party’s rebuttal to Mr. [*Biden’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/us/politics/tim-scott-rebuttal-transcript.html) first address to a joint session of Congress, Mr. Scott signaled the bitter fight to come over the president’s efforts to increase government assistance to workers, students and families. The South Carolinian panned the president’s [*$1.8 trillion American Families Plan,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/us/politics/tim-scott-rebuttal-transcript.html) branding it “big-government waste.” He also complained that Mr. Biden had eschewed compromise with Republicans — who have made it clear they have no intention of supporting government aid on he scale he has called for — to push through a one-sided agenda.

The response came after many Republicans had sat stone-faced and silent in the House chamber while [*Democrats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/us/politics/tim-scott-rebuttal-transcript.html) stood to applaud as Mr. Biden laid out his agenda, including when he mentioned how the $1.9 trillion stimulus law — enacted this year over unified G.O.P. opposition — had cut child poverty by more than half.

Mr. Scott, the Senate’s sole Black Republican, also used his response to raise a litany of issues Republicans have sought to use as political cudgels against Democrats, including coronavirus lockdowns that shuttered schools and churches and a nationwide conversation about systemic racism that has taken hold amid protests of police killings of Black Americans.

“America is not a racist country,” Mr. Scott said, invoking his own experience as a Black man from the South. “It’s wrong to try to use our painful past to try to dishonestly shut down debates in the present.”

Though he did not single it out by name, Mr. Scott took aim at Democrats’ [*landmark voting rights bill*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/us/politics/tim-scott-rebuttal-transcript.html), which Mr. Biden had called on Congress to quickly pass, and suggested that he was personally offended by attempts to frame it as the modern successor to the civil rights movement.

“This is not about civil rights, or our racial past,” he said. “It’s about rigging elections in the future.”

Mr. Scott’s speech, hailed by Republicans, underscored the long odds Mr. Biden faces in fulfilling his stated goal of finding a compromise with Republicans on a roster of legislation being considered in Congress, from infrastructure to child care to a policing overhaul.

Mr. Scott, 55, was tapped to deliver the rebuttal by the Republican leaders of the Senate and House, Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky and Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, who cited his long-held belief in small government and his rising profile as a unifying figure in Congress, most recently on issues of race and police reform.

As evidence that Mr. Biden’s vision of more government support for ***working-class*** Americans was misguided, Mr. Scott cited his [*own remarkable story*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/us/politics/tim-scott-rebuttal-transcript.html) — how he was “disillusioned and angry” and nearly failed out of school after his parents divorced and his single mother toiled to support him and his brother.

“The beauty of the American dream is that families get to define it for themselves,” Mr. Scott said. “We should be expanding opportunities and options for all families, not throwing money at certain issues because Democrats think they know best.”

As he concluded his address, Mr. Scott, who is deeply religious, drew on themes of redemption and grace.

“Our best future will not come from Washington schemes or socialist dreams; it will come from the American people — Black, Hispanic, white, Asian, Republicans and Democrats,” he said. “Brave police officers and Black neighborhoods. We are not adversaries. We are all in this together.”

But much of his speech focused on accusing Mr. Biden and congressional Democrats of “pulling us further and further apart,” and centered on a theme that Republicans believe will help them reclaim majorities in the House and Senate in 2022: portraying Mr. Biden as beholden to his party’s left flank.

While last week Republicans introduced their own, drastically slimmed down answer to Mr. Biden’s sprawling physical infrastructure package — [*offering a $568 billion counterproposal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/us/politics/tim-scott-rebuttal-transcript.html) that Democrats dismissed as inadequate — they have not offered an education and child care bill, and are not expected to offer a comprehensive alternative to the president’s latest proposals.

Instead, as they awaited [*his speech*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/us/politics/tim-scott-rebuttal-transcript.html) on Wednesday afternoon, some Republicans took to the Senate floor to preemptively denounce Mr. Biden’s approach. They painted the president’s two-pronged infrastructure plan — one to bolster the nation’s roads and bridges and another to expand access to education and child care, carrying a total price of just over $4 trillion — as unnecessary, expensive and intrusive government overreach.

“Behind President Biden’s familiar face, it’s like the most radical Washington Democrats have been handed the keys, and they are trying to speed as far left as they can possibly go before American voters ask for the car back,” Mr. McConnell said. “But it’s not too late. This White House can shake off its daydreams of a sweeping socialist legacy that will never happen in the United States.”

PHOTO: Republicans cited Senator Tim Scott’s long-held belief in small government and his rising profile as a unifying figure in Congress in choosing him to deliver their rebuttal to President Biden’s speech. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Erin Schaff/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 29, 2021

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[***Berkeley vs. Berkeley Is a Fight Over the California Dream***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YN-D8D1-DXY4-X08Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Shawn Hubler, Conor Dougherty and Sophie Kasakove

**Highlight:** The state’s complex environmental laws are being weaponized in lawsuits against the University of California, Berkeley, which is under pressure to admit more and more students.

**Body**

The state’s complex environmental laws are being weaponized in lawsuits against the University of California, Berkeley, which is under pressure to admit more and more students.

BERKELEY, Calif. — Kiara Bragg has spent years imagining herself at the University of California, Berkeley — walking through Sproul Plaza, navigating crowds of students, becoming the first in her ***working-class*** family to graduate from her state’s iconic flagship school.

Phil Bokovoy imagines, too. In his mind’s eye, the city where he moved in 1983 as a graduate student is a college town where, if he had his way, the Craftsman homes would still be affordable for professors and campus life — the packed living quarters, the beer-soaked parties — would not disrupt surrounding neighborhoods.

A reasonably priced education at a world-class public university. A single-family house in a neighborhood that is clean and peaceful. For generations, these have been pillars of the California dream.

Now an epic clash between the two ideals is forcing state lawmakers to confront the limits of California’s promise, as growth collides with the state’s ability to sustainably house and educate its 40 million people.

Bristling at pressure to make room for escalating numbers of students, longtime Berkeley residents have leveraged state environmental law to accuse the oldest University of California campus of essentially polluting neighborhoods by admitting more students than the city can handle.

The case is ongoing but plaintiffs recently won a court order to [*freeze the university’s enrollment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/03/us/uc-berkeley-admissions-enrollment.html) at 2020 levels, potentially forcing more than 2,500 incoming students to defer enrollment, take a semester remotely, lose their slot or consider another campus.

Now, with admissions envelopes due out in weeks, state lawmakers are mulling short-term remedies to the court’s order and longer-term responses to the possibility that similar lawsuits could sharply restrict enrollment.

Some policymakers see no way out except through so much remote instruction that, over time, it could severely damage the brand of the University of California. Others fear an enrollment squeeze so tight that it will crowd out racial diversity or out-of-state students. Still others want to exempt campus housing from California’s environmental laws, which are famously complex and contentious.

The dispute in a famed liberal bastion has aroused passions, with some asserting that the university has finally been called to task for driving legions of students into neighborhoods not built to hold them. Others liken the lawsuit to generational theft by the older, whiter baby boomers who dominate the propertied classes in college communities throughout California.

“It’s like, ‘I got my piece of the pie, too bad for you,’” said Riya Master, a senior at Berkeley who is majoring in integrative biology and is a vice president of the campus’s student governing body.

George Kieffer, a Los Angeles civic leader and former chair of the University of California Board of Regents, said the conflict was multifaceted.

“The residents want their community to stay the same,” he said. “The parents want their students to get into the U.C. The legislators want to respond to constituent needs. And then you have California law, which people have learned to use over the years to satisfy their interests.

“All good motives. And they’re all competing. In an increasingly crowded place.”

California offers its high school graduates a subsidized college education, with a guaranteed spot at one of the 10 University of California campuses for the top 12.5 percent. The state’s sprawling network of public campuses — community colleges, California State University and the University of California — enrolls more than 2.5 million students altogether.

But competition remains intense, particularly at marquee campuses such as Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Diego and Berkeley. Demand skyrocketed during the 2008 recession as in-state students flocked to the discounted tuition and the campuses sought to increase lucrative out-of-state enrollment.

Since then, legislators have exerted relentless political pressure on the university to add in-state students. Since 2011, [*overall system enrollment*](https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/fall-enrollment-glance), which now stands at about 300,000, has grown by more than 63,000 students, enough to populate an 11th campus.

“Everyone has a kid, a grandchild, a nephew, a niece, a neighbor who essentially has perfect grades and a great SAT score and they didn’t get in to the campus where they want to get in,” said Kevin McCarty, a state legislator in Sacramento who chairs the Assembly subcommittee overseeing education budgets. Before the court order, the Legislature and Gov. Gavin Newsom called for yet another 7,000 or more California students to be added this fall.

Housing has not kept up, for the students or for other Californians. The state’s median home price, [*at $800,000,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/29/realestate/california-housing-prices.html) is more than twice the national figure, the result of a housing shortage that dates to the 1970s.

Over the past decade, the state has added a little over three times as many people as housing units and is far below the national average in housing units per capita, according to [*an analysis*](https://www.ppic.org/blog/new-housing-fails-to-make-up-for-decades-of-undersupply/?utm_source=ppic&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_campaign=blog_subscriber) from the Public Policy Institute of California. Planners and economists have for decades been warning the state that until supply meets demand, its housing problems will worsen. But until recently, California cities and neighborhood groups have steadfastly resisted this advice by using a mix of regulations and environmental lawsuits that kill and shrink new projects, or drag them out for years.

In response, the Legislature has passed a flurry of laws that increase how much housing cities have to plan for and make it harder for them to oppose new development. Legislators like Mr. McCarty have made more state money available for campus housing projects, and the University of California has started several housing initiatives.

But while lawmakers have sought a [*dizzying array of carve-outs,*](https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/By-carving-out-projects-from-California-16984806.php) they have assiduously avoided calls to overhaul the landmark law most [*frequently weaponized to block new construction*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/26/us/california-today-regulation-environmental-quality-act.html): the California Environmental Quality Act.

Also known as CEQA, the act was passed more than 50 years ago to prevent developers from ravaging the scenic state’s natural resources and wildlife. When [*the nonprofit Save Berkeley’s Neighborhoods*](http://saveberkeleysneighborhoods.org/) sued the university in 2018, it argued that the university had failed to meet CEQA requirements to sufficiently analyze the impact of the additional enrollment.

“All we have ever wanted was a legally binding commitment that they add housing before they add more students,” said Mr. Bokovoy, the president of the nonprofit and a former investment banker with a house near the campus that is worth an estimated $1.5 million. “This is about preserving Berkeley’s culture and diversity.”

The University of California system has on-campus beds for about 106,000 students, leaving roughly two out of three to compete for off-campus housing in some of the nation’s most expensive housing markets. In Berkeley, the university houses about 22 percent of its undergraduates, fewer than any other campus in the system.

Even though students make up more than a quarter of Berkeley’s population, the city, limited by its urban locale and attached to its low-rise aesthetic, has until recent years resisted development. Rent for a two-bedroom apartment runs about $4,000 monthly “and that’s for one that isn’t even nice,” said Ms. Master, the student government officer.

In 2005, the university projected that enrollment would be 33,450 by 2020, a number that became the basis for a long-range plan for developing the campus. But in 2017, Save Berkeley’s Neighborhoods discovered that enrollment had already outstripped that estimate by 30 percent.

After the university announced a plan to convert [*an acre of parking*](https://www.berkeleyside.org/2018/07/13/uc-berkeley-looks-to-develop-upper-hearst-with-housing-classrooms) into new academic space and faculty and graduate housing, Mr. Bokovoy’s group sued again, this time with the City of Berkeley. They argued that the university’s environmental impact report — which found that the additional students had no significant impacts — was inadequate.

Together, the lawsuits became the basis of a package of complex litigation over whether the university had adequately studied and mitigated the impact of its entire enrollment. Last summer, a Superior Court issued an unusual order that rolled back and capped the university’s enrollment at its 2020-21 level of 42,347 students until the school significantly expanded the environment study in its long-range growth plan.

The decision still could be reversed, but because of the order — which was [*left in place by the California Supreme Court*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/03/us/uc-berkeley-admissions-enrollment.html) last week — the university had to [*cut the number of students*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/16/education/uc-berkeley-admissions-court-ruling.html) coming to campus in the fall.

The university said it would reduce in-person fall enrollment by 2,629 students, largely by enrolling more than 1,000 incoming freshmen remotely with the understanding that they would move onto campus in January when graduating students free up some housing slots. The transfer of hundreds of students will be delayed and some students, mostly in graduate programs, will simply not be offered admission.

The continuing fight is sowing angst. Ms. Bragg, 20, said she had been nervously checking her phone for email updates ever since she received the enrollment freeze notice.

A first-generation college student, she said she had yearned to study at the University of California, Berkeley, since her early teens and has worked a full-time job to pay for the community college credits necessary to apply there.

If offered a spot as an online student, she said, she would likely accept it. Still, so much of what she has dreamed about over the years has involved exposure to peers far from her home in the desert exurbs of Riverside County.

Not long ago, she said, she visited the Berkeley campus and soaked in the culture so familiar to Californians — the way alumni call the school “Cal” rather than “U.C. Berkeley,” the way students rushing across campus walkways avoid stepping on the Berkeley seal lest it hex their chance at a 4.0 grade-point average.

“I felt like I was just a student there,” she said. “I pictured myself there, one of them.”

Kirsten Noyes contributed research.

Kirsten Noyes contributed research.

PHOTOS: PHIL BOKOVOY, the president of Save Berkeley’s Neighborhoods. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER PRATO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); KIARA BRAGG, on visiting the U.C. Berkeley campus. Now she faces the prospect of an online study program. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ARIANA DREHSLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 11, 2022

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[***Elizabeth Warren: A Populist for the Professional Class***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YBG-JRP1-DXY4-X1B6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Highlight:** White, college-educated voters swooned. But her branding as the candidate with “a plan for that” eclipsed her own up-by-the-bootstraps biography.

**Body**

White, college-educated voters swooned. But her branding as the candidate with “a plan for that” eclipsed her own up-by-the-bootstraps biography.

BOSTON — It is, without a doubt, one of the most compelling stories that Elizabeth Warren tells.

She was just a girl when her father (“my daddy,” she calls him) had a heart attack. The family lost its station wagon and came close to losing its home. That is when her mother dug out “the dress.” “You know the one,” Ms. Warren says of the outfit that her mother saved for weddings, funerals and graduations. Muttering to herself “we will not lose this house, we will not lose this house,” her mother slipped it on, marched to Sears and won a minimum-wage job to keep their family afloat.

From Iowa to New Hampshire to California, most of the 100,000-plus people who have taken “selfies” with Ms. Warren have heard some version of the story, often listening in rapt silence. But Ms. Warren’s presidential campaign has never packaged the wrenching tale into a tidy television commercial for the millions of Americans who will vote on [*Super Tuesday*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/primary-results-biden-sanders-03-04/), or who voted in any other state so far.

What Ms. Warren, the senator from Massachusetts, calls her upbringing on the “ragged edge of the middle class” is foundational for her progressive agenda of a more assertive federal government that helps the less fortunate: a higher minimum wage, universal child care, a wealth tax. But her Oklahoma origin story — she went by Betsy at the time — has largely been lost in a 2020 race where she has become defined chiefly as the wonkish “plan for that” candidate.

“What too many voters see,” said Paul Begala, a Democratic strategist who worked on President Bill Clinton’s 1992 campaign, “is Professor Warren from Harvard Law and not Betsy from Norman, Oklahoma.”

Mr. Begala favorably compared Ms. Warren’s up-by-the-bootstraps life with his old client’s: a kid from the South who grew up amid hardship, ended up in an Ivy League institution and ultimately ran for president.

Ms. Warren’s relentless stream of erudite and innovative policy proposals — her latest would address the economic and medical implications of the coronavirus — helped lift her to front-runner status early last fall. She wowed the professional progressive class, delighted academics and activists and captured the imagination of MSNBC’s attentive audience.

But her populism and popularity never fully trickled down. Even at her peak, her strongest support came from what political operatives call the “wine track” of Democratic politics: white, affluent and college-educated voters, especially women.

“It’s both what got her to where she is but maybe prevented her from reaching beyond that,” said Joe Trippi, who served in 2004 as campaign manager for Howard Dean, another candidate in a long history of Democrats who won over the “wine track” but ultimately lost the nomination.

Now, as voters head to the polls on Super Tuesday, Ms. Warren’s campaign has all but admitted her pathway to winning the Democratic nomination outright has vanished. She enters March seeking to accumulate delegates for a potential contested convention and is most realistically hunting for them in more educated enclaves, like Seattle and Denver, where she recently held rallies and is investing heavily in advertising.

In many ways, the arc of the Warren candidacy is the story of her cornering an upscale demographic early, only to become confined to it, and then lose her grip on it.

Senator Bernie Sanders’s democratic socialist pitch has been more effective in winning over the ***working class***, while former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. has maintained overwhelming popularity among black voters.

At her high-water mark, last October, Ms. Warren had consolidated an enviable 38 percent support from college-educated white voters, according to a Quinnipiac poll. But former Mayor Pete Buttigieg soon made serious inroads with less ideological upscale white voters and finished ahead of Ms. Warren in each of the first four voting states. Senator Amy Klobuchar sapped some support from college-educated women, particularly in New Hampshire.

The back-to-back exits of Mr. Buttigieg and Ms. Klobuchar on Sunday and Monday could help Ms. Warren win back some those votes, even as both formally endorsed Mr. Biden.

In interviews with more than 20 Warren allies, former advisers, rival campaigns and independent Democratic strategists, everyone wondered how her own narrative — despite the fact that she starts almost every event with at least a speed-read of her biography — ended up as a casualty of the campaign. The clearest example, most agreed, is how little of it she put in paid advertising.

Through February, the television ad that her campaign had spent the most money to air, according to data from the media-tracking firm Advertising Analytics, was about her pledge not to appoint big donors to “cushy ambassadorships.” Four ads that at least mentioned her Oklahoma upbringing ran fewer times combined, according to the firm’s database.

The campaign said that about 40 percent of its overall television ad budget went to what it considered biographical ads, though that counted ads mostly focused on her role creating a new federal consumer agency, not her early life. A Warren adviser added that her ads were tested and the campaign aired its best-performing spots.

Of course, the days before a make-or-break moment lend themselves to 2020 hindsight, and it’s possible that a “Betsy from Oklahoma”-heavy campaign would have backfired, with rivals grumbling about authenticity.

Ms. Warren has long since graduated from her childhood economic insecurity to life with a golden retriever, Harvard tenure and a Senate sinecure. Her decision to undertake a DNA test in late 2018 to show Native American heritage haunted her candidacy in its early months, and could have complicated efforts to focus on the rest of her family story, however evocative.

The results in February plainly demonstrate the disconnect between her candidacy and the more blue-collar segments of the electorate, as her performance correlated closely with education levels, rising steadily in precincts where the share of those with college degrees was higher.

In Iowa, she emerged with the most delegates in only a single county, Johnson, the state’s best educated and the home of the University of Iowa.

In New Hampshire, exit polling showed that Ms. Warren sank into a statistical tie among those without a college degree with Representative Tulsi Gabbard, who has been mostly an afterthought in the race.

In Nevada, she again struggled among those who never attended college, earning about half as much support as Tom Steyer, the billionaire businessman who, according to entrance polling, was a nonfactor in the overall race before he dropped out Saturday. Her best demographic groups? Those with advanced degrees and regular users of Twitter.

In South Carolina, exit polls showed Ms. Warren garnering only 3 percent support among those who never attended college (the same level as Mr. Buttigieg).

From the start, Ms. Warren’s campaign has made efforts to connect with ***working-class*** and nonwhite voters. There was an early trip to the Mississippi Delta, a visit to Kermit, W.Va., to talk about the [*opioid crisis there*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/primary-results-biden-sanders-03-04/), and, on the eve of Super Tuesday, a last stop in California in heavily Latino East Los Angeles.

Her own story — she waited tables at 13, dropped out of college and got married at 19, had a child at 22, was divorced at 30 — has been woven into her stump speech, too. But only a tiny fraction of the electorate will ever see a candidate in person.

“She does talk about her story on the trail, but think about who goes to rallies — well-educated activists, not noncollege voters,” said Meredith Kelly, who served as communications director for Senator Kirsten Gillibrand during her presidential campaign. “A bigger and earlier spend on television to talk about her ***working-class*** roots would likely have gone a long way.”

Ms. Warren’s most visible branding, instead, became around her many plans.

“She speaks my love language,” as Representative Ayanna S. Pressley, a top surrogate and national co-chair, liked to say when introducing Ms. Warren. “Policy.”

Some allies grumbled that such framing was an effective way to win over only postdoctoral students, not a broad-based political coalition.

Most of the contrast that Ms. Warren drew early on with her rivals was more high-minded and process-oriented than visceral. It wasn’t until Michael R. Bloomberg, the former New York mayor, entered the race that her attacks turned more personal.

[*One of the first times*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/primary-results-biden-sanders-03-04/) she called out Mr. Buttigieg by name was to demand that he reveal his McKinsey consulting clients and open his fund-raisers to the press (there was also, along with Mr. Sanders, the “wine cave” fund-raising attack). There was the ambassadorships ad saying she was the only Democrat pledging not to appoint big donors.

And in Denver a week ago, she pegged the [*“big diff”*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/primary-results-biden-sanders-03-04/)between her and Mr. Sanders to be on the filibuster, talking through the arcana of how Senate parliamentary procedure is used to enact an agenda of “big, structural change.”

“‘I have a plan’ — it’s an intellectual argument,” Mr. Trippi, the Dean campaign manager, said. “Ten-point plans just don’t have as much emotional appeal.”

Mr. Begala, the former Clinton adviser who called Ms. Warren’s biography “as compelling a story as anybody in the race,” pointed to her campaign’s decision not to rely on a polling firm as a challenge that most likely made it harder to determine how the candidate best connected with voters. In 1992, he said, the Clinton campaign did not realize the power of his biography almost until deep into the race.

“You know what? I certainly hope when she goes to a doctor, she lets them use a thermometer. I’m sorry I have contempt for that view. To professionally measure and strategize is not to be inauthentic,” Mr. Begala said. “She doesn’t go with her gut on health care or Wall Street regulations. She talks to experts — and she is one herself.”

Running to be the first female president is another complicating factor. Allies and rivals alike acknowledged her gender has most likely played a role in how she was perceived.

One former Warren adviser said that while Ms. Warren’s biography and agenda should, in concept, appeal to blue-collar types, she had long produced a similar negative reaction among noncollege white men to Hillary Clinton that was “just not fair.”

“It’s an extra challenge to be a very obviously well-educated, articulate female,” said Barney Frank, the former Massachusetts representative, who also worked with Ms. Warren after the 2008 economic crisis. “There is a cultural element there and she clearly is at the more high end, as things go.”

If Ms. Warren did not aggressively blanket the airwaves with her personal story, her rivals jumped at the chance to try to define her. They cast her as either talking down to or looking down at voters, often in terms that the Warren camp viewed as gendered.

Former representative Beto O’Rourke called her “punitive.” Mr. Biden accused her of “[*an elitism*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/primary-results-biden-sanders-03-04/) that working- and middle-class people do not share and branded her a “my way or the highway” politician.

Doug Rubin, a Massachusetts strategist who worked on Ms. Warren’s 2012 Senate campaign and who advised Mr. Steyer during his run, said he had been surprised how absent Ms. Warren’s telling of her own biography has been from the 2020 race.

“I don’t see that story being told to any extent at all, and given her resources that’s a surprise to me,” he said. “She is absolutely not this caricature of a Harvard professor. She is the exact opposite.”

PHOTO: Senator Elizabeth Warren at a recent town hall-style event in Seattle, an educated enclave where she is investing heavily in advertising. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RUTH FREMSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2020

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[***‘La French Tech’ Arrives Under Macron, but Proves No Panacea***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655V-F631-DXY4-X08T-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** The president has brought innovation, jobs and growth. Still, resentments fester on the eve of the presidential election.

**Body**

The president has brought innovation, jobs and growth. Still, resentments fester on the eve of the presidential election.

PARIS — In full Steve Jobs mode, President Emmanuel Macron of France donned a black turtleneck in January and [*took to Twitter*](https://twitter.com/EmmanuelMacron/status/1482963796629012482) to celebrate the creation in France of 25 “unicorn” start-ups — companies with a market value of over 1 billion euros, or almost $1.1 billion.

He declared that France’s start-up economy was “changing the lives of French people” and “strengthening our sovereignty.” It was also helping to create jobs: Unemployment has [*fallen*](https://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/2405582#titre-croissance) to 7.4 percent, the lowest level in a decade.

The start-up boom was a milestone for a young president elected five years ago as a restless disrupter, promising to pry open the economy and make it competitive in the 21st century.

To some extent, Mr. Macron has succeeded, luring billions of euros in foreign investments and creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs, many in tech start-ups, in a country whose resistance to change is stubborn. But disruption is just that, and the president has at the same time left many French feeling unsettled and unhappy, left behind or ignored.

As Mr. Macron [*seeks re-election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/04/world/europe/french-election-le-pen-macron.html?searchResultPosition=2) starting on Sunday, it is two countries that will vote — a mainly urban France that sees the need for change to meet the era’s sweeping technological and economic challenges, and a France of the “periphery,” wary of innovation, struggling to get by, alarmed by immigration and resentful of a leader seen as embodying the arrogance of the privileged.

Which France shows up at voting booths in greater numbers will determine the outcome.

In many Western societies, the simultaneous spread of technology and inequality has posed acute problems, stirring social tensions, and France has proved no exception. If the disenchanted France prevails, [*Marine Le Pen*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/world/europe/marine-le-pen-french-elections-macron.html), the perennial candidate of the nationalist right, will most likely prevail, too.

Worried that he may have lost the left by favoring start-up entrepreneurship and market reforms, Mr. Macron has in the past week been multiplying appeals to the left, resorting to phrases like “our lives are worth more than their profits” to suggest his perceived rightward lurch was not the whole story.

He told France Inter radio that “fraternity” was the most important word in the French national motto, and said during a visit to Brittany that “solidarity” and “equality of opportunity” would be the central themes of an eventual second term.

The pledges looked like signs of growing anxiety about the election’s outcome. After several months in which Mr. Macron’s re-election had appeared virtually assured, the gap between him and Ms. Le Pen has closed. The leading two candidates in Sunday’s vote will go through to a runoff on April 24.

The election will be largely decided by perceptions of the economy. In Mr. Macron’s favor, the country has bounced back faster than expected from coronavirus lockdowns, with economic [*growth reaching 7 percent*](https://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/6206553) after a devastating pandemic-induced recession.

The most significant cultural transformation has come in the area of tech, where Mr. Macron’s determination to create a start-up culture centered around new technology has brought changes the government considers essential to the future of France.

Cédric O, the secretary of state for the digital sector, wearing jeans and a white dress shirt, no tie, admits to being obsessed. Day after long day, he plots the future of “la French tech” from his spacious office at the Finance Ministry.

Five years ago, that may have seemed quixotic, but something has stirred. “It’s vital to be obsessed because the risk France and Europe are facing is to be kicked out of history,” Mr. O, 39, said, borrowing a line often used by Mr. Macron. “We have to get back into the international technological race.”

Toward that end, Mr. Macron [*opened Station F*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/29/business/station-f-tech-incubator-france.html?searchResultPosition=2), a mammoth incubator project in Paris representing France’s start-up ambitions, and earmarked nearly €10 billion in tax credits and other inducements to lure research activity and artificial intelligence business. A new bank was created to help finance start-ups.

The president wined and dined multinational chief executives, creating an [*annual gathering at Versailles*](https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/choose-france) called “Choose France.”

Since 2019, France has become the leading destination for foreign investment in Europe, and more than 70 investment projects worth €12 billion have been pledged by foreign multinationals at the Versailles gatherings, said Franck Riester, France’s foreign trade minister.

In the past four years, IBM, SAP of Germany and DeepMind, the London-based machine learning company owned by Google’s parent, Alphabet, have increased investment in France and created thousands of jobs.

Facebook and Google have also bolstered their French presence and their artificial intelligence teams in Paris. Salesforce, the American cloud computing company, is moving ahead with over €2 billion in pledged investments.

“Macron brought a culture shift where France was suddenly open to the world of funders,” said Thomas Clozel, a doctor by training and the founder in 2016 of [*Owkin*](https://owkin.com/connect?utm_source=adwords&amp;utm_medium=cpc&amp;utm_campaign=connect&amp;utm_term=owkin&amp;utm_campaign=Owkin+Connect&amp;utm_source=adwords&amp;utm_medium=ppc&amp;hsa_acc=2559764001&amp;hsa_cam=12642599469&amp;hsa_grp=125799206091&amp;hsa_ad=537321099966&amp;hsa_src=g&amp;hsa_tgt=aud-1251954233473:kwd-332741499574&amp;hsa_kw=owkin&amp;hsa_mt=b&amp;hsa_net=adwords&amp;hsa_ver=3&amp;gclid=CjwKCAjwur-SBhB6EiwA5sKtjsJipSLB6mVmgpgv5XtwbTzAyANA9EHdDdWIWK5v8gYk8BC0-uL5ERoCr5QQAvD_BwE), a start-up that uses Artificial Intelligence to personalize and improve medical treatment. “He made everything easy for start-up entrepreneurs and so changed the view of France as an anticapitalist society.”

François Hollande, Mr. Macron’s Socialist Party predecessor, had famously declared in 2012: “My enemy is the world of finance.” As a result, Mr. Clozel said, securing funds as a French start-up was so problematic that he chose to incorporate in the United States.

No longer.

“Today, I am thinking of reincorporating in France,” he said. “The ease of dealing with the government, the consortium of start-ups helping one another, and the new French tech pride are compelling.”

Among the start-ups that have had a significant effect on French life are Doctolib, valued at €5.8 billion, a website that allows patients to arrange for medical appointments and tests online, and Back Market, an online market for reconditioned tech gadgets.

They began life before Mr. Macron took office, but have grown exponentially in the past five years.

“I have made 56 investments in the last two years, and 53 of them are in France,” said Jonathan Benhamou, a French entrepreneur who founded PeopleDoc, a company that simplifies access to information for human resources departments.

Now funding new ventures and focusing on a new start-up called [*Resilience*](https://www.resilience.care/a-propos) in the field of personalized cancer care, Mr. Benhamou credits Mr. Macron with “giving investors confidence in stability and creating a virtuous cycle.”

Talented engineers no longer go elsewhere because there is an “ecosystem” for them in France, Mr. O said.

Mr. Macron has insisted that opening the economy is consistent with maintaining protections for French workers and that the arrival of la French tech does not mean the embrace of the no-holds-barred capitalism behind the churn of American creativity.

Despite the president’s overhauls, France remains one of the [*most expensive countries*](https://www.oecd.org/france/taxing-wages-france.pdf) for payroll taxes, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, with hourly labor costs of nearly €38, close to levels seen in Sweden, Norway and other northern European countries.

“We know that we have to go further,” Mr. Riester, the foreign trade minister, said in a recent interview. “We still have some brakes that could be taken off the economy, and we have to cut some red tape in the future.”

“But we are also convinced we will maintain a different system than in the United States,” he added. “It’s our culture and history, and at the end of the day, we think it could be better for attracting talent from all over the world.”

Before Mr. Macron was elected, unemployment hovered around 10 percent, growth was anemic and a wealth tax, among other fiscal measures, had deterred foreign investment. France was widely perceived as an anti-entrepreneurship nation.

Mr. Macron cut France’s corporate tax rate to 25 percent from 33 percent and introduced a 30 percent flat tax on capital gains. He simplified the [*labyrinthine labor code*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/04/world/europe/emmanuel-macron-france-economy-labor-law.html?searchResultPosition=1), making hiring and firing easier. His government channeled billions of dollars into retraining programs and [*made it tougher*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/09/business/macron-unemployment-france.html?searchResultPosition=4) to keep receiving unemployment benefits.

These policies have spurred the economy while generating much hostility toward the president in a France still deeply wedded to its system of social solidarity. It is a country that tends to believe that if work has its place, quality of life should hold a greater place. The anger and alienation that set off the Yellow Vest movement in 2018 still lurk just beneath the surface.

Mr. Macron’s campaign proposal that the retirement age be raised to 65 from 62 — rejected by Ms. Le Pen — has been greeted with widespread outrage.

While entrepreneurs are creating new companies faster than ever, many jobs are precarious. Delivery workers for UberEats, Deliveroo, Amazon and other online shopping portals have [*little income security*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/16/business/uber-eats-deliveroo-glovo-migrants.html?searchResultPosition=1) and scarce benefits. A number of French [*industries remain troubled*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/05/world/europe/macron-france-election-amiens.html?searchResultPosition=1), despite Mr. Macron’s vows to forge a manufacturing revival.

The troubles in these parts of the economy are deeply felt, and that is where Mr. Macron is vulnerable.

An [*abrupt rise*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/01/business/economy/eurozone-inflation.html?searchResultPosition=2) in the cost of living, driven in part by Russia’s war in Ukraine, has quickly become one of the biggest issues facing candidates.

During a recent visit to a ***working-class*** area of Dijon — one of very few campaign stops by a president who has often seemed more concerned about discussing the war in Ukraine with President [*Vladimir V. Putin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/world/europe/macron-france-russia-ukraine.html?searchResultPosition=2) of Russia than talking about the looming election — Mr. Macron was hectored by the crowd.

“You don’t realize,” said one man. “Put yourself in the place of a French family. Shopping, paying for gas, it’s horrible!”

Asked by a woman how it was possible to survive on the minimum government handout of about $620 a month, Mr. Macron said, “I have never thought that giving a check to people in distress was the way to solve their problems.”

Rather, he said, the essential thing was to find ways to help them back into the workplace.

PHOTOS: President Emmanuel Macron at a rally this month in Nanterre. As France heads to the polls, there are some festering resentments over Mr. Macron’s economic policies. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); In November 2018, rallies across France called “yellow vest” protested the high cost of fuel, above left. Station F, above right, a mammoth incubator project in Paris, is the country’s new technical hub and represents the start-up ambitions that France is promoting. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLY TRIBALLEAU/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES; ROBERTO FRANKENBERG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 11, 2022

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[***A Reinvented Marine Le Pen Threatens to Upend French Elections***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655N-C901-DXY4-X3R1-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** The far-right presidential candidate has opened up about her personal life and tweaked her policies to gain sympathy and credibility among more mainstream voters.

**Body**

The far-right presidential candidate has opened up about her personal life and tweaked her policies to gain sympathy and credibility among more mainstream voters.

STIRING-WENDEL, France — [*Marine Le Pen*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/marine-le-pen), the far-right leader making her third attempt to become president of France, already had the backing of voters who came to listen to her recently in Stiring-Wendel, a former coal-mining town struggling to reinvent itself.

But after a 40-minute speech focusing on the rising cost of living, Ms. Le Pen succeeded in doing what even few of her supporters would have predicted just months ago: impressing them. Voters trickling out of an auditorium into the cold evening said she had become “less extreme,” more “mature” and “self-assured” — even “presidential.”

“She has softened, she is more composed, calmer, more serene,” said Yohan Brun, 19, a student who grew up in Stiring-Wendel and had come to listen to Ms. Le Pen because “she cares more about the French people than the other candidates.”

As [*France votes on Sunday*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/france-presidential-election-2022.html), polls are predicting that this election will be a rematch of the previous one, [*pitting Ms. Le Pen against President Emmanuel Macron*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/04/world/europe/french-election-le-pen-macron.html) in a second-round showdown. But that does not mean that precisely the same Ms. Le Pen is running.

Ms. Le Pen has [*revamped her image since the last election five years ago*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/15/world/europe/france-lepen.html). She has pragmatically abandoned certain ideas that had alienated mainstream voters. She has held on to others that certify her far-right credentials. And she has shifted emphasis toward pocketbook issues.

But as important, she has self-consciously sanded [*the rough edges*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/04/world/europe/france-marine-le-pen-acquitted-isis.html) off her persona in an effort to make herself appear more presidential and voter-friendly.

The makeover is part of a [*long and deliberate strategy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/13/world/europe/france-far-right-national-rally-le-pen-macron.html) by Ms. Le Pen to [*“undemonize” herself and her party*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/13/world/europe/marine-le-pen-national-front-party.html), and ultimately gain the French presidency. While the effort remains unconvincing to many who consider her a wolf in sheep’s clothing, it has nonetheless succeeded in giving her [*a last-minute surge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/04/world/europe/french-election-le-pen-macron.html) in the polls before Sunday’s election that is worrying Mr. Macron’s camp.

“Marine Le Pen appears more sympathetic than Emmanuel Macron,” said Pierre Person, a national lawmaker of the president’s party, adding that he was worried that she could win.

Ms. Le Pen had learned how to talk directly to ***working-class*** French people by showcasing a simple life not that different from the lives led by her own supporters, said Jean-Yves Camus, director of the Observatory of Radical Politics and an expert on Ms. Le Pen’s party, National Rally.

“The question is whether she sounds fake or real,” Mr. Camus said. “And to me, she sounds real.”

She has convinced some voters, too.

“Many people are afraid when they are told they will leave Europe,” said Kurt Mehlinger, a former miner who attended the rally with his wife, Christiane Mehlinger, referring to Ms. Le Pen’s past proposals to quit the eurozone, which she dropped a few years ago. “We’re more comfortable with her current platform.”

The perception of Ms. Le Pen has no doubt been helped by the contrast with [*Éric Zemmour*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/30/world/europe/eric-zemmour-france-president.html), a television pundit and rival in the race, who managed to [*outflank her on the far right*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/world/europe/eric-zemmour-macron-france-election.html), where previously few had thought there was much room left for a politician seeking to enter the mainstream.

He has even acted as a lightning rod for the [*far right’s past praise of President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/26/world/europe/russia-putin-matteo-salvini-marine-le-pen.html), allowing Ms. Le Pen to reposition herself by appearing firm against Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and sympathetic toward refugees fleeing the war.

That juxtaposition has left Ms. Le Pen appearing as the more presentable and acceptable far-right candidate, though it is not clear that much actually separates them.

Ms. Le Pen has dropped her opposition to dual citizenship, a longstanding core position of the far right. But she still wants to make it harder to become French and to reserve social services for the French. She wants to cut taxes for the French by cutting services to immigrants. She wants to make it illegal for Muslims to wear head scarves or other face coverings in public, even though she recently [*took a selfie with a teenager who was wearing one*](https://twitter.com/ZemmourEric/status/1503421965629104135).

“She’s looking to widen her electoral base while keeping the core of her program,” Mr. Camus said.

Still, the changes mark some evolution for Ms. Le Pen and her party, which had long been identified with her father, [*Jean-Marie Le Pen*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/16/world/europe/lepen-memoir-france-national-front.html), an antisemitic firebrand whose politics were shaped by France’s wartime and colonial history.

Even before the last election, which Ms. Le Pen lost with 34 percent of the vote to Mr. Macron’s 66, [*she expelled her father from the party*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/21/world/europe/jean-marie-le-pen-france-national-front-party.html), then called the National Front, and [*later renamed it the National Rally*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/11/world/europe/national-front-france.html).

Immediately after [*her defeat in 2017*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/07/world/europe/emmanuel-macron-france-election-marine-le-pen.html), Ms. Le Pen and her closest allies set out working on changing her image to broaden her appeal, said Philippe Olivier, a special adviser to Ms. Le Pen and her brother-in-law.

Back then, she was seen as a “war machine,” “a bull charging ahead,” an “ideologue,” “not very human” and acting according to “political logic,” Mr. Olivier said. And she had always refused to speak about her private life because she felt that she and her siblings had suffered personally from their father’s political career.

“She was reticent,” Mr. Olivier said, adding that before one recent speech in which she talked about herself, she said she had “thought about it all day.”

But recently she has opened up — about the lasting trauma of the apparently politically motivated bombing of her childhood home in Paris; of losing friends whose parents feared letting them play with a Le Pen; of failing to keep up a legal career because of her radioactive name.

Her relations remain complicated with her father, who last year publicly flirted with the idea of supporting Mr. Zemmour over his own daughter and even remarried in a religious ceremony that Ms. Le Pen learned of only through the news media.

Ms. Le Pen has also rhapsodized about her love of cats, which she breeds. In the fall, she sat for an [*Oprah-like television interview*](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=189869986644384) at her home, accompanied by her cats and her roommate, a childhood friend. Her mother, with whom she had been estranged for 15 years, spoke emotionally about her daughter.

She earned positive reviews last month for [*her performance*](https://www.canalplus.com/actualites/face-a-baba-emission-du-16-mars-2022/h/18300879_50013) on a popular political and entertainment show. She appeared comfortable in her own skin, even disclosing that she had been romantically unattached for the past three years and, as president, would live in the Élysée Palace with just her cats.

For voters in Stiring-Wendel, a town of 12,000 people on the border with Germany, Ms. Le Pen’s proposals to cut energy taxes and get tough on crime rang sympathetic.

The town became a far-right stronghold after mines began closing in the region more than a generation ago. People talk about life before and after the mines — about the young who left, the laid-off miners who drank themselves to premature deaths, and about the town’s main commercial street, where the last bookstore shut down recently.

“You see, every two or three shops, there’s a storefront that is closed,” Olivier Fegel, a 55-year-old truck driver whose father was a miner, said in the town center, a few hours before Ms. Le Pen’s campaign stop.

At her pet grooming store, Karine Barth said that her business had been struggling lately because of a rise in fuel prices. “She would bring order to the country,” said Ms. Barth, 43, as she shaved a Pomeranian. “There are too many foreigners in our country.”

Ms. Le Pen’s emphasis on pocketbook issues was a gambit that has paid off. [*Robert Ménard*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/03/world/europe/french-mayor-who-once-defended-journalists-now-denounces-immigrants.html), a hard-right mayor who supports Ms. Le Pen and is a longtime acquaintance of Mr. Zemmour, said he had dinner this year with Ms. Le Pen as her poll numbers were plummeting.

“Of course, she was worried,” Mr. Ménard recalled, adding that some of her lieutenants were urging her to copy Mr. Zemmour’s tough line on immigration and crime.

Mr. Ménard said she ignored the calls and decided to stick to pocketbook issues.

“It’s at that moment when everything hung in the balance,” he said.

Ms. Le Pen’s decision to stick to the economy, the rising cost of living and voters’ weakening purchasing power proved prescient as fuel and other prices spiked with the war in Ukraine.

“I’ll be the president of real life and, above all, of your purchasing power,” Ms. Le Pen said to loud applause in Stiring-Wendel.

Tellingly, though, the loudest applause came after her attacks on what she described as an “anarchic immigration” that was “feeding crime and ruining our social services,” as well as putting France at risk of “internal secession and civil discord.”

“A stranger who comes to our home will not take advantage of our hospitality and will respect the French,” she said.

For Vincent Vullo, a rare Macron supporter who had come to listen to Ms. Le Pen, those words were “pure, hard-core racism” and further proof that she had not really changed.

“She’s a liar — she wants us to believe that she’s settled down and that she’s more moderate and less racist than before,” Mr. Vullo, 62, said. “It’s just her trying to get into the second round.”

But pivoting back to the cost of living, Ms. Le Pen reminded the audience that when she publicly made it her priority in the fall, some treated the topic sarcastically. Mr. Macron, she said, was the captive of globalized elites like [*McKinsey*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/world/europe/macron-france-consultants-mckinsey-campaign.html) and other highly paid, politically unaccountable consultants.

“The people must rise against the elite bloc, against the oligarchy personified by Emmanuel Macron,” she said, adding, “We will win.”

PHOTOS: Christiane and Kurt Mehlinger at a rally for Marine Le Pen in northeast France. “We’re more comfortable with her current platform,” Mr. Mehlinger said.; Karine Barth said rising fuel prices were a concern for businesses like her pet grooming store. Ms. Le Pen has focused her campaign on pocketbook issues.; Ms. Le Pen during a campaign rally last week in Stiring-Wendel, a former coal town in northeastern France. She has revamped her image since the last election. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREA MANTOVANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Ms. Le Pen in the embrace of her father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, in 2012, before she expelled him, an antisemitic firebrand, from her political party. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BORIS HORVAT/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** April 8, 2022

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[***Race and the Coming Liberal Jolt***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62J2-FK21-JBG3-61SR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 27, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 23; BRET STEPHENS

**Length:** 934 words

**Byline:** By Bret Stephens

**Body**

Americans breathed a collective sigh of relief last week after Derek Chauvin was convicted of murdering George Floyd. The crime was heinous, the verdict just, the moral neat. If you think that systemic racism is the defining fact of race relations in 21st-century America, then Chauvin's knee on Floyd's neck is its defining image.

But what about a case like that of Ma'Khia Bryant, a Black teenager who was shot and killed last week by Nicholas Reardon, a white police officer in Columbus, Ohio, at the instant that she was swinging a knife at a woman who had her back against a car?

Ben Crump, the Floyd family's lawyer, accused the Columbus police in a tweet of killing ''an unarmed 15yo Black girl.'' Valerie Jarrett, the former Obama adviser, tweeted that Bryant ''was killed because a police officer immediately decided to shoot her multiple times in order to break up a knife fight.'' Jarrett wants to ''Demand accountability'' and ''Fight for justice.''

An alternative view: Maybe there wasn't time for Officer Reardon, in an 11-second interaction, to ''de-escalate'' the situation, as he is now being faulted for failing to do. And maybe the balance of our sympathies should lie not with the would-be perpetrator of a violent assault but with the cop who saved a Black life -- namely that of Tionna Bonner, who nearly had Bryant's knife thrust into her.

That's a thought that many, perhaps most, Americans share, even if they are increasingly reluctant to say it out loud. Why reluctant? Because in this era of with-us-or-against-us politics, to have misgivings about the left's new ''anti-racist'' narrative is to run the risk of being denounced as a racist. Much better to nod along at your office's diversity, equity and inclusion sessions than suggest that enforced political indoctrination should not become a staple of American workplace culture.

And yet those doubts and misgivings go to the heart of what used to be thought of as liberalism. The result will be a liberal crackup similar to the one in the late 1960s that broke liberalism as America's dominant political force for a generation.

Morally and philosophically, liberalism believes in individual autonomy, which entails a concept of personal responsibility. The current model of anti-racism scoffs at this: It divides the world into racial identities, which in turn are governed by systems of privilege and powerlessness. Liberalism believes in process: A trial or contest is fair if standards are consistent and rules are equitable, irrespective of outcome. Anti-racism is determined to make a process achieve a desired outcome. Liberalism finds appeals to racial favoritism inherently suspect, even offensive. Anti-racism welcomes such favoritism, provided it's in the name of righting past wrongs.

Above all, liberalism believes that truth tends to be many-shaded and complex. Anti-racism is a great simplifier. Good and evil. Black and white.

This is where the anti-racism narrative will profoundly alienate liberal-minded America, even as it entrenches itself in schools, universities, corporations and other institutions of American life.

It's possible to look at Floyd's murder as the epitome of evil and not see a racist motive in every bad encounter between a white cop and a minority suspect, including the recent shootings of Adam Toledo in Chicago and Daunte Wright in Minnesota. It's possible to think that the police make too many assumptions about young Black men, sometimes with tragic consequences, and still recognize that young Black men commit violent crimes at a terribly disproportionate rate. It's possible to believe that effective policing requires that cops gain the trust of the communities they serve while recognizing that those communities are ill served when cops are afraid to do their jobs.

It is also possible to recognize that we have miles to go in ending racism while also objecting to the condescending assumptions and illiberal methods of the anti-racist creed. The idea that white skin automatically confers ''privilege'' in America is a strange concept to millions of ***working-class*** whites who have endured generations of poverty while missing out on the benefits of the past 50 years of affirmative action programs.

Similarly, the idea that past discrimination or even present-day inequality justifies explicit racial preferences in government policy is an affront to liberal values, and will become only more so as the practices become more common. In Oakland the mayor backed an initiative that was to provide $500 a month to low-income families, but not if they were white. In Vermont, the state has given people of color priority for Covid vaccines.

Ibram X. Kendi, the most important anti-racist thinker today, argues that ''the only remedy to past discrimination is present discrimination. The only remedy to present discrimination is future discrimination.'' Some liberals will go along with this. Many others will find themselves drifting rightward, much as a past generation of disaffected liberals did.

Joe Biden's resounding victory and his progressive policies are supposed to mark the real end of the Reaganite era of American politics. Don't be surprised if they're a prelude to its return, just as the last era of progressive excess ushered in its beginning.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/26/opinion/race-police-violence-liberalism.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/26/opinion/race-police-violence-liberalism.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Roberto Schmidt/Agence France-Presse -- Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 27, 2021

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[***Teenagers in The Times: March 2022***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655M-DTC1-DXY4-X2YK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 7, 2022 Thursday 05:00 EST

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**Section:** LEARNING

**Length:** 1760 words

**Byline:** The Learning Network

**Highlight:** Our roundup of the news stories and features about young people that have recently appeared across sections of NYTimes.com.

**Body**

Our roundup of the news stories and features about young people that have recently appeared across sections of NYTimes.com.

Here is the March edition of [*Teenagers in The Times*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times), a roundup of the news and feature stories about young people that have recently appeared across sections of [*NYTimes.com*](http://nytimes.com/). We publish a new edition on the first Thursday of each month.

For ideas about how to use Teenagers in The Times with your students, please see our [*lesson plan*](http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/11/08/teaching-with-teenagers-in-the-times/) and [*special activity sheet*](https://static01.nyt.com/images/blogs/learning/pdf/2014/TeenagersinTheTimesHandout.pdf), both of which can be used with this or any other edition.

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Education

[*What Young New Yorkers Think About the End of the School Mask Mandate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/nyregion/nyc-school-mask-mandate-reactions.html)

Some students said they were excited to finally shed their masks, but others felt unsafe and wanted to continue wearing them.

[*Los Angeles schools will stop requiring masks in an agreement with the teachers’ union.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/18/us/los-angeles-schools-mask-mandate.html)

The nation’s second-largest public school district, which had held out even after the state dropped its mandate, will continue to strongly recommend masks in classrooms.

[*Too Many Americans Don’t Understand What Happens in Their Schools*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/opinion/covid-schools-disruption.html)

The author of this Opinion essay ask, “Why was the pandemic so disruptive to education?”

[*When a School Desegregates, Who Gets Left Behind?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/10/opinion/school-desegregation-california.html)

One district’s attempt to integrate has led to unexpected criticism.

[*We Want to Publish Your College Application Essay About Money*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/your-money/college-essays-money.html)

The Times Business section writes, “If you applied during the 2021-22 school year, please send us your essay about money, work, social class or related issues. If we publish yours, we’ll pay you.”

[*School Inequality Isn’t Always Just Black and White*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/14/opinion/charter-schools-desegregation.html)

“We care too much about the racial demographics at exclusive schools,” writes the author of this Opinion essay.

[*I Followed the Lives of 3,290 Teenagers. This Is What I Learned About Religion and Education.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/15/opinion/religion-school-success.html)

“Boys from ***working-class*** families benefit from the social capital that religious belief can provide,” writes the author of this Opinion essay.

[*Making the SAT and ACT Optional Is the Soft Bigotry of Low Expectations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/15/opinion/test-optional-admissions.html)

“Intended or not, it sends a message that some students of color are less capable,” writes the author of this Opinion essay.

[*New Mexico Will Make College Tuition Free for Residents*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/us/new-mexico-free-college.html)

As states take the lead in the tuition-free movement after President Biden’s plans failed to gain traction in Congress, New Mexico emerges as a leader.

[*Bringing Personal Finance to the Classroom for Generation Z*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/18/business/adviser-students-personal-finance.html)

Twenty-three states require high schoolers to take the subject, and more could join them in an effort to boost the next generation’s financial literacy.

[*Caught in a Culture War, Georgetown Day School Holds Fast to Its Mission*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/24/us/politics/georgetown-day-school-jackson.html)

After Republicans attacked the school during Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson’s confirmation hearings, parents, students and alumni said they firmly embraced its values.

[*Taliban Renege on Promise to Open Afghan Girls’ Schools*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/23/world/asia/afghanistan-girls-schools-taliban.html)

The schools were supposed to reopen this week, and the reversal could threaten aid because international officials had made girls’ education a condition for greater assistance.

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Civics, Politics, Economics and Business

[*How Medical Care for Transgender Youth Became ‘Child Abuse’ in Texas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/us/texas-transgender-youth-medical-care-abuse.html)

A custody battle in the Dallas suburbs amplified a growing conservative cause and helped fuel a move to treat transgender medicine as abuse.

[*Texas Court Halts Abuse Inquiries Into Parents of Transgender Children*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/us/texas-transgender-child-abuse.html)

A judge said the governor’s order to consider medically accepted treatments for transgender youth as abuse had been improperly adopted and violated the State Constitution.

[*Businesses Assail Texas Move to Classify Care for Trans Teens as ‘Child Abuse’*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/10/us/politics/businesses-texas-trans-teens-child-abuse.html)

A new ad signed by dozens of big companies warns, “Discrimination is bad for business.”

[*Opponents Call It the ‘Don’t Say Gay’ Bill. Here’s What It Says.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/18/us/dont-say-gay-bill-florida.html)

The Florida bill limits what educators can say about gender and sexuality, and could affect mental health services for all students.

[*Florida’s ‘Don’t Say Gay’ Bill Will Hurt Teens Like Me*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/opinion/florida-dont-say-gay-bill.html)

“Education made me hate myself less,” writes the author of this Opinion essay, a high school junior.

[*The Fight Over ‘Maus’ Is Part of a Bigger Cultural Battle in Tennessee*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/04/us/maus-banned-books-tennessee.html)

State lawmakers, led by the governor, are rethinking what public school students should read and learn.

[*12 Teenagers on What Adults Don’t Get About Their Lives*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/24/opinion/teenagers-america.html)

In a new Times Opinion focus group, teens also talked about their “addiction” to social media and being nervous to speak on sensitive subjects in class.

[*We’ve Tried Juveniles as Adults Before. The Results Were Catastrophic.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/10/opinion/crime-teeangers-jail.html)

“New York City’s mayor wants to return to a failed policy,” writes the author of this Opinion essay.

[*A Police Shooting in West Texas and a Mother’s Search for Answers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/26/us/midland-texas-teen-police-shooting.html)

More than three weeks after her 14-year-old son was shot to death, Dora Vela is still trying to learn the basic facts of the case.

[*Louisiana Student Recorded Whipping Black Classmate Is Charged With Hate Crime*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/us/vandebilt-high-school-hate-crime-louisiana.html)

The 15-year-old, who also appeared to throw cotton balls at the classmate in a video, was arrested on Tuesday in connection with the episode, which “appears to be racially motivated.”

[*‘I Honestly Believe It’s a Game’: Why Carjacking Is on the Rise Among Teens*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/01/us/car-theft-teens-pandemic.html)

The crime has made a resurgence across the country over the past two years, and many of those arrested are startlingly young.

[*Students Planned a ‘Gangsta Night’ Event. Some Thought It Was Racist.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/24/nyregion/windsor-high-school-gangsta-night-racism.html)

How a themed gathering at a basketball game revealed racial fault lines in a rural New York town.

[*Texas Student Who Protested Pledge of Allegiance Gets $90,000 in Settlement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/us/texas-pledge-of-allegiance-lawsuit.html)

Mari Oliver claimed in a federal lawsuit that she was harassed for opting out of reciting the pledge as a high school student.

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Science, Health and Technology

[*Many Teens Report Emotional and Physical Abuse by Parents During Lockdown*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/health/covid-mental-health-teens.html)

New data on teen mental health during the pandemic suggests that for many, home life was full of stressors like job loss, hunger and even violence.

[*What Is ‘Bigorexia’?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/05/style/teen-bodybuilding-bigorexia-tiktok.html)

A social media diet of perfect bodies is spurring some teenage boys to form muscle dysmorphia.

[*The Loophole That’s Fueling a Return to Teenage Vaping*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/health/vaping-fda-nicotine.html)

Sales are rising of flavored e-cigarettes using synthetic nicotine that evades regulatory oversight, a gap that lawmakers are now trying to close.

[*Vaccine protection against moderate illness waned among adolescents, new C.D.C. data suggest.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/01/health/vaccine-kids-effectiveness-omicron.html)

Booster shots, however, drastically increased that protection.

[*Omicron Blunted Vaccine Protection Among Adolescents*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/health/covid-vaccines-children.html)

The vaccines shielded adolescents only against life-threatening Covid, not less severe illness, scientists reported. Still, hospitalizations remained rare in children, compared with adults.

[*There’s a Mental-Health Crisis Among American Children. Why?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/23/magazine/mental-health-crisis-kids.html)

The pandemic is not the only reason.

[*After Covid, Are You ‘Mask Fishing’?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/style/covid-teens-face-masks.html)

As some Covid anxieties have receded, teenagers have a new word for the fear of shedding their masks to reveal their faces

[*How Robots Can Assist Students With Disabilities*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/29/technology/ai-robots-students-disabilities.html)

New tools use artificial intelligence to assist students with autism and dyslexia and address accessibility for those who are blind or deaf.

[*Does Social Media Make Teens Unhappy? It May Depend on Their Age.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/science/social-media-teens-mental-health.html)

A large study in Britain found two specific windows of adolescence when some teenagers are most sensitive to social media.

[*Adults or Sexually Abused Minors? Getting It Right Vexes Faceboo*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/business/meta-child-sexual-abuse.html)k

The company reports millions of photos and videos of suspected child sexual abuse each year. But when ages are unclear, young people are treated as adults and the images are not reported to the authorities.

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Sports

[*‘Magic Could Happen’*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/sports/newbury-park-high-milers.html)

The star milers of Newbury Park High School are getting a crash course in celebrity as they seek to crush a record. Catch them if you can. (You can’t.)

[*Olivia Miles, a Freshman, Leads Notre Dame Into the Round of 16*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/25/sports/ncaabasketball/olivia-miles-notre-dame-march-madness.html)

The point guard became the first freshman — woman or man — to record a triple-double in the N.C.A.A. tournament.

[*The Skiing Aigners Are a Nation Unto Themselves*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/13/sports/olympics/aigner-family-paralympics.html)

The visually impaired siblings and their guides accounted for more medals at the Beijing Paralympics than several powerhouse countries.

[*The Video That Changed the N.C.A.A.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/16/us/the-video-that-changed-the-ncaa.html)

One 38-second clip showing differences between the men’s and women’s tournaments led to profound overhauls in gender parity.

[*On a Dirt Court, a Ravaged School Planted the Seeds of a Championship*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/sports/louisiana-basketball-climate-change.html)

A Louisiana high school lost its gym when a hurricane tore through town. Practicing on a dirt court, the girls’ basketball team adopted a defiant motto: No gym, no problem.

[*Nine Dead, Including Coach and Six College Golfers, in Texas Wreck*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/16/sports/golf/golf-team-crash.html)

The University of the Southwest said its golf coach, Tyler James, was among the dead and that two people were in critical condition.

[*13-Year-Old Boy Drove Truck That Hit Van in Texas, Killing 9, Officials Say*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/sports/golf/golf-team-crash-texas.html)

The fiery crash killed a golf coach and six of his players, along with the boy and a man who was traveling with him.

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Arts, Media and Culture

[*Punk Rock’s New Hope: The Ferocious, Joyful Linda Lindas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/09/arts/music/the-linda-lindas-growing-up.html)

Fueled by punk conviction (and snacks), this all-girl, school-age band is ready to release its debut album, “Growing Up,” nearly a year after its song “Racist, Sexist Boy” went viral.

[*At a School for the Deaf, Signs of Change Are Clear*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/15/books/review/true-biz-sara-novic.html)

Sara Novic’s new novel, “True Biz,” takes readers beyond the hearing world.

[*This Rap Song Helped Sentence a 17-Year-Old to Prison for Life*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/opinion/rap-music-criminal-trials.html)

“Rap music is increasingly showing up as evidence in criminal trials,” writes the author of this Opinion essay.

[*Assassin Princesses, Magical Lakes and Warrior Jinn in New Y.A. Fantasy Novels*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/books/review/castles-in-their-bones-laura-sebastian-lakelore-anna-marie-mclemore-this-woven-kingdom-tahereh-mafi.html)

Three new Y.A. fantasy novels — “Castles in Their Bones,” by Laura Sebastian; “Lakelore,” by Anna-Marie McLemore; and “This Woven Kingdom,” by Tahereh Mafi — blend romance and magic to tell enchanting tales.

[*The Morphe Beauty Saga Isn’t Pretty*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/23/style/cosmetics-the-morphe-beauty-saga-it-isnt-pretty.html)

What happens when a beauty brand’s collaborators become too controversial, makeup trends change, and Gen Zers flock to TikTok?

[*‘Olivia Rodrigo: Driving Home 2 U’ Review: Songs on Overdrive*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/24/movies/olivia-rodrigo-driving-home-2-u-sour-film-review.html)

The singer-songwriter is in a reflective state in the director Stacey Lee’s film, which documents a trip from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles.

[*‘You Are Not My Mother’ Review: Parental Misguidance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/24/movies/you-are-not-my-mother-review.html)

A lonely teenager is traumatized by her mother’s volatile behavior in this impressive horror debut.

[*‘Bronco Bullfrog’: Hello Young Lovers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/23/movies/bronco-bullfrog-barney-platts-mills.html)

Barney Platts-Mills’s 1969 feature about aimless East End teenagers in love comes to Film Forum after a cinematic rediscovery.

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PHOTO: Olivia Miles of Notre Dame, a freshman, was guarded by Louisville’s Hailey Van Lith during a game in South Bend, Ind., in February. Related Article (PHOTOGRAPH BY Robert Franklin/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 7, 2022

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[***Chicago’s Signature Sandwich, Italian Beef, Gets a Multicultural Update***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64D4-HCX1-DXY4-X293-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 27, 2021 Monday 23:33 EST

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**Section:** DINING

**Length:** 1391 words

**Byline:** Priya Krishna

**Highlight:** In this city so protective of its traditions, a new generation of cooks is creating fresh variations on a deliciously soggy sandwich.

**Body**

In this city so protective of its traditions, a new generation of cooks is creating fresh variations on a deliciously soggy sandwich.

CHICAGO — Do you like your Italian beef dry and sweet? Dipped and hot? Or perhaps wet, hot and sweet? Ordering the beloved Chicago sandwich is not unlike the drill at a coffee shop; there’s a language to know, a culture to understand, decisions to make.

The city has several famous foods to its name, like deep-dish pizza and the Chicago hot dog. Yet Italian beef stands apart: roasted, thinly sliced meat that is bathed in its own jus and nestled in a plush roll, then topped with tart, spicy [*giardiniera*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/12291-giardiniera) or sweet peppers (or both), and often dipped in a rich broth of beef drippings. The broth supercharges the beefy flavor and saturates the crevices of the bread, while the peppers offer tangy relief. In one messy, intensely juicy bite comes a whole meal’s worth of complex flavors.

The sandwich may not be the best-known, or most visually enticing, of those three dishes, said David Hammond, the dining and drinking editor of the local magazine [*Newcity*](https://www.newcity.com/), and the author of a coming book on the city’s foods. But while deep dish is primarily for tourists, he said, and the hot dogs are sold in many cities, Italian beef belongs to Chicagoans.

“It is hard for me to imagine Chicago food without Italian beef,” Mr. Hammond said.

It’s a dish that speaks volumes about the city and the Italian-beef fan, said Cathy Lambrecht, a member of the [*Culinary Historians of Chicago*](https://culinaryhistorians.org/). “It is a whole reverie of memories.”

Which Italian-beef stand you prefer “brings up, ‘Where did you grow up? What part of town?’” she said. “Or if you are Catholic, ‘what parish did you grow up with?’”

Several establishments — including [*Al’s Beef*](https://www.alsbeef.com/), [*Serrelli’s Finer Foods*](https://www.serrellisfinerfoods.com/menus.php) and [*Scala’s Original*](https://chicago.cbslocal.com/2012/01/11/scalas-original/), which closed several years ago — lay claim to inventing the sandwich. The food historian Bruce Kraig said it’s unclear who actually did, though it’s likely that in the 1920s and ’30s, Italian immigrants came up with the dish as a way of stretching a less expensive cut of meat to serve in large quantities at weddings.

Italian beef came to reflect the city itself — its identity as a hub for both ***working-class*** immigrants and the meatpacking business. The sandwich made a portable, inexpensive and filling on-the-job meal.

But as the city’s demographics have shifted in recent decades, a new slate of sandwiches inspired by Italian beef has emerged. These creations incorporate a variety of ingredients, from garlicky longanisa sausage at the Filipino cafe [*Kasama*](https://www.kasamachicago.com/about-2) to sweet-savory bulgogi at the Korean-Polish deli [*Kimski*](https://www.kimskichicago.com/), to halal meat at the 1950s-style fast-food restaurant [*Slim’s*](https://slimsdelivery.com/).

If the Italian-beef sandwich mirrors the history of Italian immigrants, these adaptations tell a different kind of story, about a new generation of Chicago chefs mixing the city’s traditions with their own.

In an interview before [*he died of cancer*](https://www.chicagotribune.com/dining/ct-food-obituary-brian-mita-izakaya-mita-20211207-wzepl6s5avgidgkgb6z6gfcbqm-story.html?fbclid=IwAR0Hi2zXxIeeGcYrfpf-G2pcaZUAmIqLKiFb_3SYt4LeVAK0t8kOBlhjdXE) in December at age 43, the chef Brian Mita said he saw a kinship between Italian beef and niku dofu, a Japanese dish of thinly sliced beef and tofu cooked with soy sauce and dashi.

Like Italian beef, he said, niku dofu is a means of being economical with meat. At his restaurant, [*Izakaya Mita*](https://izakayamita.com/), niku dofu is stuffed into shokupan, or milk bread, and topped with giardiniera. Mr. Mita introduced the sandwich in summer 2020, making it a permanent addition two months ago because it sold so well.

“Really, it is an amalgamation,” he said. “I am half Japanese, half Chinese, but I grew up here in the States,” in Chicago. “That is a part of my culture, too.”

Chicago was once defined by its discrete immigrant enclaves, said Mr. Kraig, the food historian. “That has all changed, as gentrification has taken place and populations have moved.”

Many neighborhoods now have more diverse populations, he said, and Chicagoans have grown up exposed to a wide array of cuisines, especially as the local restaurant scene has become more multifaceted.

Nate Hoops and Anthony Ngo’s Vietnamese-inspired version of Italian beef at their restaurant, [*Phodega*](https://www.phodega.com/), felt like a natural outgrowth of their identities as Chicago natives who grew up in Asian American households, Mr. Hoops said.

They layer thinly sliced rib-eye on French bread, and top it with cilantro and jalapeños — classic banh mi fixings. The dish is served with a side of pho broth for dipping. They added the sandwich, called the Pho Dip, to the menu in summer 2020.

“It’s almost like a fail-safe recipe for success,” said Mr. Hoops, 37. Locals love Italian beef, so “you know it is going to do well.”

“I wouldn’t say it is in competition” with Italian beef, he added. “It is definitely a different sandwich.”

Won Kim doesn’t advertise the Ko-Po beef sandwich he created at Kimski as a variation on Italian beef, even though he drew inspiration from the classic dish. His version has bulgogi, sautéed shishito peppers, gochujang butter and a shower of scallions.

Chicagoans love to complain when foods don’t adhere to tradition, he said. “They are quick to judge, so I didn’t want to be even close to calling it an Italian thing.”

And he’s right — people do have strong opinions.

“I am a purist,” said Erick Williams, the chef and owner of [*Virtue*](https://www.virtuerestaurant.com/), a Southern restaurant in Hyde Park. “I am sure those sandwiches are probably really good, and I would be interested to try them, but I am in no hurry to replace the original version of an Italian beef.”

He doesn’t make the sandwich at Virtue, but he loves it, and partnered with Al’s Beef in 2020 to serve a special menu that included Italian beef.

Patti Serrelli, the owner of the longtime Italian-beef purveyor Serrelli’s Finer Foods, had a harsher take on these adaptations: “They are kind of bastardizing the original recipe.” At Serrelli’s, Italian beef is made the traditional way, the meat roasted in a secret blend of herbs and spices and dunked in its own juices.

Garrett Kern, the vice president of strategy and culinary for the Chicago-based restaurant chain [*Portillo’s*](https://www.portillos.com/index.html), said this territorial attitude springs from locals’ desire to protect a dish that feels uniquely theirs.

“A lot of Chicagoans have this chip on their shoulder” because the city doesn’t get as much national attention as other major locales, he said. So they attach outsize levels of pride to Italian beef.

That pride explains why, when Laricia Chandler Baker added a meat-free Italian-beef sandwich to the menu at her vegan restaurant, [*Can’t Believe It’s Not Meat*](https://cantbelieveitsnotmeat.com/), in November 2020, she took great pains to ensure that it looked and tasted like the original. She thinly slices soy protein and dunks it in a vegetable broth seasoned with herbs and peppers, then slides it into a French roll.

Khurram Shamim, who sells a halal Italian-beef sandwich at his restaurant, Slim’s, is also hesitant to mess with tradition. Customers want to eat Italian beef while adhering to their dietary restrictions, he said. The sandwich should feel as familiar as possible.

Familiarity has never been a problem for Portillo’s, which is known throughout the city for its Italian beef. This year, the chain went public, and accelerated its national expansion, to states like Arizona and Florida.

But while locals debate over these Italian-beef adaptations, the real challenge for Portillo’s, said Mr. Kern, is getting people across the country to do what Chicagoans do: adore a soggy mess of a sandwich.

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PHOTOS: Above, from left: A vegan Italian beef sandwich from Can’t Believe It’s Not Meat; at Phodega, a Vietnamese-inspired version of the sandwich; the classic at Al’s, perhaps home to the Chicago original. (D1); Clockwise, from above: A vegan alternative to the Italian beef sandwich at Can’t Believe It’s Not Meat; the writer David Hammond said Italian beef is more essential to Chicago’s food culture than deep-dish pizza; Laricia Chandler Baker, the owner of Can’t Believe It’s Not Meat; the sandwich with a side of fries at Al’s.; Above, Phodega serves an Italian beef sandwich inspired by the owners’ Asian American upbringing in Chicago. Right, the sandwich includes thinly sliced rib-eye and comes with a side of pho broth for dipping. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANJALI PINTO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (D6)

**Load-Date:** December 28, 2021

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[***For Macron, the Troubles of France's Industrial Sector Hit Home***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655D-45T1-JBG3-64SM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1711 words

**Byline:** By Norimitsu Onishi

**Body**

President Emmanuel Macron vowed an economic revival, but as he seeks re-election, a Potemkin factory in the town where he was raised shows just how hard that can be.

AMIENS, France -- During the last presidential campaign, the troubled Whirlpool factory in the northern city of Amiens became the setting for frantic, dueling appeals for support by Emmanuel Macron and his far-right rival, Marine Le Pen.

Mr. Macron promised to save the plant -- which happens to be in his hometown -- and once he was elected, his government poured millions in subsidies toward the factory's reinvention, as a showpiece of his commitment to reviving French industry.

As Mr. Macron seeks re-election, he and Ms. Le Pen are preparing to square off once again as the front-runners before the first round of voting in presidential elections on Sunday. But the fate of the plant has proved much the opposite of what Mr. Macron had hoped for.

Today, the plant is an example of the difficulty of rehabilitating ailing French industries and of the president's challenge in winning the confidence of French workers, who have been gravitating for years to the far right.

The mammoth plant in Amiens, where weeds have pushed through asphalt and the cafeteria's menu is frozen on sausage fricassee, is deserted and lifeless, except for three last Whirlpool workers who spend their days huddling around the coffee machines in a few small rooms.

The plant's new operator was convicted in February of misuse of funds, after a year of taking money from the government and Whirlpool and doing precious little with it. Workers say they spent idle days as next to nothing rolled off the assembly line. Instead, they kept busy killing time, taking extended cigarette breaks or lying inside their cars fidgeting on their smartphones.

''Two or three times, when someone important visited, we had to pretend to work or hide,'' recalled Mariano Munoz, 49, who was in charge of janitorial services. ''The welders welded all sorts of things and hammered away. One or two tinkered with a car. Me, I'd take the street cleaner and I'd sweep the entire parking lot.''

Mr. Macron was elected as a change agent five years ago, with plans to disrupt the heavily unionized industrial sector that had stagnated as owners feared the rising cost of French workers who were guaranteed years of ample benefits and were notoriously difficult to fire. For years, unemployment hovered chronically at 8 percent or more as the industrial sector atrophied.

Initially, Mr. Macron attempted to overhaul France's economy by pushing through business-friendly changes, like cutting taxes, especially for the wealthy. In his first years as president, he took on some of France's toughest unions, provoking the biggest strikes the country had seen in years as he revamped France's voluminous labor code, making it easier to hire and fire workers.

But even as the overall economy has bounced back strongly from the pandemic, Mr. Macron's efforts to reindustrialize France have proved decidedly mixed, economists say, as evidenced by the nation's trade deficit of 84.7 billion euros, about $93 billion, last year -- a record -- as well as the plant in Amiens, which had made tumble dryers for Whirlpool and did not survive despite nearly ?10 million in subsidies.

For Mr. Macron, the plant's long, agonizing death has complicated every trip back to his hometown, about 80 miles north of Paris. It reinforced the impression of Mr. Macron, a former investment banker, as the president of the rich, someone cut off from ordinary French people -- like the nearly 300 workers who lost their jobs when the plant finally did close in 2018.

Many of the laid off workers went on to join the Yellow Vest movement, whose ranks were filled with ***working-class*** French struggling under high taxes and a lack of earning power, ushering in the biggest political crisis of Mr. Macron's presidency.

Burned by the Yellow Vest protests, Mr. Macron's government spent massively to offset the economic shock of the pandemic, and unemployment is now at its lowest in a decade. Still, it is service-sector jobs that have continued to increase, while industrial employment declines.

Thomas Grjebine, an economist at CEPII, a research center in Paris, said that the fate of the Amiens plant was ''symptomatic'' of the difficulties of reviving the industrial sector. ''In fact, the government is somewhat powerless before the closings of plants,'' Mr. Grjebine said. ''But many promises are made during campaigns.''

During Mr. Macron's campaign for the presidency in 2017, 11 days before the final vote, Mr. Macron met with union leaders in town, while Ms. Le Pen paid a surprise visit to the plant's parking lot and was greeted warmly by striking employees -- forcing a reluctant Mr. Macron to follow.

Heckled and jostled by the hostile crowd, Mr. Macron tried to catch up with Ms. Le Pen, whose party, then called the National Front, had won the department that includes Amiens in the first round of voting that year.

''You think it doesn't hurt me in the gut that people vote for the National Front on my soil?'' Mr. Macron said to the crowd. Later, he promised a ''real Marshall Plan for the reindustrialization of our economically lost territories.''

Half a year after his election victory, that promise seemed in sight. A prominent local businessman, Nicolas Decayeux, was selected to take over the plant with a project to manufacture refrigerated lockers and small vehicles. He took on 162 of the 282 laid-off Whirlpool workers and received ?2.6 million in subsidies from the government and ?7.4 million from Whirlpool.

During a celebratory visit to the plant, Mr. Macron was accompanied by Mr. Decayeux. In a follow-up letter to Mr. Decayeux, the president wrote that the businessman's ''beautiful entrepreneurial project'' would ''contribute to our industrial recovery.''

''I really had stars in my eyes because here is a young president who wants to reform France,'' recalled Mr. Decayeux, who named his company WN.

It was a rare piece of good news for Amiens, a picturesque town of more than 130,000 that straddles the Somme River.

Like much of northern France, it had been hit by deindustrialization for two generations as successive national governments considered a shift toward a consumer-driven economy a sign of modernization, witnessed in the Amazon warehouses that have opened in Amiens and elsewhere.

''This drop in social standing, the sentiment of being abandoned and of not mattering, eased the way for extremism,'' said Brigitte Fouré, the center-right mayor of Amiens.

In an interview with a French magazine last year, Mr. Macron said that growing up in Amiens, he had witnessed the ''full force of deindustrialization'' in his region. Still, he acknowledged that he himself had enjoyed a sheltered upbringing, living in a ''rather happy bubble, and even a bubble in a bubble.''

The son of two medical doctors, Mr. Macron grew up in Amiens's richest neighborhood, Henriville, and attended the city's most prestigious school, a private Jesuit establishment called La Providence.

''He's from Henriville, and when you say, 'Henriville,' it's Versailles,'' said M'hammed El Hiba, the longtime head of Alco, a community center in Amiens North, an area inhabited by the descendants of North Africans recruited to work in factories in the 1960s and 1970s.

At the former Whirlpool plant, the optimism faded quickly. Former workers said that Mr. Decayeux's plans to build lockers and small vehicles never took off.

''Nothing was happening,'' said Christophe Beaugrand, 44, a welder who was hired by Mr. Decayeux after being laid off by Whirlpool. ''People were in the cafeteria with their phones and chargers. When the prefect visited, we had to make noise or hide.''

Worried about the lack of activity, workers informed their national lawmaker, François Ruffin, and gave him a chicken made of steel as proof of their idleness.

Mr. Ruffin said he alerted the government but got no response until it was too late. Mr. Macron's government, he said, appeared to have lost interest in the plant after Mr. Decayeux's company took it over.

''It was as if everything was over on the day of the inauguration,'' Mr. Ruffin said.

Eventually, the government looked closely at Mr. Decayeux's company, WN, and pulled the plug. Without subsidies, the company shut down in July 2019, about a year after opening to great fanfare.

After an official inquiry and a trial, Mr. Decayeux was found guilty in February of awarding himself a ?25,000 bonus, which he must repay; of using company funds to rent two apartments, one for himself and another for his girlfriend; and of hiring his son as a part-time sales representative.

Mr. Decayeux, who has appealed, said that he had become a scapegoat for a government that panicked and fatally cut subsidies before his business could take off. Though he acknowledged that the assembly line lay silent for most of the time, he said that WN had made 15 small vehicles and a few elevator shafts.

''Before the government, I'm nothing,'' he said, adding, ''They crushed me.''

During his last visit to Amiens, in November, Mr. Macron met nine former Whirlpool workers. By then, the news had become even worse. A local furniture maker that had taken over the plant following WN's collapse had also quickly gone out of business.

Mr. Macron described Mr. Decayeux as a ''hunter of bonuses'' and told the workers, ''I was duped along with you.''

Some of Whirlpool's former workers didn't buy it.

''It's all well and good that he did his mea culpa, but behind that, there are still people without jobs,'' said Frédéric Chantrelle, 53, one of the last three Whirlpool workers still employed at the plant. A court ruled last year that the company had to rehire them because the factory was not closed for economic reasons.

In the otherwise abandoned 17-hectare facility, they punch in and walk through a labyrinth of dark and cold corridors to reach the few heated rooms where they spend their days.

''It's like a ghost factory,'' Mr. Chantrelle said. ''It's awe-inspiring, a big site like this emptied of everything.''

Adèle Cordonnier contributed reporting.Adèle Cordonnier contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/05/world/europe/macron-france-election-amiens.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/05/world/europe/macron-france-election-amiens.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A mammoth Whirlpool plant in President Emmanuel Macron's hometown is a symbol of the struggles of French industry. The trade deficit set a record last year.

From left: Amiens North, an area inhabited by many descendants of North Africans recruited to work in factories decades ago. Patrice Sinoquet, one of the last three workers at the former Whirlpool plant, showed a photograph of Mr. Macron visiting in 2019. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 6, 2022

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[***Race and the Coming Liberal Crackup; Bret Stephens***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62J1-16F1-DXY4-X187-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 26, 2021 Monday 15:34 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 943 words

**Byline:** Bret Stephens

**Highlight:** Our racialized politics will produce a conservative resurgence.

**Body**

Americans breathed a collective sigh of relief last week after Derek Chauvin was convicted of murdering George Floyd. The crime was heinous, the verdict just, the moral neat. If you think that systemic racism is the defining fact of race relations in 21st-century America, then Chauvin’s knee on Floyd’s neck is its defining image.

But what about a [*case like that of Ma’Khia Bryant*](https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation-world/ct-aud-nw-makhia-bryant-shooting-20210424-vjl4b6s2rbcczccdif5wpfzwwi-story.html), a Black teenager who was shot and killed last week by Nicholas Reardon, a white police officer in Columbus, Ohio, at the instant that she was swinging a knife at a woman who had her back against a car?

Ben Crump, the Floyd family’s lawyer, [*accused the Columbus police*](https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation-world/ct-aud-nw-makhia-bryant-shooting-20210424-vjl4b6s2rbcczccdif5wpfzwwi-story.html) in a tweet of killing “an unarmed 15yo Black girl.” Valerie Jarrett, the former Obama adviser, [*tweeted that Bryant*](https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation-world/ct-aud-nw-makhia-bryant-shooting-20210424-vjl4b6s2rbcczccdif5wpfzwwi-story.html) “was killed because a police officer immediately decided to shoot her multiple times in order to break up a knife fight.” Jarrett wants to “Demand accountability” and “Fight for justice.”

An alternative view: Maybe there wasn’t time for Officer Reardon, in an 11-second interaction, to “de-escalate” the situation, as he is now being faulted for failing to do. And maybe the balance of our sympathies should lie not with the would-be perpetrator of a violent assault but with the cop who saved a Black life — namely that of Tionna Bonner, who nearly had Bryant’s knife thrust into her.

That’s a thought that many, perhaps most, Americans share, even if they are increasingly reluctant to say it out loud. Why reluctant? Because in this era of with-us-or-against-us politics, to have misgivings about the left’s new “anti-racist” narrative is to run the risk of being denounced as a racist. Much better to nod along at your office’s diversity, equity and inclusion sessions than suggest that enforced political indoctrination should not become a staple of American workplace culture.

And yet those doubts and misgivings go to the heart of what used to be thought of as liberalism. The result will be a liberal crackup similar to the one in the late 1960s that broke liberalism as America’s dominant political force for a generation.

Morally and philosophically, liberalism believes in individual autonomy, which entails a concept of personal responsibility. The current model of anti-racism scoffs at this: It divides the world into racial identities, which in turn are governed by systems of privilege and powerlessness. Liberalism believes in process: A trial or contest is fair if standards are consistent and rules are equitable, irrespective of outcome. Anti-racism is determined to make a process achieve a desired outcome. Liberalism finds appeals to racial favoritism inherently suspect, even offensive. Anti-racism welcomes such favoritism, provided it’s in the name of righting past wrongs.

Above all, liberalism believes that truth tends to be many-shaded and complex. Anti-racism is a great simplifier. Good and evil. Black and white.

This is where the anti-racism narrative will profoundly alienate liberal-minded America, even as it entrenches itself in schools, universities, corporations and other institutions of American life.

It’s possible to look at Floyd’s murder as the epitome of evil and not see a racist motive in every bad encounter between a white cop and a minority suspect, including the recent shootings of Adam Toledo in Chicago and Daunte Wright in Minnesota. It’s possible to think that the police make too many assumptions about young Black men, sometimes with tragic consequences, and still recognize that young Black men commit violent crimes [*at a terribly disproportionate rate*](https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation-world/ct-aud-nw-makhia-bryant-shooting-20210424-vjl4b6s2rbcczccdif5wpfzwwi-story.html). It’s possible to believe that effective policing requires that cops gain the trust of the communities they serve while recognizing that those communities are ill served when cops are afraid to do their jobs.

It is also possible to recognize that we have miles to go in ending racism while also objecting to the condescending assumptions and illiberal methods of the anti-racist creed. The idea that white skin automatically confers “privilege” in America is a strange concept to millions of ***working-class*** whites who have endured generations of poverty while missing out on the benefits of the past 50 years of affirmative action programs.

Similarly, the idea that past discrimination or even present-day inequality justifies explicit racial preferences in government policy is an affront to liberal values, and will become only more so as the practices become more common. In Oakland the mayor backed a private initiative that was to provide $500 a month to low-income families, [*but not if they were white*](https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation-world/ct-aud-nw-makhia-bryant-shooting-20210424-vjl4b6s2rbcczccdif5wpfzwwi-story.html). In Vermont, the state has given people of color priority for Covid vaccines.

Ibram X. Kendi, the most important anti-racist thinker today, argues that “the only remedy to past discrimination is present discrimination. The only remedy to present discrimination is future discrimination.” Some liberals will go along with this. Many others will find themselves drifting rightward, much as a past generation of disaffected liberals did.

Joe Biden’s resounding victory and his progressive policies are supposed to mark the real end of the Reaganite era of American politics. Don’t be surprised if they’re a prelude to its return, just as the last era of progressive excess ushered in its beginning.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation-world/ct-aud-nw-makhia-bryant-shooting-20210424-vjl4b6s2rbcczccdif5wpfzwwi-story.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation-world/ct-aud-nw-makhia-bryant-shooting-20210424-vjl4b6s2rbcczccdif5wpfzwwi-story.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation-world/ct-aud-nw-makhia-bryant-shooting-20210424-vjl4b6s2rbcczccdif5wpfzwwi-story.html).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Roberto Schmidt/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 27, 2021

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[***3 Art Gallery Shows to See Right Now***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:634R-1R71-DXY4-X1GP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 14, 2021 Wednesday 01:07 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 1056 words

**Highlight:** Corita Kent’s “Heroes and Sheroes”; Igshaan Adams’s tapestries and wire sculptures; and Tammy Nguyen’s portraits of Forest City.

**Body**

Corita Kent’s “Heroes and Sheroes”; Igshaan Adams’s tapestries and wire sculptures; and Tammy Nguyen’s portraits of Forest City.

Corita Kent

Through Aug. 13. Andrew Kreps, 22 Cortlandt Alley, Manhattan; (212) 741-8849, [*andrewkreps.com*](http://andrewkreps.com/).

Corita Kent, also known as Sister Mary Corita, was pretty famous for a nun. She headlined a 1967 Newsweek article about the state of the American convent, and she worked on major commercial advertising campaigns to raise money for her order’s Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles, where she taught art. (Kent left the order in 1968 at the age of 50 and died in 1986.)

She was also a prolific artist. In screen-print collages and text art, she combined her passionate interest in social justice with a kind of earnestness about language, and about her own stated creed, which is rare to encounter anywhere, let alone in the art world. (Maybe you could call it “good faith.”)

[*“Heroes and Sheroes”*](http://andrewkreps.com/) at Andrew Kreps Gallery is New York’s first complete showing of a series Kent made in ’68 and ’69. Using found imagery, mostly from the news media, loud colors, and often handwritten texts, Kent worked through the decade’s moral catastrophes — the Kennedy and King assassinations, the Vietnam War. She might juxtapose a Vietcong guerrilla being arrested with a diagram of a slave ship and a few lines of a Whitman poem. Or she might set a simple image of a flower above the phrase, “Hope is believing that there has to be an ‘I’ in ‘daisy.’” Either way, the effect is as direct, and as devastating, as a sledgehammer blow.

The whole show, which is accompanied by [*a generous roundup of other text and media art*](http://andrewkreps.com/), is extraordinary. But the piece I kept returning to was “Pieta 1969,” a Mardi Gras-colored study of Mary cradling Jesus’s lifeless body above a letter one of Kent’s students wrote her about Robert Kennedy. “It is so easy to fall apart when surrounded by destruction,” the student observed. “Now I can see what you meant when you said we have to create. It’s the only thing we can do.”

WILL HEINRICH

Igshaan Adams

Through July 30. Casey Kaplan Gallery. 121 West 27th Street, Manhattan; (212) 645-7335, [*caseykaplangallery.com*](http://andrewkreps.com/).

The South African artist Igshaan Adams grew up in the ***working-class*** township of Bonteheuwel, near Cape Town, during the twilight years of apartheid. Born Muslim and raised by Christian grandparents, Adams, who is mixed race, weaves visual elements from these traditions in dazzling combinations that illuminate their interconnected histories.

For his first solo exhibition at Casey Kaplan Gallery, “Veld Wen,” (“to gain ground” in Afrikaans), Adams presents 10 richly textured tapestries and nestlike wire sculptures that, like the shimmering assemblages of El Anatsui, incorporate organic and synthetic flotsam, including shells, stones and nylon rope. Pinned loosely to the gallery walls, the tapestries bear abstract geometric patterns that often appear like maps, as with the archipelagic design of “Nagtreis op n Vliende Perd (a night journey on a winged horse),” from 2021, with its midnight blue expanse studded with bright stars.

The inspiration for these patterns are the linoleum flooring found in a typical Bonteheuwel home. Worn by use over time and torn out, the floors meld histories in sedimented layers, producing palimpsests that Adams has ingeniously transposed into warp and weft and dotted with glinting metallic chains and glass beads. Interspersed among these tapestries are the knotted wire sculptures, hung throughout the gallery like suspended tumbleweeds. They trace a longer history, too, alluding to the clouds of dust made by the Nama people, the artist’s grandparents among them, during a traditional celebratory performance known as the Rieldans. Adams invites his viewers to take in the craftsmanship and lineage of his works simultaneously, demonstrating that an artist can successfully merge national and personal narrative without reducing the complexity of either.

TAUSIF NOOR

Tammy Nguyen

Through Aug. 8. Smack Mellon, 92 Plymouth Street, Brooklyn; (718) 834-8761, [*smackmellon.org*](http://andrewkreps.com/).

With a recent tropical storm causing floods in the East Coast and a [*drought and heat wave*](http://andrewkreps.com/) in the West, it’s as timely as ever to be thinking about climate change. Three solo shows at Smack Mellon consider the topic, my favorite of which, by [*Tammy Nguyen*](http://andrewkreps.com/), uses painting and printmaking to emphasize how entangled it is with capitalism and geopolitics.

Nguyen’s exhibition is titled “[*Freehold*](http://andrewkreps.com/)” in reference to Forest City, a real estate development being built on four man-made islands in Malaysia. Forest City [*markets itself*](http://andrewkreps.com/) as a technologically advanced, environmentally friendly tax-free capitalist utopia. When the artist visited in 2019, a salesperson told her, “No climate change here.”

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JILLIAN STEINHAUER

PHOTOS: Corita Kent’s “Pieta 1969,” a study of Mary cradling Jesus’s lifeless body above a letter from one of Kent’s students, in “Heroes and Sheroes.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY CORITA ART CENTER AND ANDREW KREPS GALLERY); Tammy Nguyen’s “Seasons of Revolution 4,” from 2021, part of three solo shows at Smack Mellon. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TAMMY NGUYEN AND SMACK MELLON); Igshaan Adams’s tapestry “Nagtreis op n Vliende Perd (a night journey on a winged horse),” part of his first solo exhibition at Casey Kaplan Gallery. (PHOTOGRAPH BY IGSHAAN ADAMS AND CASEY KAPLAN GALLERY)

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[***Galleries***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6353-VPF1-DXY4-X3BB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 16, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 8

**Length:** 975 words

**Body**

Corita Kent's ''Heroes and Sheroes''; Igshaan Adams's tapestries and wire sculptures; and Tammy Nguyen's portraits of Forest City.

Corita Kent

Through Aug. 13. Andrew Kreps, 22 Cortlandt Alley, Manhattan; (212) 741-8849, andrewkreps.com.

Corita Kent, also known as Sister Mary Corita, was pretty famous for a nun. She headlined a 1967 Newsweek article about the state of the American convent, and she worked on major commercial advertising campaigns to raise money for her order's Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles, where she taught art. (Kent left the order in 1968 at the age of 50 and died in 1986.)

She was also a prolific artist. In screen-print collages and text art, she combined her passionate interest in social justice with a kind of earnestness about language, and about her own stated creed, which is rare to encounter anywhere, let alone in the art world. (Maybe you could call it ''good faith.'')

''Heroes and Sheroes'' at Andrew Kreps Gallery is New York's first complete showing of a series Kent made in '68 and '69. Using found imagery, mostly from the news media, loud colors, and often handwritten texts, Kent worked through the decade's moral catastrophes -- the Kennedy and King assassinations, the Vietnam War. She might juxtapose a Vietcong guerrilla being arrested with a diagram of a slave ship and a few lines of a Whitman poem. Or she might set a simple image of a flower above the phrase, ''Hope is believing that there has to be an 'I' in 'daisy.''' Either way, the effect is as direct, and as devastating, as a sledgehammer blow.

The whole show, which is accompanied by a generous roundup of other text and media art, is extraordinary. But the piece I kept returning to was ''Pieta 1969,'' a Mardi Gras-colored study of Mary cradling Jesus's lifeless body above a letter one of Kent's students wrote her about Robert Kennedy. ''It is so easy to fall apart when surrounded by destruction,'' the student observed. ''Now I can see what you meant when you said we have to create. It's the only thing we can do.''

WILL HEINRICH

Igshaan Adams

Through July 30. Casey Kaplan Gallery. 121 West 27th Street, Manhattan; (212) 645-7335, caseykaplangallery.com.

The South African artist Igshaan Adams grew up in the ***working-class*** township of Bonteheuwel, near Cape Town, during the twilight years of apartheid. Born Muslim and raised by Christian grandparents, Adams, who is mixed race, weaves visual elements from these traditions in dazzling combinations that illuminate their interconnected histories.

For his first solo exhibition at Casey Kaplan Gallery, ''Veld Wen,'' (''to gain ground'' in Afrikaans), Adams presents 10 richly textured tapestries and nestlike wire sculptures that, like the shimmering assemblages of El Anatsui, incorporate organic and synthetic flotsam, including shells, stones and nylon rope. Pinned loosely to the gallery walls, the tapestries bear abstract geometric patterns that often appear like maps, as with the archipelagic design of ''Nagtreis op n Vliende Perd (a night journey on a winged horse),'' from 2021, with its midnight blue expanse studded with bright stars.

The inspiration for these patterns are the linoleum flooring found in a typical Bonteheuwel home. Worn by use over time and torn out, the floors meld histories in sedimented layers, producing palimpsests that Adams has ingeniously transposed into warp and weft and dotted with glinting metallic chains and glass beads. Interspersed among these tapestries are the knotted wire sculptures, hung throughout the gallery like suspended tumbleweeds. They trace a longer history, too, alluding to the clouds of dust made by the Nama people, the artist's grandparents among them, during a traditional celebratory performance known as the Rieldans. Adams invites his viewers to take in the craftsmanship and lineage of his works simultaneously, demonstrating that an artist can successfully merge national and personal narrative without reducing the complexity of either.

TAUSIF NOOR

Tammy Nguyen

Through Aug. 8. Smack Mellon, 92 Plymouth Street, Brooklyn; (718) 834-8761, smackmellon.org.

With a recent tropical storm causing floods in the East Coast and a drought and heat wave in the West, it's as timely as ever to be thinking about climate change. Three solo shows at Smack Mellon consider the topic, my favorite of which, by Tammy Nguyen, uses painting and printmaking to emphasize how entangled it is with capitalism and geopolitics.

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JILLIAN STEINHAUER

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/14/arts/design/3-art-gallery-shows-to-see-right-now.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/14/arts/design/3-art-gallery-shows-to-see-right-now.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Corita Kent's ''Pieta 1969,'' a study of Mary cradling Jesus's lifeless body above a letter from one of Kent's students, in ''Heroes and Sheroes.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY CORITA ART CENTER AND ANDREW KREPS GALLERY)

Tammy Nguyen's ''Seasons of Revolution 4,'' from 2021, part of three solo shows at Smack Mellon. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TAMMY NGUYEN AND SMACK MELLON)

Igshaan Adams's tapestry ''Nagtreis op n Vliende Perd (a night journey on a winged horse),'' part of his first solo exhibition at Casey Kaplan Gallery. (PHOTOGRAPH BY IGSHAAN ADAMS AND CASEY KAPLAN GALLERY)

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[***What a Conservative Therapist Thinks About Politics and Mental Health; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66J1-72G1-DXY4-X2P4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 4, 2022 Tuesday 22:30 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 3042 words

**Byline:** Meghan Daum

**Highlight:** Conservatives need mental health help, too, but do they need to get it from someone who shares their worldview?

**Body**

Partisanship and polarization are everywhere in America these days, from classrooms to board rooms. Americans are sorting themselves into worlds separated by their political beliefs. Why would therapists’ offices be any different? One reason: Therapists seem to be [*overwhelmingly*](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-five-percent/202010/are-psychologists-too-politically-close-minded-today) [*liberal*](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1745691612448792).

Do people struggling with mental health issues need to agree with their therapists’ political views to find help? Do conservative therapists have a different perspective on mental illness from their liberal counterparts? What would a conservative therapist say about the anxiety that followed, for some Americans, the election of Donald Trump?

As part of [*It’s Not Just You*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/09/20/opinion/mental-health-america.html), Times Opinion’s project on mental health and society in America, the writer Meghan Daum spoke with Dea Bridge, a therapist in Grand Junction, Colo., who lists her services on [*conservativetherapists.com*](http://conservativetherapists.com), which helps conservative patients find treatment with politically sympathetic professionals. The two spoke about what conservative therapy might look like and how Ms. Bridge views the state of mental health in America today.

This conversation has been edited.

Meghan Daum: The home page of the Conservative Therapists site says: “Half of Americans have conservative values, yet approximately 90 percent of therapists, psychologists and psychiatrists are guided by a liberal or even socialist value system, creating a barrier for conservatives who would prefer talking with a professional who supports their values.” Does that sound right to you? Do you feel therapists tend to be on the left politically?

Dea Bridge: From what I’ve seen, yes.

I’m a little careful about what I say in certain circles because I just don’t know how well my views will be received. I kind of test the room a little bit before I open my mouth too wide. My affiliations — between the military and the law enforcement communities and some of those more hard-line traditional conservative values — really are uncomfortable for some people who are not conservative.

But I guess I didn’t realize how much it came up until Covid. I put my name on that website and I had people from other states calling me to say, “Oh my gosh, I’ve had this kind of experience and so now I’m looking for somebody whose values align more closely with mine,” and that’s really when I started thinking, “Wow!”

Daum: What kinds of experiences were they talking about?

Bridge: Basically, that they’d had liberal therapists who tried to tell them that their value system was wrong and they should think differently and then their lives would be different. When you’re basically slamming somebody’s belief system — how can you have a therapeutic relationship like that?

Daum: Can you give some examples? Were they talking about situations with friends? How much of it was very particular to this moment, this political climate, as opposed to something that could have been going on, say, 10 years ago?

Bridge: I would say the people who came to me talked very specifically about what is happening now. Whatever was happening before, for whatever reason, wasn’t as big a presence in everybody’s life. Just everywhere you look, there’s so much divisiveness. We spend a lot of time, even now, in individual and group sessions talking about how to manage the divisiveness.

Daum: And they feel they can’t say that to another therapist? They are actually saying something that is as anodyne as what you just said wouldn’t land well with a lot of therapists?

Bridge: Some people say, “I couldn’t work with this therapist,” and there’s probably others who are just afraid to say anything, because they don’t know if that person will be able to be professional and be objective and allow them to just be who they are regardless of their personal views.

Daum: When did you go to school to be a therapist?

Bridge: I started in 2014. Before that, I was in human resources and a whole bunch of other things. I have a really long résumé, different fields. I decided at 50 this is what I want to do.

Now I’m a licensed professional counselor. I did my training through a program at a private Christian college.

Daum: How is that different from a secular program?

Bridge: Religion and spirituality were very much woven into things — looking at and using scripture. But it wasn’t so overbearing that people who maybe didn’t have a strong sense of faith would be put off by it. It didn’t overburden the program and the learning, but it came from a Christian worldview.

Daum: So let’s take an example: If a couple comes in for marriage counseling — to a therapist like you, someone who takes a conservative or Christian approach — would you say that the goal, ideally, would be to keep this couple together? And might this be different from how another therapist might approach this same couple?

Bridge: That’s kind of a loaded question. I don’t do marriage counseling because I don’t want to be in that position. I have done some couples work, but in fact, the one couple that really sticks out in my mind divorced. I met with them individually, and after meeting with the wife, her vision of the marriage was so oppressive to her — it was making her ill. And we talked about her willingness to be in the relationship. So I would never be the one to say you have to make it work at all costs because this is what God wants. That’s not my job.

Daum: Do you think that conservatives are less likely to go to therapy in the first place?

Bridge: I would say yes. I don’t know if that’s a truth or just something I feel, but if you look at the ideology around conservatives, particularly out West, it’s this up-by-the-bootstraps, don’t-need-your-damn-help kind of thing. I’ve even met with people from the East Coast who’ve come out and done presentations and they say, “Wow, everybody’s really resistant out here to help.” It’s a very different mentality.

I would say the stigma that has been with mental health for a long time is decreasing; people are more open and they’re talking about mental health issues more now than they ever did. But, by and large, I would say conservatives are less likely to seek out therapy.

Daum: If you were a conservative Christian, you would be more likely to go to Christian counseling, right? That would be the first stop you would make instead of therapy.

Bridge: Perhaps, or even just go to the church and seek counsel but not counseling.

Daum: It sounds like you’re not letting your personal values intrude on the work you’re doing with the client. Is there an example of any type of problem or issue that you would just not be comfortable engaging with because of your views?

Bridge: I had a transgender client, but we weren’t working on transgender issues. It was somebody who we took in as a result of a probation contract [Ms. Bridge’s practice works with people who are involved with the criminal justice system]. I could have passed this person off to someone else, but I didn’t because we weren’t there to talk about transition-related issues. Obviously, those issues enter into the person’s life but that wasn’t really the primary focus of treatment — so we focused on the main issue.

I don’t intentionally seek out people needing services for those types of things because it’s just not my forte, and it doesn’t align with my values.

Daum: Hypothetically, if clients did come to you and they were transgender or if they were coming to you because their child was identifying as transgender, would you say, “I’m going to refer you to somebody else?” Or do you think you would try to work with them?

Bridge: I think it would be in their best interest for me to refer them to someone else from the get-go, because if I give it a go for my own curiosity and it fails miserably, then I haven’t done the client justice. They need to get to somebody who is going to give them the best chance of success.

Daum: If somebody came to you and was pregnant and strongly considering getting an abortion — how would you handle that? Would you share your opinions at all?

Bridge: I think I would just help these clients figure out what they could live with. I obviously have a conservative value about that, but I also realize my life is not going to be affected by their choice. They have to figure out what’s in the best interest of everyone involved and what they are going to be able to live with, what their conscience will tolerate. It’s not my job to bang on the Bible and say, “You’re going to hell.”

Daum: We’re hearing a lot now about a mental health crisis among everybody, but especially among young people. Do you have any thoughts about that? I know that’s a huge question.

Bridge: I have a lot of thoughts about this. Kids spend way too much time on social media and not enough time in relationships. Not enough time outside. Not enough time eating good, healthy food. There’s a lot of this mental health crisis that I think is related to environment and unhealthy modeling of relationships.

Daum: Do you see that as a conservative outlook?

Bridge: I just think it’s a people outlook. It doesn’t matter what ideology you have — if kids are stuck on a computer all the time and eating junk food, they’re not going to be good, healthy individuals.

Daum: Everything you just said sounds pretty logical to me, but I’m wondering if another kind of therapist would say, “Well, we have to meet these kids where they are and maybe they want to have a life where they sit in front of their screens and we need to adjust.”

Bridge: I think everybody talks about healthy choices. But I think in general we’ve lost the ability as a society to have good boundaries. I think, just in general, we overshare.

Daum: Do you think that people want to have psychological disorders when they don’t? There is this phenomenon on TikTok where these kids are performing having certain kinds of diagnoses — Tourette’s syndrome or obsessive-compulsive disorder — and there’s a social currency in having a diagnosis. What do you think that’s about?

Bridge: I do think there’s this labeling that takes place. I’ve actually had clients resist getting a diagnosis because they don’t want the label and then I’ve had ones who can sit there and read off a list of all the disorders they have because they know that if they’re ill, then they’re not responsible for their choices.

Daum: And you would be inclined to tell them to be responsible for their choices.

Bridge: Absolutely. You have the responsibility to be responsible. You are given free will — don’t squander it.

Daum: So what kinds of problems do people come to you with?

Bridge: A lot of anxiety, depression, adjustment disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder. I don’t take on people with acute mental disorders like schizophrenia and things like that.

Daum: I’m glad you mentioned PTSD. What does PTSD mean to you? How does one qualify for that diagnosis?

Bridge: There’s a very specific list of criteria. You know when you find yourself unable to live daily life because you have certain recurring thoughts. These things that happen that are intrusive in your life to the point that you can’t go out of your house anymore — all you want to do is engage in substance abuse because you can’t stand the thought of reality or you can’t keep the demons away at night, you can’t sleep because of your ruminating thoughts. Those are some hallmarks of PTSD. I’m talking about things that are beyond the normal response to an adverse situation. Two people can see the same horrible thing and one might have PTSD as a result and the other might not. It’s how you process the situation.

Daum: Do you think the word trauma gets overused?

Bridge: Yes, absolutely. There’s trauma little t and trauma big T. I do think “trauma” gets thrown around and I don’t know if it is used because people think, “She has trauma so we should be gentle. We can excuse her behavior.” We’re back to that labeling thing again. Did you just experience something that was really awful and you’re having a normal reaction to a really crappy thing and you’re going to get over it? I don’t think we breed resilience into people anymore.

Daum: I was going to ask you about resilience. I guess in some people’s minds, it maybe falls into the category of up-by-the-bootstraps. On the other hand, it’s pretty important. Is it something that you talk about directly in your sessions with people?

Bridge: Absolutely. Even though we endure horrible things, we need to learn how to move through them. Part of building resilience is falling flat on your face and figuring out how to build your life better.

Daum: Do you think your clients tend to be less resilient than people 30 years ago?

Bridge: Gosh, 30 years ago? I wasn’t a therapist then. But just looking at people in general and the environments that I have worked in, I would say that we’re not as resilient on a whole, because we really haven’t had to be. There are so many things that are provided and given — all with really good intentions. But there’s also really something valuable about touching the stove and learning don’t ever touch it again. We can’t always just give you an oven mitt.

Daum: What do you think is making everybody so unhappy these days?

Bridge: It’s been decades in the making. We don’t need to do a lot of things that we used to need to do to survive. We’re not really rooted in our own well-being. We’re rooted in self-gratification and, quite frankly, laziness.

A long time ago, I thought about having some sort of a program for people with eating disorders: We would have a garden plot. We would plant the garden. We would put our hands in the dirt. We would grow things, we would cook things, we would make nutritional things — a whole-body experience. Because I don’t think that we get enough of those things in our lives.

Daum: But what is somebody supposed to do if they are working in a cubicle and they need to keep doing that to survive? They’re trying to find a life partner but they’re dealing with dating apps or they’re just dealing with the world as it currently exists. I think a lot of people feel like it’s just become unmanageable — maybe even unlivable — and you can’t really tell somebody, “OK, go back to the land and grow a garden and that will solve everything.”

Bridge: I think that’s the key: How can you make even the intolerable tolerable? There’s just so much negativity out there. People get stuck in it and they build themselves a prison. You have to find your own will and your own meaning and your own reason to wake up in the morning. Whatever it is — the goldfish or the plant in your apartment or volunteer work or helping Mrs. Jones with her groceries. You need to find something to make yourself useful and get off the pity pot.

Daum: On the Conservative Therapists site, you said: “I am a counselor with strong conservative beliefs. While I do work with a wide variety of adult clients, I don’t compromise my beliefs in the course of my work.” What would compromising your beliefs entail?

Bridge: Well, here’s an example: If somebody does come to me with this very victim-oriented mentality, somebody who refuses to take any responsibility for his own well-being. We’re going to work with that until I feel like I don’t have anything else to say. I’m not going to suddenly coddle somebody because he thinks that’s what I should do for him. We get to a point where I don’t think this is working anymore for either one of us. That’s a value I have.

And there’s a difference between that and somebody who’s severely depressed. I get if you’re depressed. You can come off like a victim because you’re just not in a place to see it any other way.

Daum: Do you think that Donald Trump made everybody go crazy?

Bridge: What do you mean by “made everybody go crazy”?

Daum: In my world, I know a lot of people who were so distressed about the election of Trump that they had to go on anxiety medication. They couldn’t sleep. It dominated their lives, their goals, their thoughts, their relationships, their conversations for four years and even to this day.

Bridge: That is the most ridiculous thing I’ve ever heard. Why would you let one person in the world control your life? Are you that weak?

Daum: They would say, “Well, he is the president of our country.”

Bridge: There were people who thought that Barack Obama was the Antichrist, too. They lived through that. People don’t agree with Joe Biden now, either. If you really give that much control to someone, there are a lot more deficits in your life than you recognize.

Daum: What do you think would improve the mental health of Americans? There seems to be a huge crisis. We’re having people die [*deaths of despair*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/09/opinion/sunday/deaths-despair-poverty.html). Especially among men, especially in the ***working class***. Probably a lot of the sort of population you deal with. Where do we begin to try to solve this?

Bridge: I read an article within the last six months that really looked at multiple areas of society and compared it to how things used to be, 40 or 50 years ago. We’re very far removed from moral absolutes. We’re very far removed from knowing how to set good boundaries, how to manage our time. We’re very reactive. We’re not necessarily proactive.

We’ve lost the ability to be in the present moment. There are so many things that we could do differently. You know, I have a work phone and a personal phone and on the weekends and evenings, I have very specific business hours. I set boundaries because if I don’t, I’m not going to be healthy. I can’t be an unhealthy therapist.

Daum: So here’s my last question: What is the best thing people can do for their mental health?

Bridge: Fix your diet; examine how you’re spending your free time and who you’re spending it with; just take responsibility for your choices and stop blaming other people for your feelings.

Meghan Daum ([*@meghan\_daum*](https://twitter.com/meghan_daum)) is the host of “The Unspeakable Podcast: and the author, most recently, of “The Problem With Everything: My Journey Through the New Culture Wars.”

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[***U.S. Optimistic After Yellen Makes Case for Global Tax***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:634N-Y8T1-DXY4-X05C-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Alan Rappeport

**Body**

The Treasury secretary was in Europe to gather support for the tax plan, an agreement that gained the support of the Group of 20 nations on Saturday.

BRUSSELS -- The United States is hopeful that Ireland will drop its resistance to joining the global tax agreement that it is brokering, as Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen made the case to her Irish counterpart this week that it is in its economic interests to join the deal.

During a weeklong trip to Europe, Ms. Yellen worked to gather more support for a global plan that is intended to put an end to tax havens and curb profit shifting with a new global minimum tax. The agreement, which gained the support of the Group of 20 nations on Saturday, would usher in a global minimum tax of at least 15 percent. It would also change how taxing rights were allocated, allowing countries to collect levies from large, profitable multinational firms based on where their goods and services were sold.

''For Ireland, low taxes has been an economic strategy that has been incredibly successful,'' Ms. Yellen said in an interview on Tuesday ahead of her return to Washington. ''They see it as very vital to their economic success. And I think to go along with it, probably they need to be able to make the case that it's in the interest of the country.''

Ms. Yellen held high-stakes meetings in Brussels this week with Paschal Donohoe, Ireland's finance minister and president of the Eurogroup, a club of European finance ministers. She needs Mr. Donohoe's support because the European Union requires unanimity among its members to formally join the deal, which will require changes to domestic tax laws.

After meeting with Ms. Yellen on Monday, Mr. Donohoe struck a positive tone and said he would continue to engage in the process.

Despite growing global support for the deal, much work remains to be done.

More than 130 countries have backed a framework of the global agreement, which would be the largest shake-up of the international tax system in decades, but important holdouts like Ireland, Hungary and Estonia remain. With stops in Venice and Brussels on her first trip to Europe as Treasury secretary, Ms. Yellen worked with her counterparts to develop a strategy for getting those countries to drop their concerns and join the agreement so that a final pact can be secured by October.

Ms. Yellen told her Irish counterpart that Ireland's economic model would not be upended if it increased its tax rate from 12.5 percent, noting that it would still have a large gap between its rate and the 21 percent tax rate on foreign earnings that the Biden administration has proposed.

The Biden administration believes that the agreement, if enacted, will end the ''race to the bottom'' on corporate taxation, heralding a new era of corporate governance that will help nations finance new infrastructure investments and reduce inequality. Greater tax fairness could also aid in pushing back against the rise of right-wing populists, who have come to power around the world on a wave of frustration that ***working-class*** citizens have been forgotten by the elites.

''Globalization is not just serving to enrich the rich further and harm the poor,'' Ms. Yellen said. ''In some broader sense the international tax piece is about that.''

Top economic officials are working out complicated details of the global tax plan and will be scrambling to finish them in the coming months. One thorny issue that emerged at the G20 meetings in Venice last weekend was how tax revenue will be allocated around the world as part of a new tax on the largest and most profitable companies.

Selling the agreement in the United States could be the biggest challenge. Congress is narrowly divided, and Republicans have been adamant that they will not support tax increases, giving the Biden administration a narrow margin for success even if it is able to pass most of its proposed tax changes with only votes from Democrats.

Republican lawmakers have complained that the United States is ''surrendering'' its tax base by allowing other countries to impose new levies on its companies. For instance, in some cases, China will be able to collect new tax revenue from American businesses that sell products there. However, the United States will probably be able to collect taxes from some Chinese companies that do business in the United States. It is not clear if China would have a net gain from that part of the deal.

Ms. Yellen portrayed the global tax as part of a broader economic reckoning that the Biden administration believes needs to happen in order to prepare the United States -- and the rest of the world -- for future fiscal needs.

She pointed to the Biden administration's tax plans, which include raising the corporate tax rate to 28 percent from 21 percent, as central to that approach, saying the administration wants to address what she considers to be the unfairness of the tax code in the United States.

''It just isn't right for very successful companies to be able to avoid paying their fair share to support expenditures that we need to invest in our economy, to invest in our work force, in R.&D. and a social safety net that's operational,'' Ms. Yellen said.

Yet resistance is mounting from corporate America, with business groups warning that the possibility of $2 trillion in corporate tax increases would make American companies less competitive around the world. And with rising prices continuing to be a concern among policymakers in the United States, business interests have said the tax increases could fuel inflation, as companies pass them on to consumers.

Ms. Yellen dismissed that theory, arguing that most of the economic research has found that corporate tax increases mostly fall on past investments and would not harm workers or lead to prices rising faster.

''There's no reason to think that changing corporate taxes would have some direct impact on prices,'' Ms. Yellen said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/13/business/janet-yellen.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/13/business/janet-yellen.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen met with Paschal Donohoe, Ireland's finance minister, in Brussels this week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Virginia Mayo/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Your Thursday Briefing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6428-1CR1-DXY4-X0NK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1381 words

**Byline:** Natasha Frost

**Highlight:** Crisis at the E.U. border.

**Body**

Crisis at the E.U. border.

Crisis deepens at Belarus-Poland border

With thousands of people camped in the cold at the Poland-Belarus border, Western officials have accused Aleksandr Lukashenko, Belarus’s repressive ruler, of [*using asylum seekers as human weapons*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/10/world/poland-belarus-border-migrants) and trying to manufacture a migrant crisis in Europe in retaliation for sanctions against his country, creating a new flash point in East-West relations.

Western officials said Lukashenko had increased the number of people allowed to fly into his country and then funneled them westward toward the E.U. It appears that the number of flights to Minsk from the Middle East have [*at least doubled over the past 10 days*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/migrants-fly-iraq-belarus.html).

European officials said that E.U. member states were united when it comes to defending Europe’s borders and that [*uncontrolled immigration was over*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/poland-belarus-border-europe.html). In response, Brussels is contemplating further sanctions aimed at Belarus. But few believe that new sanctions will move Lukashenko any more than previous ones have.

The migrants: Innocent children, women and men are in freezing conditions, stuck between Polish border guards and barbed wire on one side and Belarusian troops on the other. At least 10 people have died; other estimates are higher. On either side of the border, migrants have [*faced brutal beatings*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/middleeast/migrants-beaten-belarus-border.html).

In France, a disconnect over clean energy

Montargis, a town 75 miles from Paris, was the center of the Yellow Vest social uprising, an angry protest movement over an increase in gasoline taxes that was sustained for more than year by a much broader sense of alienation felt by those outside France’s major cities.

Three years on, the economic and political disconnect that nearly tore France apart remains just below the surface. Talk of a renewable-energy revolution in Paris has [*provoked concern in Montargis and towns like it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/france-climate-change-energy-prices.html) about the potential costs to ***working-class*** people whose livelihoods are threatened by that clean-energy transition.

Household gas prices are up 12.6 percent in the past month alone, partly the result of shortages linked to the coronavirus. Electric cars seem fancifully expensive to people who were encouraged not so long ago to buy fuel-efficient diesel automobiles. And a wind turbine that will slash property values is not what people want to see down the road.

Quotable: “If Parisians love wind turbines so much, why not rip up the Bois de Vincennes and make an attraction of them?” one resident asked, alluding to the vast park to the east of Paris.

Background: For Emmanuel Macron, facing an election in April, the transition to clean energy has become a delicate subject. He has portrayed himself as a green warrior, albeit a pragmatic one, but knows that any return of the Yellow Vests would be disastrous for his election prospects.

Agreements and setbacks at COP26

In the final days of the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow, the U.S. and China [*agreed to “enhance ambition”*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/10/world/cop26-glasgow-climate-summit/china-us-cop26-climate-change) on climate change by cutting emissions this decade, and China committed for the first time to address emissions from methane.

Separately, six big automakers and 30 national governments [*agreed to phase out gas-powered car sales worldwide by 2040*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/10/world/cop26-glasgow-climate-summit/dozens-of-nations-along-with-california-and-washington-agree-to-phase-out-gas-car-sales). Some of the world’s biggest car manufacturers, including Toyota, Volkswagen and the Nissan-Renault alliance, did not join the pledge, which is not legally binding. The governments of the U.S., China and Japan abstained.

A [*primary goal of the conference*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/10/world/cop26-glasgow-climate-summit/a-draft-points-the-way-to-a-possible-agreement-in-glasgow) is to agree on stronger action to keep the average global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit), compared with preindustrial levels. But negotiators hoping to put together a stronger climate accord still face [*a long list of hurdles*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/10/world/cop26-glasgow-climate-summit/cop26-glasgow-climate-negotiations).

Political memo: As the host leader of the U.N. conference on global warming, Boris Johnson, the British prime minister, was hoping to project statesmanship. But [*a mushrooming ethics scandal in British politics*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/boris-johnson-climate-scandal.html) has dominated the week, overshadowing his climate ambitions.

THE LATEST NEWS

Virus News

* The Chinese city of Shenyang [*now requires travelers coming from overseas to spend 28 days in hotel quarantine*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/asia/covid-china-shenyang-quarantine.html) and another 28 days inside their homes. The restrictions reflect how seriously Chinese officials are taking the country’s “zero Covid” approach.

1. Nearly [*a million young children in the U.S. have gotten Covid-19 shots*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/us/politics/kids-vaccine-5-to-11.html) since the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine was cleared for 5- to 11-year-olds last week, according to White House estimates.
2. German officials are scrambling to put new Covid rules in place as the country [*experiences a record jump in case numbers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/covid-germany-record-cases.html).
3. The U.S. has negotiated a deal to [*ship additional doses of the Johnson &amp; Johnson coronavirus vaccine*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/us/politics/blinken-johnson-johnson-vaccine-covax.html) overseas, to help people living in conflict zones.
4. Here are [*the latest updates*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/10/world/covid-vaccine-boosters-mandates) and [*maps of the pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/world/covid-cases.html).

Other Big Stories

* Talks between European lawmakers and Taiwan officials, [*despite threats from Beijing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/asia/taiwan-europe-china.html), point to Europe’s increasing willingness to strengthen relations with the island, which China claims as its territory. Above, Joseph Wu, Taiwan’s foreign minister, in Prague.

1. At a court in Paris, a man was sentenced to [*life imprisonment for killing a French Holocaust survivor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/knoll-france-murder.html) in what judges said was a hate crime motivated by the fact that she was Jewish.

* Google lost an appeal on Wednesday to overturn a landmark E.U. antitrust ruling — and a [*$2.8 billion fine against the company*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/business/google-eu-appeal-antitrust.html).

What Else Is Happening

* The police in France arrested a member of the Paris St.-Germain women’s soccer team after [*masked men attacked her teammate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/sports/soccer/psg-women-attack-aminata-diallo.html).
* The Consumer Price Index, a measure of inflation in the U.S., rose 6.2 percent in October from a year ago, the [*fastest pace in more than three decades*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/business/economy/consumer-price-inflation-october.html).

A Morning Read

Over four months and 5,000 miles, a 12-foot-tall puppet of a 9-year-old Syrian girl named Amal trekked from Turkey to Britain to find her mother. In a politically divided continent, [*were any minds changed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/theater/little-amal-the-walk.html)

ARTS AND IDEAS

The legacy of ‘Chicago’

When “Chicago” premiered in 1975, it wasn’t a hit. Inspired by sensationalist murder trials, the vaudeville-style musical follows the character Roxie Hart’s ascent to fame after she kills her lover. The production “seemed too chilly, in those days, to be truly loved,” Ben Brantley wrote in The Times, pointing to the show’s themes of “greed, corruption, violence, exploitation, adultery and treachery.”

But then came a streamlined reworking of the production in 1996 that bubbled “like vintage Champagne,” Brantley wrote. “Chicago” went on to become the longest-running American musical in Broadway history and nabbed six Tony Awards, a film adaptation and over 30 international reproductions.

The show has stayed fresh with the help of dazzling cast members: singers like Patti LaBelle and Usher, movie stars like Brooke Shields and Patrick Swayze, and even reality TV personalities like NeNe Leakes. “It’s not a stunt: We don’t take anyone that can’t fulfill the stage work,” the producer Barry Weissler said. “There have been people — even important people in the music world — who couldn’t cut it onstage, so didn’t make it into the show.”

For the 25th anniversary of the revival, Juan A. Ramírez [*spoke with the musical’s composer, producers and actors about its history.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/theater/chicago-broadway-anniversary.html)

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

This vegetarian take on a beef Wellington is [*just as impressive*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1020596-vegetarian-mushroom-wellington?action=click&amp;region=Sam%20Sifton%27s%20Suggestions&amp;rank=2) as the real thing.

Denim Blues

Low-slung, high-waisted, skinny, cropped, baggy, flared — there’s [*no consensus on jeans these days*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/style/denim-jeans-trends.html).

What to Read

Three young adult novels capture the [*challenges and charms of growing up*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/books/review/aristotle-dante-waters-world-bad-girls-never-say-die-himawari-house.html).

Now Time to Play

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Many August babies (four letters).

And here is [*the Spelling Bee*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

[*You can find all our puzzles here*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords).

That’s it for today’s briefing. And a programming note: I’m away until next week, but my colleagues will be filling in to get you the latest news.

Thanks for starting your day with The Times — Natasha

P.S. The word “[*gloopiness*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/science/kilauea-volcano-eruption.html)” — describing magma from the Kilauea volcano in Hawaii — appeared [*for the first time*](https://twitter.com/NYT_first_said/status/1457982113555308545) in The Times this week.

The latest episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about a man who identifies the bodies of migrants who died trying to reach Spain.

Sanam Yar wrote today’s Arts and Ideas. You can reach Natasha and the team at [*briefing@nytimes.com*](mailto:briefing@nytimes.com?subject=Europe%20Briefing%20Feedback).

PHOTO: Migrants from the Middle East and elsewhere at the Belarus-Poland border. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Pool photo by Ramil Nasibulin FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2021

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[***Yellen Makes Case for Ireland to Join Global Tax Deal***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:634G-N3T1-JBG3-632X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 13, 2021 Tuesday 08:43 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 1015 words

**Byline:** Alan Rappeport

**Highlight:** The Treasury secretary was in Europe to gather support for the tax plan, an agreement that gained the support of the Group of 20 nations on Saturday.

**Body**

The Treasury secretary was in Europe to gather support for the tax plan, an agreement that gained the support of the Group of 20 nations on Saturday.

BRUSSELS — The United States is hopeful that Ireland will drop its resistance to joining the [*global tax agreement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/business/oecd-global-minimum-tax.html) that it is brokering, as Treasury Secretary [*Janet L. Yellen*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/16/business/economy/yellen-powell-federal-reserve.html) made the case to her Irish counterpart this week that it is in its economic interests to join the deal.

During a weeklong trip to Europe, Ms. Yellen worked to gather more support for a global plan that is intended to put an end to tax havens and curb profit shifting with a new global minimum tax. The agreement, which gained the support of the Group of 20 nations on Saturday, would usher in a [*global minimum tax of at least 15 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/20/business/economy/global-minimum-tax-corporations.html?.?mc=aud_dev&amp;ad-keywords=auddevgate&amp;gclid=CjwKCAjw87SHBhBiEiwAukSeUau0_CuQ-Fpsqu8lF319bLzdcRnqOTH2Gin4oCpaE8XAItB5bLYd-RoCXI4QAvD_BwE&amp;gclsrc=aw.ds). It would also change how taxing rights were allocated, allowing countries to collect levies from large, profitable multinational firms based on where their goods and services were sold.

“For Ireland, low taxes has been an economic strategy that has been incredibly successful,” Ms. Yellen said in an interview on Tuesday ahead of her return to Washington. “They see it as very vital to their economic success. And I think to go along with it, probably they need to be able to make the case that it’s in the interest of the country.”

Ms. Yellen held high-stakes meetings in Brussels this week with Paschal Donohoe, Ireland’s finance minister and president of the Eurogroup, a club of European finance ministers. She needs Mr. Donohoe’s support because the European Union requires unanimity among its members to formally join the deal, which will require changes to domestic tax laws.

After meeting with Ms. Yellen on Monday, Mr. Donohoe struck a positive tone and said he would continue to engage in the process.

Despite growing global support for the deal, much work remains to be done.

More than 130 countries have backed a framework of the global agreement, which would be the largest shake-up of the international tax system in decades, but important holdouts like Ireland, Hungary and Estonia remain. With stops in Venice and Brussels on her first trip to Europe as Treasury secretary, Ms. Yellen worked with her counterparts to develop a strategy for getting those countries to drop their concerns and join the agreement so that a final pact can be secured by October.

Ms. Yellen told her Irish counterpart that Ireland’s economic model would not be upended if it increased its tax rate from 12.5 percent, noting that it would still have a large gap between its rate and the 21 percent tax rate on foreign earnings that the [*Biden administration has proposed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/07/business/economy/biden-tax-plan.html).

The Biden administration believes that the agreement, if enacted, will end the “race to the bottom” on corporate taxation, heralding a new era of corporate governance that will help nations finance new infrastructure investments and reduce inequality. Greater tax fairness could also aid in pushing back against the rise of right-wing populists, who have come to power around the world on a wave of frustration that ***working-class*** citizens have been forgotten by the elites.

“Globalization is not just serving to enrich the rich further and harm the poor,” Ms. Yellen said. “In some broader sense the international tax piece is about that.”

Top economic officials are working out complicated details of the [*global tax plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/business/oecd-global-minimum-tax.html) and will be scrambling to finish them in the coming months. One thorny issue that emerged at the G20 meetings in Venice last weekend was how tax revenue will be allocated around the world as part of a new tax on the largest and most profitable companies.

Selling the agreement in the United States could be the biggest challenge. Congress is narrowly divided, and Republicans have been adamant that they will not support tax increases, giving the Biden administration a narrow margin for success even if it is able to pass most of its proposed tax changes with only votes from Democrats.

Republican lawmakers have complained that the United States is “surrendering” its tax base by allowing other countries to impose new levies on its companies. For instance, in some cases, China will be able to collect new tax revenue from American businesses that sell products there. However, the United States will probably be able to collect taxes from some Chinese companies that do business in the United States. It is not clear if China would have a net gain from that part of the deal.

Ms. Yellen portrayed the global tax as part of a broader economic reckoning that the Biden administration believes needs to happen in order to prepare the United States — and the rest of the world — for future fiscal needs.

She pointed to the Biden administration’s tax plans, which include raising the corporate tax rate to 28 percent from 21 percent, as central to that approach, saying the administration wants to address what she considers to be the unfairness of the tax code in the United States.

“It just isn’t right for very successful companies to be able to avoid paying their fair share to support expenditures that we need to invest in our economy, to invest in our work force, in R.&amp;D. and a social safety net that’s operational,” Ms. Yellen said.

Yet resistance is mounting from corporate America, with business groups warning that the possibility of $2 trillion in corporate tax increases would make American companies less competitive around the world. And with rising prices continuing to be a concern among policymakers in the United States, business interests have said the tax increases could fuel inflation, as companies pass them on to consumers.

Ms. Yellen dismissed that theory, arguing that most of the economic research has found that corporate tax increases mostly fall on past investments and would not harm workers or lead to prices rising faster.

“There’s no reason to think that changing corporate taxes would have some direct impact on prices,” Ms. Yellen said.

PHOTO: Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen met with Paschal Donohoe, Ireland’s finance minister, in Brussels this week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Virginia Mayo/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 8, 2021

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[***For Macron, France’s Troubled Industries Hit Home***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6557-BKR1-JBG3-63NJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 5, 2022 Tuesday 23:56 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1767 words

**Byline:** Norimitsu Onishi

**Highlight:** President Emmanuel Macron vowed an economic revival, but as he seeks re-election, a Potemkin factory in the town where he was raised shows just how hard that can be.

**Body**

President Emmanuel Macron vowed an economic revival, but as he seeks re-election, a Potemkin factory in the town where he was raised shows just how hard that can be.

AMIENS, France — During the last presidential campaign, the troubled Whirlpool factory in the northern city of Amiens became the setting for frantic, dueling appeals for support by [*Emmanuel Macron*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/emmanuel-macron) and his far-right rival, [*Marine Le Pen*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/marine-le-pen).

Mr. Macron promised to save the plant — which happens to be in his hometown — and once he was elected, his government poured millions in subsidies toward the factory’s reinvention, as a showpiece of his commitment to reviving French industry.

As Mr. Macron seeks re-election, he and Ms. Le Pen are preparing to [*square off once again as the front-runners*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/04/world/europe/french-election-le-pen-macron.html?searchResultPosition=1) before the first round of voting in [*presidential elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/french-presidential-election) on Sunday. But the fate of the plant has proved much the opposite of what Mr. Macron had hoped for.

Today, the plant is an example of the difficulty of rehabilitating ailing French industries and of the president’s challenge in winning the confidence of French workers, who have been gravitating for years to the far right.

The mammoth plant in Amiens, where weeds have pushed through asphalt and the cafeteria’s menu is frozen on sausage fricassee, is deserted and lifeless, except for three last Whirlpool workers who spend their days huddling around the coffee machines in a few small rooms.

The plant’s new operator was convicted in February of misuse of funds, after a year of taking money from the government and Whirlpool and doing precious little with it. Workers say they spent idle days as next to nothing rolled off the assembly line. Instead, they kept busy killing time, taking extended cigarette breaks or lying inside their cars fidgeting on their smartphones.

“Two or three times, when someone important visited, we had to pretend to work or hide,” recalled Mariano Munoz, 49, who was in charge of janitorial services. “The welders welded all sorts of things and hammered away. One or two tinkered with a car. Me, I’d take the street cleaner and I’d sweep the entire parking lot.”

Mr. Macron was elected as a change agent five years ago, with plans to disrupt the heavily unionized industrial sector that had stagnated as owners feared the rising cost of French workers who were guaranteed years of ample benefits and were notoriously difficult to fire. For years, unemployment hovered chronically at 8 percent or more as the industrial sector atrophied.

Initially, Mr. Macron attempted to overhaul France’s economy by pushing through business-friendly changes, like cutting taxes, especially for the wealthy. In his first years as president, he took on some of France’s toughest unions, provoking the biggest strikes the country had seen in years as he revamped France’s voluminous labor code, making it easier to hire and fire workers.

But even as the overall economy has bounced back strongly from the pandemic, Mr. Macron’s efforts to reindustrialize France have proved decidedly mixed, economists say, as evidenced by the nation’s trade deficit of 84.7 billion euros, about $93 billion, last year — a record — as well as the plant in Amiens, which had made tumble dryers for Whirlpool and did not survive despite nearly €10 million in subsidies.

For Mr. Macron, the plant’s long, agonizing death has complicated every trip back to his hometown, about 80 miles north of Paris. It reinforced the impression of Mr. Macron, a former investment banker, as the president of the rich, someone cut off from ordinary French people — like the nearly 300 workers who lost their jobs when the plant finally did close in 2018.

Many of the laid off workers went on to join the Yellow Vest movement, whose ranks were filled with ***working-class*** French struggling under high taxes and a lack of earning power, ushering in the biggest political crisis of Mr. Macron’s presidency.

Burned by [*the Yellow Vest protests*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/15/business/yellow-vests-movement-inequality.html), Mr. Macron’s government spent massively to offset the economic shock of the pandemic, and unemployment is now at its lowest in a decade. Still, it is service-sector jobs that have continued to increase, while industrial employment declines.

Thomas Grjebine, an economist at CEPII, a research center in Paris, said that the fate of the Amiens plant was “symptomatic” of the difficulties of reviving the industrial sector. “In fact, the government is somewhat powerless before the closings of plants,” Mr. Grjebine said. “But many promises are made during campaigns.”

During Mr. Macron’s campaign for the presidency in 2017, 11 days before the final vote, Mr. Macron met with union leaders in town, while Ms. Le Pen paid a surprise visit to the plant’s parking lot and was greeted warmly by striking employees — forcing a reluctant Mr. Macron to follow.

Heckled and jostled by the [*hostile crowd*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/26/world/europe/marine-le-pen-draws-cheers-in-macrons-hometown-and-he-gets-boos.html), Mr. Macron tried to catch up with Ms. Le Pen, whose party, then called the National Front, had won the department that includes Amiens in the first round of voting that year.

“You think it doesn’t hurt me in the gut that people vote for the National Front on my soil?” Mr. Macron [*said to the crowd*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BgJdE37dkFA). Later, he promised a “real [*Marshall Plan*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nBGQh4a04o) for the reindustrialization of our economically lost territories.”

Half a year after his election victory, that promise seemed in sight. A prominent local businessman, Nicolas Decayeux, was selected to take over the plant with a project to manufacture refrigerated lockers and small vehicles. He took on 162 of the 282 laid-off Whirlpool workers and received €2.6 million in subsidies from the government and €7.4 million from Whirlpool.

During a [*celebratory visit*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LRgYYTrhSI4)to the plant, Mr. Macron was accompanied by Mr. Decayeux. In a follow-up letter to Mr. Decayeux, the president wrote that the businessman’s “beautiful entrepreneurial project” would “contribute to our industrial recovery.”

“I really had stars in my eyes because here is a young president who wants to reform France,” recalled Mr. Decayeux, who named his company WN.

It was a rare piece of good news for Amiens, a picturesque town of more than 130,000 that straddles the Somme River.

Like much of northern France, it had been hit by deindustrialization for two generations as successive national governments considered a shift toward a consumer-driven economy a sign of modernization, witnessed in the Amazon warehouses that have opened in Amiens and elsewhere.

“This drop in social standing, the sentiment of being abandoned and of not mattering, eased the way for extremism,” said Brigitte Fouré, the center-right mayor of Amiens.

In [*an interview*](https://www.zadiglemag.fr/emmanuel-macron/) with a French magazine last year, Mr. Macron said that growing up in Amiens, he had witnessed the “full force of deindustrialization” in his region. Still, he acknowledged that he himself had enjoyed a sheltered upbringing, living in a “rather happy bubble, and even a bubble in a bubble.”

The son of two medical doctors, Mr. Macron grew up in Amiens’s richest neighborhood, Henriville, and attended the city’s most prestigious school, a private Jesuit establishment called La Providence.

“He’s from Henriville, and when you say, ‘Henriville,’ it’s Versailles,” said M’hammed El Hiba, the longtime head of Alco, a community center in Amiens North, an area inhabited by the descendants of North Africans recruited to work in factories in the 1960s and 1970s.

At the former Whirlpool plant, the optimism faded quickly. Former workers said that Mr. Decayeux’s plans to build lockers and small vehicles never took off.

“Nothing was happening,” said Christophe Beaugrand, 44, a welder who was hired by Mr. Decayeux after being laid off by Whirlpool. “People were in the cafeteria with their phones and chargers. When the prefect visited, we had to make noise or hide.”

Worried about the lack of activity, workers informed their national lawmaker, François Ruffin, and gave him a chicken made of steel as proof of their idleness.

Mr. Ruffin said he alerted the government but got no response until it was too late. Mr. Macron’s government, he said, appeared to have lost interest in the plant after Mr. Decayeux’s company took it over.

“It was as if everything was over on the day of the inauguration,” Mr. Ruffin said.

Eventually, the government looked closely at Mr. Decayeux’s company, WN, and pulled the plug. Without subsidies, the company shut down in July 2019, about a year after opening to great fanfare.

After an official inquiry and a trial, Mr. Decayeux was found guilty in February of awarding himself a €25,000 bonus, which he must repay; of using company funds to rent two apartments, one for himself and another for his girlfriend; and of hiring his son as a part-time sales representative.

Mr. Decayeux, who has appealed, said that he had become a scapegoat for a government that panicked and fatally cut subsidies before his business could take off. Though he acknowledged that the assembly line lay silent for most of the time, he said that WN had made 15 small vehicles and a few elevator shafts.

“Before the government, I’m nothing,” he said, adding, “They crushed me.”

During his last visit to Amiens, in November, [*Mr. Macron met*](https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2021/11/22/emmanuel-macron-a-rencontre-des-anciens-salaries-de-whirlpool-a-amiens_6103147_823448.html) nine former Whirlpool workers. By then, the news had become even worse. A local furniture maker that had taken over the plant following WN’s collapse had also quickly gone out of business.

[*Mr. Macron described*](https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2021/11/22/emmanuel-macron-a-rencontre-des-anciens-salaries-de-whirlpool-a-amiens_6103147_823448.html) Mr. Decayeux as a “hunter of bonuses” and told the workers, “I was duped along with you.”

Some of Whirlpool’s former workers didn’t buy it.

“It’s all well and good that he did his mea culpa, but behind that, there are still people without jobs,” said Frédéric Chantrelle, 53, one of the last three Whirlpool workers still employed at the plant. A court ruled last year that the company had to rehire them because the factory was not closed for economic reasons.

In the otherwise abandoned 17-hectare facility, they punch in and walk through a labyrinth of dark and cold corridors to reach the few heated rooms where they spend their days.

“It’s like a ghost factory,” Mr. Chantrelle said. “It’s awe-inspiring, a big site like this emptied of everything.”

Adèle Cordonnier contributed reporting.

Adèle Cordonnier contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: A mammoth Whirlpool plant in President Emmanuel Macron’s hometown is a symbol of the struggles of French industry. The trade deficit set a record last year.; From left: Amiens North, an area inhabited by many descendants of North Africans recruited to work in factories decades ago. Patrice Sinoquet, one of the last three workers at the former Whirlpool plant, showed a photograph of Mr. Macron visiting in 2019. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Your Thursday Briefing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6424-T1M1-DXY4-X0C3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 10, 2021 Wednesday 11:44 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1418 words

**Byline:** Matthew Cullen

**Highlight:** Migrants flood Poland-Belarus border.

**Body**

Migrants flood Poland-Belarus border.

We’re covering the crisis along Poland’s eastern border and the increasing willingness of European countries to engage with Taiwan.

Crisis deepens on Europe’s eastern flank

Thousands of migrants have flooded the [*border between Belarus and Poland*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/11/world/belarus-poland-border-migrants), hoping to reach E.U. countries. European officials say it is a crisis manufactured by the Belarusian ruler, Aleksandr Lukashenko, [*using asylum seekers as human weapons*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/10/world/poland-belarus-border-migrants).

The situation along the hastily constructed razor-wire-fenced border has rapidly escalated, with 17,000 Polish troops sent to stand guard and deny entry to migrants. European leaders have pledged solidarity with Poland’s government, denouncing Lukashenko, despite longstanding disputes between Brussels and Warsaw.

E.U. officials are looking at air traffic data as potential evidence of Belarus improperly ferrying migrants to the border of Poland from the Middle East. It appears that the number of flights to Minsk from the region have [*at least doubled over the past 10 days*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/migrants-fly-iraq-belarus.html).

Context: Western officials say Lukashenko is retaliating against sanctions imposed by the E.U. after his disputed 2020 election victory. Top E.U. diplomats are expected to propose new sanctions against Belarus on Monday.

Russian involvement: Poland’s prime minister accused Vladimir Putin, a close ally of Lukashenko, of orchestrating the effort — which a Russian spokeswoman denied. Chancellor [*Angela Merkel of Germany called Putin*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/10/world/poland-belarus-border-migrants/merkel-urges-putin-to-intervene-on-the-border-crisis-with-belarus) and urged him to push Belarus to stop its actions at the border, her spokeswoman said.

The migrants: The largest group are Iraqi Kurds. Many others are Syrian. Here’s why they’re [*gambling all they have to reach Europe*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/why-migrants-go-belarus.html).

Demand is down for U.S. visas from China

The Biden administration resumed visa services in China, along with several other nations, this week for the first time since the start of the coronavirus pandemic.

Lines formed at consulates in Guangzhou, Shanghai and Shenyang, but [*demand appears to be down*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/10/world/covid-vaccine-boosters-mandates/the-us-resumes-issuing-visas-in-china-but-demand-is-down). The muted interest stood in stark contrast to prepandemic scenes in front of the embassy in central Beijing, which drew some of the largest daily public crowds in the city.

It may reflect the [*political tensions between Washington and Beijing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/09/world/asia/united-states-china-taiwan.html), but also the wariness of traveling to the U.S., where the pandemic remains rampant compared with the relatively small outbreaks in China.

Related: The Chinese city of Shenyang, which has not reported any Covid-19 cases since July 30, [*now requires travelers arriving from overseas to spend 28 days in hotel quarantine*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/asia/covid-china-shenyang-quarantine.html) and another 28 days inside their home. The restrictions reflect how seriously officials are taking the country’s “zero Covid” approach.

Here are [*the latest updates*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/10/world/covid-vaccine-boosters-mandates) and [*maps of the pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/world/covid-cases.html).

In other developments:

* Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the U.S. negotiated a deal to ship doses of the Johnson &amp; Johnson Covid vaccine [*to conflict zones overseas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/us/politics/blinken-johnson-johnson-vaccine-covax.html).

1. German officials are scrambling to put new Covid rules in place as the country [*suffers a record increase in case numbers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/covid-germany-record-cases.html).

Bucking China, Europe begins to back Taiwan

European lawmakers and Taiwanese officials have repeatedly engaged with one another in recent weeks, suggesting a subtle shift is underway where European countries are becoming [*more willing to interact with the island in defiance of China*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/asia/taiwan-europe-china.html).

The European Parliament sent its first-ever formal delegation to Taiwan last week, shortly after it overwhelmingly backed a resolution calling for stronger ties. Such formal diplomatic links have long been avoided by European nations wary of provoking Beijing, which opposes contact with Taiwan and claims the island as its territory.

But China’s increasingly assertive authoritarianism has fed distrust, and some distaste. Concerns over China’s crackdown on Hong Kong, its handling of the pandemic and its intimidation tactics in Taiwan appear to have prompted a willingness in Europe to re-evaluate its diplomacy.

What’s next: Taiwan’s ultimate goal is a bilateral investment agreement with Europe. And the worldwide shortage of semiconductor chips has highlighted Taiwan’s role as an indispensable node in the global supply chain.

However: Europe’s economic interests in China are huge, and the focus on Taiwan is still a minority effort. Europe has shown no intention of abandoning its longstanding policy of recognizing Beijing’s position that there is only one Chinese government.

THE LATEST NEWS

Asia Pacific

* Prosecutors in Myanmar accused the American journalist Danny Fenster of terrorism and sedition. He once worked at a hard-hitting news outlet [*hated by Myanmar’s governing military*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/asia/danny-fenster-american-journalist-myanmar.html).

1. China committed for the first time, in a joint statement with the U.S., to [*address emissions from methane*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/10/world/cop26-glasgow-climate-summit/china-us-cop26-climate-change).
2. China Evergrande met a Wednesday [*payment deadline for two of its bonds*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/business/evergrande-bond-deadline.html).
3. Pakistan’s government and the Pakistani Taliban agreed to a [*monthlong cease-fire.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/world/asia/pakistan-taliban-cease-fire.html)
4. The U.S. Holocaust Museum said in a report that it was “gravely concerned” that the Chinese government “may be committing genocide” against the Muslim community of [*Uyghurs in northwestern China*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/world/asia/us-holocaust-museum-china-uyghurs-report.html).

Around the World

* At least six major automakers and 30 countries pledged to work toward phasing out sales of new gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles [*worldwide by 2040*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/climate/cars-zero-emissions-cop26.html).

1. Google lost an appeal on Wednesday to overturn a landmark E.U. antitrust ruling — and a [*$2.8 billion fine against the company*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/business/google-eu-appeal-antitrust.html).

* The U.N. released a draft accord that urges countries to set policies to stop adding greenhouse gases [*“by or around midcentury.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/10/world/cop26-glasgow-climate-summit/a-draft-points-the-way-to-a-possible-agreement-in-glasgow)

1. The police in France arrested a professional soccer player as part of an investigation into [*an attack on one of her teammates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/sports/soccer/psg-women-attack-aminata-diallo.html).
2. Mozambique’s former finance minister will be extradited to the U.S. to face corruption charges for a bribery scandal that prosectors say [*defrauded American investors*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/africa/mozambique-corruption-manuel-chang-extradition.html).

A Morning Read

Outside Paris, many ***working-class*** French people feel left behind by the renewable energy revolution. As the global elite gather at a climate conference in Glasgow and urge the world to shift immediately to greener systems, people in France’s “periphery” are more concerned about their [*money running out before the end of the month*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/france-climate-change-energy-prices.html). The tension has raised fears of a resurgence of the Yellow Vest social uprising.

ARTS AND IDEAS

New views on history

Two books published this fall bring new relevance to old — sometimes really old — human history.

“[*The Dawn of Everything*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/31/arts/dawn-of-everything-graeber-wengrow.html),” by the anthropologist David Graeber and the archaeologist David Wengrow, upends the prevailing narrative of social evolution: that in the millenniums between the appearance of Homo sapiens and the invention of agriculture, almost nothing happened.

The authors, citing recent discoveries, contend that early humans made collective choices about how to organize society, wealth and power. “In other words,” [*William Deresiewicz writes in The Atlantic*](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2021/11/graeber-wengrow-dawn-of-everything-history-humanity/620177/), “they practiced politics.” Graeber was a de facto leader of the Occupy Wall Street movement, and his politics are apparent in the book’s message — that humanity has reinvented itself before, and that it can again. (New York magazine [*recently profiled Graeber.*](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2021/11/david-graeber-dawn-of-everything.html))

In “[*Powers and Thrones*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/books/review/dan-jones-powers-and-thrones.html),” the historian Dan Jones narrows the scope to the Middle Ages. His stories of kings, conquerors and artists make for a “lively history that often reads like a novel,” The Times’s review says. More than simply recounting history, Jones connects the ancient world to the modern one.

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

Padma Lakshmi shares her [*foolproof recipe for slow-roasted turkey*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/dining/padma-lakshmi-thanksgiving-turkey.html).

What to Watch

“Dickinson,” the playful Apple TV+ series about the poet Emily Dickinson, has begun its final season — [*this time set in the period leading up to Civil War*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/arts/television/dickinson-final-season.html).

What to Read

Three young adult novels capture the [*challenges and charms of growing up*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/books/review/aristotle-dante-waters-world-bad-girls-never-say-die-himawari-house.html).

Now Time to Play

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Used to be (three letters).

And here is [*today’s Spelling Bee*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

[*You can find all our puzzles here*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords).

That’s it for today’s briefing. See you next time. — Matthew

P.S. The word “[*gloopiness*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/science/kilauea-volcano-eruption.html)” — describing the magma from the Hawaiian Kilauea volcano — [*made its debut*](https://twitter.com/NYT_first_said/status/1457982113555308545) in The Times this week.

The latest episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about a man who identifies the bodies of migrants who died trying to reach Spain.

Claire Moses wrote the Arts and Ideas. You can reach Matthew and the team at [*briefing@nytimes.com*](mailto:briefing+pm@nytimes.com?subject=Briefing%20Feedback).

PHOTO: Members of a Kurdish family from Iraq waiting for the border guard patrol in a forest on the Polish side of the border with Belarus on Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Wojtek Radwanski/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 11, 2021

**End of Document**



[***What’s on TV Monday: ‘The Voice’ and ‘Gentefied’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y8S-G381-JBG3-60BR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 24, 2020 Monday 01:00 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 513 words

**Byline:** Mariel Wamsley

**Highlight:** The 18th season of the singing competition debuts on NBC. And Netflix releases a vibrant comedy-drama about a Mexican-American restaurant owner.

**Body**

The 18th season of the singing competition debuts on NBC. And Netflix releases a vibrant comedy-drama about a Mexican-American restaurant owner.

What’s on TV

THE VOICE 8 p.m. on NBC. This singing competition is back for its 18th season, with Nick Jonas replacing Gwen Stefani as a coach. Episode 1 kicks off the competition’s blind auditions. Here, singers vying for the chance to be on the show — and mentored by Jonas, John Legend, Kelly Clarkson or Blake Shelton — will audition only with their voices. Later stages of the competition include singing battles and rehearsed performances, with the guest artists Dua Lipa, Ella Mai and Bebe Rexha, as well as Kevin and Joe Jonas.

BLACK IN SPACE: BREAKING THE COLOR BARRIER 8 p.m. and 11 p.m. on Smithsonian. On Aug. 30, 1983, the astronaut [*Guion Bluford*](https://www.smithsonianchannel.com/shows/black-in-space-breaking-the-color-barrier/0/3479308) embarked as a crew member of the Space Shuttle Challenger, making him t   [*he first African-American in space*](https://www.smithsonianchannel.com/shows/black-in-space-breaking-the-color-barrier/0/3479308). This documentary features him alongside Edward Dwight, an Air Force pilot edged out of a position with NASA, and Frederick Gregory, the first African-American to command a NASA mission, to examine the complications of sending a black man into space during the Cold War. Also included are   [*Arnaldo Tamayo Méndez*](https://www.smithsonianchannel.com/shows/black-in-space-breaking-the-color-barrier/0/3479308), the first Cuban astronaut sent into space by the Soviet Union, and Ronald McNair, an African-American pilot who   [*died in the Challenger disaster*](https://www.smithsonianchannel.com/shows/black-in-space-breaking-the-color-barrier/0/3479308) in 1986.

What’s Streaming

GENTEFIED Stream on [*Netflix*](https://www.smithsonianchannel.com/shows/black-in-space-breaking-the-color-barrier/0/3479308). At the center of this show tackling gentrification is Casimiro (Joaquín Cosío), a struggling Mexican restaurant owner in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles. He’s aided by his grandchildren, who aim to strike a balance between tradition and modernity: Chris (Carlos Santos), an aspiring chef; Ana (Karrie Martin), an ambitious artist; and Erik (J.J. Soria), who helps Casimiro run the restaurant.   [*In his review for The New York Times*](https://www.smithsonianchannel.com/shows/black-in-space-breaking-the-color-barrier/0/3479308), James Poniewozik wrote that the series sometimes “wants to be a sharp-elbowed satire.” But “sometimes — more effectively,” he adds, “it’s a ***working-class*** family dramedy, conscious of the cascading effects of small financial setbacks and the code-switching involved in moving across cultures.”

HUNTERS Stream on [*Amazon*](https://www.smithsonianchannel.com/shows/black-in-space-breaking-the-color-barrier/0/3479308). “The show has us at Al Pacino,”   [*Mike Hale wrote in his review for The Times*](https://www.smithsonianchannel.com/shows/black-in-space-breaking-the-color-barrier/0/3479308), noting a star-studded cast in this new series about World War II vigilantes. After the grandmother of 19-year-old Jonah Heidelbaum (Logan Lerman) is killed, he crosses paths with Meyer Offerman (Pacino), a concentration camp survivor who has assembled a group of Nazi hunters. The show takes place in the 1970s, and Meyer has reason to believe the Reich is again attempting world domination; this time, in America. The moral dilemma of the plot is easy enough to predict: Is vigilante killing, even of Nazis, really justified?

PHOTOS: John Legend, left, with Nick Jonas, Kelly Clarkson and Blake Shelton. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TRAE PATTON/NBC); Carlos Santos and Karrie Martin. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN ESTRADA/NETFLX); Al Pacino (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER SAUNDERS/AMAZON STUDIOS)

**Load-Date:** February 24, 2020

**End of Document**



[***A.O.C.’s Met Gala Designer Explains Her ‘Tax the Rich’ Dress***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63MC-SPX1-JBG3-64JY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 16, 2021 Thursday 17:28 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1071 words

**Byline:** Jessica Testa

**Highlight:** “For us it was about delivering a message.”

**Body**

“For us it was about delivering a message.”

The day after [*the gown*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/15/style/aoc-met-gala-dress.html) she designed for Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez made global headlines, Aurora James was reflecting on the fact that she didn’t see many other Black women designers represented at the [*Met Gala*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/14/style/met-gala-theme-american-fashion.html), which this year was meant to celebrate “American independence.” (There were several Black men designers in attendance as guests or dressing guests.)

“I think there may have been one person that I saw last night who was wearing Fe Noel, and that was DeBlasio’s wife,” she said. “Who else was?”

Noting this kind of thing is second nature for Ms. James, who is the founder of the [*15 Percent Pledge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/10/business/sephora-black-owned-brands.html), an initiative compelling retailers like Sephora and Gap to devote 15 percent of their inventory to Black-owned businesses.

She is also the founder of [*Brother Vellies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/12/t-magazine/fashion/brother-vellies-store-aurora-james.html), a shoe and accessory line. And she is the woman who dressed Ms. Ocasio-Cortez for a $35,000-per-ticket event in a white mermaid gown blaring “Tax the Rich” in red scrawl on its back, sending the internet into a [*tailspin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/15/style/aoc-met-gala-dress.html).

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez [*responded*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/ny-aoc-alexandria-ocasio-cortez-met-gala-tax-the-rich-dress-nyc-criticism-20210914-2773r3cohrhkvf6srb3755vqvq-story.html) to the criticism Tuesday on her Instagram, defending her decision to “puncture the fourth wall of excess and spectacle” and citing a double standard in scrutiny of male and female politicians.

Here, Ms. James talks about her design — a wool jacket dress with an organza flounce, worn with a matching “Tax the Rich” [*satin bag*](https://brothervellies.com/collections/bags/products/nile-handbag?variant=40901681512604), available without the embroidery for $995 — and her perspective on dressing Ms. Ocasio-Cortez. (The two have been following each other’s careers for some time, though after this ordeal, Ms. James said, “I would say that we are becoming friendly now.”)

To use a somewhat outdated phrase, your dress kind of broke the internet. Were you expecting that?

I don’t know what we were expecting, to be honest. For us it was about delivering a message, and I think given what the [*Met Gala*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/22/style/grimes-stylist-turner.html) is, and who the congresswoman is, and what her message really always is, we felt that it was appropriate.

What were the early concepts for the look?

I definitely wanted to make something here in New York — that was really important to me. She’s obviously a woman of the Bronx, but she’s also Puerto Rican, and so themes of her heritage came into play. There was an artist, Shelley Pehrson, that I found through a friend who makes these really beautiful flowers out of paper; she created the Flor de Maga, which is the Puerto Rican national flower, for me in the very beginning, and we [*designed the shoes*](https://www.instagram.com/p/CT0GjU3JUqk/) around the idea of adorning them with that flower.

When it came to the dress, we wanted to play with the idea of traditional suiting, because when we think of the congresswoman, she’s usually in a suit or something of that nature.

Did you know that you wanted the phrase “tax the rich” to be on the dress from the beginning?

No, we talked through a lot of different ideas and themes.

How did you decide where to place the text, and how you were going to apply it?

I didn’t really want to overthink it too much. The subject matter this year was “[*In America: A Lexicon of Fashion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/09/fashion/what-is-american-fashion.html),” and when you start diving into what that means and how to interpret the theme, I think ultimately the congresswoman in and of herself represents the theme.

It really wasn’t about having the most perfect writing or anything like that. It was really about having an honest output.

Did you write the words yourself?

No, actually, one of my design assistants wrote it — that’s just his handwriting, and it was embroidered.

How did you think about the text as a design element, beyond it being a statement? It’s pretty large, and the letters slightly curve with her body.

We know how much people want to control women’s bodies. Placing the letters on her once the dress was already fit onto her, and really working around her shape, is sort of the opposite of that.

When you stepped on the carpet together, what was going through your mind?

So much of what we see sometimes in fashion does feel a little bit performative, but this is a woman who literally does this work day in and day out. Given the last several years that we’ve had in this country, I think that we all need to be asking ourselves what we’re doing with our platform. If we get a seat at the table, what do we want that conversation to be over dinner?

Listen, it would be a lot easier to go to the Met Gala and just wear a really beautiful dress and look really beautiful and have a good time. But that was not her intention, right? Her intention was to take a conversation that’s largely existing in ***working-class*** communities and bring it into rooms where that conversation might be a little bit more uncomfortable. It’s not easy to show up in a room like that, with a statement like that.

There’s a lot of people who gain access to rooms like that and are too afraid to rock the boat.

Once you got inside, and once you were at those tables with millionaires and billionaires, how was the dress received?

Overall, people were so happy about it, and really surprised.

I also have to say, the staff that was there — which were mainly Black and brown people, predominantly — they were really excited to see that message being delivered.

Did you experience or observe any kind of awkwardness around the dress?

I didn’t really. A lot of times people would be seeing her from the front, and then she walks away, and it’s like: “Oh. Ohhh.” But it’s sort of a joy in the unexpected.

Who was at your table?

Oh, I don’t think we can share tables.

The criticism that there is some hypocrisy in mingling at an event among the very people that you’re calling to tax — what is your response to that?

I think that it is quite smart to deliver a message that you have directly to the people that you need to hear it. In person.

If your congressperson is going to be in the room with those people, what would you want them to say? Ultimately, what she’s saying is that the one percent need to be taxed.

One of the images circulating last night, along with the photo of your dress, was one of the Trump-supporting singer Joy Villa at the Grammys in 2019, when she wore [*a white dress*](https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/general-news/joy-villa-wears-barbed-wire-build-wall-gown-grammys-2019-1184772/) with the words “Build the Wall” written in big red letters on the back. Were you referencing that at all?

No. I’ve never heard of that person.

This interview has been edited and condensed.

PHOTO: An illustration of the gown worn by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez at the 2021 Met Gala. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Samantha Hahn for Brother Vellies FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 22, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Path to Social Equity in Higher Ed Doesn’t Run Through Harvard; Jay Caspian Kang***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64NM-56N1-JBG3-62NT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 31, 2022 Monday 20:19 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1526 words

**Byline:** Jay Caspian Kang

**Highlight:** We need a broader vision of equity.

**Body**

Last Thursday, I wrote about [*the Harvard affirmative action*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/27/opinion/affirmative-action-harvard.html) case and what I see as a broken system of racial preferences at elite colleges. Today, I want to broaden the scope a bit and talk about higher education in general and what life might be like after the Supreme Court ultimately decides the fate of affirmative action.

I try to avoid the prediction game, but it seems unlikely that a conservative majority on the court will judge in Harvard’s favor. The decision will almost certainly be limited to school admissions, but it is likely to open the floodgates for lawsuits that target racial preferences in all other parts of American life. This practice, aimed at achieving racial balance — often to counteract racist policies and systems — will be under direct threat. This sets up a dilemma that a pro-affirmative action student I [*interviewed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/28/magazine/where-does-affirmative-action-leave-asian-americans.html)in 2019 expressed by saying: “I don’t want to defend Harvard. But it’s the better of two evils.”

He may very well be right. Given the destruction that could come to all programs that resemble affirmative action in any way, perhaps Asian applicants and their families should accept a system that certainly seems to discriminate against them, at least in the case of Harvard admissions, but whose dissolution will also lead to a more inequitable world. This, for years, was my position on the matter. But such magnanimity usually requires a great deal of privilege and comfort — it is the capitulation of people like me who have already reaped all the rewards of prestigious degrees.

It’s nearly impossible to build a collective political vision around such abstract ideas of self-sacrifice. It might work to ask assimilated, progressive Asian Americans to overlook clear instances of discrimination and assume the role of the guilty white liberal. But even if the goal is to create a more communal and less cutthroat vision of education, is it fair to ask ***working-class*** families with no cultural capital to send their children to U.C. Santa Cruz instead of Stanford?

I recently watched Debbie Lum’s documentary “Try Harder!” about Lowell High School in San Francisco. Up until 2020 when the San Francisco school board changed Lowell’s admissions policy, it was test-in, much like Stuyvesant and Bronx Science high schools in New York City. Most of the students at Lowell are Asian American, as is the case at those New York schools.

In a scene early in the film, a physics teacher at Lowell addresses a classroom full of kids about their upcoming college applications. He suggests they temper their expectations. “You look at the Ivy League schools and even if you are a student who should be accepted at a school like this, you may not get in anyway,” he says. “And that, in many cases, has to do with a little thing called ethnicity.” He then flashes a slide that reads, “You’re Asian! And these country club schools don’t want their precious campuses turned into U.C. Irvine!” (U.C. Irvine is about 41 percent Asian.)

This is the perceived reality for many Asian American students and their parents. The response to these concerns cannot be the typical gaslighting and denial that’s become normalized in progressive circles. Nor should we ask teenagers to balance their own academic ambitions with some vaguely stated progressive goal of diversity.

I do not believe that there is a culturally or biologically determined reason Asian students have done so well in academic fields. Rather, the push for perfect G.P.A.s and SAT scores comes, in large part, from the realization that if you’re an immigrant with a distinct language barrier, zero connections to the professional workplace and very little understanding about how this country works, the academic grind is the only clear pathway for your child to move up in socioeconomic status. This is true not only for many Asian immigrant families, but also for many first- and second- generation Black and Latino immigrants.

What’s needed in an increasingly multiethnic country, then, is a broader vision of equity that’s less obsessed with racial disparities and representation at elite institutions and far more focused on how people from all backgrounds can invest in higher education as a collective good. Harvard’s comical racial machinations and the wealth of its student body should be more than enough to convince the public that there is no vision of true equity within the gates of the Ivy League.

OK, but what about affirmative action at nonelite colleges?

There’s a common misconception that every college in the United States employs some form of affirmative action. The truth is that a majority of colleges in this country let in most of their applicants and serve a relatively local population that more or less reflects the demographics of the area. For example, only 14.1 percent of undergraduate students at Cal State East Bay are white. By comparison, 78 percent of undergraduates at Chadron State College in Nebraska are white. This doesn’t mean that Chadron State discriminates against minority applicants or that Cal State East Bay has the greatest minority recruitment program of all time. The reality is that both schools aren’t selective — Chadron takes everyone — and their student bodies simply reflect the people who apply.

In 2014, there were only 352 colleges that publicly stated that they considered race in the admissions process, according to a 2017 [*study*](https://slate.com/business/2017/08/outside-of-elite-colleges-affirmative-action-is-already-disappearing.html). That’s less than 10 percent of all the two- and four-year colleges in the country. The study also found that most exclusive schools considered the race of the applicant. This makes sense. The only schools that need to make decisions based on race are those schools that need to choose among applicants at all.

So what can we do?

I’ve written in [*an earlier edition*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/13/opinion/SAT-universities-admissions.html) of this newsletter about the role that community colleges could play in ensuring a more equitable and [*open path toward upward mobility*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/17/opinion/auburn-university-black-students.html) in this country. Public colleges already take [*thousands of kids a year from the working and middle classes*](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/07/22/public-colleges-are-the-workhorses-of-middle-class-mobility/). Expanded and fully normalized pipelines from community colleges to state universities could provide opportunities not only for poor students of color, but also for economically disadvantaged students from all backgrounds.

This system, which would be modeled, in part, after the Canadian public university system, would reduce the stress on high school students to meet the impossible standards of elite colleges. The University of Toronto, which U.S. News and World Report ranked as the top university in Canada last year, has an enrollment of over 74,000 undergraduates, far more than the number of students enrolled at all eight Ivy League schools combined. There are highly competitive, specialized programs at Toronto and other universities in Canada, but they exist within the overall structure of the public university, which means that for the most part, there isn’t a college track for the elites of Canada and one for everyone else. If you care about your grades in high school, chances are you will be able to attend the university in your province. And you will almost certainly not be exclusively surrounded by the wealthy elite.

Last September, House Democrats [*released a bill*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-11/richest-u-s-colleges-would-benefit-from-democrats-tax-proposal)that included language [*curtailing endowment taxes*](https://waysandmeans.house.gov/sites/democrats.waysandmeans.house.gov/files/documents/SUBFGHJ_xml.pdf) on private colleges, provided they offer “sufficient grants and scholarships” for some students. This move coincided with a banner year for many elite universities that [*saw their coffers swell during the pandemic*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/11/04/elite-private-universities-got-much-wealthier-while-most-schools-fell-behind-my-research-found-out-why/). Cornell, Dartmouth and Yale all reported over 40 percent returns on their investments in 2021. This only accelerated a longstanding trend: Between 1990 and 2010, the return on capital endowments for universities with endowments larger than $1 billion grew roughly[*50 percent faster*](http://piketty.pse.ens.fr/files/capital21c/en/pdf/supp/TS12.2.pdf) than universities with endowments that totaled less than $100 million.

Rather than offer these universities what amounts to a break on their taxes, the Biden administration should raise them considerably. Lowering tuition for a select number of students who have already gotten into highly selective schools does very little actual good — most of those schools have robust financial aid programs anyway. I believe that the money raised from aggressively taxing endowments should be used to fund community colleges and state university programs instead, so that more students could benefit.

Taxes, alone, will not suddenly create a more communal vision of higher education, nor will they persuade everyone to fight for it. A profound cultural shift is needed that is likely to take decades to see through. The good news is that nobody really seems to like the system we have now in the United States, with its brutal competition, its winner-take-all mentality and its undue focus on a handful of elite schools. Why would we center so much of the conversation on places that most students will never even visit, when we could be building a more robust public system that educates everyone?

Have feedback? Send a note to [*kang-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:kang-newsletter@nytimes.com).

Jay Caspian Kang ([*@jaycaspiankang*](https://twitter.com/jaycaspiankang?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)), a writer for Opinion and The New York Times Magazine, is the author of “The Loneliest Americans.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alberto Miranda FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**End of Document**



[***In Critical States, Biden's Polling Lead Looks Iffy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YNF-XG11-JBG3-6033-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 14, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1306 words

**Byline:** By Nate Cohn

**Body**

Consider two important measurement differences: battleground states versus other states, and registered voters versus likely voters.

President Trump and Joe Biden begin the general election campaign locked in a highly competitive contest that remains fought along the lines of the 2016 presidential election, according to national and battleground state polls.

If anyone holds the early edge, it is Mr. Biden. He leads by an average of six points in national live-interview polls of registered voters. But the election will be decided by voters in the battleground states, not registered voters nationwide, and there the story is not nearly so clear or rosy for Mr. Biden.

At the moment, a reasonable estimate is that Mr. Biden is performing four or five points worse among likely voters in the critical states than he is among registered voters nationwide. As a result, he holds only a narrow and tenuous edge in the race for the Electoral College, if he holds one at all.

Even under ordinary circumstances, with seven months to go until the election, there would be plenty of time for the race to change. This cycle, the country also faces a pandemic and a severe economic downturn with the potential to upend the race.

Already, an initial uptick in the president's approval rating has dissipated, perhaps because a rallying effect has given way to more focus on the administration's coronavirus response. There will be many opportunities for the polls to shift again, and the president faces many downside risks without a return to normal life and to economic growth before the election.

But at least for now, the polls suggest that American voters are divided along familiar lines, despite countless events that seemed to have the potential to redraw them.

The president begins the campaign with strong support from the white ***working class*** who powered his upset win four years ago. He leads among white voters without a college degree, 61 percent to 32 percent, in an average of live-interview polls conducted since March 15, matching or perhaps even exceeding his margin over Hillary Clinton in methodologically similar polls conducted late in the 2016 campaign.

The results suggest that Mr. Biden, despite his reputed appeal to blue-collar workers, has made little to no progress in winning back the white voters without a college degree who supported Barack Obama in 2012 but swung to Mr. Trump in 2016.

Mr. Biden counters with a wide lead among white voters with a college degree, who support him by a similar or greater margin than they did Mrs. Clinton four years ago. Over all, he leads, 55-40, among that group of registered voters in an average of recent surveys.

Mr. Biden also holds the expected wide advantage among nonwhite voters, though here there is consistent evidence of a small yet discernible shift in the president's direction, including in the large series of New York Times/Siena College polls from last November. Mr. Trump, in contrast, seems to do a tick worse among white voters than he did four years ago, whether because of a slight decrease in his standing among college-educated white voters or the growing share of white voters who possess a four-year degree.

As a result, Mr. Trump appears to retain his relative advantage in the disproportionately white ***working-class*** battleground states that decided the 2016 presidential election. Mr. Biden leads in polls of registered voters in these states, but by a narrower margin than he leads nationwide. It raises the possibility that Democrats could win the most votes and lose the White House for the third time in six presidential elections.

Wisconsin, the tipping-point state in 2016, has backed Mr. Biden by just over one percentage point in an average of seven live-interview surveys conducted so far this year, compared with a six-point Biden lead in national surveys over the same period.

Mr. Trump's relative advantage in the Electoral College, though persistent so far, is not unshakable. To this point, his apparent strength in Wisconsin has tended to expand his Electoral College advantage. But a fairly modest shift in that state or another could expand or contract it.

Arizona and Florida are two possible candidates. White voters without a degree represent a smaller share of the electorate in those states than they do in the Midwest. Arizona polls in particular give Democrats some cause for hope: Mr. Biden has led live-interview polls by four points in Arizona. A breakthrough by Democrats in Arizona would essentially cancel out their weakness in Wisconsin. It would make Pennsylvania, where Mr. Biden leads by about two points, the pivotal state on the electoral map.

One reason for Mr. Biden's strength in Arizona and Florida might be older voters, who represent an above-average share of white voters in the two states. On average, Mr. Biden leads among voters over age 65 by a margin of 53 percent to 44 percent nationwide, including a lead in every live-interview national poll reporting a result for the group. It is a substantial improvement over Mrs. Clinton's six-point deficit among the group in pre-election polls in 2016.

Mr. Biden's early strength among older voters is not easy to explain. It cannot be fully accounted for by the changing composition of each age group, although the ascent of the baby boomers into the oldest age cohort may be part of the reason, along with the gradual departure of the more conservative Silent Generation from the electorate altogether. Mr. Trump seems to have made gains among voters 45 to 65, or perhaps even younger, canceling out his losses among older voters over all.

Mr. Biden's relative strength among older voters may also help counteract his expected weakness among likely voters, relative to registered voters, when pollsters apply likely-voter screens later in the cycle. In polling, Republicans usually fare about two points better among likely voters than registered voters, who tend to be relatively young and diverse.

This cycle, the coronavirus pandemic raises additional questions about the eventual turnout, particularly if it leads to widespread voting by mail. But no matter the method, Democrats typically find themselves at a turnout disadvantage, and it is doubtful that Mr. Biden will maintain the whole of his current polling advantage among likely voters. Even when Democrats benefited from a surge in turnout in well-educated suburbs during the 2018 midterm elections, Republicans fared better among likely voters than among registered voters.

Together, Mr. Trump's relative advantage of one to two points among likely voters compared with registered voters -- and his relative advantage of three and even four points in the tipping-point states -- means that the typical national poll of registered voters is probably around four or five points worse for Mr. Trump than his standing among likely voters in the most pivotal states. Mr. Biden's already narrow polling lead in states like Wisconsin, Pennsylvania or Arizona might be vanishingly small after a likely voter screen.

Of course, no one knows what American life will look like by the time of the election. Perhaps the country will still be in lockdown, saddled by 30 percent unemployment, and convinced that the president's slow response cost lives and damaged the economy. Or maybe the country will be swept by euphoria as lockdowns are lifted a month or two ahead of the election and a liberated population sends its children to school, visits friends, goes to the park and enjoys double-digit G.D.P. growth in the third quarter.

The pandemic also could change how the election is administered, potentially yielding a novel turnout that's impossible to predict at this stage. It undoubtedly has the potential to reshape the views of the electorate, even if it hasn't done so yet.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/13/upshot/polling-2020-biden-trump.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/13/upshot/polling-2020-biden-trump.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s edge in the Electoral College race is narrower than his lead among all voters. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DEMETRIUS FREEMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 14, 2020

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[***'It's Embarrassing': In Georgia, Greene Tests the Limits of Some Voters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61XS-WY21-DXY4-X55J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 5, 2021 Friday

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**Length:** 1771 words

**Byline:** By Rick Rojas

**Body**

In her Georgia district, voters saw Ms. Greene as a conservative voice that would be impossible to ignore. Now the revelation of past social media posts has unsettled some who backed her.

SUMMERVILLE, Ga. -- Billy Martin does not care much for politicians. But the retired teacher and coach liked what he heard from Marjorie Taylor Greene as she promised to take on Washington as a defiant force, intent on rattling the establishment.

Mr. Martin, 62, has lived all of his life in the foothills rolling below the Appalachian Mountains in Georgia, in a community that he believed had long been overlooked. He supported Ms. Greene, he said, because she had a brazen voice that was impossible to ignore.

Yet it has also been impossible to ignore the torrent of troubling social media posts and videos of Ms. Greene's that have surfaced in recent weeks. In them, she endorsed violent behavior, including executing Democratic leaders. She also spread conspiracy theories, describing a deadly school shooting as a hoax and questioning whether a plane crashed into the Pentagon on Sept. 11.

''She's a real asset,'' Mr. Martin said of Ms. Greene and the potential he saw in her after she was elected to Congress in November. Still, despite his best efforts to avoid politics, he learned about her social media activity and was bewildered by it.

''Sometimes people say things they regret, speak before they think,'' Mr. Martin said as he climbed into his pickup, offering a possible explanation before adding that he was not quite sure what to believe.

The rest of the country had paid attention to her campaign because of her promotion of conspiracy theories, including the pro-Trump QAnon. But in a congressional district proud of its ranking as one of the most conservative, voters said they were drawn to her unapologetic intensity, with a message of unstinting support of former President Donald J. Trump.

For some, though, she was now brushing the limits of their support.

''It's embarrassing,'' Ashley Shelton, a stay-at-home mother who voted for Ms. Greene, said of the controversy. She thought Mr. Trump would serve another term and saw Ms. Greene as ''a backup, a comfort.''

''I think she's kind of a loose cannon,'' Ms. Shelton said before paraphrasing a line from the Old Testament: ''The wise are the quiet ones,'' she said. ''The more she opens her mouth, the less evidence of her wisdom.''

As Democrats voted Thursday evening to strip Ms. Greene of committee assignments and as some Republicans have condemned her statements, she has argued that the resistance confronting her only ''strengthens my base of support at home and across the country.''

To some degree, that was true, as her most fervent supporters saw in the treatment of Ms. Greene a reminder of all that they loathed about Washington. But tensions in her home district also, in many ways, mirrored those afflicting the Republican Party as a whole as it grapples with how to position itself without Mr. Trump in the White House.

Calls for Ms. Greene to resign have appeared on roadside billboards and in the pages of local newspapers. Local Republican officials said the controversy had nudged possible primary challengers toward running, as a re-election campaign in 2022 would likely be the ultimate test of how vulnerable she was.

Georgia has been gripped by a political tug of war, as Democrats have notched significant gains in the once reliably Republican state. But in Ms. Greene's rural district, Republican domination shows few signs of weakening.

''The default is just absolutely Republican,'' said Michael E. Bailey, a political science professor at Berry College just outside Rome, the largest city in the district, with 36,000 residents. ''It isn't a kind of conservatism rooted simply in lower taxes,'' he added. ''It's more frankly an ornery conservatism, and it's one that responds to some culture war issues.''

Ms. Greene's district, Georgia's 14th, reaches from the outer suburbs of Atlanta to the outskirts of Chattanooga, sprawling into a dozen counties in the northwest corner of the state. It is largely white, ***working class*** and secluded. ''To entertain yourself, you have the local church and your family,'' said Ms. Shelton, who moved from Cumming, Ga., near Atlanta, three years ago.

And if there were any doubts of its conservatism, a large billboard greets drivers on Interstate 75: ''Every tongue will confess Jesus is Lord -- even the Democrats.'' (To underline the point, ''Democrats'' is red and adorned with the devil's trident.)

Ms. Greene, who ran a construction business with her husband and owned a CrossFit gym, moved into the district from an Atlanta suburb in order to run. The Republican field was packed, but she blazed ahead, overcoming the hurdle of being an outsider.

She beat John Cowan, a conservative Republican and local neurosurgeon, in a runoff, and glided into the general election unopposed after her Democratic opponent's campaign collapsed and he moved out of state. She won with nearly 75 percent of the vote.

Even skeptics praised the relentless pace of her campaign. Ms. Greene covered a lot of ground in the vast district, sometimes attending as many as five campaign events in a day. She appealed to voters by hewing to conservative themes, like defending gun rights, opposing immigration and railing against socialism.

''A lot of people here feel like they really know her,'' said Luke Martin, a local prosecutor and chairman of the Republican Party in Floyd County, which is in her district. ''They've met her. They've spoken with her. She never talked about that stuff. It's kind of confusing to a lot of people. The person they think they know is not this person.''

The recent cascade of past social media posts, which also included a conspiracy theory that a space laser controlled by Jewish financiers started a California wildfire, has forced some to regret their vote or lose confidence in her.

''You can't justify it,'' Luke Martin said of her statements and social media activity. ''It's indefensible.''

Yet many acknowledged that her promotion of right-wing conspiracy theories should not have been a surprise to anyone. Ms. Greene had gained a national profile over her support of QAnon, which falsely claims that a cabal of Satan-worshiping pedophiles was plotting against Mr. Trump.

Ms. Greene has had detractors within the Republican Party from the outset. The slogan adopted by Dr. Cowan, the Republican who lost to her in the runoff, was ''All of the conservative, none of the embarrassment.''

''She is not conservative,'' he told Politico before the runoff. ''She's crazy.''

And now that the controversy has intensified, Georgia Republicans have oscillated between condemning her, ignoring her and offering broad words of displeasure carefully chosen so as not to offend her supporters.

Gov. Brian Kemp of Georgia largely sidestepped the issue at a news conference this week, saying it was up to voters to decide whether they found the comments unbecoming of an elected official. ''We have an election cycle that's quickly coming upon us,'' he told reporters.

Brad Raffensperger, the Republican secretary of state who pushed back against Mr. Trump's attempts to overturn his loss in Georgia and then found himself targeted by Mr. Trump and his supporters, offered a blunt assessment of Ms. Greene: ''The future of the Republican Party is not Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene.''

Democrats in the 14th District have long been resigned to their status as a minority in an overwhelmingly conservative region, but they have been energized as they have urged Ms. Greene to step down.

''I didn't think she was fit for office back then,'' John Lugthart, who wrote a letter calling for her resignation published in The Daily Citizen-News in Dalton, said of his opinions of Ms. Greene during the election. ''More and more has come out, and my hope is that many others in our district now realize she's not the one to represent us.''

Still, the message she delivers -- and the way she delivers it -- continues to have a receptive audience among many in the district, as she has introduced articles of impeachment against President Biden, sponsored legislation that would ban Black Lives Matter flags from flying at American embassies and signed onto a bill to ''stop the dangerous trend of biological males infiltrating women's sports.''

She has rebuffed requests from reporters to explain the social media activity and statements. But she has verbally punched back at her critics with a recent series of town hall meetings across the district and a flurry of posts on social media arguing that she has been targeted by a ''mob'' that wants to ''cancel every Republican.''

''The DC swamp and the fake news media are attacking me because I am not one of them,'' she said on Twitter. ''I am one of you. And they hate me for it.''

In her district, there is a history of bristling at authority, whether in Washington or Atlanta. Now, the efforts to marginalize their representative in Congress have stirred outrage among some voters who see the criticism as evidence of the political establishment overruling their vote.

Their anger has been stoked by the region's steady decline. Factories and other industrial facilities have been abandoned. Decent-paying ***working-class*** jobs have dried up. Opioid addiction has ravaged families.

''Opportunity is not abundant and not real evident in many, many families,'' said David Pat Boyle, who runs the Democratic Party in Walker County, just below the Tennessee state line. ''The grievance is so strong -- so strong that they would vote for anybody that stands up to and takes on this vague but powerful establishment.''

The resentments are ones Teresa Rich knows well. She believes that the country is in a state of rapid decline, one that has intensified since Mr. Biden took office, and that China is wielding too much influence. She and her husband have owned a radiator shop in Summerville for nearly three decades, and she worried her business would suffer.

In Ms. Greene, she saw a warrior. ''I love her,'' she said.

Any disappointment Ms. Rich, 58, feels surrounding Ms. Greene is directed at other Republicans who, she said, have not stepped up forcefully enough to defend her.

''She fought them,'' Ms. Rich said, referring to Ms. Greene's showdown with Democrats and even elected officials in her own party. ''If the party was like it was supposed to be, she wouldn't be in a corner by herself.''

Astead W. Herndon contributed reporting from New York.Astead W. Herndon contributed reporting from New York.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/04/us/marjorie-taylor-greene-georgia-district.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/04/us/marjorie-taylor-greene-georgia-district.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: TERESA RICH, a supporter of Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene in Summerville, Ga.

LUKE MARTIN, chair of the Republican Party in Floyd County, on Ms. Greene's social media activity (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICOLE CRAINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 5, 2021

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[***Clashing Environmental Views Define a Presidential Contest***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60C9-0S41-JBG3-626B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 16, 2020 Thursday

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**Byline:** By Lisa Friedman and Katie Glueck

**Body**

President Trump traveled on Wednesday to the new political battleground of Georgia to blast away at one of the nation's cornerstone conservation laws, vowing to speed construction projects by limiting legally mandated environmental reviews of highways, pipelines and power plants.

One day earlier, his Democratic presidential rival, Joseph R. Biden Jr., took a different tack, releasing a $2 trillion plan to confront climate change and overhaul the nation's infrastructure, claiming he will create millions of jobs by building a clean energy economy.

In that period, the major party candidates for the White House displayed in sharp relief just how far apart they are ideologically on infrastructure and environmental matters of vital importance to many American voters, particularly in critical battleground states, including Pennsylvania and Florida.

Mr. Biden is trying to win over young voters and supporters of his vanquished rival, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, by showing an aggressive awareness of climate change and promising to move urgently to combat it. At the same time he has sought to maintain his promised connection to white, ***working class*** voters, especially in the Upper Midwest, who swung to Mr. Trump four years ago and are leery of what they see as threats to their livelihood, especially jobs in the oil and gas industry.

The president, in contrast, is pretty much where he has been for more than a decade: intermittently acknowledging global warming and calling it a hoax; making spurious accusations that windmills cause cancer, energy efficient appliances are ''worthless'' and zero-emissions buildings ''basically have no windows.'' At every turn and on every regulatory decision the administration embraces business over environmental interests.

''Biden wants to massively re-regulate the energy economy, rejoin the Paris climate accord, which would kill our energy totally, you would have to close 25 percent of your businesses and kill oil and gas development,'' Mr. Trump said on Wednesday as he announced a ''top to bottom overhaul'' of the National Environmental Policy Act, a bedrock environmental law since its passage in 1969. He offered no evidence to back up his statistics.

''When I think about climate change, the word I think of is 'jobs,' good-paying union jobs that will put Americans to work, making the air cleaner for our kids to breathe, restoring our crumbling roads, and bridges, and ports,'' Mr. Biden said on Tuesday as he outlined his plan.

The events captured the two candidates' radically different beliefs about the global threat of the planet's warming, and offered a glimpse of how they would lead a nation confronting a climate crisis over the next four years. For Mr. Trump, tackling global warming is a threat to the economy. For Mr. Biden, it's an opportunity.

''They are polar opposites on almost everything to do with the environment but particularly climate change,'' said Christine Todd Whitman, the former Republican governor of New Jersey and administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency under George W. Bush.

Mr. Biden's plan would spend $2 trillion over four years to put the United States on an ''irreversible path'' to net-zero emissions of planet-warming gases before 2050, meaning that carbon dioxide and other pollutants would be completely eliminated or offset by removal technology.

To do that, he called for clean energy standards that would achieve a carbon-free power sector by 2035; the energy efficiency upgrade of four million buildings in four years; and the construction of 500,000 electric vehicle charging stations. He also vowed to bring the United States back into the Paris Agreement, reinstate climate regulations that Mr. Trump has repealed and put more restrictions on things like emissions from vehicle tailpipes.

Mr. Trump has already moved to roll back virtually every effort the federal government made under President Barack Obama to combat climate change, from restricting emissions from power plants and vehicles to curbing methane from the oil and gas sector. He even rescinded an Obama-era executive order that urged federal agencies to take into account climate change and sea-level rise when rebuilding infrastructure.

The Trump administration's latest overhaul to the National Environmental Policy Act highlighted their differences still more.

The changes finalized on Wednesday include a limit of two years to conduct exhaustive environmental reviews of infrastructure projects. They also revoked a requirement that agencies consider the cumulative environmental effects of projects, like their contribution to climate change.

Mr. Trump said the current lengthy process ''has cost of trillions of dollars over the years for our country and delays like you wouldn't believe.''

In past campaigns, candidates have shied away from bold proposals on the environment, especially on climate change, but Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute, said that Mr. Biden has more political space to pursue his agenda amid the economic and public health crises plaguing the nation.

''With the pandemic shaking up the core of people's lives, they are much less worried about bold and radical change right now,'' he said, ''because that's what they want in some way.''

Those political dynamics have freed Mr. Biden to pursue policies that his allies hope will electrify younger, more liberal voters who were skeptical of him during the Democratic primaries, without automatically alienating more moderate voters, Mr. Murray said.

Certainly, Mr. Biden's allies also see political risks, should he be perceived as moving too far left on issues like natural gas hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, a practice that is tied to many jobs in states like Pennsylvania. In contrast to a number of his Democratic primary opponents, he does not support a total ban on fracking.

''Fracking is not going to be on the chopping block,'' he said in an interview last week with WNEP-TV, an ABC affiliate that serves Northeastern and Central Pennsylvania.

In a call with reporters on Tuesday, Biden campaign officials stressed that his long-held view on the issue stands: ''No new fracking on federal lands.''

Mr. Trump is betting that his uncompromising, unchanging stands will appeal to business-minded voters and people who distrust government. But there is a risk to him, too.

Carlos Curbelo, a former Republican congressman from Florida who has championed a carbon tax to combat climate change, said he believes Mr. Trump's disregard for the issue and his handling of the coronavirus are becoming linked to part of ''the broader character question.''

Such character questions resonate with ''not just young voters who have rejected his stance on climate for quite some time but also middle-aged and older voters who now in the context of Covid prioritize leaders who are good crisis managers,'' he said.

Mr. Biden's campaign criticized the president's gutting of the environmental policy act as a way ''to distract'' from Mr. Trump's failure to deliver an infrastructure plan. ''He has failed to deliver any real plan to create jobs and instead is cutting corners to once again ignore science, experts, and communities and reservations entitled to clean air, water, and environments,'' read a campaign statement.

In some ways, the debate over climate reflects the broader political realignment in both parties that defined the 2016 campaign: ***working-class*** white voters, especially in rural areas, have moved farther from their union Democratic roots to embrace Mr. Trump and his energy policies, while educated, affluent white suburban voters, once staunchly Republican, drift toward the Democrats and appear increasingly open to more ambitious efforts to combat climate change.

''Biden's pitch may play well with traditionally moderate Republican voters in the suburbs, just as Trump's policy pronouncements may play well with traditionally more Democratic-leaning voters in other parts of the state, more rural parts of the state,'' said former Representative Ryan Costello, a Republican who represented the Philadelphia suburbs.

But pro-business voters may see the danger of a Biden victory as just as high, said Scott Jennings, a Republican strategist.

''A tremendous amount is at stake,'' he said. ''Drastic overregulation and anti-business regulations could just decimate rural and middle-American economies already reeling.''

Scientists said the next four years could be critical to whether greenhouse gas emissions from the United States rise or fall.

''We are on a trajectory to a hotter planet,'' said Waleed Abdalati, director of the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Mr. Trump and Mr. Biden, he said, ''represent two very divergent paths.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/climate/trump-biden-environment.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/climate/trump-biden-environment.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: President Trump delivered a speech on rebuilding infrastructure at the U.P.S. Hapeville Airport Hub in Atlanta on Wednesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Doug Mills/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 16, 2020

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[***U.K. Legal Tactic Unevenly Hits Black People***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66VJ-RTV1-DXY4-X1B5-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1

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**Body**

The United States helped inspire Britain's tough-on-crime politics. Even as crime fell and warnings mounted, politicians never looked back.

MANCHESTER, England -- The United Kingdom's highest court delivered what seemed like a major victory for civil liberties in 2016, ruling that prosecutors had overreached for decades in using a tactic that sent hundreds of people to prison for life -- for murders committed by others.

Defense lawyers, academics and activists had waged a decade-long legal battle, arguing that these so-called joint enterprise cases were unfair and racially biased. They rejoiced at the Supreme Court decision -- heralded as historic in headlines around the country -- and expected a sharp drop in prosecutions, as well as scores of overturned convictions.

Six years later, none of that has happened.

Rather than be constrained by the ruling, senior prosecutors have quietly devised strategies to keep bringing joint enterprise cases and winning convictions. New data, obtained by The New York Times through public records requests, reveals that the Crown Prosecution Service, the national prosecutor, has actually stepped up the pace of such prosecutions since the ruling -- even as the homicide rate remained largely stable.

''The C.P.S. said: 'Don't worry. It's not going to be this radical change,''' said Simon Harding, a senior detective who ran a homicide unit at London's Metropolitan Police until 2021. ''By the time all the questions had been asked, it was business as usual.''

The zealous use of these prosecutions is one example of how British leaders from both parties have pursued criminal justice policies that have disproportionately punished Black people. Black defendants are three times as likely as white defendants to be prosecuted for homicide as a group of four or more -- a widely accepted measure of joint enterprise cases -- according to the new data.

Joint enterprise itself is not a charge. Rather, it is a legal principle that gives prosecutors the power to charge multiple people with a single crime. It became notorious more than a decade ago in a string of highly publicized cases. In one, a teenager was imprisoned and then deported for a murder he did not even witness, much less carry out. In another, a partly blind 16-year-old, who said he could not even see his friends attacking someone, received a life sentence for murder.

Since the court ruling, the Crown Prosecution Service has tried to avoid such controversy. It has stopped using the term joint enterprise, but the cases continue. A year after the Supreme Court ruling, 11 teenagers from Manchester, England, were sent to prison for a stabbing -- even though the judge acknowledged that he did not know if they had all participated in the attack. A young man with autism received a life sentence for a stabbing carried out by someone else while, he said, he sat in a car watching a music video.

While the stream of cases continued, the flood of successful appeals never materialized. Prosecutors opposed them and judges, having set an extremely high standard for appeals, rejected nearly all of them. Only a single person has been freed since the Supreme Court ruling.

The continued use of joint enterprise is one example of a British tough-on-crime policy that has grown increasingly strident. The new data -- along with more than 100 interviews with current and former law enforcement officials, government insiders, lawyers, judges, academics, families and activists -- shows that even as crime rates fell, as lawyers and judges protested, as parliamentary inquiries pointed to miscarriages of justice, the government's messaging got tougher and its tactics got stricter.

Many of those tactics were imported from the 1990s war on drugs in the United States. But while American officials have reconsidered many criminal justice policies over the past decade, they have become an entrenched part of British politics.

Today, British politicians fuel perceptions that crime is skyrocketing. Crime rates often vary regionally, and some crime may be up compared with the period of pandemic lockdowns. But the latest official statistics show that national crime levels, including homicide, are actually lower than before the pandemic began in 2020. And overall, crime has been falling for decades.

Yet Britain is in the middle of its biggest prison expansion in more than a century as the Conservative government overhauls laws to seek tougher jail terms. The new prime minister, Rishi Sunak, has pledged to make crime a top priority and called for new powers to veto parole board decisions.

With new powers, police officers are ramping up the kind of stop-and-frisk tactics made notorious, and ultimately abandoned, in New York.

As with joint enterprise, these policies disproportionately affect minorities. The police in Britain are six times more likely to stop Black people than white people. Black people are also three times more likely to be arrested and more likely to be given longer prison sentences.

Periodically, and as recently as last month, official reports have highlighted systemic racism in the criminal justice system, yet they have been largely ignored. Last year, a government-backed committee said it found no evidence of institutional racism in Britain, eliciting an outcry.

Joint enterprise cases can give prosecutors an advantage by allowing them to lump defendants together and, in many instances, label them gang members. And Black people, research shows, are far more likely to be tagged with that designation.

After being presented with The Times's findings, a prosecution service spokesman said that the authorities do not apply the term ''gang'' lightly.

''If a person helps or encourages another to commit a murder, it is right they can face prosecution for their involvement in the crime,'' the Crown Prosecution Service statement said.

The agency denied responsibility for any racial disparities and noted that ''racial disproportionality is an issue in almost all stages of the criminal justice system.'' But the agency said it would begin tracking joint enterprise cases as it develops a new case-management system.

Under the joint enterprise doctrine, which has existed since the 19th century, one person may have physically committed the crime, but associates can also be found guilty.

A classic scenario, and one often cited by prosecutors, is a robbery in which one culprit steals the cash and another drives the getaway car. Another would be a rape committed by one person, while another restrains the victim.

In many crimes, though, the roles are less clear. For decades, prosecutors won convictions simply by proving that accomplices should have anticipated the crime, even if they never intended it to happen.

In 2016, the United Kingdom's Supreme Court threw out that standard. Going forward, to win a murder conviction under the joint enterprise doctrine, prosecutors would need to prove that an accomplice actually intended for the murder to happen. That was a huge change, one that seemed likely to curtail such prosecutions.

Prosecutors have long refused to publish data on how often they bring cases, or on the ethnicity of defendants, despite a reprimand and formal recommendations to do so from a powerful parliamentary inquiry as far back as 2014. After The Times filed two formal complaints with the government and the public prosecutor's office, they relented and provided data on multi-defendant homicide cases.

Just one example of the continued use of these prosecutions could be found this year inside Manchester Crown Court, where a 20-year-old Black man named Giovanni Lawrence was convicted of murder for a stabbing carried out by his white friend.

Mr. Lawrence was not at the murder scene and never touched the weapon. He was accused of driving a car in a chase leading up to the killing. But prosecutors could find no motive, no history of violence, no security camera footage and no witnesses in the run-up to the attack.

''This was a joint enterprise from beginning to end,'' Guy Gozem, a soft-spoken, silver-haired prosecutor, said as the trial opened.

'How Do We Win This Election?'

In late 2011, England was engulfed by the largest civil unrest in a generation after the fatal police shooting of a Black man, Mark Duggan. Peaceful protests turned violent. Young men with their faces hidden behind scarves and ski masks looted, set fires, hurled bottles and attacked police officers.

The riots quickly came to symbolize simmering racial tensions and the pent-up anger among the young and the poor over government cuts to social programs. But David Cameron, then the Conservative prime minister, blamed gangs, even though official statistics quickly showed that gangs did not play a key role. The government announced millions in new money to target gang crime.

''The police saw this as an opportunity to get resources,'' said Peter Herbert, who until his retirement last year was one of Britain's few Black judges.

The tough-on-crime response came straight out of an American playbook. As far back as 1992, when Bill Clinton campaigned on the Democratic message that Republicans were too soft on crime, British politicians were taking notes. Philip Gould, the opposition Labour Party's strategy adviser, traveled to Little Rock, Ark., during that campaign and saw what he called a ''road map.''

Mr. Clinton's law-and-order message, in particular, resonated with Labour leaders, the party's communications strategist Peter Mandelson wrote in his autobiography. It helped inspire a famous refrain of a future prime minister, Tony Blair: ''Tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime.'' And it ignited an arms race between Labour and the Conservatives over who could be seen as the party of law and order.

Lost in the political fight, however, was the fact that violent crime was already declining. And despite a flurry of news reports warning of a drug-fueled crime wave, the crack epidemic never came to Britain.

''What we imported was the rhetoric,'' said Prof. Tim Newburn, a criminologist at the London School of Economics who studies crime in Britain and the United States. ''We borrowed the clothes of tough-on-crime from those fighting the war on drugs in the U.S. But in reality, we never had the same drug problem that the U.S. had.''

Since the mid 1990s, overall crime -- including violent offenses -- has fallen in England and Wales. It still has far lower levels of serious violent crime than the United States, where the murder rate -- and the imprisonment rate -- is around five times as high.

''There's always been a tendency for the U.K. Labour Party to go to the Democratic Party to say, 'How do we win this election?''' said Mr. Herbert, who served as an adviser to Mr. Blair's attorney general.

''As part of that, they found that 'criminal justice is your weakness, you can turn it into a strength, just talk about longer sentences, safer streets,' all these clichés which have an impact on poor people and minorities,'' he said.

The Home Office and the Ministry of Justice declined to comment. The National Police Chiefs' Council, the United Kingdom's national body for law enforcement, said it was committed to improving policing for Black people, including through new training and increased use of data and body cameras.

As politicians, police officers and prosecutors intensified their focus on gangs, joint enterprise became an important tool. The Metropolitan Police, the nation's biggest force, once dropped leaflets through the doors of young people they suspected of being associated with gangs, warning that they could be sent to prison ''for just being present'' or failing to stop crimes being committed.

The raw numbers were small -- an estimated 100 to 200 people were prosecuted in joint enterprise homicide cases each year, according to an analysis eight years ago by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism. But in a country with only about 700 homicides a year, joint enterprise cases were a significant share of prosecutions.

And that share is growing. Since the landmark Supreme Court ruling, nearly 15 percent of homicide defendants have been prosecuted for murder as a group of four or more, compared with nearly 10 percent before, according to a Times analysis of data obtained separately by the human rights journalism unit Liberty Investigates.

As these cases drew criticism, the Supreme Court handed down its landmark 2016 ruling in the case of Ameen Jogee.

Rebranding

As activists celebrated the ruling, many police officers were alarmed.

''In prison, you could hear all these people saying, 'Yes!''' recalled Mr. Harding, the former murder detective at the Metropolitan Police. ''We went to the C.P.S. and said: 'What is this? What is this going to mean?'''

But a dozen current and former prosecutors and law enforcement officials told The Times that there was never any question of stopping, or even curbing, the use of joint enterprise. The question was: how to continue using it?

They needed a strategy for convincing jurors that people intended to commit the crimes, even when they did not carry them out themselves. An elite group of lawyers with the office of the attorney general, the government's chief legal adviser, trained officers and prosecutors nationwide on how to do just that.

''They realized that there was a new test to apply to it, but that wasn't going to prevent people being prosecuted,'' said one of those lawyers, Duncan Atkinson.

Now, prosecutors increasingly focus on a defendant's frame of mind. Evidence like ''association'' -- the relationship between defendants -- takes on a key role in helping prove intent. Social media posts and even the music people listen to can be used to help sway a jury that defendants have a bad character or are part of a ''gang.''

Several prosecutors said that, in some ways, the ruling actually made joint enterprise cases easier to win.

As the prosecutors saw it, joint enterprise also needed rebranding. According to a Crown Prosecution Service report, the prosecutors scrapped the label ''joint enterprise'' because ''the term itself has become controversial.'' Individual prosecutors might use the term joint enterprise in court, but in public documents and official guidance to investigators, the new term became ''secondary liability.''

And it worked.

Data from the Ministry of Justice shows that in the five years after the Supreme Court decision, the number of homicide cases involving four or more defendants increased by 42 percent.

And prosecutors are winning. The number of convictions rose by nearly 50 percent. Figures from the Crown Prosecution Service show that Black defendants were three times as likely as white defendants to be prosecuted under joint enterprise.

In a Manchester courtroom this spring, the murder trial against Giovanni Lawrence showcased the many ways in which prosecutors weave together circumstantial evidence and friendships to suggest gang membership. That gang label can help persuade jurors that defendants had criminal intent.

Mr. Lawrence was charged in the killing of Rhamero West, 16, who was stabbed in September 2021 after a brief car chase. Mr. Lawrence and his friends pursued Mr. West and his friends for reasons that prosecutors could never determine. After a crash, Mr. West ran away, but Ryan Cashin, 19, caught up with him and fatally stabbed him in the leg.

Mr. Cashin, Mr. Lawrence and two other teenagers were charged with murder, though a judge accepted that even Mr. Cashin did not set out to kill the boy. Mr. Lawrence was not at the scene of the stabbing. Prosecutors said he had driven one of the cars in the chase -- evidence that they argued showed his intent to help the killer.

Mr. Lawrence could have been charged with manslaughter, which carries no minimum prison term; sentences average about 10 years. Instead, prosecutors opted for the murder charge, which carries a mandatory life sentence.

''While the fatal blows were inflicted by Cashin, the other three were clearly part of the continuing attack,'' the prosecutor, Mr. Gozem, told jurors in March.

Experts had expected that, after the Supreme Court ruling, fewer defendants like Mr. Lawrence would be prosecuted, and fewer still would face the maximum-possible charge.

Whether Mr. Lawrence was actually behind the wheel is debatable. Cellphone location data left little doubt that he was in the car, but that did not resolve the critical question of who was driving. Detectives discovered Mr. Lawrence's DNA on the turn signal of one of the cars, but it was mixed with other DNA profiles. No traces were found on the steering wheel, the rearview mirror or the gear stick.

Mr. Gozem, the prosecutor, did not present the case as a gang killing. He was careful in his language and civil in cross-examination. But he hinted at gang involvement and occasionally used the word ''gang'' to describe Mr. Lawrence and his friends.

They alluded to Mr. Lawrence's ''bad character,'' and used his association with the other three defendants to help the almost entirely white jury see them as a gang who were ''were all acting together'' and should be punished equally.

They used social media and cellphone photographs and messages to show that the defendants had been in touch. None ever denied being friends. They lived in the same ***working-class*** Manchester neighborhood and had known each other for years. But in court, they became ''associates.'' Prosecutors even tried to present violent rap lyrics as evidence of criminality, though the judge refused to let jurors hear them.

Research consistently shows that the police are far more likely to apply the gang label to Black people. Young Black people made up 89 percent of names on Manchester gangs database, according to researchers at Manchester Metropolitan University. In London, the picture is similarly stark.

''It is driven by a racialized gang narrative, which, increasingly, is only used in instances where nonwhite people are being prosecuted,'' said Patrick Williams, a Manchester Metropolitan University sociologist who has studied joint enterprise for more than a decade.

Mr. Lawrence tried to have the case thrown out. But while a judge acknowledged that the evidence of Mr. Lawrence's involvement was ''less direct and less strong,'' he allowed the case against him to continue.

On April 11, around an hour after saying they were approaching deadlock, the jury convicted Mr. Lawrence of murder.

He was sentenced to life in prison, the same sentence as Mr. Cashin, who actually killed someone. The only difference is that Mr. Lawrence will be eligible for parole in 21 years, but Mr. Cashin will have to wait 24 years.

Mr. Lawrence is appealing. His lawyers say this was the kind of joint enterprise case that the Supreme Court placed off limits.

He faces long odds. To overturn a conviction under joint enterprise, judges held, defendants had to prove that they suffered a ''substantial injustice,'' an extremely high bar to cross.

Since the ruling, only one direct court appeal has succeeded. It is not known how many have been submitted. Of 156 joint enterprise-related cases submitted to the Criminal Cases Review Commission, the official body that reviews possible miscarriages of justice, four were sent to the appeals court. Judges rejected all of them.

Even some prosecutors said they were surprised at how forcefully courts shut the door on appeals.

On the day of Mr. Lawrence's conviction, Rhamero West's mother, Kelly Brown, lit fireworks and released purple balloons -- her son's favorite color. It would not bring him back, but she said it was closure. She welcomed the verdict, but felt for the families of the defendants.

That same day, Mr. Lawrence's mother, Ann-Marie Lawrence, felt so sick that her older son had to drive her home. Once alone, she poured herself a rum and lit a cigarette.

''It's us mums who are feeling the pain at the end of the day, on both sides,'' she said. ''But this law, it's not fair.''

Selam Gebrekidan contributed reporting.

Data and methodology: The New York Times obtained data on homicide prosecutions in England and Wales involving multiple defendants covering the period of 2011 to 2020 from the Crown Prosecution Service, Home Office and Ministry of Justice through multiple Freedom of Information Act requests.

The Times's calculations on the increase in prosecutions is based on Ministry of Justice data on homicide cases -- murder, manslaughter, infanticide and causing death by gross breach of duty of care -- involving four or more defendants. According to the data, the total number of such cases brought from 2011 to 2015 was 59 (or an average of 11.8 cases per year), while the total number of such cases from 2016 to 2020 was 84 (or an average of 16.8 cases per year).

Calculations of the racial disparity in prosecutions is based on homicide data from the Crown Prosecution Service: conspiracy, attempted murder, causing death of a child or vulnerable adult, child destruction, drunken driving and aiding suicide. According to the data, 32 percent of Black defendants were prosecuted in cases with four or more defendants, compared with nearly 10 percent for white defendants. This puts the relative rate index at 3.39.

None of the agencies provided homicide data broken down by murder and manslaughter offenses, as requested. Reporters checked their calculations with leading data and crime experts in Britain, including Gavin Hales, an associate researcher at the Police Foundation U.K., and Tim Newburn, a criminologist at the London School of Economics.

Reporters supplemented their findings with data that Liberty Investigates, a human rights journalism unit, separately obtained from the Ministry of Justice on murder cases involving more than one defendant.Selam Gebrekidan contributed reporting.Data and MethodologyThe New York Times obtained data on homicide prosecutions involving multiple defendants covering the period of 2011 to 2020 from the Crown Prosecution Service, Home Office and Ministry of Justice through multiple Freedom of Information Act requests.The Times's calculations on the increase in prosecutions is based on Ministry of Justice data on homicide cases -- murder, manslaughter, infanticide and causing death by gross breach of duty of care -- involving four or more defendants. According to the data, the total number of such cases brought from 2011 to 2015 was 59 (or an average of 11.8 cases per year), while the total number of such cases from 2016 to 2020 was 84 (or an average of 16.8 cases per year).Calculations of the racial disparity in prosecutions is based on homicide data from the Crown Prosecution Service: conspiracy, attempted murder, causing death of a child or vulnerable adult, child destruction, drunken driving and aiding suicide. According to the data, 32 percent of Black defendants were prosecuted in cases with four or more defendants, compared with nearly 10 percent for white defendants. This puts the relative rate index at 3.39.None of the agencies provided homicide data broken down by murder and manslaughter offenses, as requested. Reporters checked their calculations with leading data and crime experts in Britain, including Gavin Hales, an associate researcher at the Police Foundation U.K., and Tim Newburn, a criminologist at the London School of Economics.Reporters supplemented their findings with data that Liberty Investigates, a human rights journalism unit, separately obtained from the Ministry of Justice on murder cases involving more than one defendant.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/12/world/europe/uk-criminal-justice.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/12/world/europe/uk-criminal-justice.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Giovanni Lawrence, left, was convicted of murder for a stabbing carried out by his white friend. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARY TURNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

From left, riots in Lon- don in 2011

Norton Street in Manchester where Rhamero West, 16, died after a car chase that ended in him being stabbed

and a protest organized by a group that fights joint enterprise convictions, in May outside the Houses of Parliament in London. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEON NEAL/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES

MARY TURNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

ANDREW TESTA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A12-A13)

Durrell Goodall was one of 11 teenagers from Manchester jailed for a stabbing that only one person carried out. The judge admitted he did not know whether Mr. Goodall took part in the attack. He did not carry a weapon and had no relevant prior convictions.

Calum Farquhar was one of four Black and mixed race men convicted of killing a white man during a burglary in Northamp- ton. He admitted driving the group to steal marijuana from what they believed was an empty house. He told Liberty Investigates, a human rights journalism unit, he waited in his car as the crime took place.

Wayne Collins was accused of being part of a gang which shot at police and set fire to a Birm- ingham pub during the 2011 riots. He was sentenced to 18 years, even though the court accepted that he never held the gun and security footage proves he took no active part in the rioting of the pub. He was simply present. (A13) This article appeared in print on page A1, A12, A13.

**Load-Date:** November 13, 2022

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[***Why Biden’s Polling Lead vs. Trump Isn’t as Solid as It Looks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YN7-HX61-JBG3-637R-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1340 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** Consider two important measurement differences: battleground states versus other states, and registered voters versus likely voters.

**Body**

Consider two important measurement differences: battleground states versus other states, and registered voters versus likely voters.

Follow our live coverage of the 2020 election between [*Joe Biden and President Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/17/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html).

President Trump and Joe Biden begin the general election campaign locked in a highly competitive contest that remains fought along the lines of the 2016 presidential election, according to national and battleground state polls.

If anyone holds the early edge, it is Mr. Biden. He leads by an average of six points in national live-interview polls of registered voters. But the election will be decided by voters in the battleground states, not registered voters nationwide, and there the story is not nearly so clear or rosy for Mr. Biden.

At the moment, a reasonable estimate is that Mr. Biden is performing four or five points worse among likely voters in the critical states than he is among registered voters nationwide. As a result, he holds only a narrow and tenuous edge in the race for the Electoral College, if he holds one at all.

Even under ordinary circumstances, with seven months to go until the election, there would be plenty of time for the race to change. This cycle, the country also faces a pandemic and a severe economic downturn with the potential to upend the race.

Already, an initial uptick in the president’s approval rating has dissipated, perhaps because a [*rallying effect*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/17/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) has given way to more focus on the administration’s coronavirus response. There will be many opportunities for the polls to shift again, and the president faces many downside risks without a return to normal life and to economic growth before the election.

But at least for now, the polls suggest that American voters are divided along familiar lines, despite countless events that seemed to have the potential to redraw them.

The president begins the campaign with strong support from the white ***working class*** who powered his upset win four years ago. He leads among white voters without a college degree, 61 percent to 32 percent, in an average of live-interview polls conducted since March 15, matching or perhaps even exceeding his margin over Hillary Clinton in methodologically similar polls conducted late in the 2016 campaign.

The results suggest that Mr. Biden, despite his reputed appeal to blue-collar workers, has made little to no progress in winning back the white voters without a college degree who supported Barack Obama in 2012 but swung to Mr. Trump in 2016.

Mr. Biden counters with a wide lead among white voters with a college degree, who support him by a similar or greater margin than they did Mrs. Clinton four years ago. Over all, he leads, 55-40, among that group of registered voters in an average of recent surveys.

Mr. Biden also holds the expected wide advantage among nonwhite voters, though here there is consistent evidence of a small yet discernible shift in the president’s direction, including in the large series of [*New York Times/Siena College polls*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/17/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) from last November. Mr. Trump, in contrast, seems to do a tick worse among white voters than he did four years ago, whether because of a slight decrease in his standing among college-educated white voters or the growing share of white voters who possess a four-year degree.

As a result, Mr. Trump appears to [*retain his relative advantage*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/17/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) in the disproportionately white ***working-class*** battleground states that decided the 2016 presidential election. Mr. Biden leads in polls of registered voters in these states, but by a narrower margin than he leads nationwide. It raises the possibility that Democrats could win the most votes and lose the White House for the third time in six presidential elections.

Wisconsin, the tipping-point state in 2016, has backed Mr. Biden by just over one percentage point in an average of seven live-interview surveys conducted so far this year, compared with a six-point Biden lead in national surveys over the same period.

Mr. Trump’s relative advantage in the Electoral College, though persistent so far, is not unshakable. To this point, his apparent strength in Wisconsin has tended to expand his Electoral College advantage. But a fairly modest shift in that state or another could expand or contract it.

Arizona and Florida are two possible candidates. White voters without a degree represent a smaller share of the electorate in those states than they do in the Midwest. Arizona polls in particular give Democrats some cause for hope: Mr. Biden has led live-interview polls by four points in Arizona. A breakthrough by Democrats in Arizona would essentially cancel out their weakness in Wisconsin. It would make Pennsylvania, where Mr. Biden leads by about two points, the pivotal state on the electoral map.

One reason for Mr. Biden’s strength in Arizona and Florida might be older voters, who represent an above-average share of white voters in the two states. On average, Mr. Biden leads among voters over age 65 by a margin of 53 percent to 44 percent nationwide, including a lead in every live-interview national poll reporting a result for the group. It is a substantial improvement over Mrs. Clinton’s six-point deficit among the group in pre-election polls in 2016.

Mr. Biden’s early strength among older voters is not easy to explain. It cannot be fully accounted for by the changing composition of each age group, although the ascent of the baby boomers into the oldest age cohort may be part of the reason, along with the gradual departure of the more conservative Silent Generation from the electorate altogether. Mr. Trump seems to have made gains among voters 45 to 65, or perhaps even younger, canceling out his losses among older voters over all.

Mr. Biden’s relative strength among older voters may also help counteract his expected weakness among likely voters, relative to registered voters, when pollsters apply likely-voter screens later in the cycle. In polling, Republicans usually fare about two points better among likely voters than registered voters, who tend to be relatively young and diverse.

This cycle, the coronavirus pandemic raises additional questions about the eventual turnout, particularly if it leads to widespread voting by mail. But no matter the method, Democrats typically find themselves at a turnout disadvantage, and it is doubtful that Mr. Biden will maintain the whole of his current polling advantage among likely voters. Even when Democrats benefited from a surge in turnout in well-educated suburbs during the 2018 midterm elections, Republicans fared better among likely voters than among registered voters.

Together, Mr. Trump’s relative advantage of one to two points among likely voters compared with registered voters — and his relative advantage of three and even four points in the tipping-point states — means that the typical national poll of registered voters is probably around four or five points worse for Mr. Trump than his standing among likely voters in the most pivotal states. Mr. Biden’s already narrow polling lead in states like Wisconsin, Pennsylvania or Arizona might be vanishingly small after a likely voter screen.

Of course, no one knows what American life will look like by the time of the election. Perhaps the country will still be in lockdown, saddled by 30 percent unemployment, and convinced that the president’s slow response cost lives and damaged the economy. Or maybe the country will be swept by euphoria as lockdowns are lifted a month or two ahead of the election and a liberated population sends its children to school, visits friends, goes to the park and enjoys double-digit G.D.P. growth in the third quarter.

The pandemic also could change how the election is administered, potentially yielding a novel turnout that’s impossible to predict at this stage. It undoubtedly has the potential to reshape the views of the electorate, even if it hasn’t done so yet.

PHOTO: Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s edge in the Electoral College race is narrower than his lead among all voters. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DEMETRIUS FREEMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 20, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Make Americans' Crushing Debt Disappear***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:641F-JJ21-JBG3-61WN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 7, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section TW; Column 0; SpecialSections; Pg. 8; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1444 words

**Byline:** By Astra Taylor

**Body**

Formerly enslaved people called the phase that followed the Civil War, and their emancipation, Jubilee. In doing so, they at once communicated the joy of freedom and knowingly invoked the authority of the Bible: jubilee as an Old Testament law commanding the end of slavery, redistribution of land and forgiveness of debts. The prophetic term was another name for the period more commonly known as Reconstruction.

That attempt to usher in a more substantive democracy -- racially egalitarian and responsive to its poorest citizens -- was swiftly abandoned by the federal government and violently suppressed by Southern reactionaries. Reconstruction's sabotage still reverberates: in the dysfunction of our political system, in the endurance of white supremacy, in our ever-widening inequality.

While the White House likes to trumpet good news about the economy's recovery from Covid-19, it's important to understand how unequal the recovery has been. From March 2020 to March 2021, America's billionaires increased their combined fortunes by over $1.3 trillion, according to an analysis by Americans for Tax Fairness and the Institute for Policy Studies, while millions of families, particularly in ***working-class*** communities of color, either scraped by or fell further into arrears. The nonmortgage debt load of retirees has, on average, doubled; while eviction bans kept many families off the street, they did not stop back rent from piling up. Millions more people fell into medical debt during the pandemic, which experts warn may soon lead to a spike in personal bankruptcies.

Instead of hawking a ''recovery'' that disproportionately benefits the wealthy, President Biden and his colleagues should help finish the work of Reconstruction. The time has come to revive the Jubilee -- which in the modern era would mean the erasure of debts and a democratic rebalancing of power between regular people and elites.

Since before this nation's founding, indebtedness has been useful to the powerful as both a source of profit and a tool of social control and racial domination. Thomas Jefferson's view is particularly revealing: While he fulminated against debt as an unjust encumbrance on posterity and argued for the termination of debts unpaid after ''natural limits'' (which he took to be the span of a generation), he recommended wielding debt as a tool to dispossess Indigenous people, ''because we observe that when these debts get beyond what the individuals can pay, they become willing to lop them off by a cession of lands.''

After slavery's abolition, similar tactics were deployed to squelch hopes for Jubilee. Sharecropping and tenant farming arrangements used debt to secure white landlords generations of exploitable labor, ensuring Reconstruction would remain undone.

Today, financial predators, aided by allies in Washington from both parties, target borrowers who come from marginalized backgrounds, lack intergenerational wealth and face wage discrimination on the job, ensuring lifetimes of repayment while compounding social inequities and racial disparities.

The rich, meanwhile, can use credit to their advantage: Individuals walk away from their obligations (Donald Trump, the self-professed ''king of debt,'' epitomizes this warped paradigm), and companies engage in strategic defaults.

The same ethos informed the first Covid relief package. Congress stabilized the corporate debt market and offered companies forgivable loans (it even aided payday lenders and debt collectors that were previously fined by regulators) but failed to extend equivalent generosity to regular borrowers, who instead received inadequate payment pauses and cash assistance. Even this support was a circuitous bailout for creditors, given that people spent much of what they received to pay down debts. (Debt collectors could garnish people's third stimulus checks.)

Whereas the American dream used to be owning a home with a white picket fence, now it is getting out of debt. For many, the humble aspiration of owing zero dollars seems out of reach. Over his long career, Mr. Biden has contributed to this crisis by working to strengthen the hands of creditors, including through a 2005 bankruptcy reform bill that rolled back protections for borrowers.

The time has come to make amends. If the Biden administration is serious about ''build back better,'' it needs to take bold action. This country cannot afford to allow millions of struggling households to sink when mountains of old bills and back rent suddenly come due once payment pauses and eviction moratoriums end. The government can and must find ways to make crushing debt disappear.

Student loans, medical debt, utility bills, criminal justice fines and fees, and municipal debt all need to be written down or canceled outright. I've written elsewhere about some of the various legal means by which this can be accomplished, and many other potential strategies exist.

To begin, Mr. Biden should honor his campaign promise for Congress to immediately cancel student debt for borrowers. There is no reason to hold back. Erasing every penny of federal student debt would improve nearly 45 million lives, help narrow the racial wealth gap and most likely win over a good number of Republican voters in advance of the midterms. The Debt Collective, a membership organization for debtors I helped found, has already drafted an executive order the president could sign tomorrow to do so -- no need to involve Congress or pass legislation.

Next, he should tackle medical debt. Following the lead of a proposal by Senator Bernie Sanders, Democrats could eliminate medical debt in collections, including fees incurred because of Covid. (At the very least, legislators should protect borrowers by ensuring that past-due hospital bills aren't reported on credit scores and make it harder for collectors to come after patients.)

Finally, elected officials also need to relieve renters of the enormous burden they hold by canceling accumulated rent debt, preferably in a way that doesn't simply bail out and further enrich and empower landlords. Passing the Rent and Mortgage Cancellation Act introduced by Representative Ilhan Omar of Minnesota would be a good start.

These ideas are not outside the mainstream. Over 415 organizations, including the Minority Veterans of America, the National Young Farmers Coalition and the N.A.A.C.P., have signed a letter calling on the Biden administration to use executive authority to cancel student debt. In the early days of the pandemic, the Poor People's Campaign, a racial and economic justice group, introduced the Jubilee Platform, and it recently collaborated with progressive congressional legislators on a ''Third Reconstruction Resolution,'' both of which prominently feature debt relief.

Contrary to worries that letting debtors off the hook would sink the economy, there is evidence it would actually help keep it afloat by providing a much-needed financial boost. Freeing up money now spent on debt servicing to circulate more widely would increase demand, create jobs and encourage entrepreneurialism. A Jubilee would be a boon for everyone, even those who don't need direct assistance.

But the effect would be farther-reaching than what can be measured by G.D.P. A Jubilee would help us reconstruct both our monetary economy and our moral one. A renegotiation of the social contract is long overdue.

While the affluent shirk their obligations by refusing to pay taxes and living wages and then use the wealth they've hoarded to fund politicians who protect their interests, poverty is shrouded in shame and stigma. But indebtedness is not a personal failing, and debtors are not to blame, which is why we should reject the language of ''debt forgiveness'' and instead demand debt abolition, a phrase that pays homage to the concept of abolition democracy developed by the historian and activist W.E.B. Du Bois.

''Abolition democracy'' was Du Bois's name for what Reconstruction aspired to achieve -- a process that would involve both the dismantling of racist institutions and the building of new egalitarian, cooperative political and economic relationships. We are owed nothing less.

Astra Taylor (@astradisastra) is a filmmaker, activist and writer. She is the author, most recently, of ''Remake the World: Essays, Reflections, Rebellions.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/02/opinion/student-loan-medical-debt-forgiveness.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/02/opinion/student-loan-medical-debt-forgiveness.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY O.O.P.S. FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 7, 2021

**End of Document**



[***‘It’s Embarrassing’: Marjorie Taylor Greene Tests the Limits of Some Voters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61XK-N7R1-DXY4-X4G7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 4, 2021 Thursday 11:12 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1787 words

**Byline:** Rick Rojas

**Highlight:** In her Georgia district, voters saw Ms. Greene as a conservative voice that would be impossible to ignore. Now the revelation of past social media posts has unsettled some who backed her.

**Body**

In her Georgia district, voters saw Ms. Greene as a conservative voice that would be impossible to ignore. Now the revelation of past social media posts has unsettled some who backed her.

SUMMERVILLE, Ga. — Billy Martin does not care much for politicians. But the retired teacher and coach liked what he heard from [*Marjorie Taylor Greene*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/10/technology/twitter-suspends-marjorie-taylor-greene.html) as she promised to take on Washington as a defiant force, intent on rattling the establishment.

Mr. Martin, 62, has lived all of his life in the foothills rolling below the Appalachian Mountains in Georgia, in a community that he believed had long been overlooked. He supported Ms. Greene, he said, because she had a brazen voice that was impossible to ignore.

Yet it has also been impossible to ignore the torrent of troubling social media posts and videos of Ms. Greene’s that have surfaced in recent weeks. In them, she endorsed violent behavior, including executing Democratic leaders. She also spread conspiracy theories, describing a deadly school shooting as a hoax and questioning whether a plane crashed into the Pentagon on Sept. 11.

“She’s a real asset,” Mr. Martin said of Ms. Greene and the potential he saw in her after she was [*elected to Congress*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/10/technology/twitter-suspends-marjorie-taylor-greene.html) in November. Still, despite his best efforts to avoid politics, he learned about her social media activity and was bewildered by it.

“Sometimes people say things they regret, speak before they think,” Mr. Martin said as he climbed into his pickup, offering a possible explanation before adding that he was not quite sure what to believe.

The rest of the country had paid attention to her campaign because of her promotion of conspiracy theories, including the [*pro-Trump QAnon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/10/technology/twitter-suspends-marjorie-taylor-greene.html). But in a congressional district proud of its ranking as one of the most conservative, voters said they were drawn to her unapologetic intensity, with a message of unstinting support of former President Donald J. Trump.

For some, though, she was now brushing the limits of their support.

“It’s embarrassing,” Ashley Shelton, a stay-at-home mother who voted for Ms. Greene, said of the controversy. She thought Mr. Trump would serve another term and saw Ms. Greene as “a backup, a comfort.”

“I think she’s kind of a loose cannon,” Ms. Shelton said before paraphrasing a line from the Old Testament: “The wise are the quiet ones,” she said. “The more she opens her mouth, the less evidence of her wisdom.”

As Democrats voted Thursday evening to strip Ms. Greene of committee assignments and as some Republicans have condemned her statements, she has argued that the resistance confronting her only “strengthens my base of support at home and across the country.”

To some degree, that was true, as her most fervent supporters saw in the treatment of Ms. Greene a reminder of all that they loathed about Washington. But tensions in her home district also, in many ways, mirrored those afflicting the Republican Party as a whole as it grapples with how to position itself without Mr. Trump in the White House.

Calls for Ms. Greene to resign have appeared on roadside billboards and in the pages of local newspapers. Local Republican officials said the controversy had nudged possible primary challengers toward running, as a re-election campaign in 2022 would likely be the ultimate test of how vulnerable she was.

Georgia has been gripped by a political tug of war, as Democrats have notched significant gains in the once reliably Republican state. But in Ms. Greene’s rural district, Republican domination shows few signs of weakening.

“The default is just absolutely Republican,” said Michael E. Bailey, a political science professor at Berry College just outside Rome, the largest city in the district, with 36,000 residents. “It isn’t a kind of conservatism rooted simply in lower taxes,” he added. “It’s more frankly an ornery conservatism, and it’s one that responds to some culture war issues.”

Ms. Greene’s district, Georgia’s 14th, reaches from the outer suburbs of Atlanta to the outskirts of Chattanooga, sprawling into a dozen counties in the northwest corner of the state. It is largely white, ***working class*** and secluded. “To entertain yourself, you have the local church and your family,” said Ms. Shelton, who moved from Cumming, Ga., near Atlanta, three years ago.

And if there were any doubts of its conservatism, a large billboard greets drivers on Interstate 75: “Every tongue will confess Jesus is Lord — even the Democrats.” (To underline the point, “Democrats” is red and adorned with the devil’s trident.)

Ms. Greene, who ran a construction business with her husband and owned a CrossFit gym, moved into the district from an Atlanta suburb in order to run. The Republican field was packed, but she blazed ahead, overcoming the hurdle of being an outsider.

She beat John Cowan, a conservative Republican and local neurosurgeon, in a runoff, and glided into the general election unopposed after [*her Democratic opponent’s campaign collapsed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/10/technology/twitter-suspends-marjorie-taylor-greene.html) and he moved out of state. She won with nearly 75 percent of the vote.

Even skeptics praised the relentless pace of her campaign. Ms. Greene covered a lot of ground in the vast district, sometimes attending as many as five campaign events in a day. She appealed to voters by hewing to conservative themes, like defending gun rights, opposing immigration and railing against socialism.

“A lot of people here feel like they really know her,” said Luke Martin, a local prosecutor and chairman of the Republican Party in Floyd County, which is in her district. “They’ve met her. They’ve spoken with her. She never talked about that stuff. It’s kind of confusing to a lot of people. The person they think they know is not this person.”

The recent cascade of past social media posts, which also included a conspiracy theory that a space laser controlled by Jewish financiers started a California wildfire, has forced some to regret their vote or lose confidence in her.

“You can’t justify it,” Luke Martin said of her statements and social media activity. “It’s indefensible.”

Yet many acknowledged that her promotion of right-wing conspiracy theories should not have been a surprise to anyone. Ms. Greene had gained a national profile over her support of QAnon, which falsely claims that a cabal of Satan-worshiping pedophiles was plotting against Mr. Trump.

Ms. Greene has had detractors within the Republican Party from the outset. The slogan adopted by Dr. Cowan, the Republican who lost to her in the runoff, was “All of the conservative, none of the embarrassment.”

“She is not conservative,” he [*told Politico before the runoff*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/10/technology/twitter-suspends-marjorie-taylor-greene.html). “She’s crazy.”

And now that the controversy has intensified, Georgia Republicans have oscillated between condemning her, ignoring her and offering broad words of displeasure carefully chosen so as not to offend her supporters.

Gov. Brian Kemp of Georgia largely sidestepped the issue at a news conference this week, saying it was up to voters to decide whether they found the comments unbecoming of an elected official. “We have an election cycle that’s quickly coming upon us,” he told reporters.

Brad Raffensperger, the Republican secretary of state who pushed back against Mr. Trump’s attempts to overturn his loss in Georgia and then found himself targeted by Mr. Trump and his supporters, offered a blunt assessment of Ms. Greene: “The future of the Republican Party is not Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene.”

Democrats in the 14th District have long been resigned to their status as a minority in an overwhelmingly conservative region, but they have been energized as they have urged Ms. Greene to step down.

“I didn’t think she was fit for office back then,” John Lugthart, who wrote a letter calling for her resignation [*published in The Daily Citizen-News in Dalton*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/10/technology/twitter-suspends-marjorie-taylor-greene.html), said of his opinions of Ms. Greene during the election. “More and more has come out, and my hope is that many others in our district now realize she’s not the one to represent us.”

Still, the message she delivers — and the way she delivers it — continues to have a receptive audience among many in the district, as she has introduced articles of impeachment against President Biden, sponsored legislation that would ban Black Lives Matter flags from flying at American embassies and signed onto a bill to “stop the dangerous trend of biological males infiltrating women’s sports.”

She has rebuffed requests from reporters to explain the social media activity and statements. But she has verbally punched back at her critics with a recent series of town hall meetings across the district and a flurry of posts on social media arguing that she [*has been targeted by a “mob”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/10/technology/twitter-suspends-marjorie-taylor-greene.html) that wants to “cancel every Republican.”

“The DC swamp and the fake news media are attacking me because I am not one of them,” [*she said on Twitter.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/10/technology/twitter-suspends-marjorie-taylor-greene.html) “I am one of you. And they hate me for it.”

In her district, there is a history of bristling at authority, whether in Washington or Atlanta. Now, the efforts to marginalize their representative in Congress have stirred outrage among some voters who see the criticism as evidence of the political establishment overruling their vote.

Their anger has been stoked by the region’s steady decline. Factories and other industrial facilities have been abandoned. Decent-paying ***working-class*** jobs have dried up. Opioid addiction has ravaged families.

“Opportunity is not abundant and not real evident in many, many families,” said David Pat Boyle, who runs the Democratic Party in Walker County, just below the Tennessee state line. “The grievance is so strong — so strong that they would vote for anybody that stands up to and takes on this vague but powerful establishment.”

The resentments are ones Teresa Rich knows well. She believes that the country is in a state of rapid decline, one that has intensified since Mr. Biden took office, and that China is wielding too much influence. She and her husband have owned a radiator shop in Summerville for nearly three decades, and she worried her business would suffer.

In Ms. Greene, she saw a warrior. “I love her,” she said.

Any disappointment Ms. Rich, 58, feels surrounding Ms. Greene is directed at other Republicans who, she said, have not stepped up forcefully enough to defend her.

“She fought them,” Ms. Rich said, referring to Ms. Greene’s showdown with Democrats and even elected officials in her own party. “If the party was like it was supposed to be, she wouldn’t be in a corner by herself.”

Astead W. Herndon contributed reporting from New York.

Astead W. Herndon contributed reporting from New York.

PHOTOS: TERESA RICH, a supporter of Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene in Summerville, Ga.; LUKE MARTIN, chair of the Republican Party in Floyd County, on Ms. Greene’s social media activity (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICOLE CRAINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 10, 2021

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[***With Dueling Environmental Events, Trump and Biden Define the Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60C5-6HG1-DXY4-X0F5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 15, 2020 Wednesday 18:53 EST

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**Section:** CLIMATE

**Length:** 1494 words

**Byline:** Lisa Friedman and Katie Glueck

**Highlight:** Over two days, President Trump and Joseph R. Biden Jr. laid out wildly divergent views on environmental regulations and climate change, helping to define the stakes of the presidential race.

**Body**

President Trump traveled on Wednesday to the new political battleground of Georgia to blast away at one of the nation’s cornerstone conservation laws, vowing to speed construction projects by limiting legally mandated environmental reviews of highways, pipelines and power plants.

One day earlier, his Democratic presidential rival, Joseph R. Biden Jr., took a different tack, [*releasing a $2 trillion plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/14/us/politics/biden-climate-plan.html) to confront climate change and overhaul the nation’s infrastructure, claiming he will create millions of jobs by building a clean energy economy.

In that period, the major party candidates for the White House displayed in sharp relief just how far apart they are ideologically on infrastructure and environmental matters of vital importance to many American voters, particularly in critical battleground states, including Pennsylvania and Florida.

Mr. Biden is trying to win over young voters and supporters of his vanquished rival, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, by showing an aggressive awareness of climate change and promising to move urgently to combat it. At the same time he has sought to maintain his promised connection to white, ***working class*** voters, especially in the Upper Midwest, who swung to Mr. Trump four years ago and are leery of what they see as threats to their livelihood, especially jobs in the oil and gas industry.

The president, in contrast, is pretty much where he has been for more than a decade: intermittently acknowledging global warming and calling it a hoax; making spurious accusations that [*windmills cause cancer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/14/us/politics/biden-climate-plan.html), energy efficient appliances are “[*worthless*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/14/us/politics/biden-climate-plan.html)” and zero-emissions buildings “[*basically have no windows*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/14/us/politics/biden-climate-plan.html).” At every turn and on every regulatory decision the administration embraces business over environmental interests.

“Biden wants to massively re-regulate the energy economy, rejoin the Paris climate accord, which would kill our energy totally, you would have to close 25 percent of your businesses and kill oil and gas development,” Mr. Trump said on Wednesday as he announced a “top to bottom overhaul” of the National Environmental Policy Act, a bedrock environmental law since its passage in 1969. He offered no evidence to back up his statistics.

“When I think about climate change, the word I think of is ‘jobs,’ good-paying union jobs that will put Americans to work, making the air cleaner for our kids to breathe, restoring our crumbling roads, and bridges, and ports,” Mr. Biden said on Tuesday as he outlined his plan.

The events captured the two candidates’ radically different beliefs about the global threat of the planet’s warming, and offered a glimpse of how they would lead a nation confronting a climate crisis over the next four years. For Mr. Trump, tackling global warming is a threat to the economy. For Mr. Biden, it’s an opportunity.

“They are polar opposites on almost everything to do with the environment but particularly climate change,” said Christine Todd Whitman, the former Republican governor of New Jersey and administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency under George W. Bush.

Mr. Biden’s plan would spend $2 trillion over four years to put the United States on an “irreversible path” to net-zero emissions of planet-warming gases before 2050, meaning that carbon dioxide and other pollutants would be completely eliminated or offset by removal technology.

To do that, he called for clean energy standards that would achieve a carbon-free power sector by 2035; the energy efficiency upgrade of four million buildings in four years; and the construction of 500,000 electric vehicle charging stations. He also vowed to bring the United States back into the Paris Agreement, reinstate climate regulations that Mr. Trump has repealed and put more restrictions on things like emissions from vehicle tailpipes.

Mr. Trump has already [*moved to roll back virtually every effort*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/14/us/politics/biden-climate-plan.html) the federal government made under President Barack Obama to combat climate change, from restricting emissions from power plants and vehicles to curbing methane from the oil and gas sector. He even rescinded an Obama-era [*executive order that urged federal agencies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/14/us/politics/biden-climate-plan.html) to take into account climate change and sea-level rise when rebuilding infrastructure.

The Trump administration’s latest overhaul to the National Environmental Policy Act highlighted their differences still more.

The changes finalized on Wednesday include a limit of two years to conduct exhaustive environmental reviews of infrastructure projects. They also revoked a requirement that agencies consider the cumulative environmental effects of projects, like their contribution to climate change.

Mr. Trump said the current lengthy process “has cost of trillions of dollars over the years for our country and delays like you wouldn’t believe.”

In past campaigns, candidates have shied away from bold proposals on the environment, especially on climate change, but Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute, said that Mr. Biden has more political space to pursue his agenda amid the economic and public health crises plaguing the nation.

“With the pandemic shaking up the core of people’s lives, they are much less worried about bold and radical change right now,” he said, “because that’s what they want in some way.”

Those political dynamics have freed Mr. Biden to pursue policies that his allies hope will electrify younger, more liberal voters who were skeptical of him during the Democratic primaries, without automatically alienating more moderate voters, Mr. Murray said.

Certainly, Mr. Biden’s allies also see political risks, should he be perceived as moving too far left on issues like natural gas hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, a practice that is tied to many jobs in states like Pennsylvania. In contrast to a number of his Democratic primary opponents, he does not support a total ban on fracking.

“Fracking is not going to be on the chopping block,” he [*said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/14/us/politics/biden-climate-plan.html) in an interview last week with WNEP-TV, an ABC affiliate that serves Northeastern and Central Pennsylvania.

In a call with reporters on Tuesday, Biden campaign officials stressed that his long-held view on the issue stands: “No new fracking on federal lands.”

Mr. Trump is betting that his uncompromising, unchanging stands will appeal to business-minded voters and people who distrust government. But there is a risk to him, too.

Carlos Curbelo, a former Republican congressman from Florida who has championed a carbon tax to combat climate change, said he believes Mr. Trump’s disregard for the issue and his handling of the coronavirus are becoming linked to part of “the broader character question.”

Such character questions resonate with “not just young voters who have rejected his stance on climate for quite some time but also middle-aged and older voters who now in the context of Covid prioritize leaders who are good crisis managers,” he said.

Mr. Biden’s campaign criticized the president’s gutting of the environmental policy act as a way ”to distract” from Mr. Trump’s failure to deliver an infrastructure plan. “He has failed to deliver any real plan to create jobs and instead is cutting corners to once again ignore science, experts, and communities and reservations entitled to clean air, water, and environments,” read a campaign statement.

In some ways, the debate over climate reflects the broader political realignment in both parties that defined the 2016 campaign: ***working-class*** white voters, especially in rural areas, have moved farther from their union Democratic roots to embrace Mr. Trump and his energy policies, while educated, affluent white suburban voters, once staunchly Republican, drift toward the Democrats and appear increasingly open to more ambitious efforts to combat climate change.

“Biden’s pitch may play well with traditionally moderate Republican voters in the suburbs, just as Trump’s policy pronouncements may play well with traditionally more Democratic-leaning voters in other parts of the state, more rural parts of the state,” said former Representative Ryan Costello, a Republican who represented the Philadelphia suburbs.

But pro-business voters may see the danger of a Biden victory as just as high, said Scott Jennings, a Republican strategist.

“A tremendous amount is at stake,” he said. “Drastic overregulation and anti-business regulations could just decimate rural and middle-American economies already reeling.”

Scientists said the next four years could be critical to whether greenhouse gas emissions from the United States rise or fall.

“We are on a trajectory to a hotter planet,” said Waleed Abdalati, director of the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Mr. Trump and Mr. Biden, he said, “represent two very divergent paths.”

PHOTO: President Trump delivered a speech on rebuilding infrastructure at the U.P.S. Hapeville Airport Hub in Atlanta on Wednesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Doug Mills/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 17, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Seeking Redemption on Broadway***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654J-70H1-DXY4-X1NY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 2, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1727 words

**Byline:** By Richard Zoglin

**Body**

With the musical ''Paradise Square'' preparing to open Sunday, Garth Drabinsky is hoping to re-establish himself after serving time in a Canadian prison for fraud.

Ten days before opening night of his Broadway show, ''Paradise Square,'' Garth Drabinsky was sitting at a breakfast table at the Peninsula Hotel in Midtown Manhattan, fending off a stream of cellphone calls from members of his production team.

That morning's crisis: Chilina Kennedy, one of the show's lead actresses, had called in sick (and would be out for nine days after testing positive for coronavirus). Drabinsky decided which of the two understudies should take her place. A few minutes later, he spoke with the director Moisés Kaufman.

''You're happy with the choice?'' Drabinsky asked. He listened. ''Yeah, right, but make sure that she can really deliver 'Someone to Love,''' one of the musical's big ballads. ''And the comedy.''

The days before an opening are always stressful for a Broadway producer. But few have been under a harsher spotlight than Drabinsky, a storied Canadian impresario whose return to Broadway has generated the sort of drama that even he couldn't have scripted.

First came the pandemic, which delayed the show's Broadway opening by two years. Then an out-of-town run in Chicago last fall drew mixed reviews and (hampered by the Covid-19 surge) disappointing sales. The show's preview performances on Broadway have earned only around $350,000 per week at the box office, with most of the seats filled by heavily discounted or even free tickets. That's not the best omen for a producer who is staking everything on his big comeback after an ignominious fall.

He was a brash outsider even during his heyday in the 1990s, when he took a string of Tony-winning musicals to Broadway, among them ''Ragtime,'' ''Kiss of the Spider Woman'' and a revival of ''Show Boat.'' Then, in 1998, his company, Livent, imploded, and Drabinsky was accused of understating expenses and inflating profits in order to disguise the company's precarious financial state. He was eventually convicted of fraud and forgery in his native Canada, and served 17 months of a five-year sentence, before being paroled in February 2013.

Now, he's back. And he hasn't lost his salesman's bravado, his lawyerly verbosity or his passion for theater, even though his show has faced many challenges, including questions about its financial health.

As New York rehearsals started in February, stories began circulating about slow payments, contract problems and a budget ($13.5 million, according to Drabinsky) that seemed on the slim side for a big Broadway musical with a performing company of nearly 40 and a producer known for lavish spending. Actors Equity, the performers' union, even instructed the cast not to show up for rehearsals one day, so that it could deal with a ''failure to provide our members with contracts reflecting their agreed-upon terms of employment'' and ''a myriad of other significant contract violations,'' according to an Equity statement.

''When Garth Drabinsky is involved, people are rightly concerned that all the I's are dotted and the T's are crossed,'' said David Levy, an Equity spokesman. The problems were apparently resolved, but it was hardly the sort of incident anyone wants at the outset of a Broadway run.

Drabinsky blamed a delay in delivering final contracts for the dispute, and misunderstandings about what the actors were owed when the show transferred to New York from Chicago. ''The Chicago contract froze the deal for New York,'' he said. ''There was no variation allowed. They were asking for something we were not committed to give.''

What's more, Drabinsky stressed, he is not in charge of the show's finances -- an arrangement made explicit by the limited partnership formed to bring it to Broadway. ''I walked away from every element of fiscal control of this show,'' he added. ''I don't sign checks. I don't get involved. I never want to live through the horror of what I went through in 1998 again.''

Instead, he's been working to get ''Paradise Square'' in shape for Broadway. The show began life nine years ago with a small-scale musical called ''Hard Times,'' written by the Irish American musician Larry Kirwan, lead singer of the rock band Black 47. It is set during the Civil War, in the gritty Five Points neighborhood of Manhattan, where Irish immigrants and freed Black Americans lived together -- and where Stephen Foster (whose music formed the bulk of the score) resided during his final years. The show climaxes with the draft riots of 1863, when white ***working-class*** New Yorkers formed violent racist mobs following a draft lottery.

Drabinsky loved the concept, but shied away from anchoring the show in Foster's music, with its romanticization of the slavery-era South. So he set about reworking the piece, hiring the composer Jason Howland to write a new score (only two Foster songs remain), a succession of writers to shift the story's focus to the owner of a neighborhood saloon (played by the Tony nominee Joaquina Kalukango), and a top-notch creative team, including Kaufman, as the director, along with the choreographer Bill T. Jones.

The themes of racial justice and the immigrant experience have long attracted Drabinsky, and their currency has only grown in the years of development, which included a 2019 workshop production in Berkeley, Calif. ''When the show began to parallel what was happening today in America and the world, it was sort of freaky,'' he said. ''And it hasn't stopped changing. Even to the point that days before our first preview, Russia invades Ukraine. Three million immigrants are now looking for a new home.''

Drabinsky also made an effort to diversify the creative team, hiring Christina Anderson, a Black playwright, to revise Craig Lucas and Kirwan's script, and the composer-lyricist Masi Asare, who collaborated with Nathan Tysen on the lyrics.

Still, suspicion of Drabinsky runs high in the Broadway community, where many were burned financially by his company's bankruptcy.

Yet some people clearly are willing to give him another shot. The list of more than 30 producers for ''Paradise Square'' includes few established Broadway names, but many who have confidence in Drabinsky's record as a dedicated, hands-on producer. Among them are the former Queens congressman Joe Crowley (who was brought into the project by Kirwan); Matthew Blank, the former head of Showtime who is now interim chief executive of AMC Networks; and Richard Stursberg, a former top executive at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

''I liked the dynamic of this motivated producer, needy of success, putting it all on the line,'' said Jeffrey Sine, another producer, whose Broadway credits include ''Beautiful: The Carole King Musical.'' ''I think people deserve a second chance.''

Or third or fourth. Drabinsky, 72, grew up in Toronto. At age 4 he contracted polio and spent much of his childhood in hospitals, distracting himself with music on his transistor radio -- everything from '50s rock 'n' roll to Charles Aznavour. He earned a law degree, but soon turned to the entertainment business, building the Cineplex Odeon chain of movie theaters, before resigning in 1989 amid concerns about the company's financial health.

He re-emerged as a theater mogul, parlaying a long-running Toronto production of ''The Phantom of the Opera'' at his Pantages Theater into a far-flung company, Livent, that owned theaters (in New York, Chicago and elsewhere) and produced the shows that went into them. He pioneered a new business model for Broadway: Rather than cobbling together investors for each new show, Livent was a vertically integrated company that used the profits from its theaters and touring shows to finance the new work.

But it all came crashing down in 1998, after the struggling company was bought by the Hollywood agent Michael Ovitz and the investment banker Roy Furman, who discovered bookkeeping irregularities. Drabinsky was fired; bankruptcy followed; and fraud charges were brought against Drabinsky and his longtime associate Myron Gottlieb, both in the Southern District of New York and (after Drabinsky fled to Toronto) in Canada as well.

Drabinsky doesn't like to talk much about that time. His finances were decimated, and his reputation a shambles. A rare bright spot was the Orthodox rabbi who began visiting him in prison. ''It came at the time when I was at my absolute lowest emotionally,'' he said. ''It gave me a bit of a second wind.'' He said he and the rabbi have met regularly for lunch ever since.

Two years after his release from prison, he received a diagnosis of Stage 4 melanoma, cancer of the skin that had metastasized to his lungs. (After a year of immunotherapy, he said he is cancer free.) He returned to producing with the musical ''Sousatzka'' (backed by a Canadian company in which he has no financial interest), but that closed in Toronto after poor reviews. And still, Drabinsky was unable to travel to the United States because of the pending indictment against him in New York. That changed in July 2018, when the New York prosecutors dismissed the charges, noting that he had already served time for essentially the same crimes.

''Paradise Square'' is the sort of serious, original musical that Broadway claims to want more of. Yet without a major star, or a presold brand to market (and little advertising thus far), it faces a tough road. Much is riding on the critics' reactions, which will come after Sunday's opening. But Drabinsky remains upbeat, citing the ''wonderful'' audience response and positive tweets.

''I made the decision, in terms of marketing, that our best course was to ensure that we filled the previews to capacity at whatever average ticket price we could get, and let word of mouth take over,'' he said.

His showman's optimism is bolstered by a sober, even sentimental, belief in redemption. ''There is a spirit in the soul of this country,'' he said, ''that allows somebody the opportunity to come back and work hard and be able to deliver a cultural work hopefully that will be meaningful. It's one of the things that fills my heart every day.''

Whether ''Paradise Square'' fills the seats at the Ethel Barrymore Theater will decide if Drabinsky has a future on Broadway -- or whether it's back to square one.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/01/theater/garth-drabinsky-broadway-paradise-square.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/01/theater/garth-drabinsky-broadway-paradise-square.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: ''Paradise Square,'' top, with Sidney DuPont, left, and A. J. Shively, opens Sunday. The producer, Garth Drabinsky, above right, spent time in prison. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES

MARK BLINCH/REUTERS) (C1)

The impresario Garth Drabinsky, above, is hoping that a new musical will begin to repair his reputation after he was convicted of fraud and spent time in prison. His former company, Livent, brought a critically acclaimed revival of ''Showboat'' to the Gershwin Theater in 1994, top. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES

BERNARD WEIL/TORONTO STAR, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (C7)

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[***After a Life Built on Lies, a Dying Man Comes Clean; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6244-8SS1-JBG3-62XC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 775 words

**Byline:** Adam Haslett

**Highlight:** In “Foregone,” by Russell Banks, an aging filmmaker reveals to his wife and the world secrets about his past.

**Body**

FOREGONE

By Russell Banks

Leonard Fife, the protagonist of Russell Banks’s furiously driven new novel, has been hiding all his life — from the world and from himself. On the outside he’s a successful documentary filmmaker, a semifamous left-wing figure in Canada, where he fled to from New England in 1968, supposedly to avoid the draft. He resides in a well-appointed Montreal apartment with Emma, his wife and producer of 40 years, and has managed to be both materially comfortable and morally righteous. But at 78, ill and on the verge of death, he’s now consumed by the need to confess that his life is as riddled with lies and betrayal as his body is with cancer.

To tell his story, he invites a former student, Malcolm, and a small crew to his apartment for what his acolyte believes is the chance to make a film about his mentor’s career. Fife, however, has a different purpose. To tell Emma — through the camera and in the spotlight — what he cannot bring himself to tell her in private: that before meeting her he abandoned two wives and two children and that he moved to Canada to escape not Vietnam but his own hollow self.

“Foregone” is Fife’s confession. In the present timeline of the novel, we never leave the film shoot. Where we go is deep into his bleak experience as a boy, young man and young father. Emma either already knows what Fife has to say, or doesn’t want to hear it. She’d rather he stop the interview and protect his reputation. But like a man desperate to expel a demon, which he can be free of only if his wife witnesses the exorcism, Fife insists repeatedly that she stay and listen. His mind addled by medication, he’s transported into his past, leaving the reader to guess how much of what we read is ever heard by his captive audience and how much is the dying man’s flight of memory.

One of the main strands of Banks’s fiction has long been what you might call a ***working-class*** New England existentialism. In bitterly eloquent novels such as “Affliction,” “The Sweet Hereafter” and “Continental Drift,” he has chronicled the blunted, pragmatic affect of Northern white men and the women unfortunate enough to be entangled with them. “Foregone” is in the same vein, only here the protagonist is an artist. And what Banks reveals of this artist’s life is a profound emptiness, seeded early on, which Fife has run from ever since.

Fife’s parents exhibited an “unbroken sadness and lassitude and constant low-level anxiety and detachment and pessimism bordering on despair,” which he believes he “caught” from them. At 16, in the first of many attempts to escape the inheritance of his grim home outside Boston, he drives to Texas, where he’s molested by a blind, middle-aged man and drinks himself into oblivion trying to forget the episode. By 19, he has fled to Florida, married a woman he met in a bar, gotten her pregnant and brought her back to Boston, where their relationship soon unravels. His second marriage, to a Virginian heiress attracted to his pose as a “serious young man” and writer, lasts longer and frames the bulk of his memories of his younger self. But it ends in the same fashion — with his disappearance.

As always, Banks’s prose has remarkable force to it. Like Emma, the reader too might prefer that Fife stop torturing himself in public, indulging in what is at times a kind of baroque self-recrimination complete with the sexist presumptions of the postwar American male. But there is such brio in the writing, such propulsion as the lashes are applied, that we follow Fife into the depths. The book’s real theme is the curse of being convinced that one is unlovable. And who among us hasn’t suffered that conviction to one degree or another? Such hollowness will haunt Fife till the end. He has managed to remain with Emma all these years only because early on she professed not to “need him more than he needed her,” a self-sufficiency they took as a mutual “compliment.” Only it isn’t. It’s a fantasy détente with the human condition of vulnerability. A condition that only now, in his final hours, does Fife no longer seek to hold at bay.

To his credit, Banks has never solicited his readers’ approval of his characters, and many are unlikely to be charmed by Leo Fife. But what they will find in “Foregone” is a character, a novel and a writer determined not to go gentle into that good night.

Adam Haslett is the author of “Imagine Me Gone,” “Union Atlantic” and “You Are Not a Stranger Here.” FOREGONE By Russell Banks 305 pp. Ecco. $28.99.

PHOTO: Russell Banks (PHOTOGRAPH BY NANCIE BATTAGLIA)

**Related Articles**

* [*Russell Banks: By the Book*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/05/books/review/russell-banks-by-the-book.html)

1. [*Russell Banks Imagines a Paroled Sex Offender’s Future*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/05/books/review/russell-banks-by-the-book.html)

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[***U.K. Doubles Down on a Tactic Disproportionately Targeting Black People***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66VB-7T41-JBG3-63TX-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Jane Bradley

**Highlight:** The United States helped inspire Britain’s tough-on-crime politics. Even as crime fell and warnings mounted, politicians never looked back.

**Body**

The United States helped inspire Britain’s tough-on-crime politics. Even as crime fell and warnings mounted, politicians never looked back.

MANCHESTER, England — The United Kingdom’s highest court delivered what seemed like a major victory for civil liberties in 2016, ruling that prosecutors had overreached for decades in using a tactic that sent hundreds of people to prison for life — for murders committed by others.

Defense lawyers, academics and activists had waged a decade-long legal battle, arguing that these so-called joint enterprise cases were unfair and racially biased. They rejoiced at the Supreme Court decision — heralded as historic in headlines around the country — and expected a sharp drop in prosecutions, as well as scores of overturned convictions.

Six years later, none of that has happened.

Rather than be constrained by the ruling, senior prosecutors have quietly devised strategies to keep bringing joint enterprise cases and winning convictions. New data, obtained by The New York Times through public records requests, reveals that the Crown Prosecution Service, the national prosecutor, has actually stepped up the pace of such prosecutions since the ruling — even as the homicide rate remained largely stable.

“The C.P.S. said: ‘Don’t worry. It’s not going to be this radical change,’” said Simon Harding, a senior detective who ran a homicide unit at London’s Metropolitan Police until 2021. “By the time all the questions had been asked, it was business as usual.”

The zealous use of these prosecutions is one example of how British leaders from both parties have pursued criminal justice policies that have disproportionately punished Black people. Black defendants are three times as likely as white defendants to be prosecuted for homicide as a group of four or more — a widely accepted measure of joint enterprise cases — according to the new data.

Joint enterprise itself is not a charge. Rather, it is a legal principle that gives prosecutors the power to charge multiple people with a single crime. It became notorious more than a decade ago in a string of highly publicized cases. In one, a teenager was imprisoned and then deported for a [*murder he did not even witness*](https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2017-02-21/teenager-deported-for-a-murder-he-didnt-even-witness), much less carry out. In another, a partly blind 16-year-old, who said he could not even see his friends attacking someone, [*received a life sentence for murder*](https://prisons.org.uk/cunliffevCCRC.pdf).

Since the court ruling, the Crown Prosecution Service has tried to avoid such controversy. It has stopped using the term joint enterprise, but the cases continue. A year after the Supreme Court ruling, [*11 teenagers from Manchester*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jun/05/one-death-11-jailed-teenagers-was-a-moss-side-trial-racist), England, were sent to prison for a stabbing — even though the judge acknowledged that he did not know if they had all participated in the attack. A young man with autism received a life sentence for a stabbing carried out by someone else while, he said, he sat in a car watching a music video.

While the stream of cases continued, the flood of successful appeals never materialized. Prosecutors opposed them and judges, having set an extremely high standard for appeals, rejected nearly all of them. Only a single person has been freed since the Supreme Court ruling.

The continued use of joint enterprise is one example of a British tough-on-crime policy that has grown increasingly strident. The new data — along with more than 100 interviews with current and former law enforcement officials, government insiders, lawyers, judges, academics, families and activists — shows that even as crime rates fell, as lawyers and judges protested, as parliamentary inquiries pointed to miscarriages of justice, the government’s messaging got tougher and its tactics got stricter.

Many of those tactics were imported from the 1990s war on drugs in the United States. But while American officials have reconsidered many criminal justice policies over the past decade, they have become an entrenched part of British politics.

Today, British politicians fuel perceptions that crime is skyrocketing. Crime rates often vary regionally, and some crime may be up compared with the period of pandemic lockdowns. But the [*latest official statistics*](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingjune2022) show that national crime levels, including homicide, are actually lower than before the pandemic began in 2020. And overall, crime has been falling for decades.

Yet Britain is in the middle of its biggest prison expansion in more than a century as the Conservative government overhauls laws to seek tougher jail terms. The new prime minister, Rishi Sunak, has pledged to make crime a top priority and called for new powers to veto parole board decisions.

With new powers, police officers are ramping up the kind of stop-and-frisk tactics made notorious, and ultimately abandoned, in New York.

As with joint enterprise, these policies disproportionately affect minorities. The police in Britain are [*six times more likely to stop Black people*](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-powers-and-procedures-stop-and-search-and-arrests-england-and-wales-year-ending-31-march-2022/police-powers-and-procedures-stop-and-search-and-arrests-england-and-wales-year-ending-31-march-2022) than white people. Black people are also three times more likely to be arrested and [*more likely to be given longer prison sentences*](https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/crime-justice-and-the-law/courts-sentencing-and-tribunals/average-length-of-custodial-sentences/latest).

Periodically, and as recently as [*last month*](https://www.manchester.ac.uk/discover/news/new-report-uncovers-institutional-racism-in-the-justice-system/), official reports have highlighted systemic racism in the criminal justice system, yet they have been largely ignored. Last year, [*a government-backed committee*](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331_-_CRED_Report_-_FINAL_-_Web_Accessible.pdf) said it found no evidence of institutional racism in Britain, [*eliciting an outcry*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/31/world/europe/britain-racism.html).

Joint enterprise cases can give prosecutors an advantage by allowing them to lump defendants together and, in many instances, label them gang members. And Black people, research shows, are far more likely to be tagged with that designation.

After being presented with The Times’s findings, a prosecution service spokesman said that the authorities do not apply the term “gang” lightly.

“If a person helps or encourages another to commit a murder, it is right they can face prosecution for their involvement in the crime,” the Crown Prosecution Service statement said.

The agency denied responsibility for any racial disparities and noted that “racial disproportionality is an issue in almost all stages of the criminal justice system.” But the agency said it would begin tracking joint enterprise cases as it develops a new case-management system.

Under the joint enterprise doctrine, which has existed since the 19th century, one person may have physically committed the crime, but associates can also be found guilty.

A classic scenario, and one often cited by prosecutors, is a robbery in which one culprit steals the cash and another drives the getaway car. Another would be a rape committed by one person, while another restrains the victim.

In many crimes, though, the roles are less clear. For decades, prosecutors won convictions simply by proving that accomplices should have anticipated the crime, even if they never intended it to happen.

In 2016, the United Kingdom’s Supreme Court threw out that standard. Going forward, to win a murder conviction under the joint enterprise doctrine, prosecutors would need to prove that an accomplice actually intended for the murder to happen. That was a huge change, one that seemed likely to curtail such prosecutions.

Prosecutors have long refused to publish data on how often they bring cases, or on the ethnicity of defendants, despite a reprimand and formal recommendations to do so from a powerful parliamentary inquiry as far back as 2014. After The Times filed two formal complaints with the government and the public prosecutor’s office, they relented and provided data on multi-defendant homicide cases.

Just one example of the continued use of these prosecutions could be found this year inside Manchester Crown Court, where a 20-year-old Black man named Giovanni Lawrence was convicted of murder for a stabbing carried out by his white friend.

Mr. Lawrence was not at the murder scene and never touched the weapon. He was accused of driving a car in a chase leading up to the killing. But prosecutors could find no motive, no history of violence, no security camera footage and no witnesses in the run-up to the attack.

“This was a joint enterprise from beginning to end,” Guy Gozem, a soft-spoken, silver-haired prosecutor, said as the trial opened.

‘How Do We Win This Election?’

In late 2011, England was engulfed by the largest civil unrest in a generation after the fatal police shooting of a Black man, Mark Duggan. Peaceful protests turned violent. Young men with their faces hidden behind scarves and ski masks looted, set fires, hurled bottles and attacked police officers.

The riots [*quickly came to symbolize*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/08/world/europe/08britain.html) simmering racial tensions and the pent-up anger among the young and the poor over government cuts to social programs. But David Cameron, then the Conservative prime minister, blamed gangs, even though [*official statistics*](https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2011/oct/24/riots-analysis-gangs-no-pivotal-role) quickly showed that gangs did not play a key role. The government announced millions in new money to target gang crime.

“The police saw this as an opportunity to get resources,” said Peter Herbert, who until his retirement last year was one of Britain’s few Black judges.

The tough-on-crime response came straight out of an American playbook. As far back as 1992, when Bill Clinton campaigned on [*the Democratic message*](https://www.nytimes.com/1992/07/24/us/1992-campaign-democrats-clinton-houston-speech-assails-bush-crime-issue.html) that Republicans were too soft on crime, British politicians were taking notes. Philip Gould, the opposition Labour Party’s strategy adviser, traveled to Little Rock, Ark., during that campaign and saw what he called a “road map.”

Mr. Clinton’s law-and-order message, in particular, resonated with Labour leaders, the party’s communications strategist Peter Mandelson wrote in his autobiography. It helped inspire a famous refrain of a future prime minister, Tony Blair: “Tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime.” And it ignited an arms race between Labour and the Conservatives over who could be seen as the party of law and order.

Lost in the political fight, however, was the fact that violent crime was already declining. And despite a flurry of news reports warning of a drug-fueled crime wave, the crack epidemic never came to Britain.

“What we imported was the rhetoric,” said Prof. Tim Newburn, a criminologist at the London School of Economics who studies crime in Britain and the United States. “We borrowed the clothes of tough-on-crime from those fighting the war on drugs in the U.S. But in reality, we never had the same drug problem that the U.S. had.”

Since the mid 1990s, [*overall crime*](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2022) — including violent offenses — has fallen in England and Wales. It still has far lower levels of serious violent crime than the United States, where the murder rate — and the imprisonment rate — is around five times as high.

“There’s always been a tendency for the U.K. Labour Party to go to the Democratic Party to say, ‘How do we win this election?’” said Mr. Herbert, who served as an adviser to Mr. Blair’s attorney general.

“As part of that, they found that ‘criminal justice is your weakness, you can turn it into a strength, just talk about longer sentences, safer streets,’ all these clichés which have an impact on poor people and minorities,” he said.

The Home Office and the Ministry of Justice declined to comment. The National Police Chiefs’ Council, the United Kingdom’s national body for law enforcement, said it was committed to improving policing for Black people, including through new training and increased use of data and body cameras.

As politicians, police officers and prosecutors intensified their focus on gangs, joint enterprise became an important tool. The Metropolitan Police, the nation’s biggest force, once dropped leaflets through the doors of young people they suspected of being associated with gangs, warning that they could be sent to prison “for just being present” or failing to stop crimes being committed.

The raw numbers were small — an estimated 100 to 200 people were prosecuted in joint enterprise homicide cases each year, according to [*an analysis eight years ago by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism*](https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2014-03-31/read-the-report-joint-enterprise-an-investigation). But in a country with only about 700 homicides a year, joint enterprise cases were a significant share of prosecutions.

And that share is growing. Since the landmark Supreme Court ruling, nearly 15 percent of homicide defendants have been prosecuted for murder as a group of four or more, compared with nearly 10 percent before, according to a Times analysis of data obtained separately by the human rights journalism unit Liberty Investigates.

As these cases drew criticism, the Supreme Court handed down its landmark 2016 ruling in the case of [*Ameen Jogee*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-35603309).

Rebranding

As activists celebrated the ruling, many police officers were alarmed.

“In prison, you could hear all these people saying, ‘Yes!’” recalled Mr. Harding, the former murder detective at the Metropolitan Police. “We went to the C.P.S. and said: ‘What is this? What is this going to mean?’”

But a dozen current and former prosecutors and law enforcement officials told The Times that there was never any question of stopping, or even curbing, the use of joint enterprise. The question was: how to continue using it?

They needed a strategy for convincing jurors that people intended to commit the crimes, even when they did not carry them out themselves. An elite group of lawyers with the office of the attorney general, the government’s chief legal adviser, trained officers and prosecutors nationwide on how to do just that.

“They realized that there was a new test to apply to it, but that wasn’t going to prevent people being prosecuted,” said one of those lawyers, Duncan Atkinson.

Now, prosecutors increasingly focus on a defendant’s frame of mind. Evidence like “association” — the relationship between defendants — takes on a key role in helping prove intent. Social media posts and even the music people listen to can be used to help sway a jury that defendants have a bad character or are part of a “gang.”

Several prosecutors said that, in some ways, the ruling actually made joint enterprise cases easier to win.

As the prosecutors saw it, joint enterprise also needed rebranding. According to a Crown Prosecution Service [*report*](https://www.cps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/secondary-liability-consultation-summary-of-responses.pdf), the prosecutors scrapped the label “joint enterprise” because “the term itself has become controversial.” Individual prosecutors might use the term joint enterprise in court, but in public documents and official guidance to investigators, the new term became “secondary liability.”

And it worked.

Data from the Ministry of Justice shows that in the five years after the Supreme Court decision, the number of homicide cases involving four or more defendants increased by 42 percent.

And prosecutors are winning. The number of convictions rose by nearly 50 percent. Figures from the Crown Prosecution Service show that Black defendants were three times as likely as white defendants to be prosecuted under joint enterprise.

In a Manchester courtroom this spring, the murder trial against Giovanni Lawrence showcased the many ways in which prosecutors weave together circumstantial evidence and friendships to suggest gang membership. That gang label can help persuade jurors that defendants had criminal intent.

Mr. Lawrence was charged in the killing of Rhamero West, 16, who was stabbed in September 2021 after a brief car chase. Mr. Lawrence and his friends pursued Mr. West and his friends for reasons that prosecutors could never determine. After a crash, Mr. West ran away, but Ryan Cashin, 19, caught up with him and fatally stabbed him in the leg.

Mr. Cashin, Mr. Lawrence and two other teenagers were charged with murder, though a judge accepted that even Mr. Cashin did not set out to kill the boy. Mr. Lawrence was not at the scene of the stabbing. Prosecutors said he had driven one of the cars in the chase — evidence that they argued showed his intent to help the killer.

Mr. Lawrence could have been charged with manslaughter, which carries no minimum prison term; sentences average about 10 years. Instead, prosecutors opted for the murder charge, which carries a mandatory life sentence.

“While the fatal blows were inflicted by Cashin, the other three were clearly part of the continuing attack,” the prosecutor, Mr. Gozem, told jurors in March.

Experts had expected that, after the Supreme Court ruling, fewer defendants like Mr. Lawrence would be prosecuted, and fewer still would face the maximum-possible charge.

Whether Mr. Lawrence was actually behind the wheel is debatable. Cellphone location data left little doubt that he was in the car, but that did not resolve the critical question of who was driving. Detectives discovered Mr. Lawrence’s DNA on the turn signal of one of the cars, but it was mixed with other DNA profiles. No traces were found on the steering wheel, the rearview mirror or the gear stick.

Mr. Gozem, the prosecutor, did not present the case as a gang killing. He was careful in his language and civil in cross-examination. But he hinted at gang involvement and occasionally used the word “gang” to describe Mr. Lawrence and his friends.

They alluded to Mr. Lawrence’s “bad character,” and used his association with the other three defendants to help the almost entirely white jury see them as a gang who were “were all acting together” and should be punished equally.

They used social media and cellphone photographs and messages to show that the defendants had been in touch. None ever denied being friends. They lived in the same ***working-class*** Manchester neighborhood and had known each other for years. But in court, they became “associates.” Prosecutors even tried to present violent rap lyrics as evidence of criminality, though the judge refused to let jurors hear them.

Research consistently shows that the police are far more likely to apply the gang label to Black people. Young Black people made up 89 percent of names on Manchester gangs database, according to researchers at Manchester Metropolitan University. In London, the picture is similarly stark.

“It is driven by a racialized gang narrative, which, increasingly, is only used in instances where nonwhite people are being prosecuted,” said Patrick Williams, a Manchester Metropolitan University sociologist who has studied joint enterprise for more than a decade.

Mr. Lawrence tried to have the case thrown out. But while a judge acknowledged that the evidence of Mr. Lawrence’s involvement was “less direct and less strong,” he allowed the case against him to continue.

On April 11, around an hour after saying they were approaching deadlock, the jury convicted Mr. Lawrence of murder.

He was sentenced to life in prison, the same sentence as Mr. Cashin, who actually killed someone. The only difference is that Mr. Lawrence will be eligible for parole in 21 years, but Mr. Cashin will have to wait 24 years.

Mr. Lawrence is appealing. His lawyers say this was the kind of joint enterprise case that the Supreme Court placed off limits.

He faces long odds. To overturn a conviction under joint enterprise, judges held, defendants had to prove that they suffered a “substantial injustice,” an extremely high bar to cross.

Since the ruling, only one direct court appeal has succeeded. It is not known how many have been submitted. Of 156 joint enterprise-related cases submitted to the Criminal Cases Review Commission, the official body that reviews possible miscarriages of justice, four were sent to the appeals court. Judges rejected all of them.

Even some prosecutors said they were surprised at how forcefully courts shut the door on appeals.

On the day of Mr. Lawrence’s conviction, Rhamero West’s mother, Kelly Brown, lit fireworks and released purple balloons — her son’s favorite color. It would not bring him back, but she said it was closure. She welcomed the verdict, but felt for the families of the defendants.

That same day, Mr. Lawrence’s mother, Ann-Marie Lawrence, felt so sick that her older son had to drive her home. Once alone, she poured herself a rum and lit a cigarette.

“It’s us mums who are feeling the pain at the end of the day, on both sides,” she said. “But this law, it’s not fair.”

Selam Gebrekidan contributed reporting.

Data and methodology: The New York Times obtained data on homicide prosecutions in England and Wales involving multiple defendants covering the period of 2011 to 2020 from the Crown Prosecution Service, Home Office and Ministry of Justice through multiple Freedom of Information Act requests.

The Times’s calculations on the increase in prosecutions is based on Ministry of Justice data on homicide cases — murder, manslaughter, infanticide and causing death by gross breach of duty of care — involving four or more defendants. According to the data, the total number of such cases brought from 2011 to 2015 was 59 (or an average of 11.8 cases per year), while the total number of such cases from 2016 to 2020 was 84 (or an average of 16.8 cases per year).

Calculations of the racial disparity in prosecutions is based on homicide data from the Crown Prosecution Service: conspiracy, attempted murder, causing death of a child or vulnerable adult, child destruction, drunken driving and aiding suicide. According to the data, 32 percent of Black defendants were prosecuted in cases with four or more defendants, compared with nearly 10 percent for white defendants. This puts the relative rate index at 3.39.

None of the agencies provided homicide data broken down by murder and manslaughter offenses, as requested. Reporters checked their calculations with leading data and crime experts in Britain, including Gavin Hales, an associate researcher at the Police Foundation U.K., and Tim Newburn, a criminologist at the London School of Economics.

Reporters supplemented their findings with data that Liberty Investigates, a human rights journalism unit, separately obtained from the Ministry of Justice on murder cases involving more than one defendant.

Selam Gebrekidan contributed reporting. Data and Methodology The New York Times obtained data on homicide prosecutions involving multiple defendants covering the period of 2011 to 2020 from the Crown Prosecution Service, Home Office and Ministry of Justice through multiple Freedom of Information Act requests. The Times’s calculations on the increase in prosecutions is based on Ministry of Justice data on homicide cases — murder, manslaughter, infanticide and causing death by gross breach of duty of care — involving four or more defendants. According to the data, the total number of such cases brought from 2011 to 2015 was 59 (or an average of 11.8 cases per year), while the total number of such cases from 2016 to 2020 was 84 (or an average of 16.8 cases per year). Calculations of the racial disparity in prosecutions is based on homicide data from the Crown Prosecution Service: conspiracy, attempted murder, causing death of a child or vulnerable adult, child destruction, drunken driving and aiding suicide. According to the data, 32 percent of Black defendants were prosecuted in cases with four or more defendants, compared with nearly 10 percent for white defendants. This puts the relative rate index at 3.39. None of the agencies provided homicide data broken down by murder and manslaughter offenses, as requested. Reporters checked their calculations with leading data and crime experts in Britain, including Gavin Hales, an associate researcher at the Police Foundation U.K., and Tim Newburn, a criminologist at the London School of Economics. Reporters supplemented their findings with data that Liberty Investigates, a human rights journalism unit, separately obtained from the Ministry of Justice on murder cases involving more than one defendant.

PHOTOS: Giovanni Lawrence, left, was convicted of murder for a stabbing carried out by his white friend. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARY TURNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); From left, riots in Lon- don in 2011; Norton Street in Manchester where Rhamero West, 16, died after a car chase that ended in him being stabbed; and a protest organized by a group that fights joint enterprise convictions, in May outside the Houses of Parliament in London. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEON NEAL/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES; MARY TURNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; ANDREW TESTA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A12-A13); Durrell Goodall was one of 11 teenagers from Manchester jailed for a stabbing that only one person carried out. The judge admitted he did not know whether Mr. Goodall took part in the attack. He did not carry a weapon and had no relevant prior convictions.; Calum Farquhar was one of four Black and mixed race men convicted of killing a white man during a burglary in Northamp- ton. He admitted driving the group to steal marijuana from what they believed was an empty house. He told Liberty Investigates, a human rights journalism unit, he waited in his car as the crime took place.; Wayne Collins was accused of being part of a gang which shot at police and set fire to a Birm- ingham pub during the 2011 riots. He was sentenced to 18 years, even though the court accepted that he never held the gun and security footage proves he took no active part in the rioting of the pub. He was simply present. (A13) This article appeared in print on page A1, A12, A13.

**Load-Date:** November 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[***A Producer Seeks a Broadway Comeback, Mired in Offstage Drama***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654D-GM11-JBG3-63MX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 1, 2022 Friday 14:19 EST

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 1809 words

**Byline:** Richard Zoglin

**Highlight:** With the musical “Paradise Square” preparing to open Sunday, Garth Drabinsky is hoping to re-establish himself after serving time in a Canadian prison for fraud.

**Body**

With the musical “Paradise Square” preparing to open Sunday, Garth Drabinsky is hoping to re-establish himself after serving time in a Canadian prison for fraud.

Ten days before opening night of his Broadway show, [*“Paradise Square,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/07/theater/paradise-square-broadway.html) Garth Drabinsky was sitting at a breakfast table at the Peninsula Hotel in Midtown Manhattan, fending off a stream of cellphone calls from members of his production team.

That morning’s crisis: Chilina Kennedy, one of the show’s lead actresses, had called in sick (and would be out for nine days after testing positive for coronavirus). Drabinsky decided which of the two understudies should take her place. A few minutes later, he spoke with the director Moisés Kaufman.

“You’re happy with the choice?” Drabinsky asked. He listened. “Yeah, right, but make sure that she can really deliver ‘Someone to Love,’” one of the musical’s big ballads. “And the comedy.”

The days before an opening are always stressful for a Broadway producer. But few have been under a [*harsher spotlight than Drabinsky*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/01/theater/paradise-square-musical-berkeley-drabinsky.html), a storied Canadian impresario whose return to Broadway has generated the sort of drama that even he couldn’t have scripted.

First came the pandemic, which delayed the show’s Broadway opening by two years. Then an out-of-town run in Chicago last fall drew mixed reviews and (hampered by the Covid-19 surge) disappointing sales. The show’s preview performances on Broadway have earned only around $350,000 per week at the box office, with most of the seats filled by heavily discounted or even free tickets. That’s not the best omen for a producer who is staking everything on his big comeback after [*an ignominious fall*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/26/theater/26live.html).

He was a brash outsider even during his heyday in the 1990s, when he took a string of Tony-winning musicals to Broadway, among them “Ragtime,” “Kiss of the Spider Woman” and a revival of “Show Boat.” Then, in 1998, his company, Livent, imploded, and Drabinsky was accused of understating expenses and inflating profits in order to disguise the company’s precarious financial state. He was eventually convicted of fraud and forgery in his native Canada, and served 17 months of a five-year sentence, before being paroled in February 2013.

Now, he’s back. And he hasn’t lost his salesman’s bravado, his lawyerly verbosity or his passion for theater, even though his show has faced many challenges, including questions about its financial health.

As New York rehearsals started in February, [*stories began circulating about slow payments*](https://nypost.com/2022/02/24/broadways-paradise-square-is-a-nightmare-behind-the-scenes/), contract problems and a budget ($13.5 million, according to Drabinsky) that seemed on the slim side for a big Broadway musical with a performing company of nearly 40 and a producer known for lavish spending. Actors Equity, the performers’ union, even instructed the cast not to show up for rehearsals one day, so that it could deal with a “failure to provide our members with contracts reflecting their agreed-upon terms of employment” and “a myriad of other significant contract violations,” according to an Equity statement.

“When Garth Drabinsky is involved, people are rightly concerned that all the I’s are dotted and the T’s are crossed,” said David Levy, an Equity spokesman. The problems were apparently resolved, but it was hardly the sort of incident anyone wants at the outset of a Broadway run.

Drabinsky blamed a delay in delivering final contracts for the dispute, and misunderstandings about what the actors were owed when the show transferred to New York from Chicago. “The Chicago contract froze the deal for New York,” he said. “There was no variation allowed. They were asking for something we were not committed to give.”

What’s more, Drabinsky stressed, he is not in charge of the show’s finances — an arrangement made explicit by the limited partnership formed to bring it to Broadway. “I walked away from every element of fiscal control of this show,” he added. “I don’t sign checks. I don’t get involved. I never want to live through the horror of what I went through in 1998 again.”

Instead, he’s been working to get “Paradise Square” in shape for Broadway. The show began life nine years ago with a small-scale musical called [*“Hard Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/21/theater/reviews/hard-times-an-american-musical-at-the-cell-theater.html) [*,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/21/theater/reviews/hard-times-an-american-musical-at-the-cell-theater.html) written by the Irish American musician Larry Kirwan, lead singer of the rock band Black 47. It is set during the Civil War, in the gritty Five Points neighborhood of Manhattan, where Irish immigrants and freed Black Americans lived together — and where Stephen Foster (whose music formed the bulk of the score) resided during his final years. The show climaxes with the draft riots of 1863, when white ***working-class*** New Yorkers [*formed violent racist mobs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/20/nyregion/1863-nyc-draft-riots-firefighters.html) following a draft lottery.

Drabinsky loved the concept, but shied away from anchoring the show in Foster’s music, with its romanticization of the slavery-era South. So he set about reworking the piece, hiring the composer Jason Howland to write a new score (only two Foster songs remain), a succession of writers to shift the story’s focus to the owner of a neighborhood saloon (played by the Tony nominee [*Joaquina Kalukango*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/theater/joaquina-kalukango-paradise-square.html)), and a top-notch creative team, including Kaufman, as the director, along with the choreographer Bill T. Jones.

The themes of racial justice and the immigrant experience have long attracted Drabinsky, and their currency has only grown in the years of development, which included a 2019 workshop production in Berkeley, Calif. “When the show began to parallel what was happening today in America and the world, it was sort of freaky,” he said. “And it hasn’t stopped changing. Even to the point that days before our first preview, Russia invades Ukraine. Three million immigrants are now looking for a new home.”

Drabinsky also made an effort to diversify the creative team, hiring Christina Anderson, a Black playwright, to revise Craig Lucas and Kirwan’s script, and the composer-lyricist Masi Asare, who collaborated with Nathan Tysen on the lyrics.

Still, suspicion of Drabinsky runs high in the Broadway community, where many were burned financially by his company’s bankruptcy.

Yet some people clearly are willing to give him another shot. The list of more than 30 producers for “Paradise Square” includes few established Broadway names, but many who have confidence in Drabinsky’s record as a dedicated, hands-on producer. Among them are the former Queens congressman Joe Crowley (who was brought into the project by Kirwan); Matthew Blank, the former head of Showtime who is now interim chief executive of AMC Networks; and Richard Stursberg, a former top executive at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

“I liked the dynamic of this motivated producer, needy of success, putting it all on the line,” said Jeffrey Sine, another producer, whose Broadway credits include “Beautiful: The Carole King Musical.” “I think people deserve a second chance.”

Or third or fourth. Drabinsky, 72, grew up in Toronto. At age 4 he contracted polio and spent much of his childhood in hospitals, distracting himself with music on his transistor radio — everything from ’50s rock ’n’ roll to Charles Aznavour. He earned a law degree, but soon turned to the entertainment business, building the Cineplex Odeon chain of movie theaters, before resigning in 1989 amid concerns about the company’s financial health.

He re-emerged as a theater mogul, parlaying a long-running Toronto production of “The Phantom of the Opera” at his Pantages Theater into a far-flung company, Livent, that owned theaters (in New York, Chicago and elsewhere) and produced the shows that went into them. He pioneered a new business model for Broadway: Rather than cobbling together investors for each new show, Livent was a vertically integrated company that used the profits from its theaters and touring shows to finance the new work.

But it all came crashing down in 1998, after the struggling company was bought by the Hollywood agent Michael Ovitz and the investment banker Roy Furman, who discovered bookkeeping irregularities. Drabinsky was fired; bankruptcy followed; and fraud charges were brought against Drabinsky and his longtime associate Myron Gottlieb, both in the Southern District of New York and (after Drabinsky fled to Toronto) in Canada as well.

Drabinsky doesn’t like to talk much about that time. His finances were decimated, and his reputation a shambles. A rare bright spot was the Orthodox rabbi who began visiting him in prison. “It came at the time when I was at my absolute lowest emotionally,” he said. “It gave me a bit of a second wind.” He said he and the rabbi have met regularly for lunch ever since.

Two years after his release from prison, he received a diagnosis of Stage 4 melanoma, cancer of the skin that had metastasized to his lungs. (After a year of immunotherapy, he said he is cancer free.) He returned to producing with the musical “Sousatzka” (backed by a Canadian company in which he has no financial interest), but that closed in Toronto after poor reviews. And still, Drabinsky was unable to travel to the United States because of the pending indictment against him in New York. That changed in July 2018, when the New York prosecutors dismissed the charges, noting that he had already served time for essentially the same crimes.

“Paradise Square” is the sort of serious, original musical that Broadway claims to want more of. Yet without a major star, or a presold brand to market (and little advertising thus far), it faces a tough road. Much is riding on the critics’ reactions, which will come after Sunday’s opening. But Drabinsky remains upbeat, citing the “wonderful” audience response and positive tweets.

“I made the decision, in terms of marketing, that our best course was to ensure that we filled the previews to capacity at whatever average ticket price we could get, and let word of mouth take over,” he said.

His showman’s optimism is bolstered by a sober, even sentimental, belief in redemption. “There is a spirit in the soul of this country,” he said, “that allows somebody the opportunity to come back and work hard and be able to deliver a cultural work hopefully that will be meaningful. It’s one of the things that fills my heart every day.”

Whether “Paradise Square” fills the seats at the Ethel Barrymore Theater will decide if Drabinsky has a future on Broadway — or whether it’s back to square one.

PHOTOS: “Paradise Square,” top, with Sidney DuPont, left, and A. J. Shively, opens Sunday. The producer, Garth Drabinsky, above right, spent time in prison. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES; MARK BLINCH/REUTERS) (C1); The impresario Garth Drabinsky, above, is hoping that a new musical will begin to repair his reputation after he was convicted of fraud and spent time in prison. His former company, Livent, brought a critically acclaimed revival of “Showboat” to the Gershwin Theater in 1994, top. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES; BERNARD WEIL/TORONTO STAR, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (C7)

**Load-Date:** April 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Think Your Weekend Plans Were Ruined? Try Being a Mayoral Candidate.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62T5-TTG1-JBG3-60CB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 30, 2021 Sunday 09:10 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 937 words

**Byline:** Dana Rubinstein and Sean Piccoli

**Highlight:** Because of the downpour, candidates for New York City mayor pressed their cases to voters at churches and bars, instead of in parks and on street corners.

**Body**

Because of the downpour, candidates for New York City mayor pressed their cases to voters at churches and bars, instead of in parks and on street corners.

[Live [*N.Y.C. mayoral race primary results.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)]

The cold rain dashed countless Memorial Day weekend plans in New York City, including those of the eight leading Democratic candidates for mayor, who were understandably eager to bump as many elbows as possible with just over three weeks before the [*June 22 primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html).

Instead of campaigning at subway spots and in parks, candidates spent the weekend in search of captive audiences. They tracked them down in churches, in bars and wherever dry spots could be found.

Their messages varied in nuance, but the cold rain did not drown out one unifying theme: Post-pandemic New York City is in crisis, with a rise in shootings, increasing poverty and an exacerbated need for affordable housing.

Several of the candidates made haste to pulpits in the voter-rich neighborhoods of central Brooklyn and southeast Queens to tout their wares.

In East Flatbush, Andrew Yang pitched himself to parishioners at the Clarendon Road Church as an heir to the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s fight against poverty.

Dr. King argued for a version of guaranteed income, Mr. Yang pointed out — [*a concept*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) that Mr. Yang cast a klieg light on during his 2020 presidential campaign. (The candidate made a point of noting that he knows Martin Luther King III, who is backing his campaign.)

“This is when you probably met me, is when I appeared on your TV screens,” Mr. Yang told the congregation. “Now, you might remember this, the magical Asian man, who was saying we should start giving everyone money.”

At separate Pentecostal churches in Queens, parishioners encountered beeping thermometers, consent forms and two well-funded but badly lagging first-time candidates for mayor: Raymond J. McGuire and Shaun Donovan.

At Bethel Gospel Tabernacle, a majority Black church in a ***working-class*** section of Jamaica, a 15-piece live band and choir played rousing gospel to nearly empty pews, while two jumbo screens flanking the stage showed a live webcast interview with Mr. McGuire, the former Citigroup executive.

It was the first of four scheduled church stops on Sunday in Queens, during which Mr. McGuire referenced his “old Pentecostal” religious upbringing and warned that New York City was facing “a crisis of Covid, a crisis of the economy, a crisis of safety and a crisis of education.” He said he was best equipped to lead the city to a place of shared prosperity.

“I do not owe any political favors,” Mr. McGuire said.

At Aliento de Vida, a bilingual church in Corona in an old playhouse, parishioners were greeted to a speech from Mr. Donovan, the former housing and budget secretary who is [*running on his experience*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) in the Obama administration.

His framing was similar to Mr. McGuire’s.

New York is in a “Nehemiah moment,” Mr. Donovan said, referring to the biblical figure who rebuilt Jerusalem from ruins.

Scott M. Stringer, the New York City comptroller who is [*trying to revive*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) his campaign following an allegation of sexual harassment, had planned to host his Sunday media event outdoors, in Foley Square. But with the rain pouring down, he relocated to the vaulted, Guastavino-tiled overhang at 1 Centre Street in Manhattan.

There, Mr. Stringer said he would tamp down on the rise in hate crimes by educating students about the dangers of bigotry and focusing resources on hate-crime hot spots.

Mr. Stringer, who is [*running as a progressive*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), implicitly renounced the more pro-policing campaigns of his competitors.

“We can do it without resorting to the old Giuliani-style playbook of over-policing,” Mr. Stringer said.

Citing the rain, Maya Wiley had to scrap two outdoor events on Saturday at the Bronx Night Market and the Urbanspace Market in Bryant Park.

She began her Sunday morning at two Black Baptist churches in Brooklyn, touting her commitment to New York City public housing, but then had to scratch another outdoor event planned for Socrates Sculpture Park in the progressive precincts of western Queens.

Instead, she ended up at Katch bar in Astoria, with State Senator Michael Gianaris, who earned his progressive merit badge by helping to [*torpedo Amazon’s plans*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) to build a second headquarters in Long Island City.

At the bar, Ms. Wiley sampled a signature house cocktail with tequila renamed the “Mayarita” for the occasion. Over the din of more than two dozen flat-screen TVs showing a New York Knicks playoff game, Ms. Wiley and Mr. Gianaris greeted customers and well-wishers from behind the bar and served them the red concoction in stemmed cocktail glasses.

It was a tougher setting than church for contemplating the city’s woes, but Ms. Wiley tried.

“We had a crisis before Covid — of affordability, of systemic racism,” she said, “and what Covid did was fast-track and deepen some of the crises we already were facing.”

She said the city is in recovery from the disease, but even when it is curbed, “We will still have people facing eviction. We will still have people who are hungry. We will still have a homeless crisis. We will still have a crisis of safety — safety from crime and safety from police violence.”

Roseann McSorley, who owns and runs Katch with her husband, said the restaurant has hosted other women seeking office, including Cynthia Nixon and State Senator Jessica Ramos. Ms. McSorley didn’t outright endorse Ms. Wiley but said she supported the effort to put a woman in Gracie Manson, adding: “It’s time.”

PHOTO: Maya Wiley campaigned from behind the bar at Katch in Queens. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SENG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***‘I’m in Hot Demand, Baby’: Nebraska Thrives (and Copes) With Low Unemployment***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654B-8HD1-DXY4-X0DB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 1, 2022 Friday 12:53 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS; economy

**Length:** 1729 words

**Byline:** Talmon Joseph Smith

**Highlight:** The jobless rate in February, 2.1 percent, was close to the lowest ever. Employers are adjusting to the power of workers.

**Body**

Harry’s Wonder Bar is a trusted old dive in Nebraska’s capital, frequented by office clerks, construction workers and graduate students alike: the sort of wood-paneled place with a pool table in the back where phones generally stay in pockets, second fiddle to casual conversation, and beer mugs come frosted regardless of the season.

As a half-dozen or so happy hour patrons gathered at the bar on a recent afternoon, most had something remarkable in common: Everybody seemed to know somebody who had earned a significant raise, or multiple raises, in the past year — and many, if not all, had received a jump in pay themselves.

That included the bartender on the early-evening shift, Nikki Paulk, an easygoing woman with a flash of pink hair. “I’m in hot demand, baby,” she said, mentioning “desperate” employers with a burst of a grin. “I’ve worked at like six bars in the last six months because I just keep getting better offers I can’t turn down.”

The [*unemployment rate in Nebraska*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/laus.htm) was 2.1 percent in February, tied with Utah for the lowest in the nation and near the lowest on record for any state. In several counties, unemployment is below 1 percent. Even taking into account adults who have left the work force, the [*share of the population*](https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2022/nebraska-had-highest-employment-population-ratio-in-2021-at-67-7-percent.htm) 16 and older employed in Nebraska is around 68 percent, the nation’s highest figure.

After decades of wage and income stagnation, the seesaw of power between managers and their workers looks to at least temporarily be tilting in the direction of labor, with employers in competition for workers instead of the other way around. Unemployment in states including Indiana, Kansas, Montana and Oklahoma is almost as low as in Nebraska, testing the benefits and potential costs of an economy with exceptionally tight labor markets.

Ms. Paulk, 35, graduated from college with a graphic design degree during the Great Recession, when jobs were scarce. She remembers working 60-hour weeks near minimum wage in Illinois, “being excited to find a quarter” that could go toward laundry. In 2013, she moved to Nebraska and took a job in medical data entry for $12 an hour.

She started bartending in 2018, and since then, she says, her overall pay has more than doubled to $25 (and sometimes $30) an hour, including tips.

The [*nationwide jobless rate in March*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/04/01/business/march-2022-jobs-report) was 3.6 percent, nearly back to prepandemic levels that were the lowest in a half-century. The particularly low unemployment in Nebraska is partly attributable to its [*higher-than-average*](https://media4.manhattan-institute.org/pdf/cr_baeo.pdf) high school graduation rate, and the dominant role of industries like manufacturing and agriculture that are less volatile than the service or energy sectors during downturns. Even at the peak of Covid-19 lockdowns in the spring of 2020, the state unemployment rate was 7.4 percent, half the national number.

Yet the labor market in Nebraska may also be a harbinger for the country at large. Most economists expect overall unemployment to continue ticking downward this year. Job openings are near record highs, and jobless rates in January were lower than a year earlier in [*388 of the 389 metropolitan areas*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/metro.nr0.htm) evaluated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Many business analysts contend that if labor remains scarce, wages will grow too rapidly and employers will continually pass on that increased expense to consumers. At least for now, evidence of such a spiral is sparse: Federal Reserve data shows that [*median annual pay increases*](https://www.atlantafed.org/chcs/wage-growth-tracker) are well within the range — 3 to 7 percent — that prevailed from the 1980s until the 2007-9 recession.

The Fed, still concerned, has begun raising interest rates to cool off the economy and tame inflationary pressures. Supply chain challenges that arose during the pandemic have persisted, and the war in Ukraine is further complicating the outlook for inflation as well as overall economic growth. Consumer spending remains buoyant, yet surveys reflect dour economic sentiment among the public.

In the meantime, even as price increases nag household budgets, burying the value of some new wage gains, a noticeable mass of employees and job seekers are gaining more leverage regarding benefits and conditions.

During a virtual summit about the local economy held in February by the nonprofit group Leadership Lincoln, Eric Thompson, the director of the Bureau of Business Research at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, argued that the labor market might be simply rebalancing.

“Obviously, it’s still always better to be the employer than the worker, or at least usually it is,” he said. But the current environment does enable some employees to switch jobs or more easily vie for higher-level positions. Local employers are dropping degree requirements for a range of midlevel and entry roles.

Many fast-food restaurants, struggling to staff locations near the $9 minimum wage in the state, have begun to offer starting wages of $14. Evidence of automation is just as rampant as Help Wanted signs: Some pharmacies dotting the main roads and highways appear to have more self-checkout kiosks than employees at a given hour.

Mr. Thompson said such moves were not necessarily ominous for the ***working class*** but rather a reflection of the need for businesses to adapt while workers find jobs that can “maximize their skills and potential.”

Tony Goins, a former senior vice president at JPMorgan Chase who was appointed by Gov. Pete Ricketts in 2019 as director of Nebraska’s Department of Economic Development, said the tight labor market could prompt managers to become more flexible and innovative.

“At the end of the day, the market is dictating that I have to pay employees more money,” said Mr. Goins, a small-business owner himself with a cigar lounge in Lincoln. “So, I mean, how are you going to offset that?” To stay competitive in hiring, he said, managers need to improve culture, leadership, employee retention and recruiting.

He spoke of his son, an assistant men’s basketball coach at Boston College — a position that he says requires continued outreach as well as the dual promise of “the chance to play for a winning program” and gaining personal development. “That’s not what C.E.O.s are used to,” he said.

Businesses aiming to grow have begun to offer incentives beyond pay. The Japanese company Kawasaki Motors is spending $200 million to expand the 2.4-million-square-foot site in northern Lincoln where it makes Jet Skis, all-terrain vehicles and rail cars. It is increasing its 2,400-member work force by over 500 employees, with jobs primarily in fabrication, welding and assembly.

The company is becoming more flexible about hiring and work styles in order to pull it off. “It used to take a couple of weeks to get hired at Kawasaki,” said Bryan Seck, its chief talent management strategist in Lincoln. “Now, it’s down to four hours.”

With the knowledge that many parents remain on the sidelines of the work force because of child care duties, Kawasaki recently created a 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. shift tailored for those who need to retrieve children from school and day care in the early afternoon. Starting wages are $18.10 an hour, Mr. Seck said, with benefits including health care and a 401(k) plan.

In addition to increasing wages to retain employees, Todd Heyne, the chief construction officer at Allo Communications, a cable company based in Lincoln, said management decided that easing in-person work requirements could expand the pool of available workers. That led the company to allow many of its customer service representatives and technical support employees to train and work farther afield as it prepares to expand beyond Nebraska and Colorado.

Not all problem-solving is easy. The added labor costs come on top of supply chain pressures that have increased the price of crucial materials like fiber optic cable by as much as 30 percent. Vendors are often charging 20 percent more for their contracted tasks. As a result, the company has taken steps like hiring its own trucking staff.

In the end, “combined with some automation efficiencies, our team will see sizable wage increases with less rudimentary work,” Mr. Heyne said, reducing manual paperwork, centralizing back-end systems and doing more to fix customers’ network issues remotely. So despite the cost challenges, “I’ve never been more optimistic about where we’re sitting, our position in the market, how we compete against our competitors, and our technology,” he added. “Which is strange.”

For many, the opportunity of this economic moment is tinged with worry. They include Ashlee Bridger, a 30-year-old student at the Lincoln campus of Southeast Community College who works in administration for the nearby firm Huffman Engineering after being recruited from a job fair.

Ms. Bridger left her job as a nurse to pursue a career in human resources because she felt confident enough to bet on herself: “Of course, it was a risk. Leaving any career is.” But in the current job market, she said, “I knew I would be able to work my way up easier.”

She has also had a series of life milestones fall into place. She will graduate in May with an associate degree and will start bachelor’s degree work in the fall at Nebraska Wesleyan University. The managers at Huffman have told her that she is welcome to continue working there when her schedule allows, and that they would like to hire her in a more senior role after she completes her studies.

Last year, she got married in summer, then moved with her husband into a newly built house in Lincoln in August. Though they feel financially stable, she half-joked that they were lucky the home was mostly built before lumber prices soared. With prices up across the board now, “I’m more cautious about my spending,” she said.

Ms. Paulk, the bartender at Harry’s thriving off better pay, has friends and customers who are upset about recent inflation. “But it’s something controlled out of our hands anyway,” she said with a shrug.

“All I know,” she added, “is now I’m not broke anymore — it’s great. Life is good.”

PHOTOS: Nikki Paulk, a bartender at Harry’s Wonder Bar in Lincoln, Neb., served drinks on St. Patrick’s Day. A college graduate, Ms. Paulk started bartending in 2018. Her pay has more than doubled, to as much as $30 an hour, since then. (B1); Tony Goins, Nebraska’s economic development head, above, and Todd Heyne, the chief construction officer at Allo Communications, below. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TERRY RATZLAFF FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B5)

**Load-Date:** April 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Chinatown Civic Groups Hold On to Hold Off Developers***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:659N-J0F1-JBG3-60XW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 26, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 14

**Length:** 1918 words

**Byline:** By Elaine Chen, Stefanos Chen and Jingyu Lin

**Body**

For decades, the Lee Family Association, one of the oldest civic groups in Manhattan's Chinatown, has helped countless Chinese immigrants, working from its six-story building on Mott Street.

Its latest campaign: a makeover, starting with moving the mahjong tables.

''That's just temporary -- for the elders,'' said Sonny Lee, 49, the head of the group's newly formed youth chapter, looking past the well-worn game sets. He pointed instead to the new karaoke disco light, the billiard table and exercise bikes.

The Lees, like many traditional Chinese associations based on family, profession or region, need new blood -- and the future of Chinatown, one of the few remaining ***working-class*** neighborhoods in Manhattan, could hinge on replenishing their aging ranks.

The groups' importance is linked to their coveted real estate portfolio, amassed over decades to serve members of the Chinese diaspora, from restaurant and shop owners to longtime low-income renters.

Though demographic changes in Chinatown have thinned the clubs' membership, they remain one of the last bulwarks against gentrification in an area of Lower Manhattan surrounded by luxury development.

The New York Times identified at least 42 buildings owned by dozens of associations -- a collection of commercial walk-ups and tenement buildings that are home to scores of small businesses and hundreds of rent-stabilized tenants. In total they are worth at least $93 million, according to city estimates, but perhaps two or three times as much on the open market.

While many groups have held on to their property for decades, the pandemic has heightened challenges, with rising taxes, unpaid rent and mounting maintenance costs that could force owners to sell -- and upend a delicate neighborhood balance.

''When we lose them, who takes over?'' said Jan Lee, a board member of the Small Property Owners of New York, an advocacy group. ''It's not another Chinese property owner. It's likely a corporate entity.''

Now, the clock is ticking for many groups to come up with a turnaround plan, said Fang Wong, 74, a former president of the local Wong Family Benevolent Association.

''We're at a critical curve,'' he said. ''Unless we change, it's going to go out in the next 10 years.''

'This area has to be next'

Unlike affluent neighborhoods like SoHo and sections of the Lower East Side, where real estate investors have helped fuel a wave of luxury developments, Chinatown has been shielded from most speculative deals. That's partly because of longtime property owners, said Bob Knakal, the chairman of New York investment sales at JLL, a commercial real estate firm.

''A lot of owners there either don't speak English, or pretend not to speak English, so it's very hard to cold call property owners in Chinatown,'' he said. ''From a brokerage perspective, it is one of the areas that is very difficult to break into.''

Zoning rules that favor low-rise construction and a large concentration of rent-regulated buildings have also deterred investors, said Michael Tortorici, an executive vice president of Ariel Property Advisors, a commercial real estate brokerage.

Recent developments -- including a nearly 850-foot-tall luxury condo tower in nearby Two Bridges, a largely lower-income neighborhood -- have tested price records and renewed interest in Chinatown.

''I've always thought, even before Covid, that this area has to be next,'' Mr. Tortorici said.

No civic association has sold property in decades, but the pressure is intensifying, said Thomas Yu, a leader at Asian Americans for Equality, a housing and social services group in Chinatown.

''Some of them are sitting on 100-year-old buildings with significant capital needs, and they just don't have the deep pockets,'' he said.

A change in ownership among the many small commercial and apartment buildings could be harmful for tenants, many of whom have worked out reduced rents with their landlords during the pandemic.

Ting's Gift Shop, on Doyers Street, has had the same landlord since it opened more than 60 years ago: the Sun Wei Association, a club headquartered above the store whose members are from a district in Guangdong province.

The shop was forced to close for six months because of the pandemic, but the association agreed to cut its $3,000-a-month rent in half for a year while the store recovers, said Eleanor Ting, one of the owners. A building manager for Sun Wei confirmed the arrangement.

''They're being human about it -- they're willing to work with us,'' Ms. Ting said, adding that some nearby businesses have closed permanently because of inflexible landlords.

Most associations rely on rent from commercial tenants simply to cover expenses. ''The buildings are not an investment, they're for the associations,'' said Eric Ng, 72, a retired accountant who also owned fortune cookie and coffee businesses and is a past president of Hoy Sun Ning Yung, one of the more prominent neighborhood groups.

For most longtime members, the properties represent the sacrifice and labor of their predecessors and, above all, a home, said Justin Yu, 76, a recent president of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, or C.C.B.A., an umbrella organization for many clubs. ''They have a place to gather.''

During the pandemic, some groups became a neighborhood lifeline. The C.C.B.A. hosted food banks and coordinated coronavirus testing and vaccinations. Several of its member groups have rallied against a rise in anti-Asian violence across New York.

Some association headquarters remain essential campaign stops for candidates, including Mayor Eric Adams when he was running for office. The groups have also been vocal in opposing new homeless shelters and the building of a local jail as part of the city's plan to replace the troubled Rikers detention complex.

The origins of the associations

The associations began in the late 1800s, during a period of intense discrimination, to protect Chinese immigrants -- mostly men who had emigrated with the goal of sending money back to family in China, said Charlie Lai, a community organizer who helped establish the Museum of Chinese in America.

Many groups were formed in the wake of laws like the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which effectively banned or limited Chinese immigration until 1965.

United by shared surname, village of origin or profession, the groups functioned as de facto governments, adjudicating disputes, levying fees and deciding where businesses could open, along with lending money and helping members find jobs.

The early immigrants ''were not welcome anywhere,'' Mr. Lai said, and had to ''create their own sense of place and create this rule of law.''

The Wong association provided that space for Mr. Wong's family, he said: ''I remember when I was very young, my father, every free moment he had, this is where he spent it.''

That spirit persists, said Amy Chin, a genealogist and the president of the board at Think!Chinatown, a nonprofit community group. ''You can go there and get a meal,'' she said. ''Some of these family associations always have a rice cooker cooking.''

Today, the associations' struggles are partly tied to demographic changes in Chinatown.

New York City's Chinese population has increased 60 percent since 2000, to 570,000 from 357,000, but the growth is mostly outside Manhattan. In Chinatown, the Chinese population declined by around a third over that same period, to 34,000 from 51,000. Indeed, many association members no longer live in Chinatown.

Part of the decline is driven by high housing costs. In the first quarter of 2022, the median asking rent in Chinatown was $3,000 a month, compared with $1,950 in Flushing, a Chinese hub in Queens, according to the listing website StreetEasy.

At the same time, functions that the associations once provided are increasingly offered by Chinese-speaking social service and nonprofit organizations, which tend to be more left-leaning than the traditional groups and appeal more to younger people.

Chinese immigration has also shifted. Most of the associations are run by Taishanese speakers, while many newcomers, from regions like Fujian, speak different dialects.

And there are political divisions. Several associations still fly the flag of the Republic of China -- the flag of Taiwan -- because of their reverence for the statesman Sun Yat-sen, who delivered a speech in Chinatown in 1911 supporting the overthrow of the Qing dynasty. But some recent Chinese immigrants view Taiwan as a breakaway province.

Many associations are also selective about who they will admit. Family groups limit membership to people with the same surname; regional associations require family origins in a particular Chinese village or district; and most require an endorsement from a current member. Several groups still do not offer full membership to women.

But despite their aging rolls, many groups are wary of relaxing rules.

New members might question the need to hold on to properties, said Tak Wong, 67, a former president of the Lin Sing Association, which owns a walk-up apartment building on Mott Street with ground-floor souvenir shops.

''They have no passion for the property,'' Mr. Wong said, repeating a common refrain among longtime association members. ''They just join and wait until they have enough power, and then they vote, 'Let's sell it!'''

Some associations have adopted rules making it harder to sell or refinance property, including requiring approval of most of the board. (In 2010, a New York State court canceled the transfer of an association's property as fraudulent, and association leaders have sued each other over the handling of rental agreements and payments.)

A youth drive

It is a slow evolution, but some groups are trying to update their practices. In 2018, Hoy Sun Ning Yung, one of the largest Taishanese groups, elected its youngest and first American-born president, Raymond Tsang, a 38-year-old funeral home director from Staten Island, who doesn't speak Taishanese.

He has found that modernizing the group is a challenge. ''We don't even do emails,'' Mr. Tsang said.

In March, he also became president of the C.C.B.A, and one of his first acts was to create a C.C.B.A. Twitter account.

Virginia Wong, a retired New York City civil servant who has long been active in Chinatown, became one of the first female members of the Wong association a few years ago. While she and others have talked about ways to draw younger members, her first assignment has been more prosaic: digitizing the musty membership lists.

Still, maintaining the support of older members is crucial. ''You cannot say, 'Oh, I want to do this or that,''' Ms. Wong said. ''It takes time.''

After becoming president of the Lee Family Association in 2015, Wade Li, 40, a health care executive from Long Island, said he met resistance from older members over seemingly straightforward proposals: replacing the building's dated elevator or expanding the pool of recipients for student grants.

''Most of my ideas were not being supported,'' he said.

But Li eventually prevailed, and the group's latest effort, a new youth chapter complete with a refurbished club room, is aimed at luring more like-minded young professionals, said Sonny Lee, 49, a chemist who will lead the new group.

''It's like an incubator,'' he said.

The group had already created a ''junior'' committee. The average age: 60.

Kitty Bennett contributed research.Kitty Bennett contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/23/nyregion/chinatown-new-york-real-estate.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/23/nyregion/chinatown-new-york-real-estate.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Wade Li, left, heads the Lee association, Ho Kew Lee is an ex-president, and Sonny Lee leads its youth chapter.

Eleanor Ting, an owner of Ting's Gift Shop, with her daughter, Jona. Their landlord cut rent for a year.

One Manhattan Square, a luxury condo tower in nearby Two Bridges, commands high prices.

Lee Family Association members playing mahjong, a mainstay, although some hope to appeal to the young.

''We're at a critical curve,'' said Fang Wong, a former head of the Wong Family Benevolent Association.

Some groups fly the flag of the Republic of China, the flag of Taiwan, but some recent Chinese immigrants view Taiwan as a breakaway province. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JINGYU LIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Will Murphy Move to the Center After His Narrow Victory in New Jersey?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:640W-93N1-JBG3-640G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

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**Byline:** Tracey Tully

**Highlight:** The Democratic governor won re-election in a surprisingly close race that has raised questions about his ability to enact liberal measures on gun control and abortion.

**Body**

The Democratic governor won re-election in a surprisingly close race that has raised questions about his ability to enact liberal measures on gun control and abortion.

For much of his first term, Gov. Philip D. Murphy of New Jersey governed his largely suburban state as a steadfast liberal, winning an increase in the minimum wage, a tax hike on the wealthy and the legalization of marijuana.

But when he ran for re-election this year on that unabashedly left-leaning record, Mr. Murphy, a Democrat who just weeks ago seemed destined for an easy victory, [*came surprisingly close to losing to a conservative Republican, Jack Ciattarelli*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/08/nyregion/jack-ciattarelli-phil-murphy.html).

Mr. Murphy’s narrow victory, combined with a Republican upset in the [*Virginia governor’s race*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/us/politics/democrats-virginia-governor-race.html) and Republican gains in the New Jersey State Legislature, suggest the nation’s political winds may have shifted rightward. And that has raised a major question in Trenton: Will Mr. Murphy still push forward with liberal initiatives on issues like abortion and gun control, as he had once planned?

Republicans and even some Democrats say a left-leaning agenda will face stiff opposition, predicting that Mr. Murphy and Democratic legislators will become increasingly mindful of independent suburban voters whose party loyalty is famously fluid and whose political ideology tends toward the center.

The key to courting those voters will be to focus on “affordability,” some officials say, in particular, containing the state’s property taxes, which are among the nation’s highest.

“This is not that complicated,” said Assemblyman Jon M. Bramnick, a Republican who was elected Tuesday to the State Senate. “Most people are kind of in the middle.”

But where moderates may see the need for a course correction and heightened attention to issues like the cost of living and safe streets, Mr. Murphy’s progressive allies speak mainly of opportunity.

On Tuesday, voters in South Jersey ousted the state’s [*second most powerful lawmaker*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/nyregion/stephen-sweeney-durr-nj-election.html), the Senate president, [*Steve Sweeney*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/nyregion/steve-sweeney-durr-nj-election.html), a Democrat who was also Mr. Murphy’s main political rival. [*Mr. Sweeney*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/nyregion/steve-sweeney-durr-nj-election.html)’s loss simultaneously created an unexpected power vacuum in the State House and eroded the influence of the most conservative region of the state — without making a significant dent in the Democrats’ majority in Trenton.

That could clear an easier pathway for the governor’s unfinished legislative priorities, some analysts and legislators say. Despite losing some seats, Democrats will still control both houses of the Legislature.

“Politically, it’s an incredible opportunity for Murphy,” said Julia Sass Rubin, a professor at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University. “[*Sweeney*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/nyregion/steve-sweeney-durr-nj-election.html) keeping his seat and Murphy winning by 10 would be nowhere near as good.”

Still, the day after the election, few Democrats were talking much about Mr. Murphy’s most contentious policy goals: codifying abortion rights to protect against the possibility of a Supreme Court decision overturning Roe v. Wade; expanding gun control laws to allow victims to sue gun manufacturers; reducing [*long mandatory sentences*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/17/nyregion/nj-mandatory-minimum-public-corruption.html) for nonviolent crimes.

“We’re going to obviously revisit what we’ve been doing,” said Senator Nick Scutari, a Democrat from northern New Jersey who led the fight to [*legalize marijuana*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/05/nyregion/nj-marijuana-ballot-question.html) in the state and is seen as a contender to become the next Senate president.

Mr. Scutari, a former municipal prosecutor in Linden, N.J., said he expected more discussion about “kitchen table issues.”

“Making sure there’s a strong economy,” he said. “Good strong job prospects. Making sure the taxes are stable and we do provide services because of those taxes.”

George E. Norcross, an insurance executive and powerful Democratic power broker strongly allied with Mr. Sweeney, said the most potent issue in New Jersey has always been taxes.

“If you look at New Jersey history from a political way, you see Democrats and Republicans alternating as governors, and it always happens over the same issue, which is taxes,” Mr. Norcross said. “It’s taxes, taxes, taxes. And people move back and forth between parties in that regard, and that’s the way in which it historically has happened.”

George Helmy, Mr. Murphy’s chief of staff, said the governor’s economic agenda had always been rooted in making life more affordable for working families.

But he said he anticipated the party “wanting to focus more” on bread-and-butter economic issues, as well as better communicating the benefits of Mr. Murphy’s progressive policies for ***working-class*** families.

“I think we need to continue to focus on the affordability picture and the progress we’ve made for working families,” he said.

“People need to hear that message more,” he added. “We have to be more focused on speaking to what we have delivered for working families and the bold vision going forward.”

On Thursday, Mr. Murphy spoke at a convention in Atlantic City, N.J., organized by one of his strongest allies, the New Jersey Education Association.

Mr. Ciattarelli, who has not conceded the race, had no public appearances. His campaign, however, did send out a fund-raising letter.

“This race is far from over,” it read. “Our team is making sure every legal vote is counted and the will of the people is heard loud and clear.”

[*Mr. Murphy’s lead*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/11/02/us/elections/results-new-jersey.html) over Mr. Ciattarelli had grown to about 2 percentage points by Thursday afternoon, and counties were still tabulating mail votes and provisional ballots. Most of the uncounted ballots are in counties with heavy Democratic majorities; The Associated Press called the race for Mr. Murphy on Wednesday evening.

Though Mr. Murphy won more votes on Tuesday than he did in 2017, Democratic turnout in many parts of the state — in the suburbs as well as in heavily immigrant communities and poor rural areas — was lackluster.

The depressed turnout was partly attributed to a series of public polls that predicted Mr. Murphy would coast to victory — and proved wildly inaccurate.

On Thursday, Patrick Murray, the director of the [*Monmouth University Polling Institute*](https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/), a widely trusted polling outfit, apologized publicly to both candidates, their supporters and to voters for survey information “that was at the very least misleading.”

“I blew it,” Mr. Murray wrote in a [*letter*](https://www.nj.com/opinion/2021/11/pollster-i-blew-it-maybe-its-time-to-get-rid-of-election-polls-opinion.html) published by nj.com.

“If you are a Republican who believes the polls cost Ciattarelli an upset victory or a Democrat who feels we lulled your base into complacency, feel free to vent,” he said. “I hear you.”

But several progressive activists said that Tuesday’s turnout should be seen as a mandate to finally deliver on long-promised policy goals in Trenton and in Washington, including creating a path to citizenship for more immigrants, making child care affordable and addressing inequity within the criminal justice system.

Amy Torres, the executive director of the New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice, said the way to counter low turnout was to give people a reason to trust that lawmakers would keep their campaign promises.

“You need registered voters to be enthusiastic about turning out,” Ms. Torres said. “So the question becomes: How do you mobilize them? By delivering on promises made on the campaign trail.”

Mr. Ciattarelli campaigned on issues popular with voters who supported former President Donald J. Trump, and his strong showing on Tuesday also appeared to be sending a message to mainstream Republicans. In the State Assembly, Republicans made a leadership change on Thursday, choosing a conservative lawmaker, John DiMaio, over a moderate who supports abortion rights and gun control — and who appeared to have locked in the votes to lead the caucus before Election Day.

“New Jersey does not want to be the California of the East Coast,” said Senator Michael Testa Jr., a Republican lawyer who led Mr. Trump’s re-election campaign in the state. “New Jersey is not such a blue state.”

Nick Corasaniti contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Gov. Philip D. Murphy of New Jersey, a Democrat who weeks ago seemed destined for an easy victory, came close to losing re-election to a conservative Republican, Jack Ciattarelli, at left. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRYAN ANSELM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2021

**End of Document**



[***In One Queens Building, the Third Apartment Is the Charm (for Now); renters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64BK-RJP1-JBG3-6105-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** REALESTATE

**Length:** 1289 words

**Byline:** D.W. Gibson

**Highlight:** When they needed more space, and then enough room to work at home, they graduated to ever-larger apartments in the same Astoria building. But what comes next?

**Body**

When they needed more space, and then enough room to work at home, they graduated to ever-larger apartments in the same Astoria building. But what comes next?

Isaac Goldberg was working on the 2014 re-election campaign of Representative Steve Israel, Democrat of Huntington, N.Y., when he decided to have a party in his Astoria, Queens, apartment. He sent out a mass invite to everyone working on campaigns for Democrats on Long Island.

Anna Doré didn’t know Mr. Goldberg, but she was helping out with another campaign, heard about the party and decided to go. Ms. Doré, who works in public relations, has spent only five months of the last seven years working in politics. But that short window of time just happened to coincide with Mr. Goldberg’s party. “It was very much kismet,” she said.

It was also 90 degrees when she arrived, and most of the partygoers were circled around the air-conditioning unit, nursing Jell-O shots to keep cool. Campaign posters, an American flag and a 1996 Yankees championship poster adorned the walls. “The décor was definitely in need of some love and affection,” Ms. Doré said.

Surrounded by a mix of memorabilia, election talk and spiked refreshment, she and Mr. Goldberg found each other. One spark led to another and, seven years later, they are married and living in the same building where they met.

“We joke that Anna came to a party at my apartment and hasn’t left since,” Mr. Goldberg said. The joke is only partially true: While the couple has stayed in the building, they are living in their third apartment there — all on the same floor.

It was just a few months into their relationship when Ms. Doré moved in with Mr. Goldberg. She had been living on the Upper East Side, but fate forced her hand when a 4 a.m. fire broke out in her building. “Isaac raced over and came to the rescue,” she said, “even though we were just newly dating.”

She stayed with him that night, and the next day her building was condemned. Sharing the one-bedroom with Mr. Goldberg quickly evolved from a short-term fix to a long-term commitment.

“I didn’t want to be burned into living together,” Ms. Doré said. “But it worked out.”

Eventually, she did lament that the circumstances of the fire robbed them of a moment when they could, more deliberately, arrive at the decision to move in together. The night after she mentioned that to him, she came home from work to find that Mr. Goldberg had a dozen roses waiting for her. “There was a note with them,” she said. “He wrote, ‘I’ve lived alone and I’ve lived with you, and I never want to live alone again. Will you move in with me?’ To which I said, ‘Well done.’”

They were happy together, but it was a small one-bedroom — and there was still that Yankees poster. Then they got word that their neighbors across the hall were moving out of a two-bedroom apartment.

“I think by the time they found a place,” Mr. Goldberg said, “we basically had our couches in their apartment.”

The bigger place had a eat-in kitchen and an extra bedroom to turn into a home office for Mr. Goldberg, who still works as a political consultant — and the move required little work. “The doorways line up perfectly,” Ms. Doré said. “So you could just push our stuff directly across the hallway.”

In 2019, after the couple married at the Queens Museum, they envisioned themselves remaining in the second apartment for years to come. But then, Covid.

With both of them working from home, Ms. Doré set up a makeshift office in the bedroom. “I was sharing a wall with Isaac in his office,” she said. “As a political consultant, Isaac tends to talk on the phone all day.”

Investing in noise-canceling headphones helped “preserve our sanity,” she said, but it soon became clear that they needed a more permanent fix.

They thought the day had finally come when they would move into another building. Over a couple of months, they looked at 10 apartments in 10 buildings, sticking to Astoria for their search.

They are, by Mr. Goldberg’s admission, “Astoria obsessed.” For more than two years, Ms. Doré ran a locally focused Instagram account, WeHeartAstoria.

“I started to love the neighborhood through that lens,” she said. “We knew we didn’t want to leave.”

For his part, Mr. Goldberg is attracted to Astoria’s livability and ***working-class*** feel: “There’s the joke that the two hardest things to find in Astoria are doormen and dishwashers.”

$2,600 | Astoria, Queens

Anna Doré, 30; Isaac Goldberg, 33

Occupation: Ms. Doré is senior director of communications at Rothy’s, a fashion company; Mr. Goldberg is a Democratic campaign consultant at BerlinRosen.

On Doing What You Love: Mr. Goldberg started his career in politics as an intern for the 2008 Obama campaign: “I’ve always loved politics,” he said, “and I’ve always felt blessed that my hobby and profession overlap.” Ms. Doré enjoys working in public relations, she said, because “it’s storytelling, at its core.”

The Proposal: Mr. Goldberg proposed to Ms. Doré at Elias Corner for Fish, a favorite neighborhood restaurant. “It’s classic no-frills,” he said. “They don’t even have menus. The waiter comes over and tells you which fish they have in the case. I proposed in the middle of the restaurant, and everyone clapped.”

During their apartment search, they ran into a neighbor from their building at a bodega. “We saw Mike,” Ms. Doré said, “and he told us, ‘Heads up, we’re moving to Long Island.’”

They were invited to have a look at the apartment and didn’t waste any time stopping by. “That night, we knocked on the door while the kids were eating dinner,” Ms. Doré said, laughing. “And we’re, like, ‘Yeah, we live here now.’”

It was another two-bedroom apartment, but about 200 square feet larger, with a dining room and a foyer. “We were thinking to ourselves, ‘Are we really going to be in a third apartment in the same building?’” Ms. Doré said. “The answer turned out to be a very clear ‘yes.’”

Both moves have been possible not only because of good relationships with their neighbors, but also because of the landlord’s accessibility and the informal atmosphere in the building: Letters regarding modest rent increases carry an apologetic tone, and announcements to tenants are posted in the hallways, handwritten by the super.

“It makes it possible to approach them and say, ‘Hey, look, we’ve been model tenants, minus a few raucous parties — can we move down the hall?’” Ms. Doré said.

By now, they have been in the third apartment for a year. With more space to decorate together, Mr. Goldberg has managed to retain a few mementos in his office. “It’s critical,” he said, “that the 1996 Yankees championship poster is still displayed prominently.”

Ms. Doré has her own work space now, in the living room. “I’m not in the bedroom anymore,” she said, “which is great for my sanity. And my Zoom background.”

She said her mother noted — as did Mr. Goldberg’s mother — that the apartment might be big enough for children. “I think both moms are cautiously optimistic in that department,” she said. “No plans yet, but it could happen in this apartment.”

That is, unless the neighbor across the hall moves out.

“He’s been here since the ’70s,” Ms. Doré said. “He’s an old rocker who teaches guitar lessons and is perpetually threatening to run off to Florida. He has this insane three-bedroom we’ve been eyeing for years.”

She paused briefly, then added: “I guess you could say we don’t know how the story ends.”

For weekly email updates on residential real estate news, [*sign up here*](http://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/realestate/). Follow us on Twitter: [*@nytrealestate*](https://twitter.com/nytrealestate).

PHOTOS: Top, Anna Doré and Isaac Goldberg have lived in three of the eight apartments on the fifth floor of their building. Above, the couple’s current apartment includes a spacious kitchen. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 23, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Narrow Race In New Jersey Could Push It Toward Right***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6410-JDD1-JBG3-6465-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 5, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 12

**Length:** 1331 words

**Byline:** By Tracey Tully

**Body**

The Democratic governor won re-election in a surprisingly close race that has raised questions about his ability to enact liberal measures on gun control and abortion.

For much of his first term, Gov. Philip D. Murphy of New Jersey governed his largely suburban state as a steadfast liberal, winning an increase in the minimum wage, a tax hike on the wealthy and the legalization of marijuana.

But when he ran for re-election this year on that unabashedly left-leaning record, Mr. Murphy, a Democrat who just weeks ago seemed destined for an easy victory, came surprisingly close to losing to a conservative Republican, Jack Ciattarelli.

Mr. Murphy's narrow victory, combined with a Republican upset in the Virginia governor's race and Republican gains in the New Jersey State Legislature, suggest the nation's political winds may have shifted rightward. And that has raised a major question in Trenton: Will Mr. Murphy still push forward with liberal initiatives on issues like abortion and gun control, as he had once planned?

Republicans and even some Democrats say a left-leaning agenda will face stiff opposition, predicting that Mr. Murphy and Democratic legislators will become increasingly mindful of independent suburban voters whose party loyalty is famously fluid and whose political ideology tends toward the center.

The key to courting those voters will be to focus on ''affordability,'' some officials say, in particular, containing the state's property taxes, which are among the nation's highest.

''This is not that complicated,'' said Assemblyman Jon M. Bramnick, a Republican who was elected Tuesday to the State Senate. ''Most people are kind of in the middle.''

But where moderates may see the need for a course correction and heightened attention to issues like the cost of living and safe streets, Mr. Murphy's progressive allies speak mainly of opportunity.

On Tuesday, voters in South Jersey ousted the state's second most powerful lawmaker, the Senate president, Steve Sweeney, a Democrat who was also Mr. Murphy's main political rival. Mr. Sweeney's loss simultaneously created an unexpected power vacuum in the State House and eroded the influence of the most conservative region of the state -- without making a significant dent in the Democrats' majority in Trenton.

That could clear an easier pathway for the governor's unfinished legislative priorities, some analysts and legislators say. Despite losing some seats, Democrats will still control both houses of the Legislature.

''Politically, it's an incredible opportunity for Murphy,'' said Julia Sass Rubin, a professor at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University. ''Sweeney keeping his seat and Murphy winning by 10 would be nowhere near as good.''

Still, the day after the election, few Democrats were talking much about Mr. Murphy's most contentious policy goals: codifying abortion rights to protect against the possibility of a Supreme Court decision overturning Roe v. Wade; expanding gun control laws to allow victims to sue gun manufacturers; reducing long mandatory sentences for nonviolent crimes.

''We're going to obviously revisit what we've been doing,'' said Senator Nick Scutari, a Democrat from northern New Jersey who led the fight to legalize marijuana in the state and is seen as a contender to become the next Senate president.

Mr. Scutari, a former municipal prosecutor in Linden, N.J., said he expected more discussion about ''kitchen table issues.''

''Making sure there's a strong economy,'' he said. ''Good strong job prospects. Making sure the taxes are stable and we do provide services because of those taxes.''

George E. Norcross, an insurance executive and powerful Democratic power broker strongly allied with Mr. Sweeney, said the most potent issue in New Jersey has always been taxes.

''If you look at New Jersey history from a political way, you see Democrats and Republicans alternating as governors, and it always happens over the same issue, which is taxes,'' Mr. Norcross said. ''It's taxes, taxes, taxes. And people move back and forth between parties in that regard, and that's the way in which it historically has happened.''

George Helmy, Mr. Murphy's chief of staff, said the governor's economic agenda had always been rooted in making life more affordable for working families.

But he said he anticipated the party ''wanting to focus more'' on bread-and-butter economic issues, as well as better communicating the benefits of Mr. Murphy's progressive policies for ***working-class*** families.

''I think we need to continue to focus on the affordability picture and the progress we've made for working families,'' he said.

''People need to hear that message more,'' he added. ''We have to be more focused on speaking to what we have delivered for working families and the bold vision going forward.''

On Thursday, Mr. Murphy spoke at a convention in Atlantic City, N.J., organized by one of his strongest allies, the New Jersey Education Association.

Mr. Ciattarelli, who has not conceded the race, had no public appearances. His campaign, however, did send out a fund-raising letter.

''This race is far from over,'' it read. ''Our team is making sure every legal vote is counted and the will of the people is heard loud and clear.''

Mr. Murphy's lead over Mr. Ciattarelli had grown to about 2 percentage points by Thursday afternoon, and counties were still tabulating mail votes and provisional ballots. Most of the uncounted ballots are in counties with heavy Democratic majorities; The Associated Press called the race for Mr. Murphy on Wednesday evening.

Though Mr. Murphy won more votes on Tuesday than he did in 2017, Democratic turnout in many parts of the state -- in the suburbs as well as in heavily immigrant communities and poor rural areas -- was lackluster.

The depressed turnout was partly attributed to a series of public polls that predicted Mr. Murphy would coast to victory -- and proved wildly inaccurate.

On Thursday, Patrick Murray, the director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute, a widely trusted polling outfit, apologized publicly to both candidates, their supporters and to voters for survey information ''that was at the very least misleading.''

''I blew it,'' Mr. Murray wrote in a letter published by nj.com.

''If you are a Republican who believes the polls cost Ciattarelli an upset victory or a Democrat who feels we lulled your base into complacency, feel free to vent,'' he said. ''I hear you.''

But several progressive activists said that Tuesday's turnout should be seen as a mandate to finally deliver on long-promised policy goals in Trenton and in Washington, including creating a path to citizenship for more immigrants, making child care affordable and addressing inequity within the criminal justice system.

Amy Torres, the executive director of the New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice, said the way to counter low turnout was to give people a reason to trust that lawmakers would keep their campaign promises.

''You need registered voters to be enthusiastic about turning out,'' Ms. Torres said. ''So the question becomes: How do you mobilize them? By delivering on promises made on the campaign trail.''

Mr. Ciattarelli campaigned on issues popular with voters who supported former President Donald J. Trump, and his strong showing on Tuesday also appeared to be sending a message to mainstream Republicans. In the State Assembly, Republicans made a leadership change on Thursday, choosing a conservative lawmaker, John DiMaio, over a moderate who supports abortion rights and gun control -- and who appeared to have locked in the votes to lead the caucus before Election Day.

''New Jersey does not want to be the California of the East Coast,'' said Senator Michael Testa Jr., a Republican lawyer who led Mr. Trump's re-election campaign in the state. ''New Jersey is not such a blue state.''

Nick Corasaniti contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/nyregion/nj-governor-race-phil-murphy-victory.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/nyregion/nj-governor-race-phil-murphy-victory.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Gov. Philip D. Murphy of New Jersey, a Democrat who weeks ago seemed destined for an easy victory, came close to losing re-election to a conservative Republican, Jack Ciattarelli, at left. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRYAN ANSELM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 5, 2021

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[***A Play Recreates The Drama of 'Jaws'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:640S-KBJ1-JBG3-62VN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 4, 2021 Thursday

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 5

**Length:** 1207 words

**Byline:** By Alex Marshall

**Body**

The hit movie's set was plagued by malfunctioning sharks and drunken feuds -- perfect material for a night at the theater.

LONDON -- When Ian Shaw was 5, he did something to make any movie fan jealous: He visited the set of ''Jaws.'' On location on Martha's Vineyard, an assistant pulled back a huge sheet and young Shaw found himself staring into the gaping mouth of the man-eating shark that would soon become a cinematic icon.

''I was terrified!'' Shaw, now 51, recalled in a recent interview.

Shaw was on set because his father, Robert Shaw, was starring in the movie as Quint, the psychotic shark hunter who, by the film's end, has been bitten in two. Shaw said he visited many of his father's sets, and the ''Jaws'' shoot seemed like any other. But what he didn't know back then was that the shoot was one of movie history's most notoriously dysfunctional, plagued by technical problems and cast feuds.

The production's three mechanical sharks kept breaking down, and shooting was often delayed: Steven Spielberg, the film's director, took to calling the special effects team the ''special defects department.'' At one point, a boat they were filming on sank, sending two cameras down to the sea floor. (The film inside the cameras turned out to be safe.)

Shaw's father -- who died in 1978 -- brought difficulties of his own to the production. He drank heavily during the shoot, and clashed with a co-star, Richard Dreyfuss. The elder Shaw repeatedly belittled and tried to humiliate Dreyfuss, making off-putting comments seconds before the cameras rolled, or goading Dreyfuss into performing silly stunts, like climbing a ship's mast and jumping into the sea.

Roy Scheider, the movie's other star, was stuck between the feuding pair.

The younger Shaw didn't learn the full extent of the chaos on the set of ''Jaws'' until decades later, he said, but he realized that they had enough drama for a play. Now he is winning rave reviews in Britain for ''The Shark Is Broken,'' a comedy three-hander running at the Ambassadors Theater in London's West End through Jan. 15. In it, Shaw plays his father, stuck on a boat with Dreyfuss (Liam Murray Scott) and Scheider (Demetri Goritsas) as the tensions wax and wane.

In a recent interview, Shaw talked about the difficulty of portraying his father's darker side onstage, and whether conflict can spur creativity. These are edited extracts of that conversation.

In the play, your father clearly dislikes ''Jaws.'' Did he ever take you to see the movie?

I saw it when I was very young, in a screening room somewhere, and was absolutely terrified and couldn't go in the swimming pool afterward. I remember having nightmares, imagining sharks around my bed and calling for my dad to come and save me. Even though I knew that in the film he got eaten, I was able to suspend my disbelief about that.

What made you come up with the idea to turn the movie's problems into this play?

I once had to grow a mustache for a part, and looked in the mirror and thought, ''Oh, I look like Quint.'' That's what started it, but it seemed a very silly and foolish idea because I'd spent my whole career avoiding association with my dad.

Then I read Carl Gottlieb's ''The Jaws Log,'' and watched documentaries, and saw there was this really interesting relationship between Robert and Richard and Roy -- this triangle which makes for great drama. And you only need three people, so it's affordable!

I toyed with the idea for years, because I felt it could be very embarrassing -- potentially disrespectful to my dad and to the movie ''Jaws,'' which I love. To step into my dad's shoes, and to paint him as an alcoholic -- do I have the right to do that publicly?

Did you know he was an alcoholic at the time? He died only a few years after making ''Jaws'' when you were still young.

I did used to see him drink. I was often playing under the table in the Irish pubs when he would be having a session. But it didn't seem a problem then. It actually seemed kind of normal.

I feel that generation, especially the more ***working-class*** actors like Richard Burton, had a little discomfort with the profession in terms of putting on tights and makeup. So their way of asserting their masculinity was to be hard drinkers, the sort of Viking method of proving themselves.

What made you get over your fear of disrespecting him?

When I started writing the play with Joseph Nixon, we quickly saw it wasn't just about ''Jaws.'' Joe's father died very sadly, and it became a little bit more about fathers and sons, about addiction, about making movies in general. There were these other themes that meant it wasn't just a stunt.

You show your father continually antagonizing Dreyfuss, often seemingly just for fun. Why do you think he behaved like that?

He really didn't want to do ''Jaws,'' because, at the time, he was offered [the remake of] ''Brief Encounter,'' or was certainly in the running for it. He would have rather have done that, to break away from this macho image. He kind of felt handcuffed to ''Jaws'' to provide for his family.

Then the shark's not working, so they're hanging around. And he liked to drink. But also Dreyfus genuinely did wind him up and so he thought he needed a bit of a slap down. He dared Dreyfuss to jump off the mast from the top of the ship, and I think he fired a fire hose in his face. There's so many stories, and a lot of them are true.

In the play, your father says he's needling Dreyfuss to improve the movie. Their characters are meant to dislike each other. Did you consider that he might just have been trying to create a mood?

Personally, I think it was both because he was annoyed with Richard, but also he did think it was getting some good work done between them. The acting is so good in the film, so it probably did help.

You once auditioned for a role in a production Dreyfuss was directing. How did that go given his past with your father?

He was directing ''Hamlet,'' and I went in and mentioned that I was Robert Shaw's son and he looked, ironically, like Hamlet seeing his dead father. He just sat down and looked slightly ill. I was really taken aback at the time. I'd been expecting him to go, ''Wonderful!'' then give me a big hug. But he was very professional, because we obviously went through the audition.

Did you get the part?

No, I didn't!

Given that ''Jaws'' experienced so many problems, did you have any of your own making ''The Shark Is Broken?''

Not that I remember. When I had the first ideas on paper, I did wake up with cold sweats at three o'clock in the morning thinking, ''This is really bad idea,'' because I was really worried that I would offend my family. But in terms of the writing process, I really enjoyed it.

Do you think ''Jaws'' would have been a better movie without the problems?

No, because the problems meant they all hung around and developed it. It allowed them to improvise. ''You're gonna need a bigger boat'' was a piece of improvisation from Steven Spielberg. And the delays allowed my father to rewrite the Indianapolis speech, which is a big moment. All sorts of things in it were devised while they were hanging around waiting.

So disaster is a good recipe for creative success?

Well, it can be.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/theater/jaws-play-the-shark-is-broken.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/theater/jaws-play-the-shark-is-broken.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top, Ian Shaw, who plays his father in the play ''The Shark Is Broken''

from left, Roy Scheider, Robert Shaw and Richard Dreyfuss in the 1975 film ''Jaws''

and a scene from the play, with Demetri Goritsas, center. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAUREN FLEISHMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

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**Load-Date:** November 4, 2021

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[***Abbott and O'Rourke Win Their Texas Primaries, Avoiding Runoffs***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WY-9T11-JBG3-641W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 2, 2022 Wednesday

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**Length:** 1633 words

**Byline:** By Shane Goldmacher and J. David Goodman

**Body**

In the Texas race for governor, Gov. Greg Abbott overcame several opponents on his right, and Beto O'Rourke sailed to the Democratic nomination.

HOUSTON -- Gov. Greg Abbott of Texas fended off two right-wing primary challengers on Tuesday, avoiding a runoff by a wide margin but still falling well short of the 90 percent of the vote he marshaled in the primary four years ago as a restive Republican base continues to push the party farther to the right.

Mr. Abbott, who is running for a third term, left little to chance, spending $15 million in the last month alone to squash any primary threat. He will now face Beto O'Rourke, the former congressman who formally won the Democratic nomination, in the fall.

The results from the Texas primaries are providing the first pieces of the 2022 midterm puzzle: both an early indication of the strength of the two parties' ideological factions and the intensity of former President Donald J. Trump's continued hold on the Republican electorate.

In South Texas, a fierce effort by progressives to defeat one of the last anti-abortion Democrats remaining in Congress, Representative Henry Cuellar, was headed to a runoff. The race was a rematch from two years ago but this time the challenger, Jessica Cisneros, received a political gift when the F.B.I. raided Mr. Cuellar's home late in the race.

In the governor's race, Mr. Abbott faced backlash from the Republican base despite overseeing a sharp push to the right in state government over the last year that intensified in the campaign's closing days, including telling state agencies to investigate treatment for transgender adolescents as ''child abuse.'' The governor has been criticized by some on the right for his handling of the pandemic and the border and drew two notable challengers: Allen West, a former state party chairman, and Don Huffines, a former state senator, neither of whom ever gained significant traction.

Still, Mr. Abbott faced boos at a Trump rally north of Houston in January and only won over the crowd by invoking Mr. Trump more than two dozen times in a six-minute speech.

Statewide, Mr. Trump has endorsed more than two dozen candidates, including Mr. Abbott, though most were expected to win before earning his backing. Texas has a two-step primary system: Any candidate who finishes below 50 percent will face off against the No. 2 vote-getter in a May runoff.

''Big night in Texas!'' Mr. Trump said in a statement Tuesday. ''All 33 candidates that were Trump endorsed have either won their primary election or are substantially leading.''

One of the most intense races was the Republican primary for Texas attorney general, where the incumbent, Ken Paxton, has attracted the attention of federal investigators after some of his own top aides accused him of corruption.

Mr. Paxton failed to avoid a runoff, even though he spent heavily to promote Mr. Trump's endorsement, including $1.8 million on one television ad that opened with uninterrupted audio of the former president praising him. Mr. Paxton's runoff opponent in May will be one of the scions of the Bush dynasty, George P. Bush, the state land commissioner.

The full picture of the 2022 landscape will be revealed through a series of state-by-state primaries held over the next six months, as polls suggest President Biden, who delivered his State of the Union address on Tuesday, and the Democrats face an increasingly challenging political environment.

But the Texas contests offered almost a sneak peek of the coming dynamics nationwide, including how strict new voting rules played out and the salience of abortion, after a state law last year effectively banned most abortions after six weeks of pregnancy. Later this year, a ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court is expected in a Mississippi abortion case, which could affect procedures in multiple states. Yet no Texas Democratic congressional candidate aired an ad focusing on abortion, according to data from Ad Impact, an ad tracking firm.

After redistricting, Texas lawmakers erased nearly all the House seats that were competitive in the general election from the map in 2022, magnifying the importance of a handful of contested primaries in both parties. Republicans, in particular, are hoping to build on the dramatic gains the party made in South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley, particularly among ***working-class*** Latino voters in 2020, in the state's lone open, tossup seat.

Nationwide, Republicans are energized by the chance to take back both the House, which the Democrats control by a historically narrow margin, and the Senate, which is equally divided with only Vice President Kamala Harris's tiebreaking vote giving control to the Democrats.

Mr. Biden's sagging approval ratings -- not just in Texas but even in Democratic strongholds like California -- and the lingering cloud of the coronavirus on life, the economy and schools have emboldened many Republican voters, candidates and strategists.

Despite the hostile national climate, Democrats have scored some notable recruiting successes, including two high-profile candidates who came up just short in 2018, Mr. O'Rourke and Stacey Abrams, who is running again for governor of Georgia.

Mr. O'Rourke has already been traveling the state and raising money at a fast clip: $3 million in the last month. But Mr. Abbott, a prolific fund-raiser, outpaced him and entered the final days before the primary with $50 million on hand, compared to $6.8 million for Mr. O'Rourke.

Texas is where Mr. Trump suffered one of his rare primary endorsement defeats last year, in a House race, and while he has issued a range of endorsements, from governor down to Tarrant County District Attorney, he has mostly backed incumbents and heavy favorites.

Bigger tests of his influence loom later in the spring and summer, in the Senate contests in North Carolina and Alabama, and in the governor's race in Georgia. In that Georgia race, Mr. Trump recruited David Perdue, a former senator, to attempt to unseat Gov. Brian Kemp, a Republican who refused to bend to Mr. Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election.

The biggest test of Mr. Trump's influence in Texas was the attorney general's race, where Mr. Paxton's three challengers represented the various Republican power centers vying to be the future of the party.

Mr. Bush, the son of Jeb Bush and a statewide office holder who has held himself out as the most electable conservative in the race, was locked for much of the evening in a tight race for the second-place spot in the runoff. The other two Republicans were Eva Guzman, a former state Supreme Court justice, and Representative Louie Gohmert.

A Trump ally, Mr. Gohmert received an unexpected shout-out from Mr. Trump at the rally where Mr. Abbott was booed, despite the former president's endorsement of Mr. Paxton. Mr. Gohmert also posed with Mr. Trump during a photo line, but the Trump team did not send Mr. Gohmert the picture, because they did not want him to use it in the primary, according to a person familiar with the exchange.

The race was multidimensional. Ms. Guzman swiped at Mr. Bush, whose family dynasty has been weakened even among Texas Republicans. Mr. Bush responded in kind. Mr. Paxton traded attacks with Mr. Gohmert and, in recent days, went after Ms. Guzman as well.

''We haven't seen a primary this consequential since the 1990s,'' said Brandon Rottinghaus, a professor of political science at the University of Houston.

Mr. Paxton finished behind the rest of the Republican ticket in 2018, raising some fears that his renomination this year could provide a rare opening for Democrats in November. Republicans have won every statewide race in Texas since 1994.

One primary north of Houston, to replace the retiring Representative Kevin Brady, emerged as a proxy race for the national battle for power raging within the Republican Party. A super PAC aligned with Representative Kevin McCarthy, the minority leader, spent heavily to elect Morgan Luttrell, a Navy SEAL veteran. The activist wing of House Republicans and the political arm of the House Freedom Caucus backed Christian Collins, a former aide to Senator Ted Cruz.

''This is primary season,'' Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia said at a recent rally for Mr. Collins. ''This is where we work out our differences. This is where iron sharpens iron.''

Mr. Luttrell was far ahead in the early tally but it was not clear whether he would clear the 50 percent mark to avoid a runoff.

On the Democratic side, two primaries that drew national attention -- including trips to Texas by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York and Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts -- pitted the party's ideological wings against each other.

In the race for an open seat, a self-described democratic socialist and Austin city councilman, Greg Casar, defeated State Representative Eddie Rodriguez. The other primary was the rematch between Mr. Cuellar and a young progressive lawyer, Ms. Cisneros -- a race in which abortion has been an issue for the district's large number of Catholic voters.

When Ms. Ocasio-Cortez declared at a rally for Mr. Casar and Ms. Cisneros that ''Texas turning blue is inevitable,'' the clip was immediately picked up by Republicans, including Mr. Abbott, and wielded as an attack.

''She was doing the work for Republicans,'' said Matt Angle, a Democratic activist whose political action committee aims to unseat Republicans in Texas. He noted that Texas Democrats are more conservative in their views on issues like guns and abortion than national party leaders.

''It's a field trip for them,'' Mr. Angle added. ''For us, it's the future of the state.''

Nick Corasaniti contributed reporting.Nick Corasaniti contributed reporting.

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Gov. Greg Abbott, a Republican, at a ''Get Out the Vote'' campaign event last month in Houston. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRANDON BELL/GETTY IMAGES)

Beto O'Rourke, a Democrat, campaigning for Texas governor in Tyler in early February. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MONTINIQUE MONROE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

From left: Representative Louie Gohmert, Eva Guzman and George P. Bush at a forum in Midland. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[***A New Look for New York’s City Council; New York Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:633D-G691-JBG3-6231-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1028 words

**Byline:** Troy Closson

**Highlight:** The legislative body is expected become more diverse, with women holding a majority of the seats for the first time.

**Body**

[Want to get New York Today by email? [*Here’s the sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).]

It’s Thursday.

Weather: Cooler, with a high in the mid-80s. Partly sunny in the morning, but storms gradually move in, and expect sometimes heavy rain and gusty winds overnight.

Alternate-side parking: In effect until July 19 (Eid al-Adha).

New York’s 51-seat [*City Council*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/nyregion/city-council-republicans-nyc.html) passes laws, votes on the city budget, has a major voice in land-use decisions and provides checks on the mayor’s power.

But the legislative body has not always reflected the diversity of the millions it represents.

This week’s primary election results offer a clearer window into what shape the incoming Council is poised to take, and they signal a change: Women are expected to hold a majority of the body’s seats for the first time in city history, and several L.G.B.T.Q. people of color are likely to serve on the Council.

“Across the board, you were seeing a group of candidates that more clearly reflected the people that needed to be represented,” said the progressive candidate Tiffany Cabán (shown above), a queer Latina who won her Council primary in Queens.

Here’s what to know, according to [*my colleague Michael Gold’s full dive into the races*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/08/nyregion/new-york-city-council-diversity.html).

The more representative Council

Fourteen women currently hold seats on the [*Council*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/nyregion/city-council-republicans-nyc.html). Female candidates have won 26 races where Democrats are favored. Three others are leading in races that have not yet been called.

No person of South Asian descent, Muslim woman or openly gay Black woman has ever served in the legislative body. But each first is now expected to be achieved.

There are also activists from ***working-class*** backgrounds and at least six foreign-born New Yorkers poised to hold seats. If elected, Chi Ossé, who is 23, would also be the youngest person to serve on the next Council.

The progressive push

Several candidates further to the left faltered in the mayor’s race, and Eric Adams is poised to become the next mayor. Still, many of the expected Council members are left-leaning candidates who were supported by progressive groups and politicians.

[Read about [*Mr. Adams and his political career*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-nyc.html), and about [*why voters favored centrists in the mayor’s race*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/nyregion/kathryn-garcia-maya-wiley-eric-adams-mayor.html).]

The Working Families Party endorsed 30 candidates; 14 are on track to take office. Progressives also scored a victory in the race for city comptroller, where Brad Lander, who was endorsed by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, was victorious, according to The Associated Press.

Several races, however, underlined challenges facing the city’s political left. Six candidates were backed by the Democratic Socialists of America; only two are now poised to win.

From The Times

[*Who’s Happy About In-Person Summer School? N.Y.C. Parents.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/08/nyregion/nyc-summer-school.html)

[*Why Some of N.Y.C.’s Essential Workers Skipped a Parade to Honor Them*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/nyregion/NYC-parade-essential-workers.html)

[*A Private-School Sex Educator Defends Her Methods*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/style/sex-educator-methods-defense.html)

[*People Are Making Out. Everywhere.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/08/style/making-out-is-back.html)

Want more news? [*Check out our full coverage*](https://www.nytimes.com/section/nyregion).

The Mini Crossword: Here is [*today’s puzzle*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini).

What we’re reading

A 24-year-old man was arrested in connection with a May incident in which a firework was thrown at a Jewish woman during protests in Midtown Manhattan. [[*Daily News*](https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/nyc-crime/ny-suspect-arrested-fireworks-times-square-palestine-20210707-wfw5tlvqgnhj7knjkmy4yazq7e-story.html)]

One story of how a group of neighbors rallied to save some of their favorite restaurants in Brooklyn. [[*Grub Street*](https://www.grubstreet.com/2021/07/how-neighbors-rallied-to-save-their-favorite-restaurants.html)]

New York City’s immigration courts are reopening after largely being shut down for more than a year. [[*Gothamist*](https://gothamist.com/news/citys-immigration-courts-reopen-after-more-year-being-shut-down-all-most-urgent-cases)]

And finally: Disney’s early return to Broadway

[*The Times’s Nancy Coleman writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/theater/disney-broadway-benefit-concert.html):

For the first time in what certainly feels like forever, classics from the Disney songbook will once again — and sooner than expected — ring out from a Broadway stage.

The New Amsterdam Theater, usually home to “[*Aladdin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/21/theater/aladdin-tweaks-the-disney-formula-with-breezy-insouciance.html),” will briefly welcome audiences back for four concerts benefiting the Actors Fund in late July, with a handful of Disney stage alumni performing numbers from “[*The Lion King*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/15/theater/the-lion-king-south-africa.html),” “[*Frozen*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/27/theater/australia-theater-reopens-coronavirus.html),” “[*Beauty and the Beast*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/04/23/movies/critic-s-notebook-a-beauty-or-a-beast-contrasting-film-and-musical.html),” “Aladdin” and others.

The concert series, “[*Live at the New Am*](https://disneyonbroadway.com/liveatthenewam/),” is somewhat of a soft reopening for Disney’s theatrical division in New York, albeit without the more elaborate production elements and massive companies that its stage adaptations typically entail. “The Lion King” and “Aladdin,” along with nearly a dozen other Broadway shows, [*start back up in September*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/theater/broadway-reopening-guide.html).

Even yesterday, Covid-19 protocols for “Live at the New Am” were still in flux: Disney hadn’t decided whether masks will be required. Audience members will need to show proof that they are fully vaccinated; attendees under 12 are exempt but must be with a vaccinated adult.

The concert isn’t so much a test run of Covid-19 protocols ahead of the September reopenings, Schumacher said, since the latest guidance will continue to evolve. Logistically, after 16 months without an audience, it’s primarily a chance to get the theater’s entire ecosystem back up and running.

“It’s very difficult to imagine, just on a practical level, bringing the entire company of ‘Aladdin’ — orchestra, cast, crew, everybody, ushers — all back in the theater and, bang, just starting back in with the show,” Schumacher said.

It’s a process that involves reopening the box office, getting ticket-takers and other front-of-house staff back to work and examining the traffic patterns of how patrons move through the building.

Not to mention one of the more underrated needs: “To hear laughter and applause and joy in the space is valuable — gives everyone confidence,” Schumacher added. “People need confidence to come back.”

It’s Thursday — look forward to something.

Metropolitan Diary: ‘How much?’

Dear Diary:

I stepped off a bus on Fifth Avenue in Midtown on a steamy afternoon. My first stop was a nearby street vendor for a cold drink. I asked for a seltzer.

“How much?” I said. I expected to hear $2 or $3, so I was somewhat surprised when he said $5.

I handed him a $5 bill.

“I am not a tourist,” I said. “I live here.”

Flashing a big smile, he handed me back a single.

A modest victory, maybe, but it made my day.

— Art Schaffer

Illustrated by Agnes Lee. [*Read more Metropolitan Diary here*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/metropolitan-diary).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Brittainy Newman/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 4, 2021

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[***Election Denier Wins Republican Primary for Pennsylvania Governor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GB-Y2R1-DXY4-X17P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 18, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 14

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**Byline:** By Shane Goldmacher and Trip Gabriel

**Body**

Five states held primary elections on Tuesday, with Pennsylvania's contests for Senate and governor the center of attention.

Doug Mastriano, a far-right Republican state senator who marched on the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, and emerged as a leading denier of the 2020 election results, won his party's nomination for governor of Pennsylvania on Tuesday, as the battleground state's hotly contested Senate Republican primary remained too close to call.

The rise of Mr. Mastriano, the Republican front-runner even before a bandwagon-boarding endorsement by Donald J. Trump over the weekend, had the old guard of his party scrambling to derail him and pointing fingers as that became impossible, fearing that the conspiracy-promoting legislator would prove too extreme to win this fall.

''God is good, all the time,'' Mr. Mastriano said in his victory speech, outlining ''day one'' goals that included ''mandates are gone,'' ''any jab for job requirements are gone,'' critical race theory is ''over,'' ''only biological females can play on biological female teams'' and ''you can only use the bathroom that your biological anatomy says.''

The Republican Governors Association issued a tepid response after the race was called, not promising financial support. ''The R.G.A. remains committed to engaging in competitive gubernatorial contests,'' the group's executive director, Dave Rexrode, said in a statement.

In the Senate race, the celebrity physician Dr. Mehmet Oz and David McCormick, the former chief executive of the world's largest hedge fund, had bludgeoned each other on the airwaves and on the campaign trail for months in the Republican primary. With more than 90 percent of the vote counted, they were knotted together -- and possibly within range of a recount, which is triggered under state law if the margin is 0.5 percent or less of the total vote.

Both Mr. McCormick and Dr. Oz said in speeches to supporters that there would be no immediate result.

''We have tens of thousands of mail-in ballots that have not been counted,'' Mr. McCormick told the crowd at his election night watch party in Pittsburgh late Tuesday night, leaving unsaid that top Republicans have systematically sought to undermine faith in such ballots since 2020.

Kathy Barnette, a far-right commentator who has a history of expressing homophobic and anti-Muslim views, made a surprising late surge on the strength of her compelling personal story but was further behind.

In a sign of the race's importance this fall, President Biden congratulated the Democratic nominee, Lt. Gov. John Fetterman, and said of the G.O.P. field that ''whoever emerges will be too dangerous, too craven, and too extreme.''

Mr. Mastriano's victory sets up a fall clash with Attorney General Josh Shapiro, who was unopposed in the Democratic primary, a matchup with vast potential consequences both for state-level issues like abortion rights and for election certification in the 2024 presidential race.

Pennsylvania Republicans who fully control the Legislature are likely to attempt to restrict abortion rights if the Supreme Court overturns Roe v. Wade, as expected. That means whoever occupies the governor's residence in Harrisburg would determine whether such a bill becomes law. And the Pennsylvania governor appoints the secretary of state, whose office will oversee the 2024 election.

Mr. Mastriano and Ms. Barnette formed something of a hard-right ticket, endorsing one another as they attempted to fend off their better-funded rivals. Dr. Oz relied heavily on the conservative credibility he gained from Mr. Trump's endorsement while Mr. McCormick's Wall Street allies flooded the airwaves with attack ads.

Five states -- Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Kentucky, Oregon and Idaho -- held primaries on Tuesday, with the outcomes signaling the relative strength of the ideological factions in both political parties.

In North Carolina, Representative Madison Cawthorn, a Trump-backed Republican who has created a string of controversies and mini-scandals, including his comment that some colleagues in Washington had indulged in cocaine and orgies, conceded defeat to his primary challenger on Tuesday night, State Senator Chuck Edwards. He became the first incumbent who was not facing another member of Congress to lose a primary in 2022.

Also in North Carolina, Representative Ted Budd handily won the Republican nomination for an open Senate seat, riding an early Trump endorsement and millions of dollars in outside spending to best former Gov. Pat McCrory, in another sign of the diminished standing of the party establishment. Mr. Budd will face Cheri Beasley, a Democrat who is a former chief justice of the State Supreme Court and who would become North Carolina's first Black senator if elected.

In Idaho, another Trump-backed candidate, Lt. Gov. Janice McGeachin, lost her challenge to Gov. Brad Little, a fellow Republican. And in Oregon, Representative Kurt Schrader, a top moderate Democrat, was trailing his progressive challenger, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, in early vote tallies.

But Pennsylvania was the center of attention, a perennial presidential battleground that is seen as a bellwether of the nation's political mood. The retirement of Senator Pat Toomey, a Republican, and term limits for Gov. Tom Wolf, a Democrat, meant rare simultaneous open races for both governor and Senate -- and the latter could tip control of a chamber now evenly split 50-50 between the two parties.

Mr. Mastriano's election denialism has been a key part of his appeal to the Republican base. Pennsylvania is one of three top presidential battlegrounds with a current Democratic governorship up for grabs in 2022 and a Republican-led Legislature that has promoted voter-fraud myths. The two other states are Michigan and Wisconsin.

In the Pennsylvania Senate race, Mr. Fetterman, whose progressivism and campaign-trail uniform of shorts and hoodies helped earn him the support of grass-roots voters and a passionate online donor base, won the Democratic primary, easily defeating Representative Conor Lamb, a moderate from outside Pittsburgh who was endorsed by Democratic officials statewide as the most electable candidate.

Mr. Fetterman was leading in every county in the state.

The Democratic primaries came to an unusual finish, with both leading candidates absent from the trail. Mr. Shapiro, 48, tested positive for the coronavirus and was isolating at home while Mr. Fetterman, 52, suffered a stroke on Friday and his campaign announced he had a procedure on Tuesday ''to implant a pacemaker with a defibrillator.''

Both Democrats cast emergency absentee ballots.

Pennsylvania is outwardly a swing state, but Democratic strength has eroded in recent years. That has been clear in the difference between former President Barack Obama's five-point victory in 2012 in the state and the much narrower, one-point presidential races in 2016 and 2020. Democrats, who have long led in party registrations, have seen their advantage slip to 550,000, down from 815,000 during the May 2018 primaries.

Whomever Mr. Fetterman faces, the Pennsylvania Senate race is expected to be among the fiercest and most expensive of the fall, with millions of dollars in television ads already reserved.

A hulking figure with a shaved head, tattoos and a goatee, Mr. Fetterman has cultivated an outsider image in part by refusing to court elected party officials and campaigning in rural counties where Democrats have suffered huge losses. When he met President Biden at the site of a collapsed bridge, he wore shorts. When he attended the White House Easter Egg Roll, he sported a sweatshirt.

Democratic voters embraced that style and Mr. Fetterman's promise to win back support in the state's conservative interior counties over the centrist polish of Mr. Lamb, as well as Malcolm Kenyatta, a liberal state legislator from the Philadelphia area.

''He looks like a gruff ***working-class*** Western Pennsylvania dude,'' Brendan McPhillips, who ran Mr. Biden's campaign in the state in 2020, said of Mr. Fetterman. ''When he walks into a local dive bar, there's a resonance there.''

Mr. Fetterman, who endorsed Senator Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign in 2016, ran for Senate that same year, finishing a distant third in the primary.

The political climate nationally for Democrats in 2022 looks bleak. But many Pennsylvania Republicans are still openly worried about their party's chances with a Mastriano-led ticket.

Mr. Mastriano, who has been subpoenaed by the congressional committee investigating the Jan. 6 riot, made his own failed effort to subpoena voting machines to ''audit'' the 2020 election. Last month he spoke at a conference organized by QAnon conspiracy theorists.

''He's very far right,'' said Tom Marino, a former Republican congressman in the state. ''There will be moderate Republicans and independents and perhaps even some moderate Democrats in Pennsylvania that will not vote for Mastriano.''

Last-minute efforts to consolidate a deeply splintered Republican field and unite behind the leading Mastriano alternative in the polls, former Representative Lou Barletta, had mostly flopped even before Mr. Trump issued his endorsement. Mr. Mastriano was leading in a landslide, roughly doubling Mr. Barletta's vote total.

Mr. Marino lashed out at Mr. Trump for not backing Mr. Barletta. Both Mr. Marino and Mr. Barletta had supported Mr. Trump in 2016. Mr. Marino said he was frustrated that the former president would spurn an early Trump supporter in favor of Mr. Mastriano. ''With Trump, loyalty is a one-way street,'' Mr. Marino said in an interview, ''and I've learned that now.''

Mr. Shapiro made clear his preference, meddling in the Republican primary in the final weeks to boost Mr. Mastriano, an Army veteran who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, by running television ads that highlighted some of his conservative stances popular with the Republican base.

As of May 2, the Shapiro campaign had $15.8 million; the Mastriano campaign had less than $800,000, according to state records.

Mr. Shapiro has said he will make the fall election partly a referendum on abortion rights, given the likelihood that, in a post-Roe world, the Republican-led legislature will pass a bill strongly restricting abortion. Mr. Shapiro has said he would veto such a measure while Mr. Mastriano, who has made his Christian faith central to his candidacy, favors banning abortion with no exceptions for rape, incest or the mother's health.

For much of 2022, the Republican Senate primary had been dominated by Dr. Oz and Mr. McCormick, who spent, along with allies, more than $45 million on television advertisements. Ms. Barnette spent less than $200,000 but used debates and her biography as a Black woman who was a ''byproduct of rape'' and who became an unabashed right-wing Republican to connect with the conservative base.

The Club for Growth, an anti-tax group, spent more than $2 million to give Ms. Barnette a late boost but an intense set of last-minute attacks, including from Mr. Trump, appeared to take a toll. ''When she's vetted, it's going to be a catastrophe for the party,'' the former president warned Monday.

She has notably not committed to backing her G.O.P. rivals in November. ''I have no intention of supporting globalists,'' she said on a Breitbart podcast on Monday.

Mr. Trump had originally endorsed Sean Parnell, a failed congressional candidate, for the seat last year, but Mr. Parnell quit the race after his estranged wife accused him of abuse. In April, Mr. Trump endorsed Dr. Oz after a heavy lobbying campaign by both Mr. McCormick, who served in the George W. Bush administration, and Dr. Oz.

A key figure in Dr. Oz's camp was Sean Hannity, the Fox News host who regularly had the doctor on his program.

In his election night speech, Dr. Oz thanked, in order, his wife, Mr. Trump and Mr. Hannity. ''He understands exactly how to make a difference and he's been doing that this entire campaign,'' Dr. Oz said of Mr. Hannity.

Mr. McCormick, whose wife was a senior Trump White House official, brought a bevy of Trump alumni onto his campaign team -- a fact that Mr. Trump ridiculed at his lone rally with Dr. Oz.

''If anybody was within 200 miles of me, he hired them,'' Mr. Trump said of Mr. McCormick.

Both Mr. McCormick and Dr. Oz were accused of carpetbagging. Mr. McCormick, who is from Pennsylvania, lived in Connecticut while leading Bridgewater, the hedge fund. Dr. Oz, who attended medical school at the University of Pennsylvania, moved back to the state from New Jersey in late 2020, according to his campaign, originally renting a home from his wife's parents.

Dr. Oz faced hesitancy from conservative voters about his residency, his dual Turkish citizenship and previous positions that he took in interviews, on his TV show and in columns with his byline for gun restrictions and abortion rights. Those issues -- along with the image of him kissing his Hollywood star -- were aired relentlessly by a pro-McCormick super PAC.

Mr. Trump, who traveled to the state to hold a rally for Dr. Oz, was instrumental in building up the right-wing bona fides. At a rally on the eve of the election, Dr. Oz put Mr. Trump on speakerphone and held it close to the microphone, nodding along as the former president said, ''He's a loyal MAGA person.''

Nick Corasaniti and Jazmine Ulloa contributed reporting.Nick Corasaniti and Jazmine Ulloa contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/us/politics/gop-senate-primary-pa.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/us/politics/gop-senate-primary-pa.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Doug Mastriano, who won the Republican nomination for governor in Pennsylvania, arrived at his election night party in Chambersburg. At left, Representative Ted Budd, the G.O.P. winner in North Carolina, will vie for the Senate. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAROLYN KASTER/ASSOCIATED PRESS

MELISSA SUE GERRITS/GETTY IMAGES)

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[***The Daily: An Audio Guide to the Election***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:615Y-NNV1-DXY4-X08Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Desiree Ibekwe

**Highlight:** Join us on a sonic journey back through the presidential campaign in preparation for Election Day.

**Body**

Join us on a sonic journey back through the presidential campaign in preparation for Election Day.

The Daily: Live Election Day Broadcast

Host Michael Barbaro and Times deputy managing editor Carolyn Ryan will talk to correspondents and voters on a history-making day.

Tune in Tuesday, Nov. 3 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern.

Only at nytimes.com/thedaily and on The New York Times iPhone app.

The 2020 campaign — like much of the year — has been filled with convulsions and unexpected turns. And The Daily team, along with our guest reporters, have been there for it all. Over the last few months, we have drilled down on what the candidates truly stand for and traveled into towns and cities across the country to document the hopes and anxieties among voters.

As we head into the final days of the election campaign, we look back at some of our reporting to help you make sense of it all.

The Candidates

Has President Trump delivered on the promises he made on the 2016 campaign trail? What does Joe Biden stand for?

In a two-part series, we examined the policies of the president as well as the man seeking to replace him.

The Voters

For [*“The Field,”*](https://open.spotify.com/show/5qZVjeWMl3JRAwalPYpZQF?si=pNrzFKhcQzyKJ6v2JPX8Tg) a series that has sought to take the temperature of the country ahead of the election, our producers alongside Times reporters have traveled the nation.

Through their reporting we heard from Latino voters in Arizona, split in their party allegiances; spoke with white ***working-class*** Trump supporters in Pennsylvania who defected from the Democratic Party in 2016; and followed Julius Irving, an ex-felon in Florida, as he tried to persuade other former prisoners to use their newly regained right to vote.

The Unexpected

Throughout the campaign, The Daily team has remained poised for the surprise twists and revelations.

We stayed up late to make sense of the chaos of the first presidential debate, released a special afternoon edition on President Trump’s coronavirus diagnosis, and published two episodes in a single morning to pay tribute to Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and explore the political ramifications of her passing.

Here is some of our coverage on the events that changed the stakes of the contest.

The Historical Lens

Amid all the noise, we often journeyed into the past to help us understand the present. We explored how Joe Biden’s Democratic nomination was the culmination of a three-decade-long ambition and charted the events of the contested 2000 race between George W. Bush and Al Gore.

The Cultural Context

Two seismic changes to the American body politic happened this year: the coronavirus pandemic and the police killing of George Floyd — and the racial reckoning it precipitated.

INSIDE ‘THE DAILY’ For an exclusive look at how the biggest stories on our show come together, [*subscribe to our newsletter*](https://open.spotify.com/show/5qZVjeWMl3JRAwalPYpZQF?si=pNrzFKhcQzyKJ6v2JPX8Tg). Read the latest edition [*here*](https://open.spotify.com/show/5qZVjeWMl3JRAwalPYpZQF?si=pNrzFKhcQzyKJ6v2JPX8Tg).

There are a lot of ways to listen to ‘The Daily.’ [*Here’s how.*](https://open.spotify.com/show/5qZVjeWMl3JRAwalPYpZQF?si=pNrzFKhcQzyKJ6v2JPX8Tg)

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“The Daily” is made by Theo Balcomb, Andy Mills, Lisa Tobin, Rachel Quester, Lynsea Garrison, Annie Brown, Clare Toeniskoetter, Paige Cowett, Michael Simon Johnson, Brad Fisher, Larissa Anderson, Wendy Dorr, Chris Wood, Jessica Cheung, Stella Tan, Alexandra Leigh Young, Lisa Chow, Eric Krupke, Marc Georges, Luke Vander Ploeg, Kelly Prime, Sindhu Gnanasambandan, M.J. Davis Lin, Austin Mitchell, Neena Pathak, Dan Powell, Dave Shaw, Sydney Harper, Daniel Guillemette, Hans Buetow, Robert Jimison, Mike Benoist, Bianca Giaever, Liz O. Baylen, Asthaa Chaturvedi and Rachelle Bonja. Our theme music is by Jim Brunberg and Ben Landsverk of Wonderly. Special thanks to Sam Dolnick, Mikayla Bouchard, Lauren Jackson, Julia Simon, Mahima Chablani, Nora Keller, Sofia Milan and Desiree Ibekwe.

PHOTO: Joe Biden, the Democratic nominee for President, speaks at a campaign drive-in rally at Broward College in Coconut Creek, FL on Thursday; President Trump during a campaign rally at the Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport in Bullhead City, AZ, Wednesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Erin Schaff/The New York Times; Doug Mills/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Not Bitter, Maybe Even at Peace***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66C4-DGT1-DXY4-X0VS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Byline:** By Michael Gold

**Body**

For decades, as Bill de Blasio climbed the political ladder, he resolutely insisted he was a New Yorker. This insistence came even though he was raised primarily in Boston -- well, nearby in Cambridge, technically -- and kept his childhood fealty to the Red Sox.

As he ascended from councilmember to public advocate to mayor, New Yorkers grew to accept him. Not necessarily as one of their own -- the man used a fork and knife to eat a slice of pizza, after all -- but as a progressive leader who would restore the city to its left-leaning core after 20 years of non-Democratic mayors.

Yet this fall, with New York City having spurned his recent bid for Congress, Mr. de Blasio will pack his bags and head briefly to Boston -- well, Cambridge -- where he will leave his life in electoral politics behind and be a visiting teaching fellow at Harvard University.

The move isn't permanent; Mr. de Blasio and his family will remain in Brooklyn. But, he said in an interview, it would ''be sweet to spend a little time in the town I grew up in'' and to head to Fenway Park to watch his beloved Red Sox. ''Not that they're doing so much this season,'' he added with a laugh. After many highs in the past decade, the Sox are currently last in their division.

Mr. de Blasio, 61, may very well relate. After an energizing election in 2013, he left office last year as one of the most unpopular mayors in the city's history. Then, in May, he announced that he would run for Congress but dropped out after two months of campaigning made it clear that his neighbors were not especially eager for his return to the political arena.

Despite the rejection, Mr. de Blasio was not bitter or defeated but energized and hopeful. The failed campaign had been ''gratifying,'' he said. It renewed his dedication to serving the public, even if the public was not so sure it wanted to be served by him.

''Humans vote emotionally,'' Mr. de Blasio said. ''And if you're tired of someone, you're tired of them.''

Mr. de Blasio's fall from political grace was less a precipitous drop than it was a cascading series of political pratfalls and miscalculations.

He entered City Hall in 2014 as the first Democratic mayor in two decades, and he carried the hopes of much of the city on his shoulders. After spending his campaign vowing to tackle growing inequality and represent historically neglected communities, his decisive electoral victory made him a prominent bearer of a left-leaning, populist politics that has in recent years fueled rising Democratic stars like Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

But Mr. de Blasio was immediately met with challenges. He battled with Andrew M. Cuomo, a fellow Democrat who was then the governor, and city police unions. He lost liberal followers over not living up to campaign promises, and then, after a landslide re-election, further antagonized them when he appeared to side with the police during the city's rancorous racial justice protests.

His political ambitions did not help matters. From the get-go, Mr. de Blasio held an unwavering view of himself as a progressive catalyst on the national stage, visiting Iowa during his first term as mayor and making a quixotic run for president in his second.

By the time he left office in 2021, his popularity had cratered, creating an obstacle for his congressional run that he ultimately proved unable to surmount.

In interviews with numerous former aides and advisers to Mr. de Blasio, a portrait emerged of a mayor whose public image steadily eroded only in part because of his job performance; many, including some who were once his closest supporters, said it was his didactic manner that alienated New Yorkers.

Over the last several months, Mr. de Blasio has acknowledged that he had not been a perfect leader, saying that he ''made mistakes'' that he hoped to learn from. In a frank and reflective interview that addressed his regrets as mayor and the likely end of his political career, he said that chief among those mistakes was failing to stay ''close to the hearts of people'' and maintain ''the personal bond'' that propelled him into City Hall.

''I really lost track of that need,'' Mr. de Blasio said. ''And that's a real mistake on my part.''

Policy Meets Reality

Mr. de Blasio entered the 2013 mayoral race as a left-leaning antidote to the city's 20-year run under Rudolph W. Giuliani and Michael R. Bloomberg. He had a multiracial family that, as he often pointed out, looked like the voters he sought to represent.

He vowed to end the city's income inequality, which disproportionately affected ***working-class*** New Yorkers in communities of color. Many of his signature initiatives -- universal prekindergarten; laws protecting fast-food workers from unpredictable and exploitative schedules; and the reduction of the Police Department's use of stop-and-frisk tactics -- addressed those groups' concerns.

Still, Mr. de Blasio's push to turn his policy planks to reality would almost immediately expose his vulnerabilities and open him up to criticism that would plague him throughout his mayoralty.

Weeks after taking office in 2014, Mr. de Blasio set to work trying to enact universal prekindergarten. The initiative was ultimately successful, but the battle to pay for it would become the first of many bruising fights with the governor.

During his campaign, Mr. de Blasio had promised that the money for universal pre-K would come from a dedicated tax on the wealthy. Doing so required approval from Albany, and Mr. Cuomo, who was running for re-election that fall, was against it.

The fight set the two lawmakers on an ugly collision course: Mr. de Blasio was adamant about the tax, insisting the people had given him a mandate. Mr. Cuomo pushed back, in private and in public. When Mr. de Blasio tried to rally support in Albany, Mr. Cuomo lent his support to a competing rally meant to protest the mayor's handling of charter schools and embarrass him.

In the end, the governor got his way. The state did provide dedicated money for pre-K, but Mr. de Blasio did not get the tax he sought, even after spending considerable capital on the fight.

The dispute kicked off a yearslong vitriolic feud with Mr. Cuomo, who during their overlapping years in office would pin many of the city's problems on the mayor, then engage in constant one-upsmanship in an effort to solve them. Mr. Cuomo would characterize Mr. de Blasio repeatedly as a self-righteous ideologue who was often unwilling to compromise.

Mr. de Blasio tried to take his conflict with the governor to a broader stage, publicly accusing Mr. Cuomo of petty and vindictive political machinations against dissenters. But the gambit to sway public opinion failed to seriously alter Mr. Cuomo's standing, and he remained a thorn in the mayor's side on key issues until the governor resigned in August 2021.

As the governor used his bully pulpit to denigrate the mayor, Mr. de Blasio did not exactly help matters, often exhibiting a stubborn streak and dismissive attitude that exasperated his supporters.

His insistence on working out at a Y.M.C.A. in Park Slope, Brooklyn, was often cited. Despite moving to Gracie Mansion on Manhattan's Upper East Side, Mr. de Blasio insisted on traveling in a private car with a police escort some 11 miles to his preferred gym.

Throughout his time as mayor, Mr. de Blasio defended his gym visits -- criticized by many as wasteful and environmentally unsound -- and did not acknowledge that the trips were misguided until earlier this year.

People's objections to him were so much about his image, said a former adviser. Even when the solution seemed obvious to all in his circle -- that is, stop taking a motorcade to a gym in Brooklyn -- the mayor wouldn't even consider it.

Losing the Police Department

The first major crisis for Mr. de Blasio arrived in July 2014, when a confrontation on Staten Island between the police and an unarmed Black man, Eric Garner, led to his death.

Mr. de Blasio had campaigned as a fierce critic of the Police Department, and had committed to improving its relationships with Black and Hispanic residents. In the immediate aftermath of Mr. Garner's death, Mr. de Blasio's middle-ground approach left many left-leaning supporters dissatisfied.

Months later, after a grand jury decided not to indict the police officer whose chokehold led to Mr. Garner's death, Mr. de Blasio -- who already had a tense relationship with law enforcement -- again sought to stay above the fray. Still, as protests sprung up, he voiced sympathy for the protesters and gave an emotional speech, saying that he had urged his biracial son to be especially cautious in encounters with officers.

Police union leaders took offense. Then, weeks later, two officers were shot and killed in their patrol car. When Mr. de Blasio went to the officers' funerals, dozens turned their backs on him in protest. A de facto work slowdown also followed, leading some to believe that the mayor had lost control of the Police Department.

Former aides and advisers said that the tension with the police cost him support in particular among wealthy white voters, who were dismayed by the police slowdown and feared higher crime, and among liberals who thought he was failing to live up to his campaign promises.

Another controversy over policing tactics brought Mr. de Blasio further difficulty in June 2020, as protests erupted across the city following the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

When video showed officers driving into a crowd of demonstrators in Brooklyn, Mr. de Blasio appeared to blame protesters. After reporters at other protests witnessed aggressive police behavior, the mayor argued that the press had seen a ''different reality'' than some of his staff.

The mayor's equivocating led to a protest from then-current and former City Hall employees and the departure of several staff members, including Olivia Lapeyrolerie, a deputy press secretary for the mayor.

''There was definitely some disappointment that he didn't live up to this progressive beacon that he said he was going to be in 2013,'' Ms. Lapeyrolerie said.

Mr. de Blasio said that he understood the frustration. But his chief concern had been to ensure that nobody died during the protests and to stem looting and property damage. Media coverage, in particular, he said, did not reflect that larger context.

''I think the bigger picture needs to be given respect as well,'' he said.

How Does It Play in Iowa?

Even as he faced difficulties advancing a progressive agenda at home, Mr. de Blasio was committed to securing a spot on the national stage. In 2015, with just a year in City Hall, he traveled to Nebraska and Iowa in an attempt to sway the Democratic Party to embrace his style of politics. More trips to other far-flung parts of the country followed, as Mr. de Blasio tried to increase his name recognition.

These efforts bred more missteps. Many New Yorkers felt the mayor's attentions were too often focused away from home, especially so early in his first term. Nationally, the Democratic establishment was dismayed by his dragged-out endorsement of Hillary Clinton in her 2016 presidential campaign. Despite the fact that he ran her Senate campaign in 2000, he seemed to be putting his ideology over their long-established ties.

That reluctance later kept him on the sidelines of Mrs. Clinton's campaign, which first declined his offer to campaign for her in Iowa, then sidelined him at appearances as her race heated up.

Meanwhile, his campaign for re-election was also approaching, and there were troubles at home. As Mr. de Blasio was out supporting Mrs. Clinton, his own press secretary resigned. It was one of several high-profile departures at the time.

While attrition is common in any mayoral administration, many of those who left their jobs with Mr. de Blasio often cited his management style and personality as their reason. High-ranking women, in particular, said the work environment was hostile or frustrating.

Some of those who departed would go on to become outspoken critics. Rebecca Kirszner Katz, a spokeswoman whom Mr. de Blasio once called ''the fifth member'' of his family, left to become a political consultant. She would become one of Mr. de Blasio's most vocal antagonists toward the end of his mayoralty. ''I've been defending de Blasio's record for years,'' she said in 2019. ''I stopped defending his choices a long time ago.''

Despite the mounting criticism and a dwindling inner circle, Mr. de Blasio sailed to re-election in 2017. But the path forward still would not be easy: Mr. de Blasio continued to spar with Mr. Cuomo, and the City Council showed a new willingness to challenge an increasingly unpopular mayor.

The re-election did not boost Mr. de Blasio's support substantially, and his standing at home was further weakened by his presidential bid. His curious national trips fed speculation that the mayor had presidential ambitions, despite a lack of name recognition and long odds. In May 2019, he made his campaign official.

Almost immediately, the decision angered city residents, who felt he was ignoring them to chase a dream that had little chance of succeeding. His absence during a July blackout that took out the power in large chunks of Manhattan prompted further griping.

In the end, Mr. de Blasio abandoned the race after four months, the first time in nearly two decades that he had mounted an unsuccessful electoral campaign. He returned home that September promising to double down on his progressive planks.

Several months later, the coronavirus pandemic hit New York.

The 'Alternate Universe' Mayoralty

The onset of the pandemic in March 2020 sat, in many ways, at the intersection of problems plaguing Mr. de Blasio. He clashed with top health officials over shutdowns, resisting the pleas of advisers and public health experts who urged him to close schools and restaurants. As tensions grew, he lost a valued public health commissioner, Dr. Oxiris Barbot, who in her resignation email voiced ''deep disappointment'' that Mr. de Blasio had not sufficiently relied on her department's expertise. (Dr. Barbot did not respond to a request for comment.)

He also fought with Mr. Cuomo over who had the final say over shutdowns, reopenings, restrictions and how to administer vaccines. At one point, as he was urging residents to stay home, he traveled the 11 miles from Gracie Mansion to the gym.

Looking back, Mr. de Blasio said he largely stood by his decisions during the pandemic, including his push to reopen city schools in the fall of 2020. But he acknowledged that the period was traumatizing for New York and said that it contributed in large part to his low popularity in parts of the city.

''After the intense difficulties that people went through, it's hard to ask people, if they were upset about a certain decision with Covid, it's hard to say, 'Hey, let's look at the big picture again,''' Mr. de Blasio said. ''Because that was so recent and intense.''

The continued threat of the pandemic in the mayor's final year further challenged his agenda. While the virus exposed the inequality that Mr. de Blasio had brought to the fore, it also raised questions about whether he had been able to address it.

Still, in the final months of Mr. de Blasio's time in office, the outlook became rosier. Mr. Cuomo's resignation amid several scandals led many to reconsider whether Mr. de Blasio had been treated unfairly. As the city started to reopen, Mr. de Blasio became one of its biggest cheerleaders. After years of a bitter slog, he seemed to be having fun.

Mr. de Blasio described the second half of his last year in office as ''sort of the alternate universe'' version of his mayoralty.

''I felt more at peace,'' he said. ''We ended on a note that was very moving and positive. That last day at City Hall felt very much like the pieces had come together.''

Mr. de Blasio had hoped to carry that newfound momentum into the congressional race. He entered with significant advantages: broad name recognition, a track record of some successes, solid fund-raising and a district in his political home base.

''When I first heard he was running for Congress, it honestly made immense sense to me,'' Ms. Lapeyrolerie said. ''I was like, 'I feel like he would actually be quite good at this.'''

Now, though, a future career in electoral politics seems unlikely.

''I'm a little sad about it,'' Mr. de Blasio said. ''But I'm not deeply pained, because I really have had the opportunity to think.''

After dropping his campaign bid, Mr. de Blasio took some time off, the first stretch in years that he ''actually felt some relief and the ability to calm and de-stress,'' he said.

When he heads to Harvard, among the areas of focus will be two of his biggest successes as mayor, the highs that book-ended his eight-year term: early childhood education and steering the city through a pandemic.

But when his time as a fellow ends, Mr. de Blasio's future is uncertain.

''It's public service, unquestionably,'' he said. ''I don't know what form it will take. But I do know that I feel a lot of energy, and I feel a lot of desire to serve.''

Jeffery C. Mays contributed reporting.Jeffery C. Mays contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/09/nyregion/bill-de-blasio-ny-mayor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/09/nyregion/bill-de-blasio-ny-mayor.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Bill de Blasio, the previous mayor of New York City, is leaving electoral politics behind for now and will be a visiting teaching fellow in his former hometown, Cambridge, Mass., where there is currently little joy over his beloved Boston Red Sox. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSHUA BRIGHT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB1)

Mayor Bill de Blasio emerging from his favorite Y.M.C.A., in Brooklyn, in 2016. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

The mayor created universal prekindergarten programs, but it was a bruising fight. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SETH WENIG/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

In 2020, Mr. de Blasio became embroiled in disputes over police tactics at protests. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DEMETRIUS FREEMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

At a 2015 funeral, some police officers turned their backs to the mayor as a silent protest. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAMON WINTER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

The mayor often feuded with Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo, above in 2014, who resigned in 2021. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NATHANIEL BROOKS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Mr. de Blasio at a presidential campaign rally in South Carolina in 2019. He soon dropped out. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SEAN RAYFORD/GETTY IMAGES) (MB4)

**Load-Date:** September 11, 2022

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[***Economic Forces Push World's Poorest to Brink***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GB-Y2R1-DXY4-X171-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Peter S. Goodman, Ruth Maclean, Salman Masood, Elif Ince, Flávia Milhorance, Muktita Suhartono and Brenda Kiven

**Body**

Before war ravaged Yemen, Walid Al-Ahdal did not worry about feeding his children. At his hometown near the Red Sea, his family grew corn, raised goats and relied on their own cow for milk.

But for the last four years, after fighting forced them to flee, their home has been a tent at a camp with 9,000 other families outside the capital city of Sana. Mr. Al-Ahdal has struggled to buy adequate food with his wages as a janitor at a hospital.

Now another war -- this one more than 2,000 miles away -- has upended their lives again. Food prices are soaring. Since Russia invaded Ukraine, the cost of wheat has more than doubled, while milk has climbed by two-thirds.

On many nights, Mr. Al-Ahdal, 25, has nothing to feed his 2-year-old daughter and his three boys, ages 3, 5 and 6. He consoles them with tea and sends them to bed.

''My heart hurts every time my child looks for food that is not there,'' Mr. Al-Ahdal said. ''But what can I do?''

The hunger gnawing at families in war-torn countries like Yemen highlights a broader crisis confronting billions of people in the world's less-affluent economies as the consequences of Russia's assault on Ukraine are compounded by other challenges -- the continuing pandemic, a global tightening of credit and a slowdown in China, the second-largest economy after the United States.

''It's like wildfires in all directions,'' said Jayati Ghosh, an economist at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. ''This is much bigger than after the global financial crisis. Everything is stacked against the low- and middle-income countries.''

The most direct repercussions are seen in the rising prices of cooking fuel, fertilizer and staple foods like wheat, disrupting agriculture and threatening nutrition in much of the world.

Sanctions imposed on Russia, a major oil and gas exporter, have constrained the supply of energy, sending prices skyward and limiting economic growth, especially in countries heavily dependent on imports.

High energy prices are at the center of diminished expectations for global economic growth, now estimated at 3.6 percent this year compared with 6.1 percent last year, according to a forecast from the International Monetary Fund.

More than 14 million people are now on the brink of starvation in the Horn of Africa, according to the International Rescue Committee -- the result of a terrible drought combined with the pandemic and shortfalls of grains from Russia and Ukraine. The two countries are collectively the source for one-fourth of the world's exports of wheat.

Last week, as India banned exports of most of its wheat, concerns deepened. India is the world's second-largest wheat producer and holds abundant reserves.

The war in Ukraine threatens to impede the humanitarian response, lifting by as much as 16 percent the prices of components like peanuts that are blended into a therapeutic paste used to treat children facing life-threatening levels of malnutrition, UNICEF warned on Monday.

This catastrophe is unfolding as the pandemic continues to assail health systems, depleting government resources, and as the Federal Reserve and other central banks raise interest rates to choke off inflation. That is prompting investors to abandon lower-income countries while moving funds into less risky assets in wealthy economies.

This tidal shift in the flow of money has lifted the U.S. dollar while pushing down the value of currencies from India to South Africa to Brazil, making their imports more expensive. Tighter credit is also increasing borrowing costs for heavily indebted governments.

Not least, China, long the engine of growth for many countries, has become a significant source of drag. As the Chinese government extends lockdowns to enforce its zero-Covid policy, the result is weaker demand for raw materials, parts and finished goods shipped to China from around the globe.

''I look at a perfect storm developing in places like Yemen, and many other places around the world,'' said Philippe Duamelle, the UNICEF representative for Yemen. ''Families have terrible choices to make.''

Not Enough Bread

On a fiercely hot morning in Cameroon's largest city, Douala, Michael Moki, a motorcycle taxi driver, pulled up to a glass case containing a scattering of bread rolls.

A jovial man with a ready laugh, Mr. Moki, 34, ordered 500 Central African francs' (about 80 cents) worth of rolls -- breakfast for his family of five. When the vendor handed him the bag, the smile fell from his face.

''Your bread gets smaller every day, and the price increases,'' he complained to the young man behind the counter. ''Do you think I can eat all of this and get full?''

''The price of flour has gone up,'' the vendor replied.

This kind of exchange has become commonplace in markets across Africa and parts of Asia.

The fighting in Ukraine has prompted farmers in Ukraine to flee their land, while Russia has blockaded Ukrainian ports on the Black Sea -- vital conduits for exports. Last week, the World Food Program warned that the shutdowns of the ports threatened to worsen severe food insecurity in Ethiopia, South Sudan, Syria, Yemen and Afghanistan.

Russia and Ukraine supply all the wheat imported by Somalia and Benin, and at least two-thirds of the supply reaching Tanzania, Senegal, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and Egypt, according to research from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Globally, export prices for wheat and corn soared more than one-fifth in the month after Russia invaded Ukraine, according to the World Food Program.

Some economists accuse multinational agribusiness of exploiting the chaos caused by the pandemic and the war to lift prices beyond any connection to supply and demand. Ms. Ghosh, the economist, cited evidence that financial speculation is driving food prices higher.

In April, speculators were responsible for 72 percent of the buying activity on the Paris wheat market, up from 25 percent before the pandemic, according to data analyzed by Lighthouse Reports, a European journalism collaborative.

Many poor countries now confront an uncomfortable choice -- increasing spending to aid their populations while adding to their debts, or imposing budget austerity and courting social conflict. Last week, public rage over rapid inflation amid a spiraling debt crisis in Sri Lanka triggered the downfall of the government. The risks of upheaval look dire in Tunisia, Ghana, South Africa and Morocco, Oxford Economics warned in a recent report.

For Mr. Moki, the motorcycle taxi driver, the source of strife was immediate. Returning to his two-room apartment, he faced disappointment from his wife over his meager breakfast haul.

Their landlord is increasing their rent from a barely affordable 50,000 francs ($80) a month to 75,000 francs ($120), citing his own higher costs.

''Things are becoming very difficult for us,'' Mr. Moki said.

Culling the Herd

Sencer Solakoglu, a dairy farmer in Turkey, is getting squeezed by forces beyond his control.

The prices of animal feed like hay, corn and alfalfa -- much of it imported from Russia and Ukraine -- have doubled and tripled in recent months. Yet the government, fearing public anger over inflation, has pressured farmers to forgo price increases, limiting Mr. Solakoglu's ability to recoup his costs.

Turkish households, battered by a long-running economic crisis, have cut back on milk, slashing his sales by roughly half.

This is how Mr. Solakoglu, whose farm sits outside the Turkish city of Bursa, found himself culling his dairy herd by 200 in recent months.

''We slaughtered every cow that produced less than 30 kilograms (66 pounds) of milk per day,'' he said.

These sorts of grim calculations have become routine in Turkey, a country that has gained intimate familiarity with economic distress.

After the global financial crisis of 2008, central banks in major economies like the United States and Europe dropped interest rates to near zero to spur growth. As international investors sought better returns, they piled into so-called emerging markets, accepting higher risks in exchange for greater rewards.

Turkey's strongman president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, urged his cronies to avail themselves of international borrowing to finance enormous construction projects that kept the economy growing.

By 2017, investors fretted that the staggering debts held by Turkish companies posed the risk of defaults. They dumped the Turkish lira, pushing its value down roughly three-fourths by the end of last year.

That was the story before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and before central banks around the globe began raising interest rates.

By April, the lira was falling anew, and Turkey's inflation rate was running at nearly 70 percent -- its worst mark in two decades.

Even in countries facing less dire circumstances, farmers are grappling with malevolent arithmetic, as prices rise for animal feed, fertilizers and pesticides.

Indonesia has in recent years imported growing stocks of fertilizer from Russia. With fertilizer costs doubling in recent months, farmers have limited their application, diminishing their harvests.

''The current situation is the worst that we have ever seen,'' said Ajat Sudrajat, a farmer in the Cipanas district of West Java, an agricultural area that serves Jakarta, Indonesia's teeming capital.

Impossible Debts

Two years ago, when Rubab Zafar and her husband, Muhammad Ali, left their village in rural Pakistan for new lives in Islamabad, they were full of optimism.

''There were no jobs in the village,'' said Ms. Zafar, 31. ''Islamabad is a big city, and we thought there would be some opportunity for us here.''

Instead, they have suffered the grind of a country grappling with impossible debts and downward mobility.

Ms. Zafar recently lost her babysitting job, while securing occasional part-time stints. Her husband works for a ride-hailing app. Collectively, they earn about 25,000 rupees a month (about $133), which barely covers the rent for their single room in a ***working-class*** neighborhood.

They are behind on their electrical bill, placing them in the same position as the Pakistani government, now in talks with the International Monetary Fund for an extension on a $6 billion package of loans.

Since 2016, Pakistan's external debt payments have swelled to 38 percent of government revenue from about 9 percent, according to data tabulated by Debt Justice, an advocacy organization in England.

Debt payments have absorbed money that might otherwise support people like Ms. Zafar. Several times, she has applied for a cash grant, only to be turned away without explanation.

Downward Mobility

Brazil, a major exporter, is often portrayed as a beneficiary of rising commodity prices.

But in the shantytowns of Brazil's major cities, where poverty frames daily life, people are focused on the exploding cost of liquefied petroleum gas, the cooking fuel used in 96 percent of homes.

Since February, the price of a canister of L.P. gas has increased nearly 10 percent, reaching its highest level in two decades, according to government data.

''It is the only thing we talk about,'' said Vanderley de Melo Pereira, 55, a father of two in Rocinha, a teeming slum in Rio de Janeiro. ''Since the war in Ukraine started, things have gotten worse.''

Across Latin America, the unfolding crisis threatens to erase decades of progress in boosting living standards.

''There are no prospects for growth,'' said Liliana Rojas-Suarez, a regional expert and senior fellow at the Center for Global Development in Washington. ''I think we're going to have another lost decade.''

Ruth Maclean reported from Dakar, Senegal; Salman Masood from Islamabad, Pakistan; Elif Ince from Istanbul; Flávia Milhorance from Rio de Janeiro; Muktita Suhartono from West Java, Indonesia; and Brenda Kiven from Douala, Cameroon. Renato Dias in Rio de Janeiro contributed to this report.Ruth Maclean reported from Dakar, Senegal; Salman Masood from Islamabad, Pakistan; Elif Ince from Istanbul; Flávia Milhorance from Rio de Janeiro; Muktita Suhartono from West Java, Indonesia; and Brenda Kiven from Douala, Cameroon. Renato Dias in Rio de Janeiro contributed to this report.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/business/inflation-developing-economies.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/business/inflation-developing-economies.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A market in Cameroon. Across Africa, people are increasingly getting less food for their money. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TOM SAATER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1)

Walid Al-Ahdal and his children at a refugee camp in Yemen. Now a war thousands of miles away has upended their lives further. (PHOTOGRAPH BY OWIS ALHAMDANI/UNICEF)

Vanderley de Melo Pereira, right, in Rio de Janeiro traces worsening conditions to the war in Ukraine. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DADO GALDIERI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A7)

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2022

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[***The G.O.P. Senate primary in Pennsylvania remains a tossup as an election denier wins the Republican primary for governor.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GB-6P61-DXY4-X12P-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Five states held primary elections on Tuesday, with Pennsylvania’s contests for Senate and governor the center of attention.

**Body**

Five states held primary elections on Tuesday, with Pennsylvania’s contests for Senate and governor the center of attention.

Doug Mastriano, a far-right Republican state senator who marched on the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, and emerged as a leading denier of the 2020 election results, won his party’s nomination for governor of Pennsylvania on Tuesday, as the battleground state’s hotly contested Senate Republican primary remained too close to call.

The rise of Mr. Mastriano, the Republican front-runner even before a bandwagon-boarding endorsement by Donald J. Trump over the weekend, had the old guard of his party scrambling to derail him and pointing fingers as that became impossible, fearing that the conspiracy-promoting legislator would prove too extreme to win this fall.

“God is good, all the time,” Mr. Mastriano said in his victory speech, outlining “day one” goals that included “mandates are gone,” “any jab for job requirements are gone,” critical race theory is “over,” “only biological females can play on biological female teams” and “you can only use the bathroom that your biological anatomy says.”

The Republican Governors Association issued a tepid response after the race was called, not promising financial support. “The R.G.A. remains committed to engaging in competitive gubernatorial contests,” the group’s executive director, Dave Rexrode, said in a statement.

In the Senate race, the celebrity physician Dr. Mehmet Oz and David McCormick, the former chief executive of the world’s largest hedge fund, had bludgeoned each other on the airwaves and on the campaign trail for months in the Republican primary. With more than 90 percent of the vote counted, they were knotted together — and possibly within range of a recount, which is triggered under state law if the margin is 0.5 percent or less of the total vote.

Both Mr. McCormick and Dr. Oz said in speeches to supporters that there would be no immediate result.

“We have tens of thousands of mail-in ballots that have not been counted,” Mr. McCormick told the crowd at his election night watch party in Pittsburgh late Tuesday night, leaving unsaid that top Republicans have systematically sought to undermine faith in such ballots since 2020.

Kathy Barnette, a far-right commentator who has a history of expressing homophobic and anti-Muslim views, made a surprising late surge on the strength of her compelling personal story but was further behind.

In a sign of the race’s importance this fall, President Biden congratulated the Democratic nominee, Lt. Gov. John Fetterman, and said of the G.O.P. field that “whoever emerges will be too dangerous, too craven, and too extreme.”

Mr. Mastriano’s victory sets up a fall clash with Attorney General Josh Shapiro, who was unopposed in the Democratic primary, a matchup with vast potential consequences both for state-level issues like abortion rights and for election certification in the 2024 presidential race.

Pennsylvania Republicans who fully control the Legislature are likely to attempt to restrict abortion rights if the Supreme Court overturns Roe v. Wade, as expected. That means whoever occupies the governor’s residence in Harrisburg would determine whether such a bill becomes law. And the Pennsylvania governor appoints the secretary of state, whose office will oversee the 2024 election.

Mr. Mastriano and Ms. Barnette formed something of a hard-right ticket, endorsing one another as they attempted to fend off their better-funded rivals. Dr. Oz relied heavily on the conservative credibility he gained from Mr. Trump’s endorsement while Mr. McCormick’s Wall Street allies flooded the airwaves with attack ads.

Five states — Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Kentucky, Oregon and Idaho — held primaries on Tuesday, with the outcomes signaling the relative strength of the ideological factions in both political parties.

In North Carolina, Representative Madison Cawthorn, a Trump-backed Republican who has created a string of controversies and mini-scandals, including his comment that some colleagues in Washington had indulged in cocaine and orgies, conceded defeat to his primary challenger on Tuesday night, State Senator Chuck Edwards. He became the first incumbent who was not facing another member of Congress to lose a primary in 2022.

Also in North Carolina, Representative Ted Budd handily won the Republican nomination for an open Senate seat, riding an early Trump endorsement and millions of dollars in outside spending to best former Gov. Pat McCrory, in another sign of the diminished standing of the party establishment. Mr. Budd will face Cheri Beasley, a Democrat who is a former chief justice of the State Supreme Court and who would become North Carolina’s first Black senator if elected.

In Idaho, another Trump-backed candidate, Lt. Gov. Janice McGeachin, lost her challenge to Gov. Brad Little, a fellow Republican. And in Oregon, Representative Kurt Schrader, a top moderate Democrat, was trailing his progressive challenger, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, in early vote tallies.

But Pennsylvania was the center of attention, a perennial presidential battleground that is seen as a bellwether of the nation’s political mood. The retirement of Senator Pat Toomey, a Republican, and term limits for Gov. Tom Wolf, a Democrat, meant rare simultaneous open races for both governor and Senate — and the latter could tip control of a chamber now evenly split 50-50 between the two parties.

Mr. Mastriano’s election denialism has been a key part of his appeal to the Republican base. Pennsylvania is [*one of three top presidential battlegrounds*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/06/us/politics/governor-races-democrats.html) with a current Democratic governorship up for grabs in 2022 and a Republican-led Legislature that has promoted voter-fraud myths. The two other states are Michigan and Wisconsin.

In the Pennsylvania Senate race, Mr. Fetterman, whose progressivism and campaign-trail uniform of shorts and hoodies helped earn him the support of grass-roots voters and a passionate online donor base, won the Democratic primary, easily defeating Representative Conor Lamb, a moderate from outside Pittsburgh who was endorsed by Democratic officials statewide as the most electable candidate.

Mr. Fetterman was leading in every county in the state.

The Democratic primaries came to an unusual finish, with both leading candidates absent from the trail. Mr. Shapiro, 48, tested positive for the coronavirus and was isolating at home while Mr. Fetterman, 52, suffered a stroke on Friday and his campaign announced he had a procedure on Tuesday “to implant a pacemaker with a defibrillator.”

Both Democrats cast emergency absentee ballots.

Pennsylvania is outwardly a swing state, but Democratic strength has eroded in recent years. That has been clear in the difference between former President Barack Obama’s five-point victory in 2012 in the state and the much narrower, one-point presidential races in 2016 and 2020. Democrats, who have long led in party registrations, have seen their advantage slip to 550,000, down from 815,000 during the May 2018 primaries.

Whomever Mr. Fetterman faces, the Pennsylvania Senate race is expected to be among the fiercest and most expensive of the fall, with millions of dollars in television ads already reserved.

A hulking figure with a shaved head, tattoos and a goatee, Mr. Fetterman has cultivated an outsider image in part by refusing to court elected party officials and campaigning in rural counties where Democrats have suffered huge losses. When he met President Biden at the site of a collapsed bridge, [*he wore shorts*](https://twitter.com/johnfetterman/status/1487142012881186818?lang=en). When he attended the White House Easter Egg Roll, he [*sported a sweatshirt*](https://twitter.com/nancook/status/1516055208937328652).

Democratic voters embraced that style and Mr. Fetterman’s promise to win back support in the state’s conservative interior counties over the centrist polish of Mr. Lamb, as well as Malcolm Kenyatta, a liberal state legislator from the Philadelphia area.

“He looks like a gruff ***working-class*** Western Pennsylvania dude,’’ Brendan McPhillips, who ran Mr. Biden’s campaign in the state in 2020, said of Mr. Fetterman. “When he walks into a local dive bar, there’s a resonance there.”

Mr. Fetterman, who endorsed Senator Bernie Sanders’ presidential campaign in 2016, ran for Senate that same year, finishing a distant third in the primary.

The political climate nationally for Democrats in 2022 looks bleak. But many Pennsylvania Republicans are still openly worried about their party’s chances with a Mastriano-led ticket.

Mr. Mastriano, who has been subpoenaed by the congressional committee investigating the Jan. 6 riot, made his own failed effort to subpoena voting machines to “audit” the 2020 election. Last month he spoke at a conference organized by QAnon conspiracy theorists.

“He’s very far right,” said Tom Marino, a former Republican congressman in the state. “There will be moderate Republicans and independents and perhaps even some moderate Democrats in Pennsylvania that will not vote for Mastriano.”

Last-minute efforts to consolidate a deeply splintered Republican field and unite behind the leading Mastriano alternative in the polls, former Representative Lou Barletta, had mostly flopped even before Mr. Trump issued his endorsement. Mr. Mastriano was leading in a landslide, roughly doubling Mr. Barletta’s vote total.

Mr. Marino lashed out at Mr. Trump for not backing Mr. Barletta. Both Mr. Marino and Mr. Barletta had supported Mr. Trump in 2016. Mr. Marino said he was frustrated that the former president would spurn an early Trump supporter in favor of Mr. Mastriano. “With Trump, loyalty is a one-way street,” Mr. Marino said in an interview, “and I’ve learned that now.”

Mr. Shapiro made clear his preference, meddling in the Republican primary in the final weeks to boost Mr. Mastriano, an Army veteran who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, by running television ads that highlighted some of his conservative stances popular with the Republican base.

As of May 2, the Shapiro campaign had $15.8 million; the Mastriano campaign had less than $800,000, according to state records.

Mr. Shapiro has said he will make the fall election partly a referendum on abortion rights, given the likelihood that, in a post-Roe world, the Republican-led legislature will pass a bill strongly restricting abortion. Mr. Shapiro has said he would veto such a measure while Mr. Mastriano, who has made his Christian faith central to his candidacy, favors banning abortion with no exceptions for rape, incest or the mother’s health.

For much of 2022, the Republican Senate primary had been dominated by Dr. Oz and Mr. McCormick, who spent, along with allies, more than $45 million on television advertisements. Ms. Barnette spent less than $200,000 but used debates and her biography as a Black woman who was a “byproduct of rape” and who became an unabashed right-wing Republican to connect with the conservative base.

The Club for Growth, an anti-tax group, spent more than $2 million to give Ms. Barnette a late boost but an intense set of last-minute attacks, including from Mr. Trump, appeared to take a toll. “When she’s vetted, it’s going to be a catastrophe for the party,’’ the former president warned Monday.

She has notably not committed to backing her G.O.P. rivals in November. “I have no intention of supporting globalists,” she said on a Breitbart podcast on Monday.

Mr. Trump had [*originally endorsed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/22/us/politics/sean-parnell-suspends-pennsylvania-senate.html) Sean Parnell, a failed congressional candidate, for the seat last year, but Mr. Parnell quit the race after his estranged wife accused him of abuse. In April, Mr. Trump endorsed Dr. Oz after a heavy lobbying campaign by both Mr. McCormick, who served in the George W. Bush administration, and Dr. Oz.

A key figure in Dr. Oz’s camp was Sean Hannity, the Fox News host who regularly had the doctor on his program.

In his election night speech, Dr. Oz thanked, in order, his wife, Mr. Trump and Mr. Hannity. “He understands exactly how to make a difference and he’s been doing that this entire campaign,” Dr. Oz said of Mr. Hannity.

Mr. McCormick, whose wife was a senior Trump White House official, brought a bevy of Trump alumni onto his campaign team — a fact that Mr. Trump ridiculed at his lone rally with Dr. Oz.

“If anybody was within 200 miles of me, he hired them,” Mr. Trump said of Mr. McCormick.

Both Mr. McCormick and Dr. Oz were accused of carpetbagging. Mr. McCormick, who is from Pennsylvania, lived in Connecticut while leading Bridgewater, the hedge fund. Dr. Oz, who attended medical school at the University of Pennsylvania, moved back to the state from New Jersey in late 2020, according to his campaign, originally renting a home from his wife’s parents.

Dr. Oz faced hesitancy from conservative voters about his residency, his dual Turkish citizenship and previous positions that he took in interviews, on his TV show and in columns with his byline for gun restrictions and abortion rights. Those issues — along with the image of him kissing his Hollywood star — were aired relentlessly by a pro-McCormick super PAC.

Mr. Trump, who traveled to the state to hold a rally for Dr. Oz, was instrumental in building up the right-wing bona fides. At a rally on the eve of the election, Dr. Oz put [*Mr. Trump on speakerphone*](https://twitter.com/DrOz/status/1526587542312783875) and held it close to the microphone, nodding along as the former president said, “He’s a loyal MAGA person.”

Nick Corasaniti and Jazmine Ulloa contributed reporting.

Nick Corasaniti and Jazmine Ulloa contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Doug Mastriano, who won the Republican nomination for governor in Pennsylvania, arrived at his election night party in Chambersburg. At left, Representative Ted Budd, the G.O.P. winner in North Carolina, will vie for the Senate. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAROLYN KASTER/ASSOCIATED PRESS; MELISSA SUE GERRITS/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The 'Jaws' Shoot Was a Drama. Now It's a Play.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:640J-MDH1-JBG3-60M1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 3, 2021 Wednesday

The New York Times on the Web

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**Section:** Section ; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk

**Length:** 1207 words

**Byline:** By Alex Marshall

**Body**

The hit movie's set was plagued by malfunctioning sharks and drunken feuds -- perfect material for a night at the theater.

LONDON -- When Ian Shaw was 5, he did something to make any movie fan jealous: He visited the set of ''Jaws.'' On location on Martha's Vineyard, an assistant pulled back a huge sheet and young Shaw found himself staring into the gaping mouth of the man-eating shark that would soon become a cinematic icon.

''I was terrified!'' Shaw, now 51, recalled in a recent interview.

Shaw was on set because his father, Robert Shaw, was starring in the movie as Quint, the psychotic shark hunter who, by the film's end, has been bitten in two. Shaw said he visited many of his father's sets, and the ''Jaws'' shoot seemed like any other. But what he didn't know back then was that the shoot was one of movie history's most notoriously dysfunctional, plagued by technical problems and cast feuds.

The production's three mechanical sharks kept breaking down, and shooting was often delayed: Steven Spielberg, the film's director, took to calling the special effects team the ''special defects department.'' At one point, a boat they were filming on sunk, sending two cameras down to the sea floor. (The film inside the cameras turned out to be safe.)

Shaw's father -- who died in 1978 -- brought difficulties of his own to the production. He drank heavily during the shoot, and clashed with a co-star, Richard Dreyfuss. The elder Shaw repeatedly belittled and tried to humiliate Dreyfuss, making off-putting comments seconds before the cameras rolled, or goading Dreyfuss into performing silly stunts, like climbing a ship's mast and jumping into the sea.

Roy Scheider, the movie's other star, was stuck between the feuding pair.

The younger Shaw didn't learn the full extent of the chaos on the set of ''Jaws'' until decades later, he said, but he realized that they had enough drama for a play. Now he is winning rave reviews in Britain for ''The Shark Is Broken,'' a comedy three-hander running at the Ambassadors Theater in London's West End through Jan. 15. In it, Shaw plays his father, stuck on a boat with Dreyfuss (Liam Murray Scott) and Scheider (Demetri Goritsas) as the tensions wax and wane.

In a recent interview, Shaw talked about the difficulty of portraying his father's darker side onstage, and whether conflict can spur creativity. These are edited extracts of that conversation.

In the play, your father clearly dislikes ''Jaws.'' Did he ever take you to see the movie?

I saw it when I was very young, in a screening room somewhere, and was absolutely terrified and couldn't go in the swimming pool afterward. I remember having nightmares, imagining sharks around my bed and calling for my dad to come and save me. Even though I knew that in the film he got eaten, I was able to suspend my disbelief about that.

What made you come up with the idea to turn the movie's problems into this play?

I once had to grow a mustache for a part, and looked in the mirror and thought, ''Oh, I look like Quint.'' That's what started it, but it seemed a very silly and foolish idea because I'd spent my whole career avoiding association with my dad.

Then I read Carl Gottlieb's ''The Jaws Log,'' and watched documentaries, and saw there was this really interesting relationship between Robert and Richard and Roy -- this triangle which makes for great drama. And you only need three people, so it's affordable!

I toyed with the idea for years, because I felt it could be very embarrassing -- potentially disrespectful to my dad and to the movie ''Jaws,'' which I love. To step into my dad's shoes, and to paint him as an alcoholic -- do I have the right to do that publicly?

Did you know he was an alcoholic at the time? He died only a few years after making ''Jaws'' when you were still young.

I did used to see him drink. I was often playing under the table in the Irish pubs when he would be having a session. But it didn't seem a problem then. It actually seemed kind of normal.

I feel that generation, especially the more ***working-class*** actors like Richard Burton, had a little discomfort with the profession in terms of putting on tights and makeup. So their way of asserting their masculinity was to be hard drinkers, the sort of Viking method of proving themselves.

What made you get over your fear of disrespecting him?

When I started writing the play with Joseph Nixon, we quickly saw it wasn't just about ''Jaws.'' Joe's father died very sadly, and it became a little bit more about fathers and sons, about addiction, about making movies in general. There were these other themes that meant it wasn't just a stunt.

You show your father continually antagonizing Dreyfuss, often seemingly just for fun. Why do you think he behaved like that?

He really didn't want to do ''Jaws,'' because, at the time, he was offered [the remake of] ''Brief Encounter,'' or was certainly in the running for it. He would have rather have done that, to break away from this macho image. He kind of felt handcuffed to ''Jaws'' to provide for his family.

Then the shark's not working, so they're hanging around. And he liked to drink. But also Dreyfus genuinely did wind him up and so he thought he needed a bit of a slap down. He dared Dreyfuss to jump off the mast from the top of the ship, and I think he fired a fire hose in his face. There's so many stories, and a lot of them are true.

In the play, your father says he's needling Dreyfuss to improve the movie. Their characters are meant to dislike each other. Did you consider that he might just have been trying to create a mood?

Personally, I think it was both because he was annoyed with Richard, but also he did think it was getting some good work done between them. The acting is so good in the film, so it probably did help.

You once auditioned for a role in a production Dreyfuss was directing. How did that go given his past with your father?

He was directing ''Hamlet,'' and I went in and mentioned that I was Robert Shaw's son and he looked, ironically, like Hamlet seeing his dead father. He just sat down and looked slightly ill. I was really taken aback at the time. I'd been expecting him to go, ''Wonderful!'' then give me a big hug. But he was very professional, because we obviously went through the audition.

Did you get the part?

No, I didn't!

Given that ''Jaws'' experienced so many problems, did you have any of your own making ''The Shark Is Broken?''

Not that I remember. When I had the first ideas on paper, I did wake up with cold sweats at three o'clock in the morning thinking, ''This is really bad idea,'' because I was really worried that I would offend my family. But in terms of the writing process, I really enjoyed it.

Do you think ''Jaws'' would have been a better movie without the problems?

No, because the problems meant they all hung around and developed it. It allowed them to improvise. ''You're gonna need a bigger boat'' was a piece of improvisation from Steven Spielberg. And the delays allowed my father to rewrite the Indianapolis speech, which is a big moment. All sorts of things in it were devised while they were hanging around waiting.

So disaster is a good recipe for creative success?

Well, it can be.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/theater/jaws-play-the-shark-is-broken.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/theater/jaws-play-the-shark-is-broken.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: In ''The Shark Is Broken,'' the three main characters are stuck together on a boat as tensions wax and wane. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Helen Maybanks FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 3, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Poor Countries Face a Mounting Catastrophe Fueled by Inflation and Debt***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65G6-48G1-JBG3-61BT-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 2095 words

**Byline:** Peter S. Goodman, Ruth Maclean, Salman Masood, Elif Ince, Flávia Milhorance, Muktita Suhartono and Brenda Kiven

**Highlight:** Russia’s war in Ukraine is combining with a global tightening of credit and an economic slowdown in China to sow misery in low- and middle-income countries.

**Body**

Before war ravaged Yemen, Walid Al-Ahdal did not worry about feeding his children. At his hometown near the Red Sea, his family grew corn, raised goats and relied on their own cow for milk.

But for the last four years, after fighting forced them to flee, their home has been a tent at a camp with 9,000 other families outside the capital city of Sana. Mr. Al-Ahdal has struggled to buy adequate food with his wages as a janitor at a hospital.

Now another war — this one more than 2,000 miles away — has upended their lives again. Food prices are soaring. Since Russia invaded Ukraine, the cost of wheat has more than doubled, while milk has climbed by two-thirds.

On many nights, Mr. Al-Ahdal, 25, has nothing to feed his 2-year-old daughter and his three boys, ages 3, 5 and 6. He consoles them with tea and sends them to bed.

“My heart hurts every time my child looks for food that is not there,” Mr. Al-Ahdal said. “But what can I do?”

The hunger gnawing at families in war-torn countries like Yemen highlights a broader crisis confronting billions of people in the world’s less-affluent economies as the consequences of Russia’s assault on Ukraine are compounded by other challenges — the continuing pandemic, a global tightening of credit and a slowdown in China, the second-largest economy after the United States.

“It’s like wildfires in all directions,” said Jayati Ghosh, an economist at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. “This is much bigger than after the global financial crisis. Everything is stacked against the low- and middle-income countries.”

The most direct repercussions are seen in the rising prices of cooking fuel, fertilizer and staple foods like wheat, disrupting agriculture and threatening nutrition in much of the world.

Sanctions imposed on Russia, a major oil and gas exporter, have [*constrained the supply of energy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/16/business/russia-sanctions-oil-energy-demand.html), sending prices skyward and limiting economic growth, especially in countries heavily dependent on imports.

High energy prices are at the center of diminished expectations for [*global economic growth*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/29/business/europe-economy-gdp.html), now estimated at 3.6 percent this year compared with 6.1 percent last year, according to a [*forecast*](https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2022/04/19/world-economic-outlook-april-2022) from the International Monetary Fund.

More than 14 million people are now on the brink of starvation in the Horn of Africa, according to the [*International Rescue Committee*](https://www.rescue.org/article/why-millions-people-across-africa-are-facing-extreme-hunger) — the result of a terrible drought combined with the pandemic and shortfalls of grains from Russia and Ukraine. The two countries are collectively the source for one-fourth of the world’s exports of wheat.

Last week, as India [*banned exports of most of its wheat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/14/world/asia/india-wheat-export-ban.html), concerns deepened. India is the world’s second-largest wheat producer and holds abundant reserves.

The war in Ukraine threatens to impede the humanitarian response, lifting by as much as 16 percent the prices of components like peanuts that are blended into a therapeutic paste used to treat children facing life-threatening levels of malnutrition, [*UNICEF*](https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/world-virtual-tinderbox-catastrophic-levels-severe-malnutrition-children) warned on Monday.

This catastrophe is unfolding as the pandemic continues to assail health systems, depleting government resources, and as the Federal Reserve and other central banks raise interest rates to choke off inflation. That is prompting investors to abandon lower-income countries while moving funds into less risky assets in wealthy economies.

This tidal shift in the flow of money has lifted the [*U.S. dollar*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/06/business/dollar-stock-bond-currency.html) while pushing down the value of currencies from [*India*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-05-12/rupee-tumbles-to-a-record-on-inflation-risks-stocks-decline?sref=12wQtvNW) to [*South Africa*](https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/south-africas-rand-falls-stronger-dollar-weighs-2022-05-09/) to [*Brazil*](https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/brazilian-real-tumbles-amid-rallying-dollar-local-tensions-2022-04-25/), making their imports more expensive. Tighter credit is also increasing borrowing costs for heavily indebted governments.

Not least, [*China*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/05/business/china-shanghai-covid-lockdown-economy.html), long the engine of growth for many countries, has become a significant source of drag. As the Chinese government extends lockdowns to enforce its [*zero-Covid policy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/13/business/china-zero-covid-xi.html), the result is weaker demand for raw materials, parts and finished goods shipped to China from around the globe.

“I look at a perfect storm developing in places like Yemen, and many other places around the world,” said Philippe Duamelle, the UNICEF representative for Yemen. “Families have terrible choices to make.”

Not Enough Bread

On a fiercely hot morning in Cameroon’s largest city, Douala, Michael Moki, a motorcycle taxi driver, pulled up to a glass case containing a scattering of bread rolls.

A jovial man with a ready laugh, Mr. Moki, 34, ordered 500 Central African francs’ (about 80 cents) worth of rolls — breakfast for his family of five. When the vendor handed him the bag, the smile fell from his face.

“Your bread gets smaller every day, and the price increases,” he complained to the young man behind the counter. “Do you think I can eat all of this and get full?”

“The price of flour has gone up,” the vendor replied.

This kind of exchange has become commonplace in markets across Africa and parts of Asia.

The fighting in Ukraine has prompted farmers in Ukraine to flee their land, while Russia has blockaded Ukrainian [*ports on the Black Sea*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/13/world/russia-ukraine-war-news/seeking-to-avoid-a-global-food-crisis-officials-look-for-new-routes-for-ukrainian-grain-exports-blocked-by-russian-forces?smid=url-copy) — vital conduits for exports. Last week, the [*World Food Program warned*](https://www.wfp.org/stories/war-ukraine-wfp-calls-ports-reopen-world-faces-deepening-hunger-crisis) that the shutdowns of the ports threatened to worsen severe food insecurity in Ethiopia, South Sudan, Syria, Yemen and Afghanistan.

Russia and Ukraine supply all the wheat imported by Somalia and Benin, and at least two-thirds of the supply reaching Tanzania, Senegal, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and Egypt, according to [*research*](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/osginf2022d1_en.pdf) from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Globally, export prices for wheat and corn soared more than one-fifth in the month after Russia invaded Ukraine, according to the World Food Program.

Some economists accuse multinational agribusiness of exploiting the chaos caused by the pandemic and the war to lift prices beyond any connection to supply and demand. Ms. Ghosh, the economist, cited evidence that financial speculation is driving food prices higher.

In April, speculators were responsible for 72 percent of the buying activity on the Paris wheat market, up from 25 percent before the pandemic, according to data analyzed by [*Lighthouse Reports*](https://www.lighthousereports.nl/investigation/the-hunger-profiteers/), a European journalism collaborative.

Many poor countries now confront an uncomfortable choice — increasing spending to aid their populations while adding to their debts, or imposing budget austerity and courting social conflict. Last week, public rage over rapid inflation amid a spiraling debt crisis in [*Sri Lanka*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/14/world/asia/sri-lanka-rajapaksa.html) triggered the downfall of the government. The risks of upheaval look dire in Tunisia, Ghana, South Africa and Morocco, Oxford Economics warned in a recent report.

For Mr. Moki, the motorcycle taxi driver, the source of strife was immediate. Returning to his two-room apartment, he faced disappointment from his wife over his meager breakfast haul.

Their landlord is increasing their rent from a barely affordable 50,000 francs ($80) a month to 75,000 francs ($120), citing his own higher costs.

“Things are becoming very difficult for us,” Mr. Moki said.

Culling the Herd

Sencer Solakoglu, a dairy farmer in Turkey, is getting squeezed by forces beyond his control.

The prices of animal feed like hay, corn and alfalfa — much of it imported from Russia and Ukraine — have doubled and tripled in recent months. Yet the government, fearing public anger over inflation, has pressured farmers to forgo price increases, limiting Mr. Solakoglu’s ability to recoup his costs.

Turkish households, battered by a [*long-running economic crisis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/08/business/turkey-economy-crisis.html), have cut back on milk, slashing his sales by roughly half.

This is how Mr. Solakoglu, whose farm sits outside the Turkish city of Bursa, found himself culling his dairy herd by 200 in recent months.

“We slaughtered every cow that produced less than 30 kilograms (66 pounds) of milk per day,” he said.

These sorts of grim calculations have become routine in Turkey, a country that has gained intimate familiarity with economic distress.

After the global financial crisis of 2008, central banks in major economies like the United States and Europe dropped interest rates to near zero to spur growth. As international investors sought better returns, they piled into so-called emerging markets, accepting higher risks in exchange for greater rewards.

Turkey’s strongman president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, urged his cronies to avail themselves of international borrowing to finance [*enormous construction projects*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/10/business/turkey-economy-erdogan.html) that kept the economy growing.

By 2017, investors fretted that the staggering debts held by Turkish companies posed the risk of defaults. They dumped the Turkish lira, pushing its value down roughly three-fourths by the end of last year.

That was the story before Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, and before central banks around the globe began raising interest rates.

By April, the lira was falling anew, and [*Turkey’s inflation rate*](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/turkeys-inflation-surges-20-year-high-70-april-2022-05-05/) was running at nearly 70 percent — its worst mark in two decades.

Even in countries facing less dire circumstances, farmers are grappling with malevolent arithmetic, as prices rise for animal feed, fertilizers and pesticides.

Indonesia has in recent years imported growing stocks of fertilizer from Russia. With fertilizer costs doubling in recent months, farmers have limited their application, diminishing their harvests.

“The current situation is the worst that we have ever seen,” said Ajat Sudrajat, a farmer in the Cipanas district of West Java, an agricultural area that serves Jakarta, Indonesia’s teeming capital.

Impossible Debts

Two years ago, when Rubab Zafar and her husband, Muhammad Ali, left their village in rural Pakistan for new lives in Islamabad, they were full of optimism.

“There were no jobs in the village,” said Ms. Zafar, 31. “Islamabad is a big city, and we thought there would be some opportunity for us here.”

Instead, they have suffered the grind of a country grappling with impossible debts and downward mobility.

Ms. Zafar recently lost her babysitting job, while securing occasional part-time stints. Her husband works for a ride-hailing app. Collectively, they earn about 25,000 rupees a month (about $133), which barely covers the rent for their single room in a ***working-class*** neighborhood.

They are behind on their electrical bill, placing them in the same position as the Pakistani government, now in talks with the International Monetary Fund for an extension on a $6 billion package of loans.

Since 2016, Pakistan’s external debt payments have swelled to 38 percent of government revenue from about 9 percent, according to [*data*](https://data.debtjustice.org.uk/about.php) tabulated by Debt Justice, an advocacy organization in England.

Debt payments have absorbed money that might otherwise support people like Ms. Zafar. Several times, she has applied for a cash grant, only to be turned away without explanation.

Downward Mobility

Brazil, a major exporter, is often portrayed as a beneficiary of rising commodity prices.

But in the shantytowns of Brazil’s major cities, where poverty frames daily life, people are focused on the exploding cost of liquefied petroleum gas, the cooking fuel used in 96 percent of homes.

Since February, the price of a canister of L.P. gas has increased nearly 10 percent, reaching its highest level in two decades, according to government data.

“It is the only thing we talk about,” said Vanderley de Melo Pereira, 55, a father of two in Rocinha, a teeming slum in Rio de Janeiro. “Since the war in Ukraine started, things have gotten worse.”

Across Latin America, the unfolding crisis threatens to erase decades of progress in boosting living standards.

“There are no prospects for growth,” said Liliana Rojas-Suarez, a regional expert and senior fellow at the Center for Global Development in Washington. “I think we’re going to have another lost decade.”

Ruth Maclean reported from Dakar, Senegal; Salman Masood from Islamabad, Pakistan; Elif Ince from Istanbul; Flávia Milhorance from Rio de Janeiro; Muktita Suhartono from West Java, Indonesia; and Brenda Kiven from Douala, Cameroon. Renato Dias in Rio de Janeiro contributed to this report.

Ruth Maclean reported from Dakar, Senegal; Salman Masood from Islamabad, Pakistan; Elif Ince from Istanbul; Flávia Milhorance from Rio de Janeiro; Muktita Suhartono from West Java, Indonesia; and Brenda Kiven from Douala, Cameroon. Renato Dias in Rio de Janeiro contributed to this report.

PHOTOS: A market in Cameroon. Across Africa, people are increasingly getting less food for their money. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TOM SAATER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1); Walid Al-Ahdal and his children at a refugee camp in Yemen. Now a war thousands of miles away has upended their lives further. (PHOTOGRAPH BY OWIS ALHAMDANI/UNICEF); Vanderley de Melo Pereira, right, in Rio de Janeiro traces worsening conditions to the war in Ukraine. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DADO GALDIERI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A7)

**Load-Date:** April 12, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Amid Climate Talks, Actor's Call to Action Unfolds Onstage***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:640B-MXK1-JBG3-63D4-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Whitney Bauck

**Body**

A filmed version of Fehinti Balogun's play about his awakening to climate issues is being shown at the COP26 summit. He is among the theater artists trying to make a difference through their work.

The actor Fehinti Balogun knows that theater can mobilize people toward climate action, because that's what it did for him.

Back in 2017, while preparing for a role in ''Myth,'' a climate parable, he began reading books about climate change and became alarmed by the unusually warm summer he was experiencing in England. The play itself called for him and the other actors to repeatedly run through the same mundane lines, to the point of absurdity, as their environment ruptured terrifyingly around them -- the walls streaking with oil, the stove catching fire, the freezer oozing water.

The whole experience changed his life, Balogun said. Suddenly, nothing seemed more important than addressing the global crisis. Not even landing the lead in a West End production (a long-coveted dream) of ''The Importance of Being Earnest.'' His growing anxiety made him feel as if he were living a real-world version of ''Myth'' in which society kept repeating the same old script even as the planet descended into chaos.

''Knowing all that I did made me angry at the world for not doing anything,'' the 26-year-old Balogun (''Dune,'' ''I May Destroy You'') said in a phone interview. ''I didn't get how we weren't revolting.''

That sense of urgency is what he said he hopes to pass along to audiences in ''Can I Live?,'' a new play that he wrote, stars in and created with the theater company Complicité. A filmed version of the piece, which also features supporting actors and musicians and was originally conceived as a live show, was screened Monday as part of COP26, the United Nations climate meeting in Glasgow. The resulting work is as innovative as any piece of theater to emerge during the Covid-19 era: Initially it appears to be just an intimate Zoom session with Balogun but evolves into an explosive mix of spoken word, animation, hip-hop and dialogue.

The hourlong production, which the Barbican Center has made available for streaming on its website through Nov. 12, combines scientific facts about how the greenhouse effect works with the story of Balogun's own journey into the climate movement. It also focuses on the gap between the largely white mainstream environmental groups he joined, and the experiences of his primarily Black friends and family.

Throughout the show, Balogun fields phone calls from family members about issues seemingly unrelated to the central thrust of the play, asking him when he's going to get married or why he left a bag in the hallway at home. Though at first it seems as if they are interrupting Balogun's primary narrative about ''emissions, emissions, emissions,'' as he sings at one point, their interjections hammer home one of his central ideas: If the movement isn't willing to prioritize someone like his Nigerian grandma, it's missing the point. Climate action, in other words, is for everyday people with everyday concerns.

''The goal is to make grass-roots activism accessible, and to represent people of color and ***working-class*** people,'' he said. To that end, he interweaves his own story with that of the Nigerian writer and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, who campaigned against destructive oil extraction on behalf of his Ogoni people. ''So often we don't talk about the global South,'' Balogun said. ''We don't talk about the communities who've been leading this fight for years.''

Though Balogun is the only theater artist on the official COP26 schedule, he is certainly not the first playwright to grapple with climate themes. Climate Change Theater Action, an initiative of the nonprofit the Arctic Cycle, was created to encourage theater-making that might draw greater attention to COP21, the U.N. climate meeting in 2015 that resulted in the landmark Paris Agreement. (The theater group has never been officially affiliated with any of the annual COP meetings.)

Since its inception, the group has produced 200 works that have been performed for 40,000 people in 30 countries, said its co-founder, Chantal Bilodeau. The organization commissions plays with environmental themes, paying the writers and then providing the scripts free to theater companies, schools or any other groups that want to stage readings or productions.

The first year, Bilodeau said, they ended up with a ''whole lot of depressing plays.'' Now they try to steer playwrights away from dystopia and toward visions of a livable future, and encourage those staging the works to pair them with programming that helps audiences get a deeper understanding of the issues.

Lanxing Fu, co-director of the nonprofit Superhero Clubhouse in New York City, spends part of her time focused on those who will be most affected by a hotter planet: the next generation. Through Superhero Clubhouse's after-school program Big Green Theater, run in collaboration with the Bushwick Starr and the Astoria Performing Arts Center, public elementary school students in Brooklyn and Queens are taught about climate issues and write plays in response to what they're learning.

Over a decade after the program began, Fu said that what is most striking about the students' plays is how instinctively the young writers understand a basic truth about climate that evades a lot of adults: to find long-term solutions, we'll need to work together.

''A huge element of climate resilience is in the community we build and how we come together,'' she said. ''That's always really present in their stories; it's often part of the way that something gets resolved.''

The Queens-based playwright and TV writer Dorothy Fortenberry also spends plenty of time thinking about children's roles in the movement. Her play ''The Lotus Paradox,'' which will have its world premiere in January at the Warehouse Theater in Greenville, S.C., asks, What happens when children are constantly receiving the message that it's their job to save the world? Like much of Fortenberry's work in TV (she's a writer on ''The Handmaid's Tale''), ''The Lotus Paradox'' includes the subject of climate change without making it the singular focus of the story.

''If you're making a story about anything, in any place, and you don't have climate change in it, that's a science-fiction story,'' she said. ''You have made a choice to make the story less realistic than it would have been otherwise.''

That's a sentiment also shared by Anaïs Mitchell, the musician and writer of the musical ''Hadestown,'' which reopened on Broadway in September. In her retelling of Greek mythology, Hades is portrayed in song as a greedy ''king of oil and coal'' who fuels his industrialized hell of an underworld with the ''fossils of the dead.'' Aboveground, the lead characters, Orpheus and Eurydice, endure food scarcity and brutal weather that's ''either blazing hot or freezing cold,'' a framing that was inspired by headlines about climate refugees.

It's worth intentionally wrestling with climate narratives in the theater, not just because they make plays more believable, Mitchell said, but also because theater might just be one of best tools for handling such themes. Like Orpheus trying to put things right with a song that shows ''how the world could be, in spite of the way that it is,'' Mitchell sees theater as a powerful tool for helping us imagine our way into a better future.

''Theater is capable of opening our hearts and our eyes to an alternate reality than the one we're living in,'' she said.

That's why Balogun -- though he remarks more than once in ''Can I Live?'' that he's ''not a scientist'' -- said he believes he has just as crucial a role to play as any climatologist. ''Scientists are begging for artists and theater makers to help deliver this message,'' he said. ''And there's a need for it now more than ever.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/01/theater/climate-crisis-theater-cop26.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/01/theater/climate-crisis-theater-cop26.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The actor Fehinti Balogun, top center, wrote the play ''Can I Live?,'' top left, with the playwright performing. The production aims to make ''grass-roots activism accessible,'' Balogun said. Above, Superhero Clubhouse's after-school program, Big Green Theater, in New York. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TOM JAMIESON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

DAVID HEWITT

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[***Abbott and O’Rourke win their Texas primaries.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WR-NKW1-JBG3-62T4-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** In the Texas race for governor, Gov. Greg Abbott overcame several opponents on his right, and Beto O’Rourke sailed to the Democratic nomination.

**Body**

In the Texas race for governor, Gov. Greg Abbott overcame several opponents on his right, and Beto O’Rourke sailed to the Democratic nomination.

Follow our live coverage of the [*2022 midterm elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/11/10/us/election-updates-midterms-results) for the latest news and updates.

HOUSTON — Gov. Greg Abbott of Texas fended off two right-wing primary challengers on Tuesday, avoiding a runoff by a wide margin but still falling well short of the 90 percent of the vote he marshaled in the primary four years ago as a restive Republican base continues to push the party farther to the right.

Mr. Abbott, who is running for a third term, left little to chance, spending $15 million in the last month alone to squash any primary threat. He will now face Beto O’Rourke, the former congressman who formally won the Democratic nomination, in the fall.

The results from the [*Texas primaries*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/03/01/us/texas-election-primary) are providing the first pieces of the [*2022 midterm*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/2022-midterm-elections) puzzle: both an early indication of the strength of the two parties’ ideological factions and the intensity of former President Donald J. Trump’s continued hold on the Republican electorate.

In South Texas, a fierce effort by progressives to defeat one of the last anti-abortion Democrats remaining in Congress, Representative Henry Cuellar, was headed to a runoff. The race was a rematch from two years ago but this time the challenger, Jessica Cisneros, received a political gift when the F.B.I. raided Mr. Cuellar’s home late in the race.

In the governor’s race, Mr. Abbott faced backlash from the Republican base despite overseeing a sharp push to the right in[*state government*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/18/us/texas-republicans-democrats.html) over the last year that intensified in the campaign’s closing days, including telling state agencies [*to investigate treatment for transgender adolescents as “child abuse.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/23/science/texas-abbott-transgender-child-abuse.html) The governor has been criticized by some on the right for his handling of the pandemic and the border and drew two notable challengers: Allen West, a former state party chairman, and Don Huffines, a former state senator, neither of whom ever gained significant traction.

Still, Mr. Abbott faced boos at a Trump rally north of Houston in January and only won over the crowd by invoking Mr. Trump more than two dozen times in a six-minute speech.

Statewide, Mr. Trump has endorsed more than two dozen candidates, including Mr. Abbott, though most were expected to win before earning his backing. Texas has a two-step primary system: Any candidate who finishes below 50 percent will face off against the No. 2 vote-getter in a May runoff.

“Big night in Texas!” Mr. Trump said in a statement Tuesday. “All 33 candidates that were Trump endorsed have either won their primary election or are substantially leading.”

One of the most intense races was the Republican primary for Texas attorney general, where the incumbent, Ken Paxton, has attracted the attention of federal investigators after some of his own top aides accused him of corruption.

Mr. Paxton failed to avoid a runoff, even though he spent heavily to promote Mr. Trump’s endorsement, including [*$1.8 million on one television ad that opened with uninterrupted audio*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/03/01/us/texas-election-primary#texas-primary-trump-ads) of the former president praising him. Mr. Paxton’s runoff opponent in May will be one of the scions of the Bush dynasty, George P. Bush, the state land commissioner.

The full picture of the 2022 landscape will be revealed through a series of state-by-state primaries held over the next six months, as polls suggest President Biden, who delivered his State of the Union address on Tuesday, and the Democrats face an increasingly challenging political environment.

But the Texas contests offered almost a sneak peek of the coming dynamics nationwide, including how strict [*new voting rules*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/18/us/politics/texas-primary-voting-law.html) played out and the salience of abortion, after a state law last year [*effectively banned most abortions*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/20/us/politics/texas-abortion-law-supreme-court.html) after six weeks of pregnancy. Later this year, a ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court is expected in a Mississippi abortion case, which could affect procedures in multiple states. Yet no Texas Democratic congressional candidate [*aired an ad focusing on abortion*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/03/01/us/texas-election-primary#texas-primary-trump-ads), according to data from Ad Impact, an ad tracking firm.

After redistricting, Texas lawmakers [*erased nearly all the House seats that were competitive*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/10/03/us/politics/texas-redistricting-map-2022.html) in the general election from the map in 2022, [*magnifying the importance of a handful of contested primaries in both parties*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/us/politics/redistricting-partisan-divide.html). Republicans, in particular, are hoping to build on [*the dramatic gains the party made in South Texas*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/05/us/texas-election-results.html) and the Rio Grande Valley, particularly among ***working-class*** Latino voters in 2020, in the state’s [*lone open, tossup seat*](https://www.valleycentral.com/news/local-news/in-battleground-district-15-candidates-prepare-for-march-primary/).

Nationwide, Republicans are energized by the chance to take back both the House, which the Democrats control by a historically narrow margin, and the Senate, which is equally divided with only Vice President Kamala Harris’s tiebreaking vote giving control to the Democrats.

Mr. Biden’s sagging approval ratings — not just in Texas but [*even in Democratic strongholds like California*](https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2022-02-16/poll-california-feinstein-harris-biden-padilla) — and the lingering cloud of the coronavirus on life, the economy and schools have emboldened many Republican voters, candidates and strategists.

Despite the hostile national climate, Democrats have scored some notable recruiting successes, including two high-profile candidates who came up just short in 2018, Mr. O’Rourke and Stacey Abrams, who is running again for governor of Georgia.

Mr. O’Rourke has already been traveling the state and raising money at a fast clip: $3 million in the last month. But Mr. Abbott, a prolific fund-raiser, outpaced him and entered the final days before the primary with $50 million on hand, compared to $6.8 million for Mr. O’Rourke.

Texas is where Mr. Trump suffered one of his rare primary endorsement defeats last year, [*in a House race*](https://www.texastribune.org/2021/07/29/jake-ellzey-donald-trump-texas-6-congressional-seat/), and while he has issued a range of endorsements, from governor down to Tarrant County District Attorney, he has mostly backed incumbents and heavy favorites.

Bigger tests of his influence loom later in the spring and summer, in the Senate contests in North Carolina and Alabama, and in the governor’s race in Georgia. In that Georgia race, Mr. Trump recruited David Perdue, a former senator, to attempt to unseat Gov. Brian Kemp, a Republican who refused to bend to Mr. Trump’s efforts to overturn the 2020 election.

The biggest test of Mr. Trump’s influence in Texas was the attorney general’s race, where Mr. Paxton’s three challengers represented the various Republican power centers vying to be the future of the party.

Mr. Bush, the son of Jeb Bush and a statewide office holder who has held himself out as the most electable conservative in the race, was locked for much of the evening in a tight race for the second-place spot in the runoff. The other two Republicans were Eva Guzman, a former state Supreme Court justice, and Representative Louie Gohmert.

A Trump ally, Mr. Gohmert received an unexpected shout-out from Mr. Trump at the rally where Mr. Abbott was booed, despite the former president’s endorsement of Mr. Paxton. Mr. Gohmert also posed with Mr. Trump during a photo line, but the Trump team did not send Mr. Gohmert the picture, because they did not want him to use it in the primary, according to a person familiar with the exchange.

The race was multidimensional. Ms. Guzman swiped at Mr. Bush, whose family dynasty has been weakened even among Texas Republicans. Mr. Bush responded in kind. Mr. Paxton traded attacks with Mr. Gohmert and, in recent days, [*went after Ms. Guzman as well*](https://twitter.com/KenPaxtonTX/status/1497170246267916291?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw).

“We haven’t seen a primary this consequential since the 1990s,” said Brandon Rottinghaus, a professor of political science at the University of Houston.

Mr. Paxton finished behind the rest of the Republican ticket in 2018, raising some fears that his renomination this year could provide a rare opening for Democrats in November. Republicans have won every statewide race in Texas since 1994.

One primary north of Houston, to replace the retiring Representative Kevin Brady, emerged as a proxy race for the[*national battle for power raging within the Republican Party*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/us/politics/redistricting-partisan-divide.html). A super PAC aligned with Representative Kevin McCarthy, the minority leader, spent heavily to elect Morgan Luttrell, a Navy SEAL veteran. The activist wing of House Republicans and the political arm of the House Freedom Caucus backed Christian Collins, a former aide to Senator Ted Cruz.

“This is primary season,” Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia said at a recent rally for Mr. Collins. “This is where we work out our differences. This is where iron sharpens iron.”

Mr. Luttrell was far ahead in the early tally but it was not clear whether he would clear the 50 percent mark to avoid a runoff.

On the Democratic side, two primaries that drew national attention — including trips to Texas by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York and Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts — pitted the party’s ideological wings against each other.

In the race for an open seat, a self-described democratic socialist and Austin city councilman, Greg Casar, defeated State Representative Eddie Rodriguez. The other primary was the rematch between Mr. Cuellar and a young progressive lawyer, Ms. Cisneros — a race in which [*abortion has been an issue for the district’s large number of Catholic voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/19/us/texas-laredo-abortion.html).

When Ms. Ocasio-Cortez declared at a rally for Mr. Casar and Ms. Cisneros that “Texas turning blue is inevitable,” the clip was immediately picked up by Republicans, including Mr. Abbott, and wielded as an attack.

“She was doing the work for Republicans,” said Matt Angle, a Democratic activist whose political action committee aims to unseat Republicans in Texas. He noted that Texas Democrats are more conservative in their views on issues like guns and abortion than national party leaders.

“It’s a field trip for them,” Mr. Angle added. “For us, it’s the future of the state.”

Nick Corasaniti contributed reporting.

Nick Corasaniti contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Gov. Greg Abbott, a Republican, at a “Get Out the Vote” campaign event last month in Houston. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRANDON BELL/GETTY IMAGES); Beto O’Rourke, a Democrat, campaigning for Texas governor in Tyler in early February. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MONTINIQUE MONROE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); From left: Representative Louie Gohmert, Eva Guzman and George P. Bush at a forum in Midland. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2022

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[***One Journey Out of the Addictive Grip of QAnon***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61WG-Y091-JBG3-63VG-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

During the political fallout after four years of Donald J. Trump, one question is what will happen with the followers of conspiracy theories that bend Americans' perceptions of reality.

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WASHINGTON -- In the summer of 2017, Lenka Perron was spending hours every day after work online, poring over fevered theories about shadowy people in power. She had mostly stopped cooking, and no longer took her daily walk. She was less attentive to her children, 11, 15 and 19, who were seeing a lot of the side of her face, staring down into her phone. It would all be worth it, she told herself. She was saving the country and they would benefit.

But one day while she was scrolling, something caught her eye. People claiming to be sources inside the government had posted on Facebook that John Podesta, a former White House chief of staff, was about to be indicted. And yet on her phone she was watching a video that showed him chatting casually in front of an audience. Around the same time she saw Hillary Clinton, another supposed target for an indictment, walking in Hawaii, looking relaxed and holding a coffee cup.

''She just wasn't behaving like someone who was about to get arrested,'' she said.

It was the first nagging feeling that something did not add up. Five months and many more inconsistencies later, Ms. Perron, a consultant in the insurance industry in suburban Detroit, finally called it quits.

''At some point I realized, 'Oh, there's a reason this doesn't fit,''' she said. ''We are being manipulated. Someone is having fun at our expense.''

Her journey out of that world could be instructive: As the country begins to sort through the political fallout from four years of Donald J. Trump, one looming question is what will happen with the followers of QAnon and other anti-establishment conspiracy theories that have been bending Americans' perceptions of reality.

There are signs that some have lost faith: Mr. Trump left Washington last week, blowing a hole through a key QAnon belief -- that Mr. Trump, not President Biden, was the one who would be inaugurated on Jan. 20. But others are doubling down, and experts believe that some form of the QAnon conspiracy theory will remain deeply embedded in the nation's culture by simply morphing to incorporate the new developments, as it has before.

QAnon believers are part of a broader swath of Americans who are immersed in conspiracy theories. Once on the far-right fringes, these theories now hold people from across the political spectrum in their thrall, from anti-lockdown libertarians to left-wing wellness types and ''Stop the Steal'' Trumpists.

The theories can be malevolent, causing real-life damage to people who end up in their cross hairs: the parents of children killed in the Sandy Hook mass shooting who have been harassed by conspiracists, or a Washington pizza restaurant shot up by a man who had come to take down a child trafficking ring he believed was housed inside. Q sweatshirts dotted the crowd that stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6.

But while much has been said about how people descend into this world, little is known about how they get out. Those who do leave are often filled with shame. Sometimes their addiction was so severe that they have become estranged from family and friends.

The theories seem crazy to Ms. Perron now, but looking back, she understands how they drew her in. They were comforting, a way to get her bearings in a chaotic world that felt increasingly unequal and rigged against middle-class people like her. These stories offered agency: Evil cabals could be defeated. A diffuse sense that things were out of her control could not.

The theories were fiction, but they hooked into an emotional vulnerability that sprang from something real. For Ms. Perron, it was a feeling that the Democratic Party had betrayed her after a lifetime of trusting it deeply.

Her immigrant family, from the former Yugoslavia, were union Democrats in ***working-class*** Detroit who had seen their middle-class lifestyle decline after the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement. As an inspector for the insurance industry, she spent decades in factories seeing union jobs wither. Still, she stayed with the party because she believed it was fighting for her. When Bernie Sanders became a presidential candidate she found him electrifying.

''He put into words what I couldn't figure out but I was seeing around me,'' said Ms. Perron, who is now 55. ''The middle class was shrinking. The 1 percent and corporations having more control and taking more of the money.''

She felt sure the Democratic establishment would back him, and she began volunteering for his campaign, meeting many new friends in the movement. But she felt that the news media was barely covering him. Then he lost the 2016 primary. When she began reading through leaked emails that fall, it looked to her like the party establishment had conspired to block him.

She spent weeks combing through the emails, hacked from Mr. Podesta, the Democratic National Committee and Mrs. Clinton. Her stunned discovery enraged her and put her on the path to conspiracy theories and, eventually, QAnon.

''There was no hint of conversation about the ***working class***,'' she said about the emails. Instead, she said, it was ''expensive dinner parties, exclusive get-togethers.''

The emails were Ms. Perron's doorway to the conspiracy world, and she found others there too. She was no longer a lonely victim of a force she did not understand, but part of a bigger community of people seeking the truth. She loved the feeling of common purpose. They were learning together how to research, looking up important people in the emails and figuring out how to trace them back to big donors.

''There was this excitement,'' Ms. Perron said. ''We were joining forces to finally clean house. To finally find something to explain why we were suffering.''

The community was growing, and also going to darker places. Ms. Perron remembers watching and sharing videos appearing to link a Washington pizza parlor to Mr. Podesta, Mrs. Clinton and a child sex trafficking ring. The dots were hazy, but she and her newfound friends on Facebook and Reddit drew bright lines connecting them. It sounds crazy now, she said, but at the time it felt so real and disturbing that sometimes she felt physically ill.

''It was all of us,'' she said of the early months of her immersion. ''It was these puzzle pieces that we all got to play around with. We were all sort of authoring this.''

If the early months were a build-your-own-adventure designed by different groups, all the theories were snapped together into one giant ''deep state'' explanation after Q, the anonymous person or people at the center of QAnon, first posted in late 2017, she said. Q's information drops had an addictive effect, drawing her in again after she had started to have doubts.

''Q managed to make us feel special, that we were being given very critical information that basically was going to save all that is good in the world and the United States,'' she said. ''We felt we were coming from a place of moral superiority. We were part of a special club.''

Meanwhile, her family was eating takeout all the time since she had stopped cooking and her stress levels had shot up, causing her blood pressure medication to stop working. Her doctor, worried, doubled her dose.

People who tried to talk her out of the conspiracy theories by sending her factual information only made it worse.

''Facts are not facts anymore,'' Ms. Perron said. ''They are highly powerful, nefarious people putting out messaging to keep us as docile as sheep.''

As the months went on, the claims she was seeing grew more outlandish. There were slickly produced videos of cannibalism and Satanism within the Democratic Party.

''The people I got to know on social media, they started to look stranger and act stranger and I didn't want to be like that,'' she said.

Mr. Trump himself was a source of doubt. Q presented him as a brilliant mastermind, and for a while she accepted that. But it became harder to reconcile that persona with what she observed in real life.

Another twinge of self-consciousness came during a phone conversation with a childhood friend. ''I remember calling my best friend and getting all into the number of pedophiles in government and that they've taken over the whole government system,'' she said. ''I felt a part of her saying, 'This is not the friend I recognize.' It never came out in words, it was just a sense that I had.''

When she first left QAnon, she felt a lot of shame and guilt. It was also humbling: Ms. Perron, who has a master's degree, had looked down on Scientologists as people who believed crazy things. But there she was.

But she has come to appreciate the experience. She has talked to her children about what she went through, and has learned to identify conspiracy dependence in others. She agreed to speak for this article to help others who are still in the throes of QAnon.

There are many. Ms. Perron volunteers as a life coach, and recently was working with a 40-year-old man who had lost his marriage and was falling asleep at work. At some point, he began texting her Q links. She realized he was staying up all night consuming conspiracy theories.

''I was watching his life fall apart,'' she said. ''I had no way to penetrate it. I could not even make a dent.''

She said she was no longer working with him.

Mr. Trump may be gone from government, but Ms. Perron believes that the ground is still fertile for conspiracy theories because many of the underlying conditions are the same: widespread distrust of authority, anger at powerful figures in politics and in the news media, and growing income inequality.

Unless there are major changes, Ms. Perron said, the craving will continue.

''Trump just used us and our fear,'' she said. ''When you are no longer living in fear, you are no longer prone to believe this stuff. I don't think we are anywhere near that yet.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/29/us/leaving-qanon-conspiracy.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/29/us/leaving-qanon-conspiracy.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: LENKA PERRON, a longtime Democrat from suburban Detroit who mostly stopped cooking and taking daily walks as she fell deeper into QAnon's online conspiracy world. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIN KIRKLAND FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Ms. Perron backed Senator Bernie Sanders for president in 2016, but lost faith in the Democratic Party after reading leaked emails. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALLISON FARRAND FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Ms. Perron said bogus theories linking a Washington pizza parlor to child sex trafficking by top Democrats seemed real at the time. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JUSTIN T. GELLERSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

''Trump just used us and our fear,'' Ms. Perron said, adding that theories like QAnon will outlast him. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AL DRAGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***‘Trump Just Used Us and Our Fear’: One Woman’s Journey Out of QAnon***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61W9-70D1-DXY4-X0MK-00000-00&context=1519360)

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But one day while she was scrolling, something caught her eye. People claiming to be sources inside the government had posted on Facebook that John Podesta, a former White House chief of staff, was about to be indicted. And yet on her phone she was watching a video that showed him chatting casually in front of an audience. Around the same time she saw Hillary Clinton, another supposed target for an indictment, walking in Hawaii, looking relaxed and holding a coffee cup.

“She just wasn’t behaving like someone who was about to get arrested,” she said.

It was the first nagging feeling that something did not add up. Five months and many more inconsistencies later, Ms. Perron, a consultant in the insurance industry in suburban Detroit, finally called it quits.

“At some point I realized, ‘Oh, there’s a reason this doesn’t fit,’” she said. “We are being manipulated. Someone is having fun at our expense.”

Her journey out of that world could be instructive: As the country begins to sort through the political fallout from four years of Donald J. Trump, one looming question is what will happen with the followers of QAnon and other anti-establishment conspiracy theories that have been bending Americans’ perceptions of reality.

There are [*signs that some have lost faith*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/technology/qanon-inauguration.html): Mr. Trump left Washington last week, blowing a hole through a key QAnon belief — that Mr. Trump, not President Biden, was the one who would be inaugurated on Jan. 20. But others are doubling down, and experts believe that some form of the QAnon conspiracy theory will remain deeply embedded in the nation’s culture by simply morphing to incorporate the new developments, as it has before.

QAnon believers are part of a broader swath of Americans who are immersed in conspiracy theories. Once on the far-right fringes, these theories now hold people from across the political spectrum in their thrall, from anti-lockdown libertarians to left-wing wellness types and “Stop the Steal” Trumpists.

The theories can be malevolent, causing real-life damage to people who end up in their cross hairs: the parents of children killed in the Sandy Hook mass shooting who have been harassed by conspiracists, or a Washington pizza restaurant shot up by a man who had come to take down a child trafficking ring he believed was housed inside. Q sweatshirts dotted the crowd that stormed the [*Capitol*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/03/us/politics/qanon-shaman-capitol-guilty.html) on Jan. 6.

But while much has been said about how people descend into this world, little is known about how they get out. Those who do leave are often filled with shame. Sometimes their addiction was so severe that they have become estranged from family and friends.

The theories seem crazy to Ms. Perron now, but looking back, she understands how they drew her in. They were comforting, a way to get her bearings in a chaotic world that felt increasingly unequal and rigged against middle-class people like her. These stories offered agency: Evil cabals could be defeated. A diffuse sense that things were out of her control could not.

The theories were fiction, but they hooked into an emotional vulnerability that sprang from something real. For Ms. Perron, it was a feeling that the Democratic Party had betrayed her after a lifetime of trusting it deeply.

Her immigrant family, from the former Yugoslavia, were union Democrats in ***working-class*** Detroit who had seen their middle-class lifestyle decline after the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement. As an inspector for the insurance industry, she spent decades in factories seeing union jobs wither. Still, she stayed with the party because she believed it was fighting for her. When Bernie Sanders became a presidential candidate she found him electrifying.

“He put into words what I couldn’t figure out but I was seeing around me,” said Ms. Perron, who is now 55. “The middle class was shrinking. The 1 percent and corporations having more control and taking more of the money.”

She felt sure the Democratic establishment would back him, and she began volunteering for his campaign, meeting many new friends in the movement. But she felt that the news media was barely covering him. Then he lost the 2016 primary. When she began [*reading through leaked emails*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/10/us/politics/hillary-clinton-emails-wikileaks.html) that fall, it looked to her like the party establishment had conspired to block him.

She spent weeks combing through the emails, hacked from Mr. Podesta, the Democratic National Committee and Mrs. Clinton. Her stunned discovery enraged her and put her on the path to conspiracy theories and, eventually, QAnon.

“There was no hint of conversation about the ***working class***,” she said about the emails. Instead, she said, it was “expensive dinner parties, exclusive get-togethers.”

The emails were Ms. Perron’s doorway to the conspiracy world, and she found others there too. She was no longer a lonely victim of a force she did not understand, but part of a bigger community of people seeking the truth. She loved the feeling of common purpose. They were learning together how to research, looking up important people in the emails and figuring out how to trace them back to big donors.

“There was this excitement,” Ms. Perron said. “We were joining forces to finally clean house. To finally find something to explain why we were suffering.”

The community was growing, and also going to darker places. Ms. Perron remembers watching and sharing videos appearing to link a Washington pizza parlor to Mr. Podesta, Mrs. Clinton and a child sex trafficking ring. The dots were hazy, but she and her newfound friends on Facebook and Reddit drew bright lines connecting them. It sounds crazy now, she said, but at the time it felt so real and disturbing that sometimes she felt physically ill.

“It was all of us,” she said of the early months of her immersion. “It was these puzzle pieces that we all got to play around with. We were all sort of authoring this.”

If the early months were a build-your-own-adventure designed by different groups, all the theories were snapped together into one giant “deep state” explanation after Q, the anonymous person or people at the center of QAnon, first posted in late 2017, she said. Q’s information drops had an addictive effect, drawing her in again after she had started to have doubts.

“Q managed to make us feel special, that we were being given very critical information that basically was going to save all that is good in the world and the United States,” she said. “We felt we were coming from a place of moral superiority. We were part of a special club.”

Meanwhile, her family was eating takeout all the time since she had stopped cooking and her stress levels had shot up, causing her blood pressure medication to stop working. Her doctor, worried, doubled her dose.

People who tried to talk her out of the conspiracy theories by sending her factual information only made it worse.

“Facts are not facts anymore,” Ms. Perron said. “They are highly powerful, nefarious people putting out messaging to keep us as docile as sheep.”

As the months went on, the claims she was seeing grew more outlandish. There were slickly produced videos of cannibalism and Satanism within the Democratic Party.

“The people I got to know on social media, they started to look stranger and act stranger and I didn’t want to be like that,” she said.

Mr. Trump himself was a source of doubt. Q presented him as a brilliant mastermind, and for a while she accepted that. But it became harder to reconcile that persona with what she observed in real life.

Another twinge of self-consciousness came during a phone conversation with a childhood friend. “I remember calling my best friend and getting all into the number of pedophiles in government and that they’ve taken over the whole government system,” she said. “I felt a part of her saying, ‘This is not the friend I recognize.’ It never came out in words, it was just a sense that I had.”

When she first left QAnon, she felt a lot of shame and guilt. It was also humbling: Ms. Perron, who has a master’s degree, had looked down on Scientologists as people who believed crazy things. But there she was.

But she has come to appreciate the experience. She has talked to her children about what she went through, and has learned to identify conspiracy dependence in others. She agreed to speak for this article to help others who are still in the throes of QAnon.

There are many. Ms. Perron volunteers as a life coach, and recently was working with a 40-year-old man who had lost his marriage and was falling asleep at work. At some point, he began texting her Q links. She realized he was staying up all night consuming conspiracy theories.

“I was watching his life fall apart,” she said. “I had no way to penetrate it. I could not even make a dent.”

She said she was no longer working with him.

Mr. Trump may be gone from government, but Ms. Perron believes that the ground is still fertile for conspiracy theories because many of the underlying conditions are the same: widespread distrust of authority, anger at powerful figures in politics and in the news media, and growing income inequality.

Unless there are major changes, Ms. Perron said, the craving will continue.

“Trump just used us and our fear,” she said. “When you are no longer living in fear, you are no longer prone to believe this stuff. I don’t think we are anywhere near that yet.”

PHOTOS: LENKA PERRON, a longtime Democrat from suburban Detroit who mostly stopped cooking and taking daily walks as she fell deeper into QAnon’s online conspiracy world. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIN KIRKLAND FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Ms. Perron backed Senator Bernie Sanders for president in 2016, but lost faith in the Democratic Party after reading leaked emails. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALLISON FARRAND FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Ms. Perron said bogus theories linking a Washington pizza parlor to child sex trafficking by top Democrats seemed real at the time. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JUSTIN T. GELLERSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); “Trump just used us and our fear,” Ms. Perron said, adding that theories like QAnon will outlast him. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AL DRAGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 23, 2023

**End of Document**



[***U.S. Arms Sales and Yemen***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YY4-4GS1-DXY4-X0KX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 20, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 26; LETTERS

**Length:** 592 words

**Body**

A foreign policy expert discusses the fiction of arms sales as jobs creator. Also: The future of Christianity.

To the Editor:

Re ''Why U.S. Arms Take Grim Toll in Yemen War'' (front page, May 17):

Jobs tied to arms sales should never be used as an excuse to fuel mass slaughter, as the Trump administration has done with respect to the sale of Raytheon bombs to Saudi Arabia for use in the war in Yemen. But if the president wants to raise jobs as an issue, he should at least get his facts straight.

Arms sales to Saudi Arabia have created 20,000 to 40,000 jobs in recent years, well under one-tenth of 1 percent of total U.S. employment. That's a far cry from the 500,000 jobs tied to Saudi sales claimed by President Trump. Virtually any other expenditure of the same funds -- or any other export -- would create far more jobs than spending on weapons.

Selling arms to repressive regimes is bad foreign policy and bad economic policy. It's time to end U.S. arms sales to Saudi Arabia, once and for all.

William D. HartungNew YorkThe writer is director of the Arms and Security Program at the Center for International Policy.

Directions for Christianity in the Modern World

To the Editor:

Re ''The Future of Christianity Is Punk,'' by Tara Isabella Burton (Sunday Review, May 10), which Ms. Burton calls ''a return to old-school forms of worship as a way of escaping from the crisis of modernity'':

She seems to have confused punk with nostalgia. Whose voices are allowed in reconstructing traditionalist worship and whom are we serving by it? I hardly think the point of Mass is to worship a past that never was (read: nostalgia) so that I might find the transcendent for me alone.

Punk is the Gospel, written under Roman oppression to give hope to weary believers. Punk is the Eucharist that has us remember that Jesus died at the hands of those Romans in power only to come back from the dead so that we might confront racism, sexism, homophobia and everything else that separates us from the love of God.

I have no doubts about the beauty of traditionalist liturgies, but punk they are not. If we want punk Christianity, I ask which injustice will we boldly choose to fight against? I can only hope that the answer is many.

Nicole HanleyBronxThe writer is a seminarian at the Episcopal Divinity School at Union Theological Seminary.

To the Editor:

Tara Isabella Burton doesn't address the profoundly problematic aspects of older Christian ritual: its paternalistic privileging, particularly its relegation of women to secondary roles and status, and its homophobia. However beautiful and unusual ancient hymns and rituals may be, they are grounded in sexism and disrespect for gender fluidity.

Moreover, Ms. Burton conflates liberal and conservative perspectives vis-à-vis her claim that both center on individualism. Liberals -- who make up a significant majority in the Democratic Party -- emphasize the need to care for those less fortunate, while conservatives privilege the individual's supposed capacity to lift oneself up by the bootstraps (refusing, for example, to extend unemployment benefits for fear that this will disincentivize people to work).

We've only to look at the Republicans in the Senate and the White House, whose refusal to extend support for poor and ***working-class*** people during this pandemic (often by allowing wealthy corporations and chief executives to siphon off relief funds) stands in stark contrast to the Democrats' legislation aimed at helping those most in need.

Harriet PowerBala Cynwyd, Pa.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/19/opinion/letters/yemen-arms-trump.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/19/opinion/letters/yemen-arms-trump.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Smoke rising from Sana in 2015 after a Saudi-led airstrike killed seven people. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tyler Hicks/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 20, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The ‘Jaws’ Shoot Was a Drama. Now It’s a Play.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:640C-H661-JBG3-64SJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 2, 2021 Tuesday 00:21 EST

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 1242 words

**Byline:** Alex Marshall

**Highlight:** The hit movie’s set was plagued by malfunctioning sharks and drunken feuds — perfect material for a night at the theater.

**Body**

The hit movie’s set was plagued by malfunctioning sharks and drunken feuds — perfect material for a night at the theater.

LONDON — When Ian Shaw was 5, he did something to make any movie fan jealous: He visited the set of “[*Jaws*](https://www.nytimes.com/1975/06/21/archives/screen-entrapped-by-jaws-of-fear.html).” On location on Martha’s Vineyard, an assistant pulled back a huge sheet and young Shaw found himself staring into the gaping mouth of the man-eating shark that would soon become a cinematic icon.

“I was terrified!” Shaw, now 51, recalled in a recent interview.

Shaw was on set because his father, Robert Shaw, was starring in the movie as Quint, the psychotic shark hunter who, by the film’s end, has been bitten in two. Shaw said he visited many of his father’s sets, and the “Jaws” shoot seemed like any other. But what he didn’t know back then was that the shoot was one of movie history’s most notoriously dysfunctional, plagued by technical problems and cast feuds.

The production’s three mechanical sharks kept breaking down, and shooting was often delayed: Steven Spielberg, the film’s director, took to calling the special effects team the “[*special defects department*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QmzqlZu528Q).” At one point, a boat they were filming on sank, sending two cameras down to the sea floor. (The film inside the cameras turned out to be safe.)

Shaw’s father — [*who died in 1978*](https://www.nytimes.com/1978/11/06/archives/obituaries-obituaries.html) — brought difficulties of his own to the production. He drank heavily during the shoot, and clashed with a co-star, Richard Dreyfuss. The elder Shaw repeatedly belittled and tried to humiliate Dreyfuss, making off-putting comments seconds before the cameras rolled, or goading Dreyfuss into performing silly stunts, like climbing a ship’s mast and jumping into the sea.

Roy Scheider, the movie’s other star, was stuck between the feuding pair.

The younger Shaw didn’t learn the full extent of the chaos on the set of “Jaws” until decades later, he said, but he realized that they had enough drama for a play. Now he is [*winning rave reviews*](https://www.standard.co.uk/culture/theatre/the-shark-is-broken-theatre-review-ian-shaw-jaws-west-end-b961518.html) in Britain for “[*The Shark Is Broken*](https://thesharkisbroken.com/),” a comedy three-hander running at the Ambassadors Theater in London’s West End through Jan. 15. In it, Shaw plays his father, stuck on a boat with Dreyfuss (Liam Murray Scott) and Scheider (Demetri Goritsas) as the tensions wax and wane.

In a recent interview, Shaw talked about the difficulty of portraying his father’s darker side onstage, and whether conflict can spur creativity. These are edited extracts of that conversation.

In the play, your father clearly dislikes “Jaws.” Did he ever take you to see the movie?

I saw it when I was very young, in a screening room somewhere, and was absolutely terrified and couldn’t go in the swimming pool afterward. I remember having nightmares, imagining sharks around my bed and calling for my dad to come and save me. Even though I knew that in the film he got eaten, I was able to suspend my disbelief about that.

What made you come up with the idea to turn the movie’s problems into this play?

I once had to grow a mustache for a part, and looked in the mirror and thought, “Oh, I look like Quint.” That’s what started it, but it seemed a very silly and foolish idea because I’d spent my whole career avoiding association with my dad.

Then I read Carl Gottlieb’s “The Jaws Log,” and watched documentaries, and saw there was this really interesting relationship between Robert and Richard and Roy — this triangle which makes for great drama. And you only need three people, so it’s affordable!

I toyed with the idea for years, because I felt it could be very embarrassing — potentially disrespectful to my dad and to the movie “Jaws,” which I love. To step into my dad’s shoes, and to paint him as an alcoholic — do I have the right to do that publicly?

Did you know he was an alcoholic at the time? He died only a few years after making “Jaws” when you were still young.

I did used to see him drink. I was often playing under the table in the Irish pubs when he would be having a session. But it didn’t seem a problem then. It actually seemed kind of normal.

I feel that generation, especially the more ***working-class*** actors like Richard Burton, had a little discomfort with the profession in terms of putting on tights and makeup. So their way of asserting their masculinity was to be hard drinkers, the sort of Viking method of proving themselves.

What made you get over your fear of disrespecting him?

When I started writing the play with Joseph Nixon, we quickly saw it wasn’t just about “Jaws.” Joe’s father died very sadly, and it became a little bit more about fathers and sons, about addiction, about making movies in general. There were these other themes that meant it wasn’t just a stunt.

You show your father continually antagonizing Dreyfuss, often seemingly just for fun. Why do you think he behaved like that?

He really didn’t want to do “Jaws,” because, at the time, he was offered [*[the remake of] “Brief Encounter,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/1974/11/12/archives/tv-brief-encounter-burton-and-miss-loren-portray-lovers-on-hallmark.html) or was certainly in the running for it. He would have rather have done that, to break away from this macho image. He kind of felt handcuffed to “Jaws” to provide for his family.

Then the shark’s not working, so they’re hanging around. And he liked to drink. But also Dreyfus genuinely did wind him up and so he thought he needed a bit of a slap down. He dared Dreyfuss to jump off the mast from the top of the ship, and I think he fired a fire hose in his face. There’s so many stories, and a lot of them are true.

In the play, your father says he’s needling Dreyfuss to improve the movie. Their characters are meant to dislike each other. Did you consider that he might just have been trying to create a mood?

Personally, I think it was both because he was annoyed with Richard, but also he did think it was getting some good work done between them. The acting is so good in the film, so it probably did help.

You once auditioned for a role in a production Dreyfuss was directing. How did that go given his past with your father?

He was directing “Hamlet,” and I went in and mentioned that I was Robert Shaw’s son and he looked, ironically, like Hamlet seeing his dead father. He just sat down and looked slightly ill. I was really taken aback at the time. I’d been expecting him to go, “Wonderful!” then give me a big hug. But he was very professional, because we obviously went through the audition.

Did you get the part?

No, I didn’t!

Given that “Jaws” experienced so many problems, did you have any of your own making “The Shark Is Broken?”

Not that I remember. When I had the first ideas on paper, I did wake up with cold sweats at three o’clock in the morning thinking, “This is really bad idea,” because I was really worried that I would offend my family. But in terms of the writing process, I really enjoyed it.

Do you think “Jaws” would have been a better movie without the problems?

No, because the problems meant they all hung around and developed it. It allowed them to improvise. “You’re gonna need a bigger boat” was a piece of improvisation from Steven Spielberg. And the delays allowed my father to rewrite [*the Indianapolis speech*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9S41Kplsbs), which is a big moment. All sorts of things in it were devised while they were hanging around waiting.

So disaster is a good recipe for creative success?

Well, it can be.

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top, Ian Shaw, who plays his father in the play “The Shark Is Broken”; from left, Roy Scheider, Robert Shaw and Richard Dreyfuss in the 1975 film “Jaws”; and a scene from the play, with Demetri Goritsas, center. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAUREN FLEISHMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; UNIVERSAL STUDIOS; HELEN MAYBANKS)

**Load-Date:** November 4, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Cuomo Is a Media Hero in the Pandemic. De Blasio Is a Scapegoat.; the media equation***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YJR-Y6W1-DXY4-X00P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BUSINESS; media

**Length:** 1230 words

**Byline:** Ben Smith

**Highlight:** The mayor of New York, who is often disdainful of the media, has become an irresistible punching bag.

**Body**

The mayor of New York, who is often disdainful of the media, has become an irresistible punching bag.

Mayor Bill de Blasio of New York called me this morning a little out of breath, feet pounding in the background, on his daily walk in Prospect Park. It’s the kind of stubbornly pointless personal ritual his critics in the media find incredibly annoying — couldn’t he just stay home at Gracie Mansion and clap for health care workers like his neighbors?

“I can’t put on a costume and pretend to be a different person than I am,” he told me.

That has been part of Mr. de Blasio’s problem all along: He refuses to participate in media theater, the performative love for the city, that made mayors like Ed Koch and Rudy Giuliani larger-than-life figures. In fact, his central political realization may be that he can govern while the declining tabloids sneer at him on his way to the gym — and he sneers back.

His disdain for much of the media helped him focus on the basic job he was hired to do with the support of black, ***working class*** voters: redistributing money from rich to poor, in the form of health and education spending. Against many predictions, he also maintained Mike Bloomberg’s safe, prosperous city.

Of course, the mayor’s attitude also blinded him to legitimate media criticism on issues like public housing. But on Jan. 1, a fair assessment would have judged him a reasonably successful, if sometimes extremely irritating, mayor.

But now, at a moment when that intangible, direct-to-camera quality of public leadership has turned Gov. Andrew Cuomo of New York into a national hero, Mr. de Blasio is filling a different role: Punching bag. [*The New York Post*](https://nypost.com/2020/03/23/mayor-bill-de-blasio-needs-to-quit-pushing-partisan-hysteria/) accuses him of “pushing partisan hysteria,” while a [*Daily News op-ed*](https://nypost.com/2020/03/23/mayor-bill-de-blasio-needs-to-quit-pushing-partisan-hysteria/) lists his “coronavirus failures.” A widely shared [*New York magazine article*](https://nypost.com/2020/03/23/mayor-bill-de-blasio-needs-to-quit-pushing-partisan-hysteria/) covered his “worst week ever.” Meghan McCain of ABC’s “The View” recently [*revealed*](https://nypost.com/2020/03/23/mayor-bill-de-blasio-needs-to-quit-pushing-partisan-hysteria/) that she’d disliked him ever since he fatally wounded a groundhog in 2014.

When New Yorkers, and when writers, need to shift their gaze from the federal government’s deadly failures, Mr. de Blasio is close at hand. His early news conferences were stressed and rambling — relatable, in a way. We are all stressed and rambling. But he didn’t project the soothing strength that has made Mr. Cuomo’s appearances into reassuring fireside chats for an uneasy nation. A sympathetic Cuomo aide said he thought Mr. de Blasio had been getting a bit of a bad rap on his performance because of the “hair on fire” quality of his early response to the crisis.

“I think it’s not surprising the media and the public discourse gravitates toward that big emotional messaging,” Mr. de Blasio said. His own goal, he said, has been “to set up a message of scrupulous blunt truth,” call attention to heroic New Yorkers, and at times call out President Trump in the hopes of getting more supplies flowing.

“I’ve had a very, very substantial number of people come to me and say, ‘You’ve been steady, you’ve been calm, you’ve been purposeful,’” he said.

The contrast between Mr. Cuomo’s and Mr. de Blasio’s public appearances has been striking. But a look at the details of their actions to confront the pandemic, well outlined by [*Politico*](https://nypost.com/2020/03/23/mayor-bill-de-blasio-needs-to-quit-pushing-partisan-hysteria/), makes the contrast less clear. Almost everyone was dangerously late to the seriousness of the crisis. The federal agencies whose job it was to prepare and test failed grievously. Only a handful of officials, notably Mayor London Breed of San Francisco, were truly ahead of the curve.

And Mr. de Blasio? He was somewhere in the middle, like most of the media that is now keeping score. His painfully public three-day Hamlet act over closing schools ended with Mr. Cuomo announcing that they’d be closed just minutes before Mr. de Blasio’s planned announcement — both of them days behind some other school systems around the country. Ms. Breed had her city “shelter in place” March 16; Mr. de Blasio aired that idea March 17, to be immediately rebuked by Cuomo, who then put in a similar statewide order four days later. On Wednesday, Mr. Cuomo overrode the mayor to close playgrounds. The two have tiptoed around one another, and on Tuesday held news conferences at the same hospital ship, an hour apart.

Mr. de Blasio told me his hesitation to shut schools and, effectively, the city was focused on the city as he saw it. “The vast majority of New Yorkers are ***working-class*** people, are lower income folks, who have no option but to stand and fight,” he said. “They can’t go any place else, they don’t have an alternative to child care, they don’t have a nanny.”

And he blamed the media for overlooking those groups to focus on the more affluent classes. “Our discourse is inherently about a small subset of our people.”

The problem with his argument, of course, is that the poor get sick, too. People close to Mr. de Blasio say he erred in taking a reflexively ideological approach to a fast-moving health crisis. One former aide worried that the mayor filtered the pandemic through “a social justice lens’’ that does not work for this moment.

Mr. de Blasio rejects the criticism that he let his preoccupation with inequality overwhelm his more universal obligations. But he says the emerging story of the crisis will be about the old inequalities as much as about the new disease. The city has released largely useless data about where the coronavirus is hitting hardest. New data is nearly ready, he said, and when it’s released later this week, it will show that clearly.

“We’re going to be able to put out much more true data that will show this tracking with the health disparities that are historically known,” he said. “Coronavirus is equal opportunity, and we have to save and protect everyone — but it’s increasingly clear where we’re losing lots of people and how it connects back to historic disparities.”

Mr. de Blasio’s hair has cooled off as the briefings have gone on; he continues to drive his aides crazy by refusing to trust information, as [*The New York Times’ Jeffery C. Mays and Joseph Goldstein reported*](https://nypost.com/2020/03/23/mayor-bill-de-blasio-needs-to-quit-pushing-partisan-hysteria/), until he has “processed it himself.” He’s scrambling like other executives to get supplies for the city; he was on the phone Monday, he said, with the chief executive of a Swedish ventilator company, pleading New York’s case. He’s now [*under fire*](https://nypost.com/2020/03/23/mayor-bill-de-blasio-needs-to-quit-pushing-partisan-hysteria/) from the right for releasing inmates from city jails.

But outside the Manhattan bubble, city’s perceptions vary widely. [*A recent Siena Poll*](https://nypost.com/2020/03/23/mayor-bill-de-blasio-needs-to-quit-pushing-partisan-hysteria/) said 61 percent of New Yorkers approved of his handling of the crisis, about halfway in between ratings for Mr. Trump and Mr. Cuomo. Among black New Yorkers, however, 84 percent approved, as did 71 percent of people making less than $50,000 a year.

As the crisis wears on and New Yorkers and Americans show signs of wanting to root for their leaders, not just to punch them, Mr. de Blasio has an opportunity to be judged on his stated priorities: to blunt what is likely to be a predictably, vastly disproportionate impact of this crisis on poor people who are [*more likely*](https://nypost.com/2020/03/23/mayor-bill-de-blasio-needs-to-quit-pushing-partisan-hysteria/) to have underlying conditions, from diabetes to heart disease, that make them vulnerable.

“I increasingly see that the greatest threat is to people who have the least and the hospitals that have the least,” he said.

PHOTO: Mayor Bill de Blasio of New York has been a target of media criticism over his response to the coronavirus pandemic.  (PHOTOGRAPH BY Stefan Jeremiah/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Bill de Blasio Knows New York Is Tired of Him. He’s at Peace With It.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66BN-YFM1-DXY4-X52V-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 3043 words

**Byline:** Michael Gold

**Highlight:** On the eve of the former mayor’s return to his New England home, a frank exit interview about his time in New York.

**Body**

For decades, as Bill de Blasio climbed the political ladder, he resolutely insisted he was a New Yorker. This insistence came even though he was raised primarily in Boston — well, nearby in Cambridge, technically — and kept his childhood fealty to the Red Sox.

As he ascended from councilmember to public advocate to mayor, New Yorkers grew to accept him. Not necessarily as one of their own — the man used a fork and knife to eat a slice of pizza, after all — but as a progressive leader who would restore the city to its left-leaning core after 20 years of non-Democratic mayors.

Yet this fall, with New York City having spurned his recent bid for Congress, Mr. de Blasio will pack his bags and head briefly to Boston — well, Cambridge — where he will leave his life in electoral politics behind and be a visiting teaching fellow at Harvard University.

The move isn’t permanent; Mr. de Blasio and his family will remain in Brooklyn. But, he said in an interview, it would “be sweet to spend a little time in the town I grew up in” and to head to Fenway Park to watch his beloved Red Sox. “Not that they’re doing so much this season,” he added with a laugh. After many highs in the past decade, the Sox are currently last in their division.

Mr. de Blasio, 61, may very well relate. After an energizing election in 2013, he left office last year as one of the most unpopular mayors in the city’s history. Then, in May, he announced that he would run for Congress but dropped out after two months of campaigning made it clear that his neighbors were not especially eager for his return to the political arena.

Despite the rejection, Mr. de Blasio was not bitter or defeated but energized and hopeful. The failed campaign had been “gratifying,” he said. It renewed his dedication to serving the public, even if the public was not so sure it wanted to be served by him.

“Humans vote emotionally,” Mr. de Blasio said. “And if you’re tired of someone, you’re tired of them.”

Mr. de Blasio’s fall from political grace was less a precipitous drop than it was a cascading series of political pratfalls and miscalculations.

He entered City Hall in 2014 as the first Democratic mayor in two decades, and he carried the hopes of much of the city on his shoulders. After spending his campaign vowing to tackle growing inequality and represent historically neglected communities, his decisive electoral victory made him a prominent bearer of a left-leaning, populist politics that has in recent years fueled rising Democratic stars like Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

But Mr. de Blasio was immediately met with challenges. He battled with Andrew M. Cuomo, a fellow Democrat who was then the governor, and city police unions. He lost liberal followers over not living up to campaign promises, and then, after a landslide re-election, further antagonized them when he appeared to side with the police during the city’s rancorous racial justice protests.

His political ambitions did not help matters. From the get-go, Mr. de Blasio held an unwavering view of himself as a progressive catalyst on the national stage, visiting Iowa during his first term as mayor and making a quixotic run for president in his second.

By the time he left office in 2021, his popularity had cratered, creating an obstacle for his congressional run that he ultimately proved unable to surmount.

In interviews with numerous former aides and advisers to Mr. de Blasio, a portrait emerged of a mayor whose public image steadily eroded only in part because of his job performance; many, including some who were once his closest supporters, said it was his didactic manner that alienated New Yorkers.

Over the last several months, Mr. de Blasio has acknowledged that he had not been a perfect leader, saying that he “made mistakes” that he hoped to learn from. In a frank and reflective interview that addressed his regrets as mayor and the likely end of his political career, he said that chief among those mistakes was failing to stay “close to the hearts of people” and maintain “the personal bond” that propelled him into City Hall.

“I really lost track of that need,” Mr. de Blasio said. “And that’s a real mistake on my part.”

Policy Meets Reality

Mr. de Blasio entered the 2013 mayoral race as a left-leaning antidote to the city’s 20-year run under Rudolph W. Giuliani and Michael R. Bloomberg. He had a multiracial family that, as he often pointed out, looked like the voters he sought to represent.

He vowed to end the city’s income inequality, which disproportionately affected ***working-class*** New Yorkers in communities of color. Many of his signature initiatives — universal prekindergarten; laws protecting fast-food workers from unpredictable and exploitative schedules; and the reduction of the Police Department’s use of stop-and-frisk tactics — addressed those groups’ concerns.

Still, Mr. de Blasio’s push to turn his policy planks to reality would almost immediately expose his vulnerabilities and open him up to criticism that would plague him throughout his mayoralty.

Weeks after taking office in 2014, Mr. de Blasio set to work trying to enact universal prekindergarten. The initiative was ultimately successful, but the battle to pay for it would become the first of many bruising fights with the governor.

During his campaign, Mr. de Blasio had promised that the money for universal pre-K would come from a dedicated tax on the wealthy. Doing so required approval from Albany, and Mr. Cuomo, who was running for re-election that fall, was against it.

The fight set the two lawmakers on an ugly collision course: Mr. de Blasio was adamant about the tax, insisting the people had given him a mandate. Mr. Cuomo pushed back, in private and in public. When Mr. de Blasio tried to rally support in Albany, Mr. Cuomo [*lent his support to a competing rally*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/03/nyregion/cuomo-put-his-weight-behind-charter-school-protections.html?module=inline) meant to protest the mayor’s handling of charter schools and embarrass him.

In the end, the governor got his way. The state did provide dedicated money for pre-K, but Mr. de Blasio did not get the tax he sought, even after spending considerable capital on the fight.

The dispute kicked off a yearslong vitriolic feud with Mr. Cuomo, who during their overlapping years in office would pin many of the city’s problems on the mayor, then engage in constant one-upsmanship in an effort to solve them. Mr. Cuomo would characterize Mr. de Blasio repeatedly as a self-righteous ideologue who was often unwilling to compromise.

Mr. de Blasio tried to take his conflict with the governor to a broader stage, publicly accusing Mr. Cuomo of[*petty and vindictive political machinations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/01/nyregion/de-blasio-denounces-cuomo-accusing-him-of-hurting-new-york-city.html) against dissenters. But the gambit to sway public opinion failed to [*seriously alter Mr. Cuomo’s standing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/18/nyregion/cuomo-and-de-blasios-feud-has-hurt-new-york-voters-say.html?module=inline), and he remained a thorn in the mayor’s side [*on key issues*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/29/nyregion/cuomo-de-blasio-feud-threatens-new-york-citys-plans-for-affordable-housing.html) until the governor resigned in August 2021.

As the governor used his bully pulpit to denigrate the mayor, Mr. de Blasio did not exactly help matters, often exhibiting a stubborn streak and dismissive attitude that exasperated his supporters.

His insistence on working out at a Y.M.C.A. in Park Slope, Brooklyn, was often cited. Despite moving to Gracie Mansion on Manhattan’s Upper East Side, Mr. de Blasio insisted on traveling in a private car with a police escort some 11 miles to his preferred gym.

Throughout his time as mayor, Mr. de Blasio defended his gym visits — criticized by many as wasteful and environmentally unsound — and did not acknowledge that the trips were misguided until earlier this year.

People’s objections to him were so much about his image, said a former adviser. Even when the solution seemed obvious to all in his circle — that is, stop taking a motorcade to a gym in Brooklyn — the mayor wouldn’t even consider it.

Losing the Police Department

The first major crisis for Mr. de Blasio arrived in July 2014, when a confrontation on Staten Island between the police and an unarmed Black man, Eric Garner, [*led to his death*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/14/nyregion/eric-garner-police-chokehold-staten-island.html).

Mr. de Blasio had campaigned as a fierce critic of the Police Department, and had committed to improving its relationships with Black and Hispanic residents. In the immediate aftermath of Mr. Garner’s death, Mr. de Blasio’s middle-ground approach left many left-leaning supporters dissatisfied.

Months later, after a grand jury [*decided not to indict*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/04/nyregion/grand-jury-said-to-bring-no-charges-in-staten-island-chokehold-death-of-eric-garner.html) the police officer whose chokehold led to Mr. Garner’s death, Mr. de Blasio — who already had a tense relationship with law enforcement — again sought to stay above the fray. Still, as [*protests sprung up*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/08/nyregion/hundreds-protest-grand-jury-decision-in-eric-garner-chokehold-case.html), he voiced sympathy for the protesters and gave an emotional speech, saying that he had [*urged his biracial son*](https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/city-hall/story/2014/12/in-discussing-garner-de-blasio-invokes-dante-017904) to be especially cautious in encounters with officers.

Police union leaders took offense. Then, weeks later, two officers were shot and killed in their patrol car. When Mr. de Blasio went to the officers’ funerals, dozens turned their backs on him in protest. A de facto work slowdown also followed, leading some to believe that the mayor had lost control of the Police Department.

Former aides and advisers said that the tension with the police cost him support in particular among wealthy white voters, who were dismayed by the police slowdown and feared higher crime, and among liberals who thought he was failing to live up to his campaign promises.

Another controversy over policing tactics brought Mr. de Blasio further difficulty in June 2020, as protests erupted across the city following the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

When video showed officers driving into a crowd of demonstrators in Brooklyn, Mr. de Blasio appeared to blame protesters. After reporters at other protests witnessed aggressive police behavior, the mayor argued that the press had seen a “different reality” than some of his staff.

The mayor’s equivocating led to a protest from [*then-current and former City Hall employees*](https://www.thecity.nyc/2020/6/6/21282686/de-blasios-staff-demonstration-over-handling-of-george-floyd-protests-and-nypd) and the [*departure of several staff members*](https://gothamist.com/news/not-what-i-signed-de-blasio-staff-exodus-continues-mayor-stands-police), including Olivia Lapeyrolerie, a deputy press secretary for the mayor.

“There was definitely some disappointment that he didn’t live up to this progressive beacon that he said he was going to be in 2013,” Ms. Lapeyrolerie said.

Mr. de Blasio said that he understood the frustration. But his chief concern had been to ensure that nobody died during the protests and to stem looting and property damage. Media coverage, in particular, he said, did not reflect that larger context.

“I think the bigger picture needs to be given respect as well,” he said.

How Does It Play in Iowa?

Even as he faced difficulties advancing a progressive agenda at home, Mr. de Blasio was committed to securing a spot on the national stage. In 2015, with just a year in City Hall, he traveled to Nebraska and Iowa in an attempt to sway the Democratic Party to embrace his style of politics. More trips to other far-flung parts of the country followed, as Mr. de Blasio tried to increase his name recognition.

These efforts bred more missteps. Many New Yorkers felt the mayor’s attentions were too often focused away from home, especially so early in his first term. Nationally, the Democratic establishment was dismayed by his dragged-out endorsement of Hillary Clinton in her 2016 presidential campaign. Despite the fact that he ran her Senate campaign in 2000, he seemed to be putting his ideology over their long-established ties.

That reluctance later kept him on the sidelines of Mrs. Clinton’s campaign, which first declined his offer to campaign for her in Iowa, then sidelined him at appearances as her race heated up.

Meanwhile, his campaign for re-election was also approaching, and there were troubles at home. As Mr. de Blasio was out supporting Mrs. Clinton, [*his own press secretary resigned*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/06/nyregion/de-blasios-press-secretary-karen-hinton-says-she-will-quit.html). It was one of several high-profile departures at the time.

While attrition is common in any mayoral administration, many of those who left their jobs with Mr. de Blasio often [*cited his management style and personality*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/29/nyregion/why-have-so-many-women-quit-on-mayor-de-blasio.html) as their reason. High-ranking women, in particular, [*said the work environment was hostile*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/29/nyregion/why-have-so-many-women-quit-on-mayor-de-blasio.html) or frustrating.

Some of those who departed would go on to become outspoken critics. Rebecca Kirszner Katz, a spokeswoman whom Mr. de Blasio once called “the fifth member” of his family, left to become a political consultant. She would become one of Mr. de Blasio’s most vocal antagonists toward the end of his mayoralty. “I’ve been defending de Blasio’s record for years,” she said in 2019. “I stopped defending his choices a long time ago.”

Despite the mounting criticism and a dwindling inner circle, Mr. de Blasio sailed to re-election in 2017. But the path forward still would not be easy: Mr. de Blasio continued to spar with Mr. Cuomo, and [*the City Council showed a new willingness*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/19/nyregion/council-mayor-divided-new-york-de-blasio.html) to challenge an increasingly unpopular mayor.

The re-election did not boost Mr. de Blasio’s support substantially, and his standing at home was further weakened by his presidential bid. His curious national trips fed speculation that the mayor had presidential ambitions, despite a lack of name recognition and long odds. In May 2019, he made his campaign official.

Almost immediately, the decision angered city residents, who felt he was ignoring them to chase a dream that had little chance of succeeding. His absence during a July blackout that took out the power in large chunks of Manhattan prompted further griping.

In the end, Mr. de Blasio abandoned the race after four months, the first time in nearly two decades that he had mounted an unsuccessful electoral campaign. He returned home that September promising to [*double down on his progressive planks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/20/nyregion/bill-de-blasio-nyc-mayor.html).

Several months later, the coronavirus pandemic hit New York.

The ‘Alternate Universe’ Mayoralty

The onset of the pandemic in March 2020 sat, in many ways, at the intersection of problems plaguing Mr. de Blasio. He clashed with top health officials over shutdowns, resisting the pleas of advisers and public health experts who urged him to close schools and restaurants. As tensions grew, he lost a valued public health commissioner, Dr. Oxiris Barbot, who in her resignation email voiced “deep disappointment” that Mr. de Blasio had not sufficiently relied on her department’s expertise. (Dr. Barbot did not respond to a request for comment.)

He also fought with Mr. Cuomo over who had the final say over [*shutdowns*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/12/nyregion/schools-cuomo-de-blasio-nyc-coronavirus.html), reopenings, [*restrictions*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/12/nyregion/cuomo-coronavirus-orthodox-shutdown.html) and [*how to administer vaccines*](https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/politics/2021/01/05/mondays-with-the-mayor-bill-de-blasio-coronavirus-vaccine-news-covid-nyc-hospitals-possible-fines). At one point, as he was urging residents to stay home, he traveled the 11 miles from Gracie Mansion to the gym.

Looking back, Mr. de Blasio said he largely stood by his decisions during the pandemic, including his push to reopen city schools in the fall of 2020. But he acknowledged that the period was traumatizing for New York and said that it contributed in large part to his low popularity in parts of the city.

“After the intense difficulties that people went through, it’s hard to ask people, if they were upset about a certain decision with Covid, it’s hard to say, ‘Hey, let’s look at the big picture again,’” Mr. de Blasio said. “Because that was so recent and intense.”

The continued threat of the pandemic in the mayor’s final year further challenged his agenda. While the virus exposed the inequality that Mr. de Blasio had brought to the fore, it also raised questions about whether he had been able to address it.

Still, in the final months of Mr. de Blasio’s time in office, the outlook became rosier. Mr. Cuomo’s resignation amid several scandals led many to reconsider whether Mr. de Blasio had been treated unfairly. As the city started to reopen, Mr. de Blasio became one of its biggest cheerleaders. After years of a bitter slog, he seemed to be having fun.

Mr. de Blasio described the second half of his last year in office as “sort of the alternate universe” version of his mayoralty.

“I felt more at peace,” he said. “We ended on a note that was very moving and positive. That last day at City Hall felt very much like the pieces had come together.”

Mr. de Blasio had hoped to carry that newfound momentum into the congressional race. He entered with significant advantages: broad name recognition, a track record of some successes, [*solid fund-raising*](https://nypost.com/2022/07/12/ex-mayor-bill-de-blasio-rakes-in-500k-for-quarter-in-congress-bid/) and a district in his political home base.

“When I first heard he was running for Congress, it honestly made immense sense to me,” Ms. Lapeyrolerie said. “I was like, ‘I feel like he would actually be quite good at this.’”

Now, though, a future career in electoral politics seems unlikely.

“I’m a little sad about it,” Mr. de Blasio said. “But I’m not deeply pained, because I really have had the opportunity to think.”

After dropping his campaign bid, Mr. de Blasio took some time off, the first stretch in years that he “actually felt some relief and the ability to calm and de-stress,” he said.

When he heads to Harvard, among the areas of focus will be two of his biggest successes as mayor, the highs that book-ended his eight-year term: early childhood education and steering the city through a pandemic.

But when his time as a fellow ends, Mr. de Blasio’s future is uncertain.

“It’s public service, unquestionably,” he said. “I don’t know what form it will take. But I do know that I feel a lot of energy, and I feel a lot of desire to serve.”

Jeffery C. Mays contributed reporting.

Jeffery C. Mays contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Bill de Blasio, the previous mayor of New York City, is leaving electoral politics behind for now and will be a visiting teaching fellow in his former hometown, Cambridge, Mass., where there is currently little joy over his beloved Boston Red Sox. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSHUA BRIGHT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB1); Mayor Bill de Blasio emerging from his favorite Y.M.C.A., in Brooklyn, in 2016. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); The mayor created universal prekindergarten programs, but it was a bruising fight. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SETH WENIG/ASSOCIATED PRESS); In 2020, Mr. de Blasio became embroiled in disputes over police tactics at protests. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DEMETRIUS FREEMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); At a 2015 funeral, some police officers turned their backs to the mayor as a silent protest. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAMON WINTER/THE NEW YORK TIMES); The mayor often feuded with Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo, above in 2014, who resigned in 2021. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NATHANIEL BROOKS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Mr. de Blasio at a presidential campaign rally in South Carolina in 2019. He soon dropped out. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SEAN RAYFORD/GETTY IMAGES) (MB4)

**Load-Date:** September 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Dutch King's Gold Coach, Reminder of Colonial Past, Incites a Modern Backlash***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63JD-8HR1-DXY4-X025-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Nina Siegal

**Body**

The ''Golden Coach,'' built for Queen Wilhelmina of Holland in 1896, is emerging as a new focus of debate over slavery, colonialist oppression and history.

AMSTERDAM -- In 1896, the city of Amsterdam decided to build Queen Wilhelmina a very special gift: a carriage covered in gold. The ''Golden Coach'' was designed to represent the entire kingdom and its resources, with leather from Brabant, cushions filled with flax from Zeeland and teak from the Dutch colony of Java.

A prominent Dutch artist of the era, Nicolaas van der Waay, was commissioned to make panel paintings on all four sides. One of them, ''Tribute from the Colonies,'' depicts a virgin on a throne. On the left, Africans in loin cloths bow down before her. On the right, Southeast Asians in colorful batiks present her with gifts, as representations of the Dutch East Indies colony.

All of these component parts glorifying the empire would have been appreciated by most Dutch people in that era. But it is precisely these elements -- reminders of slavery and colonial oppression -- that make the carriage a source of pain in the Netherlands, particularly for descendants of formerly colonized people.

In the context of the worldwide Black Lives Matter protests, the coach has become a focus of anti-colonialist and antifascist protest. The controversy is an echo of similar debates in the United States over Confederate statues and other monuments, and in Europe over monuments honoring colonialists and slave traders.

An online petition to retire the Golden Coach has received more than 9,000 signatures.

The coach was first used in 1898 to carry Queen Wilhelmina to what the Dutch call her ''inauguration,'' eight years after she became queen at age 10. In recent years, the Golden Coach has been used primarily for the ceremonial opening of the Dutch Parliament in The Hague, and occasionally for weddings and coronations. Since the 1960s, royal trips in the carriage have often been met with street protests.

It was last used in 2015, without incident, after which it underwent a five-year, $1.4 million renovation before it was put on display at the Amsterdam Museum, where it will remain through Feb. 27, 2022.

What will happen to it thereafter -- whether to put it back in service to the king and queen; or keep it in the museum with lots of explanatory content; or store it somewhere out of sight; or destroy it -- has become a matter of intense public debate. Ultimately, the decision will be made by the royal family.

''We must finally end this practice of parading colonial images as displays of power,'' Sylvana Simons, a member of Parliament and the founder and leader of an anti-racist political party, BIJ1, said in June.

Gideon van Meijeren, a lawmaker with the Forum for Democracy, a right-wing populist party, had no patience with that. ''We must not allow ourselves to be emotionally blackmailed by a small group of pushy extremists who see racism under every stone,'' he said.

His comment echoed the 2020 Twitter sentiments of a populist Dutch politician, Geert Wilders, who characterized efforts to decommission the coach, known in Dutch as the Gouden Koets, as ''left-wing, antiracism terror.'' He continued, using a slang term for drop dead: ''I say: Don't bow, don't kneel, let them all get the rambam!''

Last month, Emile Schrijver, director of the Jewish Cultural Quarter, wrote an opinion piece in the Amsterdam daily Het Parool, calling the coach ''an outdated and unacceptable glorification of a colonial sense of superiority,'' which should be decommissioned and permanently housed in a museum.

On July 16, King Willem-Alexander addressed the subject at a news conference, saying he was ''listening'' to public forums on the matter organized by the museum. ''The discussion is ongoing,'' he added. The carriage is scheduled to return to The Hague after the exhibition. ''You will hear from us then,'' he said.

The Golden Coach was hoisted over the top of the museum by crane in June for the grand opening of the exhibition, attended by the king, and is now displayed in a large glass box in the inner courtyard. The exhibition exploring its history from its 19th-century conception fills six rooms within the museum, with another room devoted to visual responses to the coach by 15 contemporary artists.

Margriet Schavemaker, artistic director of the Amsterdam Museum, said she hoped the exhibition would help inform the public about all the issues related to the coach.

''What I hope this exhibition shows is that there are many different histories and perspectives,'' she said in an interview. ''I hope that through these many perspectives we can open up and listen to one another. A museum is a perfect place to consider all the different angles in peace and quiet.''

Before the coach's arrival at the museum, the sculptor Nelson Carrilho, an Amsterdam-based artist from the Dutch Antilles, performed in the courtyard what he called ''a ritual to give wisdom to this exhibition.''

Mr. Carrilho's great-grandmother, an Indian woman who lived in Suriname, was brought to the Netherlands in 1883, and put on display in a human zoo as part of the World Expo, a colonial showcase. During her time in Amsterdam, she was studied and photographed. Mr. Carrilho has made a contemporary art work using the photograph for the museum exhibition.

He has been a critic of the carriage but said it should still remain in use until society is ready for change. ''The society has to reach a point to say, 'We don't want this Golden Coach anymore,''' he said in an interview. ''It must not come from us, because we are just the messengers.''

The exhibition emphasizes that debates about the carriage date back to the time of its creation. To build the coach, royal supporters known as Orangists raised money from ***working-class*** residents of the Amsterdam neighborhood known as the Jordaan. The socialist press of the time argued that poor people should not have to support ''the lifestyles of these good-for-nothings.''

Since then, the coach has been a lightning rod for criticism from opponents of the monarchy. In 1966, after the wedding of Queen Beatrix and Claus van Amsberg, a German prince who had been a member of the Hitler Youth, activists threw a smoke bomb at the Golden Coach in Amsterdam.

''To me, the carriage represents a lineage, a long history of using these types of symbols to bolster a national identity that the Dutch have a lot of pride in,'' said Jennifer Tosch, a cultural historian and founder of Black Heritage Tours in Amsterdam, who was a member of a group of experts convened by the museum to advise the exhibition's curators. ''It's been in recent years that descendants of the colonized have amplified their objection to continually reproducing this memory in this way.''

If the Royal House does continue to use the coach in the future, she said, it will only inflame national tensions around issues of social justice.

''It would certainly send a very strong message to those who have advocated for its removal from public use that those voices don't matter,'' she said. ''We can't put the genie back into the bottle or unring the bell. The issue is out. The question is, 'Now, what do we do with it?'''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/06/world/europe/netherlands-golden-coach-colonialism.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/06/world/europe/netherlands-golden-coach-colonialism.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands with the ''Golden Coach'' at the Amsterdam Museum. The carriage went on display in June in an exhibition that explores its history. (PHOTOGRAPH BY REMKO DE WAAL/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

**Load-Date:** September 7, 2021

**End of Document**



[***An Actress Unafraid to Chime In***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WB-9341-DXY4-X3V7-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Julia Jacobs

**Body**

When Joaquina Kalukango was done with ''Slave Play,'' she was done with ''Slave Play.''

After four months in the show, Kalukango had to close the book on her character, Kaneisha, a Black woman desperately trying to find sexual satisfaction with her white husband by role-playing as an enslaved person and an overseer. Eight times a week, she inhabited a character who contends with psychological, sexual, generational and physical trauma, all in a two-hour span.

''How do you do that without your soul falling apart?'' Kalukango said in a recent interview. ''You have to figure that out.''

So she made a clean break, ceasing all psychoanalysis of Kaneisha and taking onscreen parts, including as Betty Shabazz in ''One Night in Miami.''

Now, after two years away from Broadway as it weathered the pandemic, Kalukango is stepping into a radically different role: as the lead actress in the big-budget, large-ensemble musical, ''Paradise Square.'' She plays Nelly O'Brien, a woman whose father escaped slavery and who now runs a bar in the Five Points neighborhood of Civil War-era Manhattan; her tight-knit community of Black Americans and Irish immigrants unravels in the days leading up to the 1863 Draft Riots, when white ***working-class*** New Yorkers formed violent racist mobs following a draft lottery.

The show, which starts previews at the Barrymore Theater on March 15 after a five-week run in Chicago in the fall, is Kalukango's first top billing in a Broadway musical.

''She was making steps toward this leading-lady position, and she's finally there,'' said Danielle Brooks, an actress who has been close friends with Kalukango since they studied at Juilliard together.

''I think she's ready to walk into this just how Audra did and just how LaChanze did,'' she added, comparing her to Audra McDonald and to the ''Trouble in Mind'' star.

But this new chapter is about much more than how the industry perceives Kalukango, whose performance as Kaneisha earned her a Tony nomination and a reputation for a magnetic star quality, as the director of ''Paradise Square,'' Moisés Kaufman, put it.

''It's about owning my power, trusting who I am, trusting that my opinions about my character are valid,'' Kalukango said. (Kalukango landed ''Paradise Square'' without an audition: In an early Zoom meeting with Kaufman, he said, ''I don't need you to read anything. I know that you can do this.'')

Until recently, Kalukango, 33, would have described herself as a reserved listener, an actress who tended to defer to the authority in the room. In the past, if she had a qualm in a rehearsal about a character or a scene, she would let it be, then end up feeling awkward and foolish onstage. It wasn't until she saw other Black actresses speaking up in rehearsals -- such as Tonya Pinkins in ''Hurt Village'' -- that she began to start building the confidence to do the same. Then came age, experience and a pandemic that filled her with a sense of urgency.

''Once that pandemic hit, it was like, this is life or death, people,'' she said. ''You can't sit up here and be in a shell anymore. You have to take ownership of your craft, ownership of your art, ownership of who you are as a person.''

Kalukango was born in Atlanta, the youngest child of Angolan parents who had immigrated to the United States after escaping civil war. Her three siblings were all much older; she remembers being too young to participate in the animated conversations about politics at the dinner table -- one place where she grew accustomed to observing from the background.

As a child, Kalukango's experiences performing were mostly limited to impersonating Whitney Houston and Aaliyah at home on her family's karaoke machine. It wasn't until after a middle school talent show that a counselor suggested she audition for a performing arts high school.

That trajectory led her to Juilliard, where Brooks and Kalukango remember the frustrations of being the only Black women in their acting classes, with few Black instructors. They were frequently mistaken for each other at auditions, Brooks remembered, and Kalukango felt some instructors did not have the faculties to advise her on how to incorporate her race and background into her characters.

''Some teachers weren't able to communicate what it meant for me to play a character -- to play Hedda Gabler as a Black woman,'' she recalled. ''Could I interpret anything of myself in this character? Or is my color completely gone from this -- my culture gone from this?''

''They weren't having those conversations,'' she continued. ''And so I felt unseen.''

After college, Kalukango had a brief stint as a swing in the 2011 Off Broadway revival of ''Rent,'' then had her Broadway debut as an understudy in ''Godspell.'' She went on to join the ensemble in ''Holler if Ya Hear Me,'' a musical inspired by Tupac Shakur's music, then took on larger parts as the rival to Sutton Foster's character in ''The Wild Party'' and as Nettie, the sister to Cynthia Erivo's Celie, in the 2015 Broadway revival of ''The Color Purple.''

She became pregnant during the run of ''The Color Purple,'' staying with the production until a month before she was due. Onstage, she learned to throw herself to the ground in a doctor-approved way, and backstage she wore a surgical mask to protect herself and the baby from viruses. When her son was born, she thought to herself, ''I can't hold back anymore. This is for him.''

After Kalukango found out in 2018 that her father had cancer, she and her son moved back to Atlanta from New Jersey. She decided to stay there after her father died, traveling with her son and her mother for jobs, including to Chicago for ''Paradise Square'' and now to New York for its Broadway opening.

Kalukango's character wasn't always the lead; in earlier scripts, Nelly was one figure in an assemblage of Five Points inhabitants, including a formerly enslaved man escaping to Canada and an immigrant who just stepped off the boat from Ireland. The show itself has been in development for nine years. In 2013, Garth Drabinsky, the lead producer, first heard music from ''Hard Times'' -- a musical conceived by Larry Kirwan, the lead singer of the Celtic rock band Black 47, which largely revolved around the songs of the 19th-century American songwriter Stephen Foster, who spent time in Five Points toward the end of his life.

Drabinsky saw the choreographic potential, the multilayered socioeconomic dynamics of the neighborhood and the sense that the story was not particularly well known to audiences.

As the producer brought on writers to develop the musical for Broadway, the show moved further and further away from Foster and his music -- especially after the production reckoned fully with Foster's contributions to American minstrelsy.

It wasn't until after ''Paradise Square'' was performed at California's Berkeley Repertory Theater in 2019 that the writers identified the show's heroine in Nelly, who is waiting for her husband, an Irish immigrant fighting in the Civil War, to come home.

''What became clear is that you need to know who you are rooting for and who you're hopeful about,'' said Jason Howland, the show's composer and music supervisor. ''Ultimately, that's Joaquina's character.''

Nelly's presence in the show grew even larger after the production in Chicago, where audiences reliably gave a standing ovation when Kalukango sang ''Let It Burn,'' a climax in the second act in which she unleashes her powerful voice, said Masi Asare, who wrote the show's lyrics with Nathan Tysen.

''Every time she comes onstage she energizes the whole thing,'' Asare said.

''Paradise Square'' bursts with action and movement -- from the rough-and-tumble of Nelly's bar, to the scenes of violent protest as Irish immigrants mobilize against the draft, to lively ensemble dance numbers that blend Irish step dancing with Juba and the beginnings of tap (the choreography is by Bill T. Jones). In between the action, there are the quieter scenes of sinister politicking as an uptown party boss seeks to undercut Nelly's influence in her community and turn Irish residents against abolition.

To prepare, Kalukango read seven books about Five Points and Black society in 19th-century New York. Knowing the history helped her shed her reserve in the rehearsal room and assert herself when she was moved to, she said.

In one scene, in which Nelly discovers another character has a bounty on his head for killing his former master, Kalukango sensed there was something off.

''The windows are open, people are outside walking in the street, and we're literally having a conversation, holding a 'Wanted' poster up,'' Kalukango said. ''At any point in time, if someone saw this, we all would be arrested or, worse, killed.''

After she raised that concern to Kaufman, the stage directions were changed to make the conversation more discreet.

When she doubts herself, Kalukango often thinks back to advice she received while doing ''Slave Play'' -- something the intimacy coordinator said to the cast during a rehearsal.

''She told us 'no' is a full sentence,'' Kalukango said. ''I think that was revelatory for so many of us.''

She had trained for over a decade in an industry where teachers explained how to walk, talk and even how to breathe. There was a sense that, as actors, they were just lucky to have a job -- so the answer should always be ''yes.''

''Actors, I feel like, in recent times, have a real ownership,'' she went on. ''We're the ones onstage doing this eight times a week. And nobody knows your character better than you.''

Although Kalukango tries not to think much about ''Slave Play,'' she does note some similarities between Kaneisha and Nelly: Both are Black women married to white men (one British, the other Irish). Both are, in their own ways, grappling with affects of centuries of racism on their lives.

And yet the characters' psychologies are sharply different. In a turn of irony, Kaneisha, a famous writer who lives in the present day, is ''still mentally enslaved and is bonded by her history,'' Kalukango said. And Nelly, who was disenfranchised and lived in a time of slavery, somehow manages to make her spirit free.

''She feels limitless to me,'' she said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/theater/joaquina-kalukango-paradise-square.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/theater/joaquina-kalukango-paradise-square.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Joaquina Kalukango plays Nelly O'Brien, whose bar in Civil War-era Manhattan serves as the center of gravity for an integrated neighborhood of Black Americans and Irish immigrants, in ''Paradise Square,'' above right. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY OLIVIA GALLI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

KEVIN BERNE)

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**End of Document**



[***Fading Glory***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:614V-DG41-JBG3-624S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 25, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 18; FICTION

**Length:** 671 words

**Byline:** By Kathryn Hughes

**Body**

HERE WE AREBy Graham Swift

It is August 1959 and we are at the end of the pier in Brighton, England, watching the kind of seaside variety show that is already slipping into history. The stars of the show are Jack, the M.C., and a handsome young magician called Pablo who, together with his shimmering assistant, Eve, has taken the summer season by storm. Further down the bill is the usual job lot of jugglers and plate spinners (and a talking teddy bear). While Jack goes through his jaunty schtick -- ''you're in Brighton, folks, so bloody well brighten up!'' -- he simultaneously fights the panicky realization that this whole performance is taking place ''on a flimsy structure built over swirling water.''

This is classic Graham Swift territory, a place where the present always feels caught between a richer past and a featureless future. Swift's central characters are constantly assailed by the suspicion that they have been set down in the wrong time, obliged to live out a life that might have been theirs if they were two decades older. Jack, in particular, has spotted that the world of ***working-class*** conviviality at which he excels as a 28-year-old will be swept away by television, not to mention the Beatles. ''The future's elsewhere, don't you think?'' he urgently asks Eve, who at this point is simply relieved that she and Pablo are such a hit with this week's audience.

Just how right Jack's prediction turns out to be is one of the main threads of this very short novel. In flashbacks narrated by an elderly Eve in 2009, we learn how Jack managed to ride those changes in taste and technology to become a much-loved television star and producer -- not bad for ''an old song-and-dance man.'' Eve knows this story well because she has been married to Jack for nearly 50 years; she's his ''managing director'' and the minder of ''the all-important little key in the small of his back'' that she winds up to get him going.

But it is neither charismatic Jack nor steely Eve whose back story sits at the heart of this novel. That space belongs to the third member of the Brighton trio, the suave magician Pablo, who is actually Ronnie Deane from the East End of London. Swift is in his element describing Ronnie's social transformation, which begins when he is evacuated as a child during the war to genteel Oxford, where he lodges with a childless couple, the Lawrences. From Eric Lawrence, who dabbles in stage magic, Ronnie picks up the spectacular sleights of hand that will enable him to make white rabbits appear from nowhere and build an act that involves running Eve through with a sword twice nightly.

''Here we are!'' is the anxiously bright phrase adopted by Ronnie's foster mother, a relieved response to the fact that everyone she is fond of, including her cockney foster son, is gathered safely under her roof. It also acts as an unwitting reproach to young Ronnie, who feels guiltily relieved that his real mother, a house cleaner, is not here to disturb his newly sophisticated life, but remains instead at a safe distance in bomb-spattered London.

Just at the point when some of this might begin to feel too familiar -- there are structural and tonal elements that sharply recall ''Mothering Sunday,'' Swift's most recent and much-praised novel -- we are propelled into something extraordinary. Back now in Brighton in 1959, Eve tells Ronnie that she can't marry him, but wants to be with Jack instead. In response Ronnie pulls off one last, and quite staggering, illusion. Swift's closing account of a mundane world momentarily pierced by a shaft of numinous mystery is magnificent. It is what he did so brilliantly in ''Waterland'' (1983), his breakthrough magic realist novel, and what he has rigorously steered clear from since. How delightful it is, then, to see a glimpse of that other Graham Swift -- flamboyant, luxurious, outrageous even -- back before our very eyes.Kathryn Hughes's most recent book is ''Victorians Undone.''HERE WE AREBy Graham Swift195 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. $22.95.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/22/books/review/graham-swift-here-we-are.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/22/books/review/graham-swift-here-we-are.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sophie Lécuyer FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Inflation, Kentucky, Pictures of the Year: Your Wednesday Evening Briefing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:649M-0671-DXY4-X4M4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1373 words

**Byline:** Remy Tumin

**Highlight:** Here’s what you need to know at the end of the day.

**Body**

Here’s what you need to know at the end of the day.

(Want to get this newsletter in your inbox? Here’s [*the sign-up*](http://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/nyt-now-evening-briefing?module=inline).)

Good evening. Here’s the latest at the end of Wednesday.

1. The Federal Reserve moved toward an all-out effort against inflation.

The central bank said it would reduce its stimulus at a moment of rapid inflation and strong economic growth by [*cutting back on its bond-buying faster*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/business/economy/inflation-fed-fomc-meeting-december-2021.html) and suggested as many as three interest rate increases in 2022 as the economy heals.

Officials are slashing their bond purchases by twice as much as they had announced last month, a pace that would put them on track to end the program altogether in March. Ending the bond-buying program sooner will position the central bank to more quickly raise its policy interest rate — the Fed’s more traditional and more powerful tool.

“Economic developments and changes in the outlook warrant this evolution,” the Fed chair, Jerome Powell, said. [*Stocks rose*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/15/business/inflation-retail-sales-stocks#stocks-drift-lower-as-wall-street-awaits-outcome-of-fed-meeting) after the Fed’s announcement.

[*Here are the basics about inflation and why it’s up*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/inflation-definition.html).

2. Booster doses of the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are likely to offer substantial protection from the Omicron variant, Dr. Anthony Fauci said.

Dr. Fauci, the top infectious disease expert in the U.S., said that “there is no need for a very specific booster” designed to fight the highly transmissible coronavirus variant. Fauci [*shared preliminary government data*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/15/world/covid-omicron-vaccines/booster-doses-of-the-moderna-and-pfizer-vaccines-are-likely-to-offer-substantial-protection-from-omicron-fauci-says) showing that protection shot up after a third vaccine dose, suggesting there would be breakthrough infections in fully vaccinated people who have not had their boosters. New studies also showed that [*vaccines protected against severe disease*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/15/world/covid-omicron-vaccines/vaccines-will-protect-against-severe-disease-from-omicron-new-lab-studies-suggest) from Omicron.

A new coronavirus surge is wreaking havoc. [*Britain broke a daily record for new cases*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/world/europe/uk-omicron-surge.html). [*Canada advised residents to avoid international travel*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/world/americas/canada-travel-warning.html). [*Broadway is canceling shows*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/theater/broadway-coronavirus-cancellations.html). [*New York University*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/nyregion/nyu-events-canceled-covid.html) became the latest college to be on high alert.

[*Covid deaths in the U.S. surpassed 800,000*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/15/world/covid-omicron-vaccines/covid-deaths-in-the-united-states-surpass-800000) today, the highest known number of any country in the world.

3. President Biden visited Kentucky to survey the damage from a series of tornadoes and to highlight the federal government’s response.

[*One of his stops*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/us/politics/biden-kentucky-tornado.html) was Mayfield, one of the hardest-hit towns during the barrage of tornadoes last week. [*These before-and-after images*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/15/us/mayfield-kentucky-tornado-damage.html) of Mayfield’s historic downtown show the large-scale destruction.

The morning after one Kentucky man’s house was destroyed, he turned to his Yamaha piano. It was a moment of calm that [*his sister recorded on video*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/us/kentucky-tornado-piano-man.html).

Despite the advances in forecasting, tornadoes that strike continue to have deadly consequences. When tornadoes strike at night, as they did late Friday, [*residents are more likely to miss the warnings*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/14/us/tornado-warnings.html).

4. Derek Chauvin pleaded guilty to violating George Floyd’s constitutional rights.

In April, a jury found him guilty of murdering Floyd, and he has been held in solitary confinement since. Under a plea deal, a federal prosecutor said he would ask a judge to sentence Chauvin, a former Minneapolis police officer, [*to 25 years in prison*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/us/derek-chauvin-civil-rights-guilty-plea.html).

The hiring process for New York City’s new police commissioner included a mock news conference about the killing of an unarmed Black man by a white officer. [*Keechant Sewell*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/14/nyregion/keechant-sewell-nypd-commissioner.html), the Nassau County chief of detectives, was chosen to become the city’s first female police commissioner, taking over the nation’s largest police force at a critical moment.

5. President Vladimir Putin of Russia and President Xi Jinping of China showed they still had each other.

[*During a video summit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/world/asia/china-russia-summit-xi-putin.html), the leaders called each other “old friend,” “dear friend” and “esteemed friend,” in a show of solidarity between two autocrats resisting Western pressure.

Putin said that he would attend the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics in February. That makes him the first leader to confirm that he will go to the event, which officials from the U.S., Australia, Britain, Canada and other countries have boycotted.

Meanwhile, China is [*not living up*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/business/economy/china-trump-trade-deal-biden.html) to its end of a Trump-era trade deal. Now the White House must decide whether to enforce it.

6. The Afghan refugee crisis is running into the U.S. housing crisis.

Thousands of Afghan refugees who were evacuated after the fall of Kabul are being released from military bases to U.S. cities to rebuild their lives. But settling them into homes amid a rental shortage [*is proving to be a challenge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/us/afghan-refugees-housing.html). Resettlement agencies are scrambling to find even temporary situations. In Owensboro, Ky., two Afghan families are living in a 147-year-old convent 15 miles from town.

In case you missed it: A Times reporter and photographer witnessed the days leading up to the Taliban’s takeover of Kabul and what came after. [*They chronicled it all.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/10/magazine/fall-of-kabul-afghanistan.html)

7. Ethiopia’s prime minister, Abiy Ahmed, won the Nobel Peace Prize for making peace with his country’s enemy. [*He then used the alliance to plan a war*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/world/africa/ethiopia-abiy-ahmed-nobel-war.html).

Abiy won the Nobel in 2019 for his surprise peace deal with Isaias Afwerki, the authoritarian leader of Eritrea. That pact ended two decades of conflict between the rivals — and also emboldened Abiy and Isaias to secretly plot a course for war against their mutual foes in the northern Tigray region, according to officials.

Abiy insists that war was foisted upon him. But new evidence shows he was planning a military campaign for months before the first shot was fired. Analysts say that Abiy’s journey from peacemaker to battlefield commander is a cautionary tale of how the West, desperate to find a new hero in Africa, got this leader spectacularly wrong.

8. The history of Black artists in the film industry. An account of an American woman who joined the Nazi resistance. A collection of poems about history and mortality.

These are among our [*critics’ top books of 2021*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/books/critics-top-books-2021.html), in both fiction and nonfiction. [*In a roundtable discussion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/books/critics-discuss-2021-in-books.html), our critics discussed the year’s hits and misses, their reading plans for 2022 and which writers to watch. Our two newest critics, Alexandra Jacobs and Molly Young, also recommended their all-time favorites: John Updike’s “Hugging the Shore” and “Odd Jobs” and Martin Amis’s collection “The War Against Cliché.”

In other book news, [*bell hooks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/books/bell-hooks-dead.html), whose incisive, wide-ranging writing on gender and race helped push feminism to include the voices of Black and ***working-class*** women, has died. She was 69.

9. Christmas is coming. Celebrate with something sweet.

Across Latin America, [*the holidays mean it’s time for buñuelos*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/13/dining/bunuelos-christmas-dessert.html), a sweet fried dough sometimes served with a syrup. Many versions are flavored with anise, a spice that indicates the dish has Spanish origins, but each country has its own take: In Mexico, the flour-based dough is rolled out until it’s paper-thin; in Cuba and Nicaragua, the dish is made with yuca; and in Colombia, buñuelos are typically made with cheese.

If you’re hosting, [*create a dessert board of sweets*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/13/dining/christmas-morning-breakfast-brunch.html) that features pull-apart brunch breads. Our editors also rounded up [*10 festive dishes for Christmas Eve dinner*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/dining/christmas-eve-dinner-ideas.html).

10. And finally, 2021 in pictures.

While many people stayed close to home again this year, Times photographers did not have that option: Photographers must be there to do their work, to bear witness firsthand. This year, that meant being at the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, inside hospital Covid wards, near fires in California, alongside floods in Germany and in Kabul as the Taliban took power.

But there were plenty of buoyant moments, too, like the reopening of nursing homes to visitors, a victory at the Scripps National Spelling Bee or the return of Broadway. As Michelle Agins, a Times photographer, puts it: “I call myself a moment thief” when it comes to capturing the right shot. “You’ve got to wait and grab it.”

[*This is the story of 2021 told visually*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/world/year-in-pictures.html).

Have a vivid night.

Eve Edelheit compiled photos for this briefing.

Your Evening Briefing is posted at 6 p.m. Eastern.

Want to catch up on past briefings? [*You can browse them here*](https://www.nytimes.com/series/us-evening-briefing).

What did you like? What do you want to see here? Let us know at [*briefing@nytimes.com*](mailto:briefing@nytimes.com?subject=Evening%20Briefing%20Feedback).

Here are [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini) and [*Spelling Bee*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee). If you’re in the mood to play more, [*find all our games here*](https://www.nytimes.com/games).

Eve Edelheit compiled photos for this briefing.

PHOTO: The Marriner S. Eccles Federal Reserve building. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Stefani Reynolds for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Partial Measures***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64VX-2XW1-JBG3-64K2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1685 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** Why aren’t the U.S. and its allies imposing tougher sanctions?

**Body**

Why aren’t the U.S. and its allies imposing tougher sanctions?

Western leaders have described the sanctions that they have imposed on Russia as “strong” and “severe.” And the sanctions will damage the Russian economy. After the U.S. and Britain [*announced new measures yesterday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/us/politics/biden-sanctions-russia-ukraine.html) — making it harder for Russian companies to raise money or import goods — an index of Moscow’s stock market fell more than 30 percent.

But it’s also worth taking a look at the potential sanctions that the U.S., Britain and the European Union have chosen not to impose. They are almost certainly more severe than the [*sanctions going into effect*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/world/europe/eu-russian-sanctions.html). A full-scale diplomatic response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine could include:

* Suspending Russia from international organizations, like the SWIFT network of banks (as Representative Adam Schiff, a California Democrat, suggested yesterday) and the Interpol network of law enforcement (as Garry Kasparov, the Russian opposition figure, has called for).

1. Seizing apartments, yachts and other assets owned by many members of the Russian elite in London, Miami and elsewhere, as Anne Applebaum of The Atlantic [*has suggested*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/02/lavrov-russia-diplomacy-ukraine/622075/).
2. Cracking down on Vladimir Putin’s propaganda tools in the West, [*including the RT television network*](https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-ukraine-crisis-britain-rt/uk-asks-regulator-to-review-licence-of-russian-news-channel-rt-pm-idUKKBN2KS11E), and on [*people like Gerhard Schröder*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/business/russia-ukraine-corporate-boards.html), the former German chancellor who now works for a Russian oil company.
3. Perhaps most significant, sharply reduce purchases of Russian oil and natural gas, by far the country’s largest source of revenue.

That the U.S. and its allies have chosen not to pursue a more aggressive path helps explain why Putin has been willing to take the enormous risk of starting the most significant war in Europe in 80 years. He believes that his enemies will respond in a limited way. Not only will they decline to send troops to Ukraine; they will fight only a limited economic and diplomatic battle, too.

This decision could change at some point, of course. For now, I want to help you understand why the Western response has been so limited.

Three reasons

1. Sanctions will hurt the West, too. “It’s very hard to get countries to sign up for truly tough sanctions against Russia,” Michael Crowley, who covers the State Department for The Times, told me. “It comes at a cost to their own economies.”

Freezing out Russian banks could create problems for the global financial system. Hurting Russia’s energy industry would increase prices when inflation is already high and angering many Western workers. The effects would often be largest in the E.U., which may explain why European officials have often been more dovish on sanctions than American or British officials.

([*Here’s an explainer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/business/russia-swift-financial-system.html) about why the U.S. cannot unilaterally cut off Russia from the SWIFT financial network — and why some Europeans have reservations.)

“The European Union is Russia’s largest trading partner, accounting for 37 percent of its global trade in 2020, and receives a third of its energy from Russia,” [*my colleague Patricia Cohen wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/business/economy/russia-europe-sanctions-gas-oil.html). “The flip side of mutual interest is mutual pain.” Matina Stevis-Gridneff, The Times’s Brussels bureau chief, adds: “The reality is that many of the tougher sanctions are considered too onerous for Europe.”

One unknown is whether the ugly reality of war in Ukraine — as opposed to merely the prospect of it — will make Western leaders and citizens more willing to accept economic costs. If not, Putin’s gamble may have succeeded, which autocrats elsewhere will no doubt notice.

2. The West worried about closing off lines of communication. Western allies have started to impose more measures [*designed to hurt Russian oligarchs and top officials*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/02/lavrov-russia-diplomacy-ukraine/622075/). But the sanctions have not yet targeted the very top officials, including Putin, nor have they cut off many Russian elites’ access to the West.

The result, as Applebaum has written, is that much of Putin’s inner circle has felt insulated from sanctions (including those imposed after Russia annexed Ukraine’s Crimean peninsula in 2014). Rather than seizing the assets of Russian elites and expelling their children from boarding schools and universities, the West has tried to negotiate. In effect, Applebaum argues, two sides in this battle are playing by different rules.

“Western leaders and diplomats,” she wrote, “think they live in a world where rules matter, where diplomatic protocol is useful, where polite speech is valued. All of them think that when they go to Russia, they are talking to people whose minds can be changed by argument or debate. They think the Russian elite cares about things like its ‘reputation.’ It does not.”

3. The West has wanted to move slowly — both to retain future options and to avoid aggravating the crisis.

As Matina reports, the E.U. is keeping some sanctions in reserve. Doing so will allow it to impose them if Putin later expands the war and will also keep open a channel of communication with the Kremlin, officials say. Critics of this approach, on the other hand, say it “gives the impression of proportionality to a completely outrageous move by Putin which should be met by shock and awe,” Matina said.

For now, the critics are losing the debate.

Dmitri Alperovitch, an American technology executive born in Russia, argues that a full-on sanctions program would bring major risks, too. It could debilitate Russia’s economy and make Putin fear for his regime. Russia might hit back by restricting energy exports, to increase inflation and cause political instability in democracies. Russia could also launch cyberattacks.

“This outcome — a hot conflict between two nuclear powers with extensive cyber capabilities — is one that everyone in the world should be anxious to avoid,” Alperovitch wrote in The Economist. It’s a reminder that there are rarely easy answers once a war begins.

The latest: Here are [*the sanctions E.U. leaders have agreed on*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/world/europe/eu-russian-sanctions.html).

More on Ukraine

* Some Russian troops [*have entered Kyiv*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/24/world/russia-attacks-ukraine/russian-troops-enter-the-outskirts-of-kyiv), Ukraine’s capital. Officials told residents of one district to “prepare Molotov cocktails.” And these videos [*show a large explosion over the city*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/24/world/russia-attacks-ukraine#videos-show-a-large-explosion-in-the-sky-over-southern-kyiv).

1. President Volodymyr Zelensky said [*that he was “target No. 1.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/24/world/russia-attacks-ukraine/zelensky-says-russian-saboteurs-are-in-kyiv-and-he-is-moscows-prime-target) He also said that at least 137 Ukrainians, military and civilian, have been killed.
2. Russian forces [*captured the Chernobyl power plant*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/24/world/russia-attacks-ukraine#the-chernobyl-plant-was-reported-captured-by-russia-what-is-there), the sealed site of the 1986 nuclear disaster.
3. “No to war!”: Thousands of Russians [*protested the invasion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/world/europe/russia-protests-putin.html). More than 1,300 people were arrested.
4. Curators in Ukraine’s museums are [*trying to protect their collections*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/24/world/russia-attacks-ukraine/ukraine-museums-russia-attacks).
5. [*Donald Trump praised Putin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/world/europe/trump-putin-russia-ukraine.html). And Fox News hosts [*initially played down the attack*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/business/fox-news-russia-ukraine.html).

* The post-Cold War era [*is officially over*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/opinion/ukraine-russia-biden.html), Emma Ashford writes in Times Opinion.

THE LATEST NEWS

The Virus

* The [*C.D.C. will loosen mask guidelines*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/24/world/covid-19-tests-cases-vaccine/the-cdc-will-soon-loosen-indoor-mask-guidelines-officials-say), allowing most people to go without them indoors.

1. Corporate executives say [*return-to-office plans are real this time*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/business/return-to-work-office.html).

Other Big Stories

* Three former police officers who failed to intervene as another officer killed George Floyd were [*convicted of civil rights violations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/us/guilty-verdict-george-floyds-rights.html).

1. Biden has [*chosen his Supreme Court nominee*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/us/politics/biden-supreme-court-nominee.html). An announcement could come today.
2. A winter storm will dump snow and ice from Texas to Maine. [*See the forecast for your region*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/upshot/snow-forecast-totals-lookup.html).

Opinions

If Democrats want a new era of progressive change, they need support from [***working-class*** *voters across racial lines*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/opinion/democrats-biden-reform.html), Michael Kazin writes.

MORNING READS

Solo time: With practice, [*solitude can be restoring*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/well/live/solitude-benefit-mental-health-advice.html).

A new kind of model: Giant, inflatable and [*aggressively sexy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/style/diesel-glenn-martens-milan-fashion-week.html).

Italy’s Kardashians? [*Meet the Ferragni sisters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/style/ferragni-sisters-reality-tv-fashion-brand.html).

Modern Love: Nearing 40, she decided to [*separate dating from mating*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/style/modern-love-seeking-a-father-for-my-child-relationship-optional.html).

A Times classic: [*Try left-side sleeping*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/26/health/26really.html?ref=health).

Advice from Wirecutter: The [*best ice cube tray*](https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/the-best-ice-cube-tray/).

Lives Lived: Sally Kellerman broke through with her portrayal of Maj. Margaret (Hot Lips) Houlihan in the 1970 dark comedy “MASH,” which also earned her an Oscar nomination. [*She died at 84*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/movies/sally-kellerman-dead.html).

ARTS AND IDEAS

‘The Godfather,’ in theaters

One of the most famous movies of the 20th century is coming out again — and it will be as if no time has passed.

Fifty years after its release, “The Godfather” is returning to theaters today, with a restored print that cleans up stains, tears and other flaws. After a limited run in theaters, the new version will come out on home video next month.

The movie was released in March 1972, and it received [*a rave review in The Times*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1972/03/16/79429240.html?pageNumber=56). “Francis Ford Coppola has made one of the most brutal and moving chronicles of American life ever designed within the limits of popular entertainment,” the critic Vincent Canby wrote.

Coppola, now 82, told The Times that the goal of the project was to make the film look new again without spoiling its famously dark appearance. And if you wonder whether he ever gets tired of watching the movie, even after a half century, his answer is: [*“No. Never.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/23/movies/godfather-francis-ford-coppola.html) — Claire Moses, a Morning writer

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

Soaking oats overnight in milk [*makes them tender and creamy*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1019516-overnight-oats).

What to Read

Memoirs from Sarah Polley and Bill Barr are among the [*books coming out next month*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/books/march-new-books.html).

What to Watch

Peter Dinklage wields pen and sword in a [*musical film adaptation of “Cyrano.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/23/movies/cyrano-review.html) (This spring, there will also be a [*stage production*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/theater/james-mcavoy-cyrano-de-bergerac-bam.html) starring James McAvoy.)

Take the News Quiz

How well did you [*follow the headlines this week*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/02/25/briefing/news-quiz-russia-ukraine-war.html)

Late Night

The hosts [*got serious about Ukraine*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/arts/television/late-night-ukraine-serious.html).

Now Time to Play

The pangram from yesterday’s Spelling Bee was allowance. Here is today’s puzzle — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

Here’s [*today’s Wordle*](https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html). Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Sorta, maybe (five letters).

If you’re in the mood to play more, find [*all our games here*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. — David

P.S. Hiram Revels of Mississippi became the first Black U.S. senator [*152 years ago today*](https://www.nytimes.com/1870/02/26/archives/congress-the-colored-member-admitted-to-his-seat-in-the-senate-an.html).

Here’s [*today’s front page*](https://static01.nyt.com/images/2022/02/25/nytfrontpage/scan.pdf).

“[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about Ukraine. “[*Popcast*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/23/arts/music/popcast-betty-davis.html)” remembers Betty Davis. And David Leonhardt talked about this newsletter [*on the “Pantsuit Politics” podcast*](https://www.pantsuitpoliticsshow.com/show-archives/2022/2/22/what-matters-right-now-with-david-leonhardt).

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Tom Wright-Piersanti and Ashley Wu contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](mailto:themorning@nytimes.com).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

PHOTO: A Ukrainian military aircraft was shot down near Kyiv. (PHOTOGRAPH BY State Emergency Service/Via Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Brandon Terry; The Ezra Klein Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67BD-N3M1-JBG3-610P-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 12542 words

**Highlight:** The Jan. 16, 2023, episode of “The Ezra Klein Show.”

**Body**

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, like [*today’s episode with Brandon Terry*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/16/opinion/ezra-klein-podcast-brandon-terry.html). Listen [*wherever you get your podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/how-to-listen-ezra-klein-show-nyt.html).

Transcripts of our episodes are made available as soon as possible. They are not fully edited for grammar or spelling.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: I’m Ezra Klein. This is “The Ezra Klein Show.”

There is this paradox in how we treat Martin Luther King Jr. Almost everyone in America reveres him, left and right. There are holidays named after him. There are statues of him, streets named after him. And almost no one really reads him.

The man wrote many books, wrote many essays. Most of them are forgotten. Few of them are taught. And maybe that’s not strange at all. Maybe it’s not an accident at all.

King is so convenient as a myth, as a uniting figure. And he is so challenging, even today, as a philosopher. But that is one of the things he was. He was a philosopher.

In recent years, there’s been a counter narrative about King, trying to push back on this. And it admits part of what we leave out. It emphasizes the positions he held that are still very far from the American mainstream, his critique of American militarism, his advocacy of a universal basic income.

This argument, it wants to enlist King — and I think it’s mostly correct in this — as a man of the left. But King’s thought is challenging if you’re on the left too. He’s focused in ways very few are today, and in ways many are very uncomfortable with today, on how political action changes the person taking the action.

He is not all about systemic solution. He is also about individual change. He is focused on questions of virtue. He’s relentless in interrogating what actually counts as victory when we engage in political action with and against each other. And he believes that when we are engaging in political action within against each other, we should be trying to find victory, at least victory as he defines it.

Brandon Terry is a professor at Harvard University. And he’s a Co-Editor of, “To Shape a New World: Essays on the Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King Jr.” I loved this book.

One of Terry’s projects is to force a confrontation with what King actually said and believed, rather than what he’s come to represent. And that confrontation, it is so worth having. He is so challenging and worth reading and worth struggling with today. What he writes is so relevant today.

This is one of those podcasts I’m going to be thinking about for a very, very long time to come. As always, my email, [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com)

Brandon Terry, welcome to the show.

BRANDON TERRY: Thank you so much, Ezra. It’s an honor to be here.

EZRA KLEIN: You have this lovely line at the beginning of the book, where you say that we treat Martin Luther King Jr. with this, quote, “dual phenomena of ritual celebration and intellectual marginalization.” What do you mean by that?

BRANDON TERRY: Well, there’s this puzzle when we think about somebody like Martin Luther King Jr. And it’s that on the one hand, we have a national holiday devoted to him, an imposing monument on the hallowed space of the National Mall; he’s invoked in all manner of political speeches from across the political spectrum, probably the most famous African American of the 20th century.

But at the same time, if you ask even really well-educated people, they often don’t know that he’d written five major books, that he’s a systematic theologian with sustained interest in political philosophy who’s written lots and lots of things, incisive things, on some of the most pressing political and ethical matters.

And the question is, how can those two things stand in connection? And what it occurred to me is that it’s partly related to how we tell the story of the civil rights movement and particularly, how we tell King’s role in the civil rights movement.

So I’ve described it as a romantic narrative, one that’s about unities in the process of becoming, a calling together of Americans to transcend racial division and come together in a unifying way, a more perfect union, as a transcendence of essential American goodness over transitory American evils.

And when we tell the story that way, unfortunately, not only is it mythic, but it trains us to treat King as the kind of person who’s not doing any original political thinking. What he’s doing is calling us to be true to who we always already were. And when you treat him like that, the thing that becomes most interesting about him is not his thought. It’s not the way he challenged us to think about violence. It’s not the way he challenges us to think about segregation, both de facto and de jure. It’s not how he challenges us to think about economic justice.

The thing that’s interesting about him starts to be his rhetoric or his tactics, the way in which he pushes people or frames arguments to call us to be true to who we always already were. That’s a real problem because it evades the most incisive, challenging and generative contributions that his public philosophy makes for our era.

EZRA KLEIN: So we take King and the civil rights movement as a validation of America, not as a critique or even a conversation about it.

BRANDON TERRY: I think that’s right — that it gets conscripted into a story that’s ultimately affirming about the adequacy of our constitutional order, the trajectory of our institutions, the essential goodness of our national character. You often hear politicians use this rhetoric of, this is not who we are.

And King wants to say something different, I think. He wants to say that we are both of these things. We are a society with what he called the congenital deformity of racism — that it’s shot through many of our deepest institutions and structural arrangements, and because it has not been redressed on the scale that it would have to be to achieve true justice, it festers. It’s a rot. It’s a challenge that every generation is called on to pick up and try to do better than their forebears.

EZRA KLEIN: Do you think the legacy or the popular understanding of nonviolence is actually part of this problem? And by that, I mean that the way I was taught about it, the way I think it’s taught, nonviolence becomes not so much a philosophy but a kind of almost inhuman forbearance and discipline that, to the extent you think about it, it is, in terms of what people like King and many others, of course, were able to endure. And it almost becomes a physical feat as opposed to a philosophical one.

BRANDON TERRY: I think that’s right. There’s a way in which the philosophy of nonviolence gets painted, even in King’s time, as a kind of extreme, purist pacifism. And part of that is the connection with Gandhi, although I think it’s a radical misunderstanding of Gandhi, as well.

But it’s a way of imagining the commitment to nonviolence as related to passivity, as related to the performance of suffering for pity. These are things that King never endures. For him, the idea of passive resistance was a misnomer. He helped coin the phrase “direct action” — he and other members of the civil-rights generation — that nonviolence is aggressive.

It’s an aggressive attack on injustice, an aggressive form of noncooperation with domination. It’s about trying to wedge yourself into the machinery of domination, to prevent its adequate functioning, to try to force or coerce your fellow citizens to stop and take stock of what kind of injustices are being unfurled in their name.

And it does so on the presumption that politics involves coercion, especially for King, who had a pretty tragic sense of human nature, that politics is going to involve confrontation with great evil, that it’s not a Pollyannaish view about what we’re all capable of if we just turn our eye toward God in the right way.

We’re owe it to them to live with evil. And we always are going to be called to confront it. We just need to do it in ways that won’t unleash a further chain of social evil and bitterness and revenge and retaliation. And King thought nonviolence was the only weapon that could cut and heal at the same time.

EZRA KLEIN: I think one way to split apart these views of nonviolence, or something that helped me do it when I spent a while studying it, a few years back — and I really recommend spending some time in nonviolent philosophy because I don’t think there’s almost anything I’ve ever read that is as challenging to the way I think about the world.

But Gandhi has this line where he says, if you can’t practice nonviolence, it quote, “retaliation or resistance unto death is the second best, though a long way off from the first. Cowardice is impotence, worse than violence.” So this idea that if you can’t be nonviolent, it’s better to be violent than to be a coward, doing nothing — I think gets at something important. Can you help unpack that?

BRANDON TERRY: Sure. One way to bring it back to King is that early in his career, he was engaged in a debate with a man named Robert Williams, who wrote a book that was very popular amongst the Black Power generation, called “Negroes with Guns.” And he gets the title — the title is a slight adjustment of a slur that was said to him, when he showed up at a public pool with a group of armed Black men as support for integrationist demonstration.

And anyway, King is involved in this debate with Robert Williams, in part about the legitimacy of self-defense. And King, in his response, expresses confusion, because he says, look, in your home, in your private personhood, self-defense is perfectly justified. No one disagrees with that. He thinks it doesn’t even really need an elaborate moral justification. It’s something that’s basically assumed in all of the major moral philosophies that he’s aware of.

He says that the really interesting question, however, is how to organize a sustained, successful challenge to structural injustice. And for King, that requires something that blends militant resistance and a higher-order ethical practice that can point the way toward peaceful reconciliation over the long term.

So when you hear King talk about love, when you hear King talk about nonviolence, these things actually require not just an enormous discipline around the acceptance of suffering, as if it’s some kind of passive practice, but they require really creative, dedicated thinking around how exactly to push and prod your neighbors into addressing the forms of injustice that structure the polity and how to do it in a way that doesn’t leave a perpetual midnight of bitterness when the conflict is done.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to pull apart two things in that answer that sometimes get put together, which is the idea of strategic nonviolence and the idea of principled nonviolence. Can you talk about them?

BRANDON TERRY: Sure. So partly as a response to their discomfort with Christian theology, their enthusiasm for anticolonial revolution and a broader skepticism about the influence of some pacifist elements within the civil rights movement, I think there were many in the student sit-in movement, in the student nonviolent movement, that tried to introduce this distinction between philosophical and strategic nonviolence.

And so for someone like Stokely Carmichael, he would often say that he supported nonviolence only insofar as it works. And on that model, you have a posited goal. And then there’s just a question, which is interpretive, empirical, about whether nonviolent practice or violent practice is going to get you to that end. And you take whatever means are necessary to get to that end.

They try to introduce that distinction as opposed to nonviolence as what they would say is a way of life. But King, I think, really importantly, challenges the legitimacy of that distinction because there’s a way in which the strategy question is already shot through with ethical reflection, with philosophical commitments.

And so to raise the question of strategy, as if we can evaluate means without some kind of ethical reflection or without some kind of underlying ethical commitments, for King, is already a confusion. He thinks that the ends are prefigured in any means.

Gandhi, in “Hind Swaraj,” has this great passage where he talks about how could come to acquire a piece of property. You could buy it. You could steal it. You could kill somebody in pursuit of it. You could ask for it as a gift.

At the end of the day, you still have the same property. But the thing, itself, has changed. In one scenario, it’s a piece of stolen property. It’s a theft. In another, it’s a gift, which is different than something you’ve purchased.

So in the course of acquiring the thing, even though the thing is the same, the means have transformed it in a really, really important way. And King wants to say something similar — that in all political practice, the ends are prefigured in the means. And nonviolence has to be — if it’s going to be true nonviolence for King — informed by a philosophy of love that really wants and desires and wills goodwill for the enemy at present and is committed, at the fundamental level, to going on together in peace, going on together, sharing the polity in perpetuity.

EZRA KLEIN: So this is a tricky thought to get into a question. But let me try because it’s something my producer Emefa and I have been talking about a lot, preparing for this episode. When you think about somebody’s political philosophy or their theory of political action, you can maybe think of there being a couple agents they’re thinking about.

So there’s the person or group you’re in conversation or conflict with. I’m a liberal, and I’m arguing with a conservative. And I think that’s the most common target to think about: How do I beat or convince this person or group on the other side?

Then there’s the broader community polity — the voters, of the country, people who are bystanders, maybe interested, maybe not, but a broader community that is in some way watching or can be brought in to watch. And then there’s you, the person taking the action, and how it affects you and your group to take a particular action.

And something that seems present in King’s thought is much, much, much, much more concern and focus than I think most political thinkers have today on how political action affects you, the person taking it, and affects the broader community that might be watching it. Does that, first, track as right to you? And if so, can you talk a bit about that?

BRANDON TERRY: That does track. And I think for King, imperative to nonviolent resistance turns, in large part, on the question of your own dignity and self-respect. So it is a justice question. He’s concerned with structural justice as a matter of the kinds of arrangements that prevail in the larger American society. That’s obviously true.

But he’s also concerned with how you relate to your own sense of equality, equal standing, worth, as he would say, somebodiness, we might say dignity — he also says that a lot — and that for King, to acquiesce in the face of oppression and domination, without protest, is to abdicate your own self-respect and dignity.

When he gives the speech at the Montgomery bus boycott’s first open meeting, he’s scrambling to try to put it together. And the task he sets himself is — he says right up front — I need to say something that will cause people to see that their dignity is at stake in what we do next and which will commit us to nonviolence. Because for him, dignity also required a certain kind of excellence of character, a certain kind of comportment and practice toward others.

So it is about trying to defend your dignity, defend yourself respect against insult and humiliation, oppression. But it’s also about doing so in a way that doesn’t degrade your character in the long term, that doesn’t cause you to end up being turned away from the good, which, again, for him, is going to be a religiously-inflected category — but I think there are secular renderings of it — that ends up with you being turned away from the good and toward things like hatred, resentment, violence, which he thinks, ultimately, will corrode your soul and take you further away from flourishing.

EZRA KLEIN: Something in that feels very present to me in a lot of the debates we’ve had in the last couple of years around civility politics, around virtue signaling. And it seems to me that there’s some important distinction between the idea that you don’t want to be taken away from the good, yourself, and you are frightened or worried or focused on how others will perceive you as acting.

Sometimes this gets called respectability politics. So that is a broader term. But there’s something there, where I think it has fallen out of favor. It gets called tone policing, sometimes. It has fallen out of favor to say that there are certain ways of acting, politically, that are better and worse, from a virtue perspective, because it often is seen not as really a question of you and your relationship to some baseline or ideal but is some kind of concession you’re making to people who don’t deserve the concession.

BRANDON TERRY: Well, to answer that, I think we have to go back to where the term, “politics respectability” comes from. I just think it’s very useful to help people understand what might otherwise seem like an idiosyncratic response.

So my colleague, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, wrote a phenomenal book, many years ago, called “Righteous Discontent.” And that’s what introduces the phrase, “the politics of respectability.” It’s a study of turn of the century Black Baptist women and their organizing efforts through the church.

And she meant the term to capture two things. One is the thing that’s been picked up and is now called respectability politics. And folks like Ta-Nehisi Coates have been extremely critical of it. It’s this idea that, in confronting a system of social stigma, the response that you need to have to it is to try to adjust your behavior, comportment, your self fashioning, in line with the dominant norms so that you can, over time, undermine the stigma and become a full participant in society.

And there are all sorts of questions, legitimate questions, that are raised against that. Are we losing something valuable about alternative forms of life, about alternative cultural practices, when we take the existing, dominant norms as unassailable or something to aspire to?

Are we losing something in our self-respect and dignity when we don’t protest that imposition as unjust and, instead, just acquiesce or accommodate ourselves to it? Are we harming people in our communities that, for valuable reasons, can’t adjust themselves — or important reasons, can’t adjust themselves to those norms?

I think all of those are legitimate questions. And if you read King’s, “Trumpet of Conscience,” his Canadian Broadcast lectures from the last year of his life, what’s really fascinating is that he talks a lot about how he sympathizes with all those criticisms. He agrees with them. He supports the counterculture movement in lots of ways. He celebrates the Black radical students who have cast of the kinds of clothing that their forebears once wore, as a sign of respectability, in favor of jeans and overalls.

But — and here’s the other part of Evelyn Higginbotham’s formulation — there’s a deeper question, one with thousands of years of moral reflection built up into it, which is about virtue ethics — that there are some things that people are appealing to you about that aren’t about their effect in the polity that aren’t about trying to manipulate white, racial attitudes. They’re about your own flourishing and character. They’re deep questions about how to live a good life, how to achieve excellence and the crafting of your soul.

I am a person who believes those questions are still legitimate, that they can’t all be reduced to strategy or will to power or psychic drives. I think that there’s something like an ethical life that requires us to argue about it and requires us to think really hard about how we discipline ourselves to achieve it.

And for King, many of the appeals he made in that vocabulary are really about that. They’re really about virtue. They’re really about what hatred does to your life, what anger does to your life, what violence does to your life. And one way we can know this is when we look at sermons like, “His Shattered Dreams”— because King’s not naive. He doesn’t think they’re going to win in his lifetime. His final speech, the “Mountaintop” speech, he doesn’t think he’s going to get to the promised land.

So there is a question for him, at the core of his life, which is, what makes this worth doing? That’s a virtue question. It’s not just a strategic or tactical one, in the narrow sense.

EZRA KLEIN: The other dimension of that, though, that I think makes it sometimes hard to follow King on this, is that he can seem unreachable or inhuman or like a saint. He talks a lot about refusing to hate people who are trying to kill you, who are trying to oppress you, who have maybe killed somebody or hurt somebody or beat somebody you love.

I mean, it sounds nice, right? I don’t want to hate anybody either. But I have trouble not having pretty strongly-negative reactions to people who send me a crappy email.

And so what is the applied dimension of his philosophy, here? Rather than saying that it is a violence that is done to you, when somebody is able to lure you into hating them because hatred is something that is corrosive to your soul, how do you understand King as actually having achieved or attempted to practice that lack of hate?

BRANDON TERRY: So let me say two things here. One, which bridges the last two questions, is that he describes nonviolence, I think really importantly, as also being about a nonviolence of spirit.

And the example that he often gives is about humiliation — that there’s a way in which the desire to humiliate others, to diminish their status in front of other people for your own pleasure, the desire to subject them to standards of evaluation that they probably themselves don’t hold or don’t understand, in order to enable mockery. There’s a way in which, if we’re reflexive about where that desire comes from, we will find that it comes from a place that’s irrational, indefensible and, likely, cruel, and that if we were to imagine a way of life built around those feelings, those desires, those practices, it would be one that would make it really hard for us to have healthy social ties, stable institutions, flourishing social relationships.

So part of what he’s up to is asking us, at all times, to be self-reflexive about the desires and needs and fantasies that drive us in politics. And part of what nonviolence is asking us to do is, do these things in a spirit of humility because as King would say, our reason sometimes can become subordinate to our passions. It can just be a legitimizing power or rationalizing power to the point where we lose track of what we really want to achieve, the kind of character we really want to have.

So what nonviolence does is, it builds in a check on those kinds of rationalizations, those kinds of emotional drives, by teaching us to avoid forms of humiliation and forms of physical violence that make it hard to come back from. So that’s the first point.

The second point — and it goes more to your sense of revenge and retaliation — is again, forcing us to acknowledge the legitimacy of anger. I don’t think King’s against the idea. He uses the phrase, “legitimate anger” in the late ’60s — but to be reflective about it and understand that, even in a case where someone kills a loved one of yours, revenge, violence, retaliation, that doesn’t bring back the loved one that you’ve lost. It doesn’t rebuild a world where people won’t lose loved ones for horrible reasons. The only thing that can do that is a kind of forward-looking, constructive practice of politics and social ethics.

And so what he’s trying to do is raise the question of, can we channel our legitimate rage, our legitimate anger, into a practice that allows us to maintain our self respect? Because that’s one of the things we’re worried about, is that people have done this thing to us because they don’t respect us. So can we somehow regain our self-respect, our sense of somebodiness, and move forward a practice of constructive politics that helps shape a world where these evils are less frequent and less likely to happen?

EZRA KLEIN: But I want to ask you there about King, the man, because this is a place where, as a person, why I read more Buddhist meditation manuals than I read actual philosophy, because I agree with all of this. I can see it. I can tell myself it. And then my own ego sloshes over the sides of my cup. My mental monologue is an endless recitation of arguments that haven’t yet happened, that I’m defending myself against, and slights from five years ago that I feel bad about.

And here’s this man who is both making this public argument and trying to get people to follow him in it and put themselves at risk over it, and is also living it himself, and talks about this unbelievably difficult thing, which is not feel righteous anger, but to not feel hatred, to internally reflect the world you want externally.

And I’m curious how he practices to that, what you know from him about how he lives a day so that he doesn’t feel what I think most of us would understand not only to be natural feelings here, but inevitable, irresistible reactions to the way society and individuals here are treating us.

BRANDON TERRY: So let me say three things. One is a shortcoming of King’s, in retrospect, which is that he does falter. He does fail. And I think when we read biographies of King, when you read the last parts of David Garrow’s biography, when you read Cornel West’s essay, from “To Shape a New World,” which talks a lot about the despair at the end of King’s life, if you watch HBO’S great documentary, “King in the Wilderness,” you see a person faltering and failing under the pressure.

He’s not able, for example, to bring himself to a kind of reconciliation with Malcolm X. There’s too much hurt, there, of the things that Malcolm has said about him. He’s frustrated with how his allies abandoned him when he came out against the Vietnam War. By the end of his life, he’s drinking a lot more. And he’s erupting sometimes in forms of disappointment, at the people around him.

And there is a question about what would our relationship to King’s memory be like if we knew more of that at the time and if he hadn’t had to project, at times, a superhuman ethos, whether that was going to be permissible for him or what it would have been like for him to try to open that faltering self up more for reflection, we don’t know. But that is an important question.

The other two pieces, though, I think are more in line with what you’re asking for. So one is that, I think King, himself, thinks that the practice of nonviolent politics does the kind of work that you’re describing. And I think he would be worried about the fact that, in our time, so much of these questions about the management of emotion, the building of character, has become a privatized practice.

He thinks that we learn a lot about how to love other people by confronting them in public, by forcing ourselves into uncomfortable situations where we have to endure the look of the other, back and forth, where we train ourselves to extend these interactions of contentious politics until they can alter or change the people that we’ve put our bodies in close contact with on the field of politics.

So I think he does think that that’s one way that this really does happen. And we have lots of evidence from the Civil Rights Movement, personal testimony, and personal reflection, where this seems to be the case.

And the last thing I’ll say is that in order to do that work, in order to do some of the work you’re describing, he also is building an alternative community. So one way that I read that famous final speech, “I’ve seen the promised land” — there’s obviously a prophetic reading of it, but there’s also one where he’s describing the prefiguration of the promised land in the kind of politics and social life he’s participated in over his career, that the promised land is seen in the union politics in Memphis, it’s seen in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, gathering to do Mississippi Freedom Summer. It’s seen in the people walking for 350-plus days in Montgomery, Alabama, and banding together to help each other out, that is the promised land.

And when you are in a community that’s constantly talking with each other and lifting each other up and engaging in practices like song, prayer, other communal rituals, to try to affirm this alternative set of ethical and political commitments against the whole rest of the culture, that’s the only way it can be done, is that you have to have an alternative form of social life that can sustain you in that work. The private practice isn’t going to do it.

EZRA KLEIN: This may seem weird, but I want to thank you for the first point there. And it’s something true about the book you coedited too. I find it very comforting and very helpful to hear about the places where King falls short. The saintliness of him sometimes puts both his practice and his thinking out of reach in a way that I don’t think is useful.

When you look at the principles of nonviolence on Stanford’s King Institute, I think a bunch of them would be familiar to people. You can resist evil without resorting to violence. You seek to win the friendship and understanding of the opponent, not to humiliate.

But the last one says that the nonviolent resistor must have, quote, “a deep faith in the future, that they should have a conviction that the universe is on the side of justice.” How imaginable is King’s philosophy, is this practice, without his deep Christianity, without a belief in redemption, in salvation, in the possibility of a next life?

BRANDON TERRY: Well, again, I go back to the sermon he gave — and it’s collected in “Strength to Love,” and it’s called shattered dreams — where he confronts a problem that is all over the Black tradition, which is that the struggle we’re engaged in has gone on, in some form or another, for hundreds of years. At the moments of its greatest promise, you can look over the course of history and see, just years later, we find ourselves in situations that are unimaginably awful.

And King is not naive. He’s a student of history. He’s somebody who asks himself hard questions like this. And he gives two different kinds of answers. And one is the answer that you’ve mentioned here, which is a theological answer. It’s conventional theodicy story, that look, at the end of the day, God is at work in the world. And God is on the side of justice.

And we may not know exactly how the arc of the moral universe is going to bend. And we won’t be there when it reaches justice, perhaps. But that is a thing we can have faith in. That cosmic story is going to play out the way we want.

There’s another way that he goes at it, however. And for me, I read it as rooted in a different kind of project, one that combines what used to be called philosophical anthropology, which is just a way of saying philosophical reflections on what kind of beings we are. It’s rooted in that, and it’s rooted in politics. And I think those things can find lots of overlapping consensus from people outside of the Christian tradition.

What you have to be committed to, in the last instance, is that evil is not the totality of who we are as persons, that people have the capacity, emotionally and rationally, to reflect on their life plans, their practices, their commitments, and change them, maybe not all of them, maybe not all at once, but that those things can be changed, and that politics is really a field where contingency is the key word, that although there are structural constraints and everything can’t be done at every moment, that the unprecedented, the new, the unexpected, happens in this realm.

And the only way that we can confirm that nothing new will happen, that oppression will last forever, that the future bears no hope, is if we don’t act. That’s the only way we can confirm that it’s true for all time, is by failing to act in pursuit of justice.

And that’s King’s view, I think. And to me, that’s the persuasive one, that in our action, we might be able to see some measure of justice from a complicated, complex swirl of contingencies, and to move the ball forward — we will inevitably fail — but to look back on that failure with maturity and try to do better the next time.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: You mentioned Ta-Nehisi Coates a couple of minutes ago. And I think, sometimes, when I think about nonviolence, about something he said to me in a conversation we did during the George Floyd protests, where he said, quote, “the people who are called on to be nonviolent are the people with the ability to do the least amount of damage, whereas we don’t call upon those who have the most power and actually can do the most damage.”

And there is this way in which King and nonviolence gets weaponized, by the powerful, against the powerless. You need to be nonviolent. But nonviolence has no relationship to me. It’s not something we ask of states. It’s not something that the million — not literally million — but the many members of Congress who wield King on the floor ever think about how to apply to the laws coming out of their chamber.

How do you think about that? How do you think about the question of the weaponization of nonviolence and then the applicability of its principles to the powerful and to what they might, we might, the state might learn from it.

BRANDON TERRY: I take my inspiration on this question from King’s agonizing over what he should say about the Vietnam War, and just a heart-wrenching decision because on the one hand, you have, in Lyndon Johnson, the president who has done the most to advance the cause of civil rights, who’s speaking forthrightly about the problem of racial inequality in a way that’s essentially unprecedented for the American presidency. And at the same time, he’s prosecuting a horrifically-unjust war.

And there were many people — Harold Cruse famously wrote this, but others even closer to King — who said, you’re not the leader of Vietnam. You’re the leader of the African American civil rights movement. You should not speak out on this war because you’ll lose your relationship with Johnson.

And King says that the people who are advising him in this way, they just don’t know him, his commitment or his calling. They don’t understand that if he’s going to raise his voice against violence in Watts or Detroit, that he’s got to raise it against what he called, “the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today,” his own government.

And I think that fits with a broader understanding of this political philosophy, which is about a kind of intensive critique of the ways in which we resort to violence as a ready-at-hand answer to all manner of social problems.

So for him, the question was really one about militarism and the way that gets imagined as this hardheaded, realistic, hyper-rational response to international disputes and social problems abroad, when in actuality, if we take stock of what he called the casualties of war, the spiritual ones and the material ones, we would realize that most of the violence we engage in at the foreign-policy level is counterproductive. It’s created more problems and more harms than it ever has seemed to solve.

This is one of the powerful interventions that you see in Lionel McPherson’s essay, in “To Shape a New World.” It’s just this idea that this is about hardheaded realism is mythic. King says it’s about an immature image that we are nurturing for ourselves, that we’re trying to shore up this idea of ourselves as some kind of crusading hero or all-powerful world power, while not taking stock of all of the things about our freedoms, about our way of life, about our connectedness as a society, about our social divisions, that war has exacerbated, not to mention the violence that’s prosecuted abroad.

And he says similar things about domestic policy, the ways in which our politics toward poor families, single-parent households, is punitive for reasons that aren’t justified, that our response to what he calls “the derivative crimes of the ghetto” are wildly out of proportion and unjust compared to how we treat the systematic crimes of exploitation, segregation, disenfranchisement, that structure much of ghetto life.

So I’m in total agreement with Coates on that question. I just think that part of why that phenomenon that he’s describing is allowed to stand is because people still, to this day, do not know King’s commitment or his calling. They don’t read the work.

EZRA KLEIN: So I’ve spent most of my adult life covering policy and policymaking and the ends of policymaking and the means of policymaking and what people are trying to achieve.

And it often strikes me that one of the challenges from nonviolence is about this question of what you’re attempting to do, both to yourself, which is something, I think, the government never thinks about — what does the application of a policy mean for what kind of government or what kind of state it becomes, what does it mean for the people, do to the people, who carry it out — and then what are you actually trying to achieve, more broadly, in the community.

And on the first level, it just seems — I don’t want to call it axiomatic, but a repeated d that the more willing you become to use violence as a state, the more it corrupts you, and the more violent you become as a state, and to some degree, the more violent the people you are policing, the people you are occupying, become.

And I’m not a pacifist. I don’t believe you can fully eradicate violence. But we don’t weigh how violent we make others, in our actions, very well, and then how violent we become in response, how much we enter into that escalatory dynamic.

But then the other thing is this question of this broader community, of changing hearts, of changing minds, of acting upon people, not through punishment, but through our belief that they can alter. And I’d be curious to hear you reflect on that question of community a little bit, because I think one of the central debates of our time is who’s actually in the community.

And a lot of policy is actually about writing people outside of the community. A lot of our political fight’s about who should be let into the conversation. What would it mean to have a bit more of King’s view, of trying to create community at the center of what the state is attempting to do, as it fashions and helps govern the country?

BRANDON TERRY: So one underappreciated feature from King’s famous Riverside Church speech against Vietnam, is he goes on this whole riff about America lacking maturity. And it’s a weird thing to have in a foreign-policy speech. You’re used to — you’re a policy person. You don’t usually hear the word “maturity” bandied about in these kinds of debates.

But what he’s getting at is that something really tightly linked to violence, that violence always exceeds the original justification you have for it. It’s not precise. It’s not able to be easily targeted, as we think. It spirals out. It produces retaliation. And then we retaliate again.

And all the while, it’s expanding its justifications to the point of absurdity. And King describes that as adding cynicism to the process of death. And he says that maturity is one of the only ways out here, that the maturity to be able to stand up and say, we were wrong, we want to make amends, we want to repair evils committed in our name, those are questions that are essentially nonstarters in American politics right now, certainly about foreign policy, but even in some places in domestic policy.

You’re starting to get some of this and the attempted wind down of mass incarceration. But this isn’t something that you would hear, for example, in welfare-reform debates or something like that.

King, calling us to maturity, and that being really crucial to the politics of nonviolence, again, being about self-reflective activity and about trying to take ownership of the things that you’ve done wrong, that the goal to do no harm has been — is something that we’ve fallen short of, that feature of King’s thinking is something that I always want to draw attention to because I think it’s something we ignore. So that’s the first point I want to make.

The second thing — and this is also really deeply-seeded in that Vietnam speech — one of the reasons that people hated it so much — he was attacked in The New York Times, basically every editorial page in the country — one of the reasons people hated that speech so much is that he spent so much time expressing solidarity and sympathy with Ho Chi Minh and the North Vietnamese forces.

We’re engaged in war with these people. How could you express sympathy or some kind of solidarity with the enemy? And it’s very instructive, how King went about it. He wasn’t one of these people — you’ve seen these images of people waving the North Vietnamese flag at counterculture protests. It wasn’t like that.

It was him really spending a lot of time meditating on the reasons why we had ended up in this conflict, narrating the whole history of our failure to support Ho Chi Minh and the struggle against French colonialism, against Chinese colonialism, and how that had led to the situation we were in by 1967. King is narrating this history. He’s also trying to get people to think about what it must feel like to be on the ground in Vietnam and witness these bombings, witnessed this imposition of terror.

And he’s doing that because at bottom, he’s inspired by a vision really rooted in a parable the Good Samaritan, from the Bible, that everyone is our neighbor, that there are no sectional loyalties that should eviscerate our moral obligations to others, our obligation to show them respect, to go on in community with them, and that most of what goes on in foreign policy and particularly war making, is a bad-faith evasion of the fact that we’re all interconnected.

And King didn’t even have the luxury of speaking about climate change the way we do, the ways in which the Covid pandemic has exposed some of the deep ways we’re connected. But he understood that there’s a fundamental interconnectedness amongst humanity at the ethical level and at the material, structural level, and that war making is an evasion of that fact. We’re going to have to live together. So the chief question that should organize it is, how can we do so in peace?

EZRA KLEIN: We’ve been talking about King’s nonviolence. I want to talk about his economic thought. But I want to do it from this perspective of his continued attention to what different politics and practices and policies and conditions do to people’s souls.

He has a line where he says, quote, “the dignity of the individual will flourish when the decisions concerning his life are in his own hands, when he has the assurance that his income is stable and certain and when he knows that he has a means to seek self-improvement. Personal conflicts between husband, wife and children will diminish when the unjust measurement of human worth, on a scale of dollars, is eliminated.” Tell me a bit about the spiritual and psychological dimensions of King’s economic philosophy and organizing.

BRANDON TERRY: Well, for King, the question of poverty and the question of economic inequality are both questions of dignity and democracy, and the questions of dignity because when you live without the adequate means to really enjoy the fair value of your basic rights, when you live in a society — and this is a really important point for King — when you live in a society of profound affluence, like the United States, and you live in severe poverty, it expresses a kind of contempt from your fellow citizens about your standing as an equal member of the polity.

So separate from the plain, material fact of hunger or health care, there’s this additional spiritual concern with the way in which living with nothing, living on a lonely island amidst an ocean of prosperity, as he would put it, diminishes your dignity. It makes it hard for you to remain tethered to the fact that you are somebody, that you matter in the world, that your rights are inviolable, that you have the same kind of equal worth as other people. So that’s that piece of it.

And then another piece — this is bridging of the dignity and democracy question — is that when people don’t have a say in the core, vital interest of their life, when they have no decision-making power over the processes which determine how their life is going to go, that too is a diminishment of their dignity. And King, who was operating in a long tradition of social democracy, wants to expand democratic practices to the broader economic realm.

So he has this really curious passage. But I think it fits with his political philosophy. In “Where Do We Go From Here,” he talks about how tenants unions and welfare-rights unions are these extraordinary inventions in the history of democracy. Why democracy? Well, because they’re making something like the administration of government benefits, the housing market and fair housing opportunities, subject to the deliberative input and democratic contestation of the people who enjoy them, the people who are subject to them.

Without expanding democracy into that economic realm, for King, we’re both making a mockery of democracy and we’re diminishing the dignity of citizens who live in search of a real standing as free and equal.

EZRA KLEIN: This seems like a very lost way of thinking to me. And I don’t want to say nobody today is doing it. That would be wrong. But as somebody who spends a lot of my time in debates about economic policy, I think it is fair to say that the ends of economics are taken as the economy, typically. People hopefully shouldn’t starve. But a lot of debates about what we should do, even for the poor, become these recursive, well, how can they better participate in the economy and how are they going to be able to invest in themselves and how they’ll be economic opportunity for their children.

And the idea that the economy is subservient to the community, that the point of the economy is the community, that it should be measured— our policy should be measured by what they do for democratic participation, for the dignity of individuals, is pretty lost. If anything, I see it more now, on the post-liberal right, as people call it, than I even do among mainline Democrats.

And it just seems to me to be a very important and correct part of King’s thought, that is — I think if you asked people about it, they would say they believe it. But it has fallen out of favor as a way to frame and think about these conversations.

BRANDON TERRY: Yeah, I think it’s rooted in some really complicated things. I think there’s a kind of liberal anxiety about speaking forthrightly about the fact that living in areas of severe, concentrated disadvantage and racial segregation that we call ghettos, diminishes the dignity of the people who live there.

That feels uncomfortable for people to say forthrightly, in the way that King would. And so we try to get around it by speaking about opportunity and the wealth gap and unemployment statistics. But really what people are feeling is an existential assault on dignity.

I think we also — and my colleague, Elizabeth Hinton, a dear friend, in her first book, “From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime,” one way to read that book is to say that she’s telling a tragic story about the loss of a particular ideal that guided great society politics. And that’s the principle of maximum feasible participation.

That was an idea. That was a really social-democratic idea, this idea that, well, we need to empower all sorts of people to participate in policy making and democratic deliberation, and that part of where people will find self-respect and dignity is through engagement in politics and their community, and all the way up, and that even bureaucracies should not be impervious to democratic deliberation and democratic decision making, for very complicated reasons, partly about the turn to a punitive impulse and social policy, fear of Black radicalism, the urban rebellions, the economic crises of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

For those reasons, that ideal was defeated in that moment. But we’ve lost something really profound in our mockery of it and our easy dismissal of it. And I think, again, returning to King’s work, where it’s so front and center, allows us to enrich this conversation.

And I’ll just say one last thing here. One way you might think about it is that, when Bernie Sanders came out, we got to hear the words “democratic socialism” over and over again. But there was a lot more interest in what makes it socialist and what makes it democratic. And for me, King is really interesting because if he’s in that tradition, the thing he’s most exciting and innovative about is actually the democratic part. And that’s the part where even the people who operate under that label have fallen short.

EZRA KLEIN: I think it’s a really, really sharp point. And I think it gets to something that is very present, towards the end of King’s life, which is his sense that there is something important for the civil rights movement in the labor movement. And unions, on some level, they are mechanisms of democracy. One of the most important functions they have is workplace democracy. Can you talk a bit about both the bridges he was building but also the connections that he was drawing?

BRANDON TERRY: Well, sure. King is, in this tradition, in many ways inspired by a mentor of his. And one of the most important figures in American history but one of the most severely neglected was A. Philip Randolph, the great labor leader, former organizer of the Pullman Porters, the architect of both the March on Washington that gets canceled, which was going to target the Roosevelt administration during World War II, and the 1963 famous March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

He’s following Randolph, in lots of ways, because they’ve got a certain set of commitments. So one is the idea that because most African Americans are ***working class*** or poor, anything that advances the interests of ***working-class*** people and their ability to exercise democratic control over the economy is going to advance the interests of African Americans.

Now in our moment, that’s become more complicated as the class stratification of African Americans has intensified. But in the 1960s, you could see why King and Randolph were so adamant — and Bayard Rustin were so adamant about this point. They also, though, were extremely critical of the labor movement for its history of racial discrimination.

If you study the history of labor unions in the 20th century, late 19th century, you’ll see that it’s just utterly shot through with exclusions based on race, complicated-institutionally racist practices about seniority that really disadvantaged Black people. And the constant prodding and poking of the labor movement, by Randolph, by King, by Rustin, by Ella Baker, by folks like that, really enacted, over time, an important set of changes in the labor movement. I’ve written a little bit about this, in an essay in “New Labor Forum,” with my friend and labor organizer, Jason Lee.

But the last thing I’ll say — and I think it’s probably the most interesting thing — is that for King labor unions are also, as you described, important laboratories of democracy. So they’re one of the few places where people from all walks of life can get together, deliberate about strategy, deliberate about social ends, social goods, put money behind things that they value, that aren’t only their own material interest.

They also allow for forms of nonviolent contestation. So the strike, the sit-down strike, where the sit ins take their inspiration from, the boycott — unions, in a lot of ways, are one of the original laboratories for the ideas that come to be associated with the civil rights movement. King knows this, acknowledges this, and thinks a lot about how we can sustain union participation in an era, his era, where the threat of automation was looming so largely on the horizon.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: One of the just extraordinary tragedies of King’s death is that he’s only 39. I’m 38. I’m coming into 39 fast.

BRANDON TERRY: I just turned 39 two weeks ago.

EZRA KLEIN: Congratulations. And I’m still learning a lot. I’m still changing a lot. And there’s such an unfinishedness to him and his work that I think also reverberates in how he gets used today.

So today, of course, there’s this ongoing — always is this ongoing argument — of should you have race-based politics or is that unusable, doesn’t work, creates too much backlash? Or you should have class-based politics that are looking for commonalities, and because you’ve had so much economic disadvantage for Black Americans, that’ll work through the mechanism of class just fine.

And there’s this looking at what King is doing at the end of his life with the Poor People’s Campaign and deeper focus on economic justice and often the shared plight of poor white and poor Black Americans, and that kind of view that I think you sometimes hear, a drawing of a line forward. If he had been around, he would have come down on — particularly if you’re somebody who believes we should have a class-based politics — he would have come down on my side of the debate. That’s where he was going.

How do you understand his thinking about those two approaches? And how do you understand where he was going?

BRANDON TERRY: So King often invokes the philosopher Hegel, because he’s constantly describing his mode of thinking as a dialectical one, where he’s trying to reconcile seeming opposites and produce a new synthesis, which helps you transcend certain intractable problems.

Now as a reading of Hegel, that has much to be desired. But as a description of Martin Luther King’s thought, I think that’s always a good way to understand what he’s up to. And so I think what he’s always trying to do is transcend that opposition. And there’s a way to transcend it that I want to resist, and I think it’s really important to resist.

So I think there’s a way in which we sometimes will say class-based politics works to lift African Americans because they’re disproportionately poor. And what’s tricky about that is that it doesn’t really theorize what to do about the African American middle class and the African American elite.

So a thing that King was thinking a lot about when he wrote “Stride Toward Freedom” and the Montgomery bus boycott, is there are areas where racial solidarity is going to be really effective and probably indispensable.

So where questions of anti-Black racism emerge, where questions of racial humiliation, stigma that really affects the larger group, things that all Black people feel vulnerable to, those are going to be areas — like the segregation laws on the buses — those are going to be areas where you actually can generate a lot of racial solidarity and do a lot of important work with it, especially as a defensive posture.

When you start to get into questions of political economy, however, you have to be careful because the appeal of racial solidarity can actually obscure the fact that Black people don’t all share the same material interest in lots of ways.

I’m from Maryland originally. I think this is a great laboratory to study this kind of thing. When Ben Jealous ran for governor, in Maryland, he was destroyed in part by being painted as a socialist. And the Black middle class, located in the D.C. suburbs, did not rally to his support because their material interests were not aligned with a radical redistribution of wealth in the same way. This is a feature of American politics that has changed dramatically from King’s era. And any of our race or class-based politics discussions have to confront that head on.

So what I think King’s primary principle always is, is that he’s dedicated to the group that William Julius Wilson called the truly disadvantaged, the least of these, that at the end of the day, he’s going to give everything to the people who are in the most desperate situation, the poor. And that’s going to guide his politics.

So where that is enabled by a race-based solidarity, so in questions of policing, perhaps, or questions of social stigma and media discourse, that’s where he’ll turn. But in other cases, I think he’d really be trying to experiment with a form of politics that empowers the poor to take leadership on their own, to take a part in political action and policy making, and that really puts, as its first principle, the amelioration and elimination of poverty.

EZRA KLEIN: I always want to avoid asking anyone to channel a deceased thinker. I don’t think it’s a fair question. But we have this period we’ve been in, where there are these huge fights over what got called wokeness and then I think antiracism or, in a different version, critical race theory. And there are better and worse-faith versions of those discussions.

But one of the better faith ones, I think, which gets to something you were just talking about, is whether there’s a tendency for these conversations to get captured away from a focus on material outcomes, particularly for the least well off, and pushed towards representation, particularly in elite spaces, symbolic politics that sometimes gets called virtue signaling, social-media activism.

And I’m curious, somebody who has been deeply marinated in King’s thought, not what you think he would have made of it, but what he has helped you make of it. How does being more aware of the distinctions he drew and the decisions he made help you look at some of the paths we should be walking down today and are not, in these conversations, or are walking down and shouldn’t be?

BRANDON TERRY: So I do want to be clear, and maybe in a way that wasn’t exactly precise in my last answer, that the critique of racism does have important work to do in the pursuit of economic justice.

So in order for us to understand why so many African Americans are located in the realm of the most disadvantaged, in the strata of the most disadvantaged, you have to understand the history of racial domination in this country. You have to understand the persistence of racial discrimination, especially in labor markets. And you have to understand the ways that racial ideology allows us to obscure the nature of our economy.

So the most classic example is that structural unemployment gets reframed, in part by racism, as questions of laziness or pathology or criminality instead of as a feature of the economy as such. So King always talks about the critique of racism as part of the diagnosis of the disease in order to cure it.

So even in the privileging the least well off and being concerned with poor people of all races, he wants to say that the critique of racism helps us see through the kinds of blindnesses that obscure the nature of our economy and the commonalities across race and the things that we need to address the questions of economic justice precisely. So that’s the first thing.

The second thing is that, in his critique of Black power, one of the things he says is that he worries that Black power gives priority to the question of race in a way that confuses our analysis of social reality. So what does he mean by that?

Well, if you think that all Black disadvantage is primarily about anti-Black racism, you can start to miss the fact that there are broader economic dislocations that need to be addressed, that there are structural features of the American constitutional order, the ways in which municipal boundaries are structured, ways that funding decisions are made, that aren’t primarily driven by racial animus, that need to be addressed.

You can lose sight of those things and start to think that the real battle is in something like a totality of anti-Black racial ideology that can be battled in Hollywood movies and comic books and school curricula and legislation and political rhetoric. So it’s not to say that those things don’t exist. It’s just to say that there’s a confusion about what’s going to make the biggest impact in improving the life circumstances of the least well off.

And I think King really calls us to constantly be very precise about what the causal mechanisms are for Black disadvantage and to not be confused by the fact that there’s discrimination and injustice and cruelty in these other realms but which might not have as much causal impact as some of these other things.

The last thing I’ll say, which I want to end on because I don’t want to sound like I’m just totally disparaging this critique of representation, these things, King was very adamant that Black pride, that a concern with representation, that thinking in expansive ways about how do you affirm the somebodiness of Black youth, that those things are really, really important and that they’re not to be dismissed.

So it is a question of justice if people in Hollywood just constantly demean or diminish the talent of nonwhite actors. That is a question of justice. It’s just that we have to be honest about what the import of those struggles will be for the broader group. And the only way we can do that is by being attentive to the class differences within the group.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to ask a version of the question from the other side now, which is — I heard you say something that I found interesting, which is that studying Black nationalism and the civil rights era had given you a lot of insight into what’s going on on the right today. Tell me a bit about what you mean by that.

BRANDON TERRY: I think there are lots of ways you could take it. But I’ll focus on one thing that I’ve been thinking quite a lot about. And it goes back to part of our earlier conversation on the problem of hope, futurity, the problem of humiliation.

And there’s a way in which — and King diagnoses this very incisively — there’s a way in which some genres of Black nationalism are so pessimistic about the possibility for multiracial democracy in the United States, for any kind of Black flourishing in the United States that they essentially foreclose real interest in political organizing and social movements.

But the energy they still managed to generate — the outrage, the sentiment, the sociality — they find their outlet, instead, in a practice of humiliation, counter humiliation. So that there may not be hope that we can actually change the country, but at the very least, we can enjoy a feeling of retaliation, a kind of self-respecting sense of resistance, by engaging in a practice of trying to humiliate our opponents in the public sphere, to mock them, to make bombastic claims about the conspiratorial things that they’re up to. And there’s a titillation to that. There’s a catharsis in watching someone — at that point, it would have been called stick it to whitey. Now it would be stick it to the libs or own the libs.

So for me, I see those similar political emotions at work in a group of people who, I think, don’t have really much hope that Donald Trump is going to change America or that the movement they’re a part of is going to fundamentally change the structure of the world so that it could bring back places that have been destroyed by globalization and offshoring and predatory capital.

They don’t really think that any of that is going to change. But they’re finding an outlet for their feelings of resentment and retaliation in this performance of counter-humiliation. Now the danger is that, unlike the Black nationalist movement — and I want to make clear, I don’t mean all of the Black nationalist movement. There are many currents that have nothing to do with the kind of thing I’m describing.

But unlike that movement, which is always going to be small and easily repressed, this is a significant amount of people that could cause real damage in the places where they don’t face many countervailing forms of power. And they can exercise a much more toxic impact on the broader state of American politics in a time where the media environment is way more fragmented, when, as you’ve written about quite powerfully, the country is much more polarized and the polarization is, in part, geographically sorted.

So I see those elements. And I think that we need more people operating, in the kind of mode that King did, in his critique of Black power, to try to turn people away from their understandable feelings of hostility and resentment, toward more productive forms of political engagement.

EZRA KLEIN: I think something I want to draw to that, in this conversation, is actually the word, “emotion,” which is a neglected part of politics, maybe of King’s thought in particular is that he understood — I think he understood part of the goal of politics and political action as creating a particular structure of political emotion.

And so I’m curious, as we end here, how you would just distill that down, and then what you would say, when you look at what we have today, the left and the right today, our politics today, what structure of emotion, of political emotion, we’re actually living in.

BRANDON TERRY: My mentor and friend, Karuna Mantena, at Columbia, political theorist, a brilliant political theorist working on a book on Gandhi — I learned this from her, thinking a lot about how nonviolence is a kind of realism, in part because it doesn’t engage in of fiction that politics is operating on, in the model of rational discussion. It takes very, very, very seriously the problem of emotion.

And for King, thinking about the history of racial oppression in America, they’re key emotions that you have to think about. One of the most important ones is fear, that you can go back to Thomas Jefferson, Alexis de Tocqueville, F. Scott Fitzgerald’s “The Great Gatsby,” you constantly are getting expressions of a fear of Black retaliation and revenge — that the moment Black people take power, the moment Black people get a foot off their necks, they’re going to do to us what we’ve done to them.

If that fear is a longstanding, deeply-structuring feature of American culture and political life, if it’s something that animates our comedy movies, our stand-up routines, our political discourse, you can’t operate as if it’s not there. You have to do things that will somehow disarm, disrupt, dispel those fears, in order to make progress on the political questions you want to pursue. That was one of King’s deepest, deepest commitments.

He’s thinking a lot about anger, which we’ve talked at great length about. And one of the disappointments I’ve had with radical politics in the present, as sympathetic as I am to most of the aims, is that I just don’t think the emotion question has been adequately considered, that people often defend their politics as like, King was unpopular. And the things we’re saying are unpopular. So we’re operating in that tradition.

Well, it’s not enough to just say, I’ve started a conversation, I’ve provoked something toxic in the culture. He’s not trying to do that, necessarily. He’s trying to elicit reactions that bring forward certain emotions but not let those emotions unravel the society itself. He’s trying to channel them into other forms of political affect that are much more congenial to reconciliation and justice.

So in formal politics, in mainstream Democratic politics, mainstream Republican politics, what we’ve unfortunately ended up with is that the sophistication of mobilization strategists, the depth of the polarization, has made anger the principal affect of American politics at this moment.

And so much of what, I think, a King-inspired political philosophy, both at the state level and the activist level, has to do, is think about how do we transform the recalcitrant nature of today’s political anger and channel it into forms of constructive politics that might point toward a more just future and that might dissolve the forms of anger that are illegitimate and ill founded, in part, by doing the kind of work sometimes described as a moral jujitsu, turning those affects against themselves, in part, to try to transform them into something different.

EZRA KLEIN: I’m so glad I asked that question to get that answer. And I want to say two things about it, which is one, that I think it’s easy to say that’s wise. But what it is, I think, more, is challenging. And maybe it’ll be easier to use myself as an example, here.

When I started out in blogging and political writing and journalism, particularly blogging, I think I thought a lot about politics in terms of winning and losing, and in my corner of it, winning and losing intellectually, that I was involved in political arguments, and arguments could be won or lost in front of some kind of audience.

And two things have begun to corrode, for me, that sense. One is having been in a lot of arguments. And I think I’m a reasonably good arguer. And so I’ve done, by my own likes, well, and then noticed it didn’t have it all the effect I wanted it to have, which is, if anything, it usually — if you really beat somebody in an argument and they feel humiliated, they go further into views they already held. They don’t come to you. If you really make them feel bad, then they go to the people who will still make them feel good. And so you lose by winning.

And then the second is, particularly in the Trump era, the sense that if you met something awful with an equal and opposite energetic force, that in some weird way, you just added energy to what was now an awful system and conversation. And not to say you shouldn’t add some energy to it, but it often — it seemed, to me, to sidestep this question of how do you leach energy out of it.

What do you do to not create a sense that this is a right conversation to be having? And I don’t the answers to it. And I’m not saying like I’ve ascended to some higher plane and don’t argue or any of that. I have all the same intuitions and senses I’ve always had.

But that’s why I find King so interesting and challenging in this way, because it’s just really, really, really different to ask the question, how do I reshape the emotional politics and the emotional structure of myself, of the people I’m in conflict with and then of the people who are bystanders or watchers of that conflict, for the better? It’s just a really different goal to be targeting, and just unimaginably harder than, can I come up with an argument that I think is a winning argument.

BRANDON TERRY: And I think you see it — when he’s assassinated, the leading figures of the Black-Power generation, they’re heartbroken. They mourn his loss. They grieve for him, in part because — and you can read any of these memoirs, particularly Stokely Carmichael’s — they felt like he never — that even when he disagreed with them, he loved them, and not just because they were friendly, but because he loved in the sense that he always invoked, of agape love, that he wanted goodwill for them, and that his arguments weren’t from a place of trying to humiliate them or embarrass them or expose them as ridiculous.

He wanted to affirm their right to make the arguments they were making, to affirm their intelligence and judgment and to enter into their mind, to try to reconstruct a position with sympathy, but then show why it falls short for the sake of goals that he was forthright about, about justice, about reconciliation, about love. Those essays, where he’s criticizing Black Power, to me, they’re like — I wish my students could spend all their time with those essays, and think about how to persuade, how to argue.

Now I will say, we are in a moment of extraordinary cynicism. And cynicism can take advantage of your intellectual honesty, your practice of agape love. But I think that’s in the short term.

In my better moments, I’m of the view that the only way to start to turn the tide against the cynicism that has so corroded and corrupted our political culture is to try to have these demonstrations of humility and authenticity that cause us to put ourselves at some risk, the way that King did. It’s not clear to me how else you get out of a death spiral of mutually-reinforcing cynicism.

EZRA KLEIN: I think that’s a lovely place to end. So always our final question: What are three books you would recommend to the audience? And if I can put one spin on that, you mentioned the many books King wrote. If people want to start with one thing he actually wrote to read, one book, which one should they start with?

BRANDON TERRY: Oh, that’s a hard one. I would probably say, I think you get the best sense of his mature thought from his 1967 book, “Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community,” which is still our question. So I would definitely recommend that. I also really love “A Trumpet of Conscience,” his Canadian Broadcasting Corporation lectures that were published posthumously.

And then three books — and I’ll keep it on a King theme for the holiday — I really strongly recommend Peniel Joseph’s, “The Sword and the Shield.” It’s a dual biography of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. I reviewed it for The New York Review of Books and think really highly of it. It’s a great meditation on the ways they influenced each other. And it gives you a good sense of the broader intellectual milieu of the period.

I also really like Jeanne Theoharis’s “A More Beautiful and Terrible History.” I think for people coming to the study of the civil rights movement for the first time are kind of curious about why some of the things that I’ve said don’t sound familiar to them. She writes, in a really accessible and intelligent way, about some of the myths, that structure, how that history is taught and popularly conveyed. We have a lot of agreements there.

And then a where do we go from here question, I want to recommend my colleague, Tommie Shelby’s book, “Dark Ghettos,” which is a King-inspired philosophical reflection on the deep structure of ghetto poverty and what it requires of us, as a society, to do to redress it. It’s a book that’s very demanding on how far we’ve fallen short and questions of justice that pertain to the kind of neighborhoods that we grew up in and around.

And that also raises really important questions about how to understand the forms of dissent that emerge out of the ghetto and that may not always appear to be decent at first glance. And it’s a very charitable and thoughtful and sympathetic reading, again, inspired by King’s political philosophy.

EZRA KLEIN: Brandon Terry, thank you so much.

BRANDON TERRY: Thank you so much, Ezra. It’s an honor.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

The Ezra Klein Show is produced by Emefa Agawu, Annie Galvin, Jeff Geld, Rogé Karma and Kristin Lin. Fact checking by Michelle Harris, Kate Sinclair, Mary Marge Locker and Rollin Hu. Original music by Isaac Jones, mixing by Jeff Geld, audience strategy by Shannon Busta. The executive producer of New York Times Opinion Audio is Annie-Rose Strasser. And special thanks to Sonia Herrero.

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[***Letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y44-B4J1-JBG3-60KT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 2, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 5

**Length:** 547 words

**Body**

Class Warfare?

To the Editor:

Anand Giridharadas's review of Michael Lind's ''The New Class War: Saving Democracy From the Managerial Elite'' (Jan. 19) is appropriately critical of the thesis that the white ***working-class*** voters who support Donald Trump are demonstrating understandable frustration with ''elites.''

The photograph accompanying the review, which shows construction workers waiting for Trump to speak in western Pennsylvania in 2019, appears on the surface to illustrate Lind's view. A more accurate caption, however, would back up Giridharadas's point perfectly, since these workers were told by their employers (as reported in The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette) that if they did not attend the rally they would not be paid for the day. That rally, and that photograph, epitomize the phony ''populism'' of our current president.

Robert Shaffer Mechanicsburg, Pa.

Entitlement

To the Editor:

Jonathan Rauch's review of Christopher Caldwell's ''The Age of Entitlement: America Since the Sixties'' (Jan. 19) raised objections to the author's central thesis that the Civil Rights Act was anti-constitutional. But Rauch's objections were distressingly gentle. The 1788 Constitution, which Caldwell holds up as sacrosanct, legitimized human slavery. Even after ratification of the 14th Amendment, Jim Crow laws kept huge swaths of citizens from enjoying the legal protection the Constitution is meant to provide. To understand our current political and social environment, rather than a tortured speculation that the Civil Rights Act allowed unentitled groups to become entitled, one might postulate that the Supreme Court, whose mission is to protect the letter and spirit of the Constitution, has failed at that critical mission.

Jonathan M. Rosen Stamford, Conn.

Tin Ears?

To the Editor:

In his review of Ted Gioia's ''Music: A Subversive History'' (Jan. 12), David Hajdu reminds us that the works of the great composers often puzzled or even infuriated the listeners of their time. I'd like to recommend a book that illustrates some of this frustration. Nicolas Slonimsky's ''A Lexicon of Musical Invective'' is a collection of bad (even scathing) reviews of great classical works. Many seem little more than opportunities for the reviewers to show off their witticisms, and we still see that today. But the book, in its illustration of cultural narrow-mindedness, remains highly enjoyable reading.

Floyd Gumble Carmel, N.Y.

Leisure Time

To the Editor:

It's beyond absurd. According to Alana Semuels's review of Daniel Susskind's ''A World Without Work: Technology, Automation, and How We Should Respond'' (Jan. 19), we're devoting huge sums of money and calling upon our best scientific minds so we can perfect the very entity that will replace us. Has mankind ever done anything dumber?

Nancy Stark New YorkThe Times welcomes letters from readers. Letters for publication should include the writer's name, address and telephone number. Letters should be addressed to The Editor, The New York Times Book Review, 620 Eighth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10018. The email address is [*books@nytimes.com*](mailto:books@nytimes.com) Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret that because of the large volume of mail received, we are unable to acknowledge or to return unpublished letters.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/31/books/review/bogus-populism-and-bad-music.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/31/books/review/bogus-populism-and-bad-music.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY NICHOLAS KAMM/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

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[***Awaiting the End of the World in Style***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63Y8-SYX1-DXY4-X1H0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 28, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section D; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 3

**Length:** 1289 words

**Byline:** By Whitney Bauck

**Body**

The climate crisis has spawned an unlikely new area of fashion entrepreneurship.

Before last year, Whitney McGuire hadn't seriously considered stashing an emergency survival kit in her home. But as 2020's record-breaking fire season descended on the West Coast, the attorney, sustainability strategist and mother, who lives in Brooklyn, found herself considering what she might need to prepare if climate change-related disaster were to strike closer to home.

''I was feeling an incredible amount of anxiety about everything, and I wanted to feel like I had some agency in whatever the apocalypse is going to look like for me,'' she said.

Ms. McGuire, 35, started to shop online for supplies, and stumbled into the burgeoning world of stylish emergency preparedness brands.

According to Aaron Levy, director of FEMA's individual and community preparedness division, recent surveys indicate that the country is in the middle of ''a tidal wave of culture change'' when it comes to disaster prepping.

''I think we're starting to see a shift in the assumption that 'this can't happen where I live,''' said Mr. Levy.

Though government agencies like FEMA and nonprofits like the Red Cross have long sought to prepare people for the possibility of disaster, the rise of for-profit companies working in the same space reflects just how big that shift actually is.

There are companies in this category that have been around for years, catering to survivalists and ex-military types, such as Uncharted Supply Co. (which sells streamlined backpacks containing small shovels, stormproof matches and water filters), and My Medic (which sells extensive first aid supplies packaged in utilitarian bags). But as far as Ms. McGuire was concerned, these brands target ''outdoorsy, cis white men,'' with marketing materials that often feature muscular white guys wearing flannel shirts in the forest.

As a result, a new wave of emergency preparation companies has arisen: ones that cater to a more style-conscious clientele. Foremost among them are Preppi, a Goop-approved brand that sells disaster supplies in minimalist backpacks, and Judy, which has tapped celebrities like the Kardashians, Chrissy Teigen and TikTok sensation Addison Rae to promote its portable generators and waterproof supply packs.

Indeed, it was Judy's approachable branding that caught Ms. McGuire's eye a year after she first tried to build an emergency kit, and was overwhelmed with so much dread she abandoned a half-full shopping cart.

''It looks almost like a yogurt brand or something,'' Ms. McGuire said after seeing a Judy ad on Instagram. ''It's very friendly, and it's kind of making the end of the world feel a little more colorful.''

That's by design. Founded by Simon Huck, owner of celebrity PR firm Command Entertainment Group and a close friend of Kim Kardashian, and Josh Udaskin, best known for starting the buzzy if short-lived luggage company Raden, Judy exists to offer emergency kits packaged in a format that is more inviting than intimidating.

''Emergency preparedness needed a rebrand,'' Mr. Huck said. ''It can be really scary, and I think a lot of folks shut down when they hear about it. So our mission has been: How can we get people to care?''

Judy's founders turned to Red Antler, the agency responsible for creating brand identities for Allbirds and Casper, for help in making what Mr. Huck calls the ''least sexy category'' more appealing.

Their approach, designed by Ada Mayer, creative director of Red Antler, hinged on tapping positive emotions, rather than exploiting the fear that so often accompanies emergency prep. Judy never shows the ''after'' shots of homes that have been destroyed by wildfires or flooding, only the ''before'' images depicting happy families occupying pre-disaster living rooms.

The brand's signature orange calls to mind traffic cones, signaling caution without ringing the mental alarm bells associated with what Ms. Mayer calls ''medical red.'' And the brand's logo features a chunky typeface that she describes as simultaneously ''bold and steady'' and also ''a little bit friendly and disarming.''

''The goal was to create something pragmatic, but also very accessible,'' Ms. Mayer said. ''We took a potentially frightening and off-putting subject matter and made it more inviting.''

Since its launch in January 2020, Judy has sold over 25,000 disaster kits, accrued nearly 60,000 followers on its meme-strewn Instagram page, and attracted 45,000 subscribers to its text-message service that provides free emergency prep information. Mr. Huck said the business is on track to double in month-over-month growth in 2021.

Some people seem to be finding Judy's emergency prep resources before they find FEMA's, as evidenced by Judy's FAQ page, which includes the question, ''Do I contact you if disaster strikes and I need help?'' (The answer, for the record, is no: Judy is ''not a real time alerting authority.'')

According to Antony Loewenstein, journalist and author of ''Disaster Capitalism: Making A Killing Out Of Catastrophe,'' that's just one of the potential downsides of brand-led responses to disaster.

The other has to do with these brands' relationships to environmental politics. Though Mr. Huck acknowledges the role the climate crisis plays in increasing weather-related calamities, Judy's website and social media are intentionally devoid of the term ''climate change'' lest it alienate potential customers who deem it ''too politicized'' -- despite the fact that Americans who think global warming is happening outnumber those who don't by more than six to one. Judy doesn't publish anything about the environmental impacts of manufacturing its products, either.

As far as Mr. Loewenstein is concerned, this is ''avoiding the elephant in the room.''

''You have increasing numbers of companies saying, 'we can assist you to address what everyone knows is a growing climate crisis.' But there's no openness about why this is happening,'' Mr. Loewenstein said. ''They should be asking, 'Am I, as a corporation, complicit, in supply chains and elsewhere?'''

Dr. Samantha Montano, assistant professor of emergency management at Massachusetts Maritime Academy and author of ''Disasterology,'' sees other problems with market-led responses to disaster. ''This individualistic approach runs into limitations,'' she said. ''Particularly the conceptualization of preparedness as this consumeristic process where somebody can just go out and buy a bunch of stuff, and then be fine.''

What she would like to see instead is a greater focus on holistic disaster preparation, with a particular emphasis on the communities that can't afford to drop between $195 and $995 on a Kardashian-approved emergency kit.

Mr. Huck resists the framing of brands like his as opportunistic, and compares their offerings to that of an alarm service or insurance company. And if approachable branding like Judy's can help ''make emergency preparedness part of the zeitgeist, where people can actually talk about it and don't feel turned off,'' he said, he'll feel like he has accomplished part of his goal.

For Ms. McGuire, the price of Judy products ended up feeling prohibitive, as did what she perceived to be a lack of interest on the brand's part in serving the ***working class*** people that tend to most need disaster relief. She's still interested in emergency readiness for her own family, but she's starting with prep that doesn't cost anything, like gathering important documents in easy-to-grab, waterproof containers.

Even Mr. Huck can see the wisdom in that.

''The number one thing you can do to save lives is make an emergency plan, more so than actually having a physical product,'' he said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/28/style/disaster-prep-kits.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/28/style/disaster-prep-kits.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, an emergency survival kit from the company Judy. Above, disaster prep kits from Preppi. Judy has tapped celebrities to help promote its products. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUDY

PREPPI)

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[***Disaster Prep Kits Get a Makeover***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63Y8-T271-DXY4-X224-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 28, 2021 Thursday 15:24 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1302 words

**Byline:** Whitney Bauck

**Highlight:** The climate crisis has spawned an unlikely new area of fashion entrepreneurship.

**Body**

The climate crisis has spawned an unlikely new area of fashion entrepreneurship.

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According to Aaron Levy, director of [*FEMA*](https://www.ready.gov/)’s individual and community preparedness division, recent [*surveys*](https://www.fema.gov/about/openfema/data-sets/national-household-survey) indicate that the country is in the middle of “a tidal wave of culture change” when it comes to disaster prepping.

“I think we’re starting to see a shift in the assumption that ‘this can’t happen where I live,’” said Mr. Levy.

Though government agencies like FEMA and nonprofits like the Red Cross have long sought to prepare people for the possibility of disaster, the rise of for-profit companies working in the same space reflects just how big that shift actually is.

There are companies in this category that have been around for years, catering to survivalists and ex-military types, such as [*Uncharted Supply Co.*](https://unchartedsupplyco.com/) (which sells streamlined backpacks containing small shovels, stormproof matches and water filters), and [*My Medic*](https://mymedic.com/) (which sells extensive first aid supplies packaged in utilitarian bags). But as far as Ms. McGuire was concerned, these brands target “outdoorsy, cis white men,” with marketing materials that often feature muscular white guys wearing flannel shirts in the forest.

As a result, a new wave of emergency preparation companies has arisen: ones that cater to a more style-conscious clientele. Foremost among them are [*Preppi*](https://www.preppi.co/), a Goop-approved brand that sells disaster supplies in minimalist backpacks, and [*Judy*](https://judy.co/), which has tapped celebrities like the Kardashians, Chrissy Teigen and TikTok sensation Addison Rae to promote its portable generators and waterproof supply packs.

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“It looks almost like a yogurt brand or something,” Ms. McGuire said after seeing a Judy ad on Instagram. “It’s very friendly, and it’s kind of making the end of the world feel a little more colorful.”

That’s by design. Founded by Simon Huck, owner of celebrity PR firm Command Entertainment Group and [*a close friend of Kim Kardashian*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/12/style/kardashian-bestie-simon-huck-is-selling-you-beer-and-shampoo.html), and Josh Udashkin, best known for starting the buzzy if short-lived luggage company [*Raden*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/07/fashion/texting-raden-travel-suitcase.html), Judy exists to offer emergency kits packaged in a format that is more inviting than intimidating.

“Emergency preparedness needed a rebrand,” Mr. Huck said. “It can be really scary, and I think a lot of folks shut down when they hear about it. So our mission has been: How can we get people to care?”

Judy’s founders turned to [*Red Antler*](https://redantler.com/), the agency responsible for creating brand identities for Allbirds and Casper, for help in making what Mr. Huck calls the “least sexy category” more appealing.

Their approach, designed by Ada Mayer, creative director of Red Antler, hinged on tapping positive emotions, rather than exploiting the fear that so often accompanies emergency prep. Judy never shows the “after” shots of homes that have been destroyed by wildfires or flooding, only the “before” images depicting happy families occupying pre-disaster living rooms.

The brand’s signature orange calls to mind traffic cones, signaling caution without ringing the mental alarm bells associated with what Ms. Mayer calls “medical red.” And the brand’s logo features a chunky typeface that she describes as simultaneously “bold and steady” and also “a little bit friendly and disarming.”

“The goal was to create something pragmatic, but also very accessible,” Ms. Mayer said. “We took a potentially frightening and off-putting subject matter and made it more inviting.”

Since its launch in January 2020, Judy has sold over 25,000 disaster kits, accrued nearly 60,000 followers [*on its meme-strewn Instagram page*](https://www.instagram.com/readysetjudy/?hl=en), and attracted 45,000 subscribers to its text-message service that provides free emergency prep information. Mr. Huck said the business is on track to double in month-over-month growth in 2021.

Some people seem to be finding Judy’s emergency prep resources before they find FEMA’s, as evidenced by Judy’s FAQ [*page*](https://judy.co/pages/faq), which includes the question, “Do I contact you if disaster strikes and I need help?” (The answer, for the record, is no: Judy is “not a real time alerting authority.”)

According to Antony Loewenstein, journalist and author of “Disaster Capitalism: Making A Killing Out Of Catastrophe,” that’s just one of the potential downsides of brand-led responses to disaster.

The other has to do with these brands’ relationships to environmental politics. Though Mr. Huck acknowledges the role the [*climate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/28/climate/climate-change-framework-bill.html) crisis plays in increasing weather-related calamities, Judy’s website and social media are intentionally devoid of the term “climate change” lest it alienate potential customers who deem it “too politicized” — despite the fact that Americans who think global warming is happening outnumber those who don’t by more than [*six to one*](https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/publications/dramatic-increase-in-public-beliefs-and-worries-about-climate-change/). Judy doesn’t publish anything about the environmental impacts of manufacturing its products, either.

As far as Mr. Loewenstein is concerned, this is “avoiding the elephant in the room.”

“You have increasing numbers of companies saying, ‘we can assist you to address what everyone knows is a growing climate crisis.’ But there’s no openness about why this is happening,” Mr. Loewenstein said. “They should be asking, ‘Am I, as a corporation, complicit, in supply chains and elsewhere?’”

Dr. Samantha Montano, assistant professor of emergency management at Massachusetts Maritime Academy and author of “Disasterology,” sees other problems with market-led responses to disaster. “This individualistic approach runs into limitations,” she said. “Particularly the conceptualization of preparedness as this consumeristic process where somebody can just go out and buy a bunch of stuff, and then be fine.”

What she would like to see instead is a greater focus on holistic disaster preparation, with a particular emphasis on the communities that can’t afford to drop between $195 and $995 on a Kardashian-approved emergency kit.

Mr. Huck resists the framing of brands like his as opportunistic, and compares their offerings to that of an alarm service or insurance company. And if approachable branding like Judy’s can help “make emergency preparedness part of the zeitgeist, where people can actually talk about it and don’t feel turned off,” he said, he’ll feel like he has accomplished part of his goal.

For Ms. McGuire, the price of Judy products ended up feeling prohibitive, as did what she perceived to be a lack of interest on the brand’s part in serving the ***working class*** people that tend to most need disaster relief. She’s still interested in emergency readiness for her own family, but she’s starting with prep that doesn’t cost anything, like gathering important documents in easy-to-grab, waterproof containers.

Even Mr. Huck can see the wisdom in that.

“The number one thing you can do to save lives is make an emergency plan, more so than actually having a physical product,” he said.

PHOTOS: Top, an emergency survival kit from the company Judy. Above, disaster prep kits from Preppi. Judy has tapped celebrities to help promote its products. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUDY; PREPPI)

**Load-Date:** October 29, 2021

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[***Bogus Populism and Bad Music***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y3N-V1H1-DXY4-X0SJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 31, 2020 Friday 05:00 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 551 words

**Highlight:** Readers respond to recent issues of the Sunday Book Review.

**Body**

Class Warfare?

To the Editor:

Anand Giridharadas’s review of Michael Lind’s “The New Class War: Saving Democracy From the Managerial Elite” (Jan. 19) is appropriately critical of the thesis that the white ***working-class*** voters who support Donald Trump are demonstrating understandable frustration with “elites.”

The photograph accompanying the review, which shows construction workers waiting for Trump to speak in western Pennsylvania in 2019, appears on the surface to illustrate Lind’s view. A more accurate caption, however, would back up Giridharadas’s point perfectly, since these workers were told by their employers (as reported in The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette) that if they did not attend the rally they would not be paid for the day. That rally, and that photograph, epitomize the phony “populism” of our current president.

Robert Shaffer

Mechanicsburg, Pa.

Entitlement

To the Editor:

Jonathan Rauch’s review of Christopher Caldwell’s “The Age of Entitlement: America Since the Sixties” (Jan. 19) raised objections to the author’s central thesis that the Civil Rights Act was anti-constitutional. But Rauch’s objections were distressingly gentle. The 1788 Constitution, which Caldwell holds up as sacrosanct, legitimized human slavery. Even after ratification of the 14th Amendment, Jim Crow laws kept huge swaths of citizens from enjoying the legal protection the Constitution is meant to provide. To understand our current political and social environment, rather than a tortured speculation that the Civil Rights Act allowed unentitled groups to become entitled, one might postulate that the Supreme Court, whose mission is to protect the letter and spirit of the Constitution, has failed at that critical mission.

Jonathan M. Rosen

Stamford, Conn.

Tin Ears?

To the Editor:

In his review of Ted Gioia’s “Music: A Subversive History” (Jan. 12), David Hajdu reminds us that the works of the great composers often puzzled or even infuriated the listeners of their time. I’d like to recommend a book that illustrates some of this frustration. Nicolas Slonimsky’s “A Lexicon of Musical Invective” is a collection of bad (even scathing) reviews of great classical works. Many seem little more than opportunities for the reviewers to show off their witticisms, and we still see that today. But the book, in its illustration of cultural narrow-mindedness, remains highly enjoyable reading.

Floyd Gumble

Carmel, N.Y.

Leisure Time

To the Editor:

It’s beyond absurd. According to Alana Semuels’s review of Daniel Susskind’s “A World Without Work: Technology, Automation, and How We Should Respond” (Jan. 19), we’re devoting huge sums of money and calling upon our best scientific minds so we can perfect the very entity that will replace us. Has mankind ever done anything dumber?

Nancy Stark

New York

The Times welcomes letters from readers. Letters for publication should include the writer’s name, address and telephone number. Letters should be addressed to The Editor, The New York Times Book Review, 620 Eighth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10018. The email address is [*books@nytimes.com*](mailto:books@nytimes.com) Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret that because of the large volume of mail received, we are unable to acknowledge or to return unpublished letters.

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY NICHOLAS KAMM/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** January 31, 2020

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[***Russia Reopens the Last Czar’s Palace, a Century After His Execution***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63Y3-52K1-JBG3-63GC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 27, 2021 Wednesday 15:00 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1231 words

**Byline:** Ivan NechepurenkoIvan Nechepurenko covers Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, the countries of the Caucasus, and Central Asia. He is based in Moscow.

**Highlight:** The last home of Nicholas II has been restored and opened to the public as a museum outside of St. Petersburg.

**Body**

The last home of Nicholas II has been restored and opened to the public as a museum outside of St. Petersburg.

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia — Maria Ryadova recalled being in a dusty room inside the [*Alexander Palace*](https://tzar.ru/en/objects/alexandrovsky), hopping from one floor beam to another and peering into the dark chasm beneath, on the day she and her team of workers made a momentous discovery.

A pile of broken blue tiles had been hiding in the darkness. These shards, Ms. Ryadova knew from archival black-and-white photos, were the remains of tiles that had once adorned the walls of that room, which used to be czar Nicholas II’s private pool and bathroom in the early 1900s. But before they were uncovered, she had never known their color.

The discovery of these glossy pieces of cobalt and turquoise completed another piece of the puzzle that has been reconstructing this imperial mansion, which was once the home of the last czar of Russia and his family.

“This was an incredible find,” said Ms. Ryadova, 40, who is one of the main architects involved in the project. “I felt extremely inspired.”

With a team of architects and researchers, Ms. Ryadova has spent more than a decade on these grounds, working to restore the stately yellow edifice to its early-20th-century glory, before World War II and Soviet remodeling led to its deterioration. On Aug. 13, the work of Ms. Ryadova and many others was finally unveiled when Alexander Palace opened to the public as a museum.

This palace is likely be the final major Russian imperial mansion to become a museum, said Tatiana Andreeva, a research specialist. It is the result of years of investigative work by Ms. Andreeva, 37, Ms. Ryadova and their many colleagues, who re-created the interiors by working with a few fuzzy colored pictures, thousands of black-and-white photos, some watercolors, several drapery swatches and memoirs of palace life.

Of Rubble and Rubles

More than a century after the Russian monarchy collapsed with the execution of Nicholas II and his wife, four daughters and son by the Bolsheviks in 1918, historians are working to excavate the country’s imperial past.

For some, Alexander Palace has become a symbol of Russia’s reconciliation with it. “I have a complicated attitude toward the aristocrats of pre-Soviet Russia,” said Max Trudolyubov, 51, a popular blogger and commentator on current affairs. “But these palaces became monuments.”

Nicholas II has long been portrayed to the Russian people either as a bloody and committed despot — a relentless oppressor of the ***working class*** — or a clueless and lighthearted fool who carelessly let his country fall of the cliff into the abyss of Bolshevism.

The reopened palace will allow visitors to immerse themselves in part of the country’s history and make their own judgments, said Lev Lurie, a specialist in the history of St. Petersburg and the Romanov family.

“Museum is a theater, with a play rolling out without any actors,” he said.

In 2011, the Russian state decided to recreate the czar’s private suite — which had been furnished in the Art Nouveau style and was mostly destroyed during World War II and subsequent Soviet reconstructions — and create a museum around it. In the end, the government has committed more than $28 million to the project, with $12 million coming from the museum and private benefactors. (One of those private benefactors, [*Bob Atchison*](https://tzar.ru/en/objects/alexandrovsky) of Austin, Texas, is an enthusiast who has assembled a collection of items that were looted from the palace by the Germans and others — and sold at international auctions — and who has been collecting money to repair the palace for decades.)

To recreate the czar’s private rooms, Ms. Ryadova’s team had to remake almost everything: pickled oak parquet floors, wool rugs and silk draperies, and even spittoons that were used by the imperial family and courtiers.

Originally built in 1796 by Catherine the Great for her grandson Alexander, the palace was part of the imperial retreat in [*Tsarskoye Selo*](https://tzar.ru/en/objects/alexandrovsky), a sprawling complex of palaces and parks outside of St. Petersburg, Russia’s capital at the time.

In 1905, Alexander’s great-grand-nephew, Nicholas II, moved his family there permanently to escape the increasingly chaotic and dangerous life in the capital, where riots broke out regularly and his grandfather was killed in 1881.

Nicholas II’s choice, on the eve of revolution, to abandon his troops and reunite with his family at Alexander Palace, divides many who study the time period.

To some, it is an indictment: He put his family above the interests of his country, over which he had absolute power.

But to many Russian Orthodox believers, Nicholas II’s acceptance of his fate was a show of humility. In 2000, the Russian Orthodox Church [*canonized him and his family*](https://tzar.ru/en/objects/alexandrovsky) as passion bearers, a category used to identify believers who endured suffering and death with Christ-like piety.

This July, defying all pandemic-related restrictions, thousands of believers joined [*a religious procession in the city of Yekaterinburg*](https://tzar.ru/en/objects/alexandrovsky) that processed from the location of the mansion where the czar was shot (it was later destroyed) to the spot where the family’s remains were disposed in a mine shaft and dissolved with sulfuric acid.

A Palatial Puzzle

As she walked through the palace’s nearly finished rooms a few weeks before the opening this summer, Ms. Ryadova said she hoped visitors would be enraptured. She has faced too many challenges and disappointments in this reconstruction to feel otherwise.

For instance, she has been frustrated by the czar’s family photos. As avid photographers, they took thousands of pictures inside the palace, including photographs that could be considered some of the world’s earliest selfies. Portraits, however, are often useless to restoration specialists because floors and ceilings are usually cut out of the frame.

“Now I tell everyone: Photograph your ceilings!” Ms. Ryadova said.

Rugs posed a problem, too: In some cases, whole patterns were recreated from a small corner that managed to sneak into a picture or two. (Some of the ceiling restorations are on hold, in hopes that more materials will be discovered.)

In 1944, after the German occupation, most of the properties at Tsarskoye Selo had no windows or roofs. “The country was in a horrible state, but people wanted to see these ruins rebuilt as they were,” said Olga Taratynova, the director of the Tsarskoye Selo museum.

So even though the Soviet government had established itself as antithetical to the rule of the czars, it put money toward renovating their palaces. “It was a political decision,” Ms. Taratynova, 66, said.

The complex has since become an important tourist destination, not to mention a symbol of Russian history. Ms. Taratynova recalled that in 2002 President George W. Bush visited the Catherine Palace at the site as the guest of President Vladimir Putin. When Mr. Bush entered the grand 8,500-square-foot throne hall, with its gold-plated woodcarving décor, Ms. Taratynova said, he froze, mesmerized, and said simply, “Wow.”

“We Russians love it when people come to visit and say, ‘Wow!’” she said.

PHOTOS: From top: outside Alexander Palace, near St. Petersburg, Russia; left and right, reconstructed private rooms of Nicholas II, the last czar; left, some of the many era-specific items, and right, bathroom detail; right, the palace was a retreat and part of a sprawling complex. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARY GELMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 2, 2025

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[***It Seems Odd That We Would Just Let the World Burn; Ezra Klein***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:634X-5YC1-DXY4-X20R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 15, 2021 Thursday 12:06 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2358 words

**Byline:** Ezra Klein

**Highlight:** Where is the urgency on climate change?

**Body**

I spent the weekend reading a book I wasn’t entirely comfortable being seen with in public. Andreas Malm’s “How to Blow Up a Pipeline” is only slightly inaptly named. You won’t find, anywhere inside, instructions on sabotaging energy infrastructure. A truer title would be “Why to Blow Up a Pipeline.” On this, Malm’s case is straightforward: Because nothing else has worked.

Decades of climate activism have gotten millions of people into the streets but they haven’t turned the tide on emissions, or even investments. Citing [*a 2019 study*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3) in the journal Nature, Malm observes that, measuring by capacity, 49 percent of the fossil-fuel-burning energy infrastructure now in operation was installed after 2004. Add in the expected emissions from projects in some stage of the planning process and we are most of the way toward warming the world by 2 degrees Celsius — a prospect scientists consider terrifying and most world governments have repeatedly pledged to avoid. Some hoped that the pandemic would alter the world’s course, but it hasn’t. Oil consumption is [*hurtling*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3) back to precrisis levels, and demand for coal, the dirtiest of the fuels, is [*rising*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3).

[For more from Ezra Klein, listen to his [*Opinion podcast, The Ezra Klein Show*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3).]

“Here is what this movement of millions should do, for a start,” Malm writes. “Announce and enforce the prohibition. Damage and destroy new CO2-emitting devices. Put them out of commission, pick them apart, demolish them, burn them, blow them up. Let the capitalists who keep on investing in the fire know that their properties will be trashed.”

The question at the heart of Malm’s book is why this isn’t happening already. “Were we governed by reason, we would be on the barricades today, dragging the drivers of Range Rovers and Nissan Patrols out of their seats, occupying and shutting down the coal-burning power stations, bursting in upon the Blairs’ retreat from reality in Barbados and demanding a reversal of economic life as dramatic as the one we bore when we went to war with Hitler,” he says.

Malm offers two answers for the resolute nonviolence of the climate movement. The first is “strategic pacificism,” the belief that nonviolent protest is more effective than violent resistance. Much of the book is occupied by Malm’s rebuttal to potted histories of past social movements, which is persuasive in parts. He’s surely right that we sanitize past uprisings, lionizing the peaceful and blackening or forgetting the names of the violent. There is at least an argument that it’s the interplay of forces that transforms societies. There was no peaceful American Revolution. There were riots and rifles woven into the civil rights movement. “Does this movement possess a radical flank?” asks Malm.

As to whether blowing up pipelines would work here, and now, Malm is less convincing. The likeliest outcome is that a few dozen climate activists would be jailed for years (as some [*already have been*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3)) and a wave of laws criminalizing even peaceful protest would sweep the nation. He has no answers for those who fear the probable political consequences: an immediate backlash that sweeps enemies of climate action into power, eliminating even the fragile hopes for policy progress.

“I do think we need to show society there’s something radical on the line, but can you imagine how thrilled Republican politicians would be if people began blowing up pipelines?” David Roberts, author of the invaluable climate newsletter [*Volts*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3), told me. “They’ve been trying to make eco-terrorism a thing for years. Imagine the first time someone gets hurt.”

Elsewhere in the book, Malm is firmly opposed to tactics that could signal contempt or hostility for the ***working class***. But the consequence of a wave of bombings to obliterate energy infrastructure would be to raise the price on energy immediately, all across the world, and the burdens would fall heaviest on the poor. Malm tries, at times, to resolve this tension, suggesting that perhaps the targets could be the yachts of the superrich, but in general he’s talking about pipelines, and pipelines carry the fuels for used Nissans and aged ferries, not just Gulfstream jets.

Higher energy prices are political poison, which is, according to [*leaked audio*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3), why Exxon Mobil supports a carbon tax: The company knows that any politician who dares propose such a tax will do more to harm the climate movement than to help it (this is a lesson, thankfully, that the Biden administration has [*learned*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3)). It’s difficult, then, to believe that raising prices on the same fuels through a campaign of bombings would mobilize the ***working class*** on behalf of climate action.

Still, violence is often deployed, even if counterproductively, on behalf of causes far less consequential than the climate crisis. So skepticism of the practical benefits of violence does not fully explain its absence in a movement this vast and with consequences this grave. To that end, Malm quotes the writer John Lanchester, [*who asked, in 2007,*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3) whether the absence of eco-violence was because “even the people who feel most strongly about climate change on some level can’t quite bring themselves to believe in it.”

This question does not apply only to violence. It applies to quieter questions of political strategy and policy demands, and it is often asked of the climate movement. “It has become fashionable to call for a World War II-style mobilization to fight climate change,” [*wrote*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3) Ted Nordhaus, the founder of The Breakthrough Institute, in an essay questioning whether climate activists believed their own rhetoric. “But virtually no one will actually call for any of the sorts of activities that the United States undertook during the war mobilization — rationing food and fuels, seizing property, nationalizing factories or industries, or suspending democratic liberties.”

Nordhaus goes on: “The vagueness and modesty of the Green New Deal is not proof that progressives and environmentalists are closet socialists. It is, rather, evidence that most climate advocates, though no doubt alarmed, don’t actually see climate change as the immediate and existential threat they suggest it is.”

I don’t believe the strong form of this argument any more than I believe that people smoke in their 20s because they doubt that lung cancer is a horrible way to die. Much of the modesty Nordhaus identifies is a relative of the political realism that, in other contexts, he praises. Many climate activists choose an asceticism in their own lives that they wouldn’t dare ask of others, not because they believe it to be wrong, or unnecessary, but because they fear political annihilation. Most vegans I know avoid meat in part for climate reasons, but they know it would be disastrous to the causes they care about if President Biden demanded that all Americans do the same.

It’s true that there is a discordance between the pitch of the rhetoric on climate and the normalcy of the lives many of us live. I don’t see that as a revelation of political misdirection so much as a constant failure of human nature. We are inconsistent creatures who routinely court the catastrophes we most fear. We do so because we don’t feel the pain of others as our own, because there are social constraints on our actions and imaginations, because the future is an abstraction and the pleasures of this instant are a siren. That is true with our health and our finances and our loves and so of course it is true with our world.

All of this has been on my mind for reasons that should be extraordinary, but have become, instead, grimly banal. June 2021 was the hottest June ever [*recorded*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3) on land. Portland, Ore., saw temperatures of 116 degrees, a sentence that doesn’t make sense to me even as I know it to be true. In Lytton, British Columbia, temperatures reached 121 degrees, and the city simply ignited. “You can’t even comprehend it,” one resident [*told*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3) CBC Radio. “Our entire town is gone.”

In California, where I live, 2020 was a hellish, unprecedented year of fires, with more than four million acres consumed. There were days when the smoke covered the sun and every breath stung the throat. But 2021 is [*tracking*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3) even worse. And it’s not just California. “North America chokes in smoke, looks like an ashtray from space,” [*read*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3) a Weather Channel headline.

But you’d never know it watching C-SPAN. The bipartisan infrastructure bill cuts most of the climate investments from President Biden’s American Jobs Plan, leaving them for a future [*reconciliation package*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3) that may or may not pass. There’s been much debate on the left over whether the bipartisan bill should be killed, or at least stymied until its successor is closer to passage. But the bipartisan bill includes some climate priorities — $47.2 billion for climate resiliency projects, $73 billion for upgrading the electricity grid — and there’s little reason to believe that destroying it will make Senator Joe Manchin likelier to support a sweeping, partisan effort.

It is better than nothing; it is not nearly enough. The same is true, to be honest, even of the broader investments Biden envisioned. That is the state of climate policy in 2021, and I am not optimistic that it will be much different in 2022, or 2025.

“Climate alarmism is useless,” [*tweeted Juan Moreno-Cruz*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3), the Canada Research Chair in Energy Transitions at the University of Waterloo. “The impacts of climate change are here. Let’s talk about climate realism.” The problem, he continued, is that “talking climate solutions have left us unprepared for actual climate change. We keep running models and fighting over which ‘solution’ is the best, but we have done nothing to address the impacts of climate change. Adaptation research and implementation is severely underfunded.”

But when I spoke to Moreno-Cruz, his realism didn’t seem much more realistic, and he knew it. “We need to provide adaptation measures and investments to the majority of people on the planet,” he told me. Adaptation is a monstrous challenge, arguably harder and pricier than simply reducing emissions would be. It requires infrastructure, migration support, income and food security, and much more, and the financing must flow from rich countries to poor countries. “At that point, it becomes very similar to mitigation in the sense that our incentives in the rich countries to protect the poor countries are not aligned,” Moreno-Cruz said.

We underestimate the horrors humans will adapt to. There is no expanse of suffering that guarantees a compassionate response. The wreckage of the coronavirus is a reminder that even the deaths of family members, friends and neighbors will not inevitably transform our politics. More than 600,000 American lives have been lost, and for all that, the 2020 election looked much like the 2016 election, and fights over even so modest an adaptation as masks roiled the nation. Worse, American politics moved on as soon as the epicenters of crisis shifted beyond our borders. There is nothing in the past year that should make us believe that ruinous suffering in India will focus minds in America.

I do not want this to be a column arguing for despair. No emotion is more useless, and it’s wrong at any rate. If we fail to keep warming below the longtime global goal of 2 degrees Celsius, well, 2 degrees remains better than 2.5. And 2.5 is far preferable to 3. And humanity would much rather have 3 than 3.5. And so on, and so forth. There is no point at which giving up makes more sense than fighting on.

But to the immediate question — how to force the political system to do enough, fast enough, to avert mass suffering — I don’t know the answer, or even if there is an answer. Legislative politics is unlikely to suffice under any near-term alignment of power I can foresee — though I dearly hope Congress passes, at the least, the investments and clean energy standards proposed in the American Jobs Plan. I doubt a wave of bombings would accelerate change, and even if I believed otherwise, who am I to tell others to risk those consequences? The pace of renewable technologies has been a welcome surprise, and I would have us spend endless billions on technological moonshots — including nuclear, direct air capture and even geoengineering research. There is nothing we should not prepare to try, but even if we invent the fuels of the future, we will need policymakers to deploy them over the cries of industries that want to profit from the machines and oil wells of the past.

The good news is that the worst of the climate crisis seems [*less and less likely*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3). We are on track for 3 degrees of warming, measured in Celsius, not 4 or 5. But 3 degrees is still a catastrophe of truly incomprehensible proportions, visited primarily upon the world’s poor by the world’s rich. We are engineering a world that is so much worse than it need be and that will be lethal for untold millions.

“I suspect that human beings will not go extinct from climate change, but I have higher standards than that,” Kate Marvel, a climate scientist at Columbia University, once told me. “I don’t want to just not go extinct. And for me, there’s almost an abdicating of responsibility by saying, ‘Well, we’re not going to do anything about climate change unless it’s going to kill every last one of us.’ Because the things that, for me, are really frightening about climate change are the consequences for human social systems.”

Humanity has spent thousands of years building the social organizations and technological mastery to insulate itself from the whims of nature. We are spending down that inheritance, turning back the clock. I don’t believe this reveals our true preference for the world our descendants will inhabit. I believe it reveals our deeply human inability to take the future as seriously as we take the present.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Ian C. Bates for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Economies Dependent On Russia Face Risks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64V7-J0C1-DXY4-X2R4-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1720 words

**Byline:** By Patricia Cohen and Jack Ewing

**Body**

Countries that depend on the region's rich supply of energy, wheat, nickel and other staples could feel the pain of price spikes.

After getting battered by the pandemic, supply chain chokeholds and leaps in prices, the global economy is poised to be sent on yet another unpredictable course by an armed clash on Europe's border.

Even before the Kremlin ordered Russian troops into separatist territories of Ukraine on Monday, the tension had taken a toll. The promise of punishing sanctions in return by President Biden and the potential for Russian retaliation had already pushed down stock returns and driven up gas prices.

An outright attack by Russian troops could cause dizzying spikes in energy and food prices, fuel inflation fears and spook investors, a combination that threatens investment and growth in economies around the world.

However harsh the effects, the immediate impact will be nowhere near as devastating as the sudden economic shutdowns first caused by the coronavirus in 2020. Russia is a transcontinental behemoth with 146 million people and a huge nuclear arsenal, as well as a key supplier of the oil, gas and raw materials that keep the world's factories running. But unlike China, which is a manufacturing powerhouse and intimately woven into intricate supply chains, Russia is a minor player in the global economy.

Italy, with half the people and fewer natural resources, has an economy that is twice the size. Poland exports more goods to the European Union than Russia.

''Russia is incredibly unimportant in the global economy except for oil and gas,'' said Jason Furman, a Harvard economist who was an adviser to President Barack Obama. ''It's basically a big gas station.''

Of course, a closed gas station can be crippling for those who depend on it. The result is that any economic damage will be unevenly spread, intense in some countries and industries and unnoticed in others.

Europe gets nearly 40 percent of its natural gas and 25 percent of its oil from Russia, and is likely to be walloped with spikes in heating and gas bills, which are already soaring. Natural gas reserves are at less than a third of capacity, with weeks of cold weather ahead, and European leaders have already accused Russia's president, Vladimir V. Putin, of reducing supplies to gain a political edge.

And then there are food prices, which have climbed to their highest level in more than a decade largely because of the pandemic's supply chain mess, according to a recent United Nations report. Russia is the world's largest supplier of wheat, and together with Ukraine, accounts for nearly a quarter of total global exports. For some countries, the dependence is much greater. That flow of grain makes up more than 70 percent of Egypt and Turkey's total wheat imports.

This will put further strain on Turkey, which is already in the middle of an economic crisis and struggling with inflation that is running close to 50 percent, with skyrocketing food, fuel and electricity prices.

And as usual, the burden falls heaviest on the most vulnerable. ''Poorer people spend a higher share of incomes on food and heating,'' said Ian Goldin, a professor of globalization and development at Oxford University.

Ukraine, long known as the ''breadbasket of Europe,'' actually sends more than 40 percent of its wheat and corn exports to the Middle East or Africa, where there are worries that further food shortages and price increases could stoke social unrest.

Lebanon, for example, which is experiencing one of the most devastating economic crises in more than a century, gets more than half of its wheat from Ukraine, which is also the world's largest exporter of seed oils like sunflower and rapeseed.

On Monday, the White House responded to Mr. Putin's decision to recognize the independence of two Russian-backed territories in the country's east by saying it would begin imposing limited sanctions on the so-called Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics. Jen Psaki, the White House press secretary, said Mr. Biden would soon issue an executive order prohibiting investment, trade and financing with people in those regions.

Analysts watching the unfolding conflict have mapped out a range of scenarios from mild to severe. The fallout on ***working-class*** families and Wall Street traders depends on how an invasion plays out: whether Russian troops stay near the border or attack the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv; whether the fighting lasts for days or months; what kind of Western sanctions are imposed; and whether Mr. Putin responds by withholding critical gas supplies from Europe or launching insidious cyberattacks.

''Think about it rolling out in stages,'' said Julia Friedlander, director of the economic statecraft initiative at the Atlantic Council. ''This is likely to play out as a slow motion drama.''

As became clear from the pandemic, minor interruptions in one region can generate major disruptions far away. Isolated shortages and price surges-- whether of gas, wheat, aluminum or nickel -- can snowball in a world still struggling to recover from the pandemic.

''You have to look at the backdrop against which this is coming,'' said Gregory Daco, chief economist for EY-Parthenon. ''There is high inflation, strained supply chains and uncertainty about what central banks are going to do and how insistent price rises are.''

The additional stresses may be relatively small in isolation, but they are piling on economies that are still recovering from the economic body blows inflicted by the pandemic.

What's also clear, Mr. Daco added, is that ''political uncertainty and volatility weigh on economic activity.''

That means an invasion could have a dual effect -- slowing economic activity and raising prices.

In the United States, the Federal Reserve is already confronting the highest inflation in 40 years, at 7.5 percent in January, and is expected to start raising interest rates next month. Higher energy prices set off by a conflict in Europe may be transitory but they could feed worries about a wage-price spiral.

''We could see a new burst of inflation,'' said Christopher Miller, a visiting fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and an assistant professor at Tufts University.

Also fueling inflation fears are possible shortages of essential metals like palladium, aluminum and nickel, creating another disruption to global supply chains already suffering from the pandemic, trucker blockades in Canada and shortages of semiconductors.

The price of palladium, for example, used in automotive exhaust systems, mobile phones and even dental fillings, has soared in recent weeks because of fears that Russia, the world's largest exporter of the metal, could be cut off from global markets. The price of nickel, used to make steel and electric car batteries, has also been jumping.

It's too early to gauge the precise impact of an armed conflict, said Lars Stenqvist, the chief technology officer of Volvo, the Swedish truck maker. But he added, ''It is a very, very serious thing.''

''We have a number of scenarios on the table and we are following the developments of the situation day by day,'' Mr. Stenqvist said Monday.

The West has taken steps to blunt the impact on Europe if Mr. Putin decides to retaliate. The United States has ramped up delivery of liquefied natural gas and asked other suppliers like Qatar to do the same.

The demand for oil might add momentum to negotiations to revive a deal to curb Iran's nuclear program. Iran, which is estimated to have as many as 80 million barrels of oil in storage, has been locked out of much of the world's markets since 2018, when President Donald J. Trump withdrew from the nuclear accord and reimposed sanctions.

Some of the sanctions against Russia that the Biden administration is considering, such as cutting off access to the system of international payments known as SWIFT or blocking companies from selling anything to Russia that contains American-made components, would hurt anyone who does business with Russia. But across the board, the United States is much less vulnerable than the European Union, which is Russia's largest trading partner.

Americans, as Mr. Biden has already warned, are likely to see higher gasoline prices. But because the United States is itself a large producer of natural gas, those price increases are not nearly as steep and as broad as elsewhere. And Europe has many more links to Russia and engages in more financial transactions -- including paying for the Russian gas.

Oil companies like Shell and Total have joint ventures in Russia, while BP boasts that it ''is one of the biggest foreign investors in Europe,'' with ties to the Russian oil company Rosneft. Airbus, the European aviation giant, gets titanium from Russia. And European banks, particularly those in Germany, France and Italy, have lent billions of dollars to Russian borrowers.

''Severe sanctions that hurt Russia painfully and comprehensively have potential to do huge damage to European customers,'' said Adam Tooze, director of the European Institute at Columbia University.

Depending on what happens, the most significant effects on the global economy may manifest themselves only over the long run.

One result would be to push Russia to have closer economic ties to China. The two nations recently negotiated a 30-year contract for Russia to supply gas to China through a new pipeline.

''Russia is likely to pivot all energy and commodity exports to China,'' said Carl Weinberg, chief economist at High Frequency Economics.

The crisis is also contributing to a reassessment of the global economy's structure and concerns about self-sufficiency. The pandemic has already highlighted the downsides of far-flung supply chains that rely on lean production.

Now Europe's dependence on Russian gas is spurring discussions about expanding energy sources, which could further sideline Russia's presence in the global economy.

''In the longer term, it's going to push Europe to diversify,'' said Jeffrey Schott, a senior fellow working on international trade policy at the Peterson Institute for International Economics. As for Russia, the real cost ''would be corrosive over time and really making it much more difficult to do business with Russian entities and deterring investment.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/21/business/economy/ukraine-russia-economy.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/21/business/economy/ukraine-russia-economy.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, an underground gas storage facility in Kasimov, east of Moscow. Russia supplies nearly 40 percent of Europe's natural gas and 25 percent of its oil. Left, Mykolaiv, a port in Ukraine. The country sends more than 40 percent of its wheat and corn exports to the Middle East or Africa. Ukraine is also the world's largest exporter of seed oils like sunflower and rapeseed. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREY RUDAKOV/BLOOMBERG

BRENDAN HOFFMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B3)

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2022

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[***Park Slope and Staten Island: An Unlikely Political Marriage***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64V1-K051-DXY4-X2BR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1675 words

**Byline:** Katie Glueck

**Highlight:** New congressional maps that merge conservative Staten Island with liberal Park Slope will aid Democratic efforts to win a Republican-held House seat in New York.

**Body**

New congressional maps that merge conservative Staten Island with liberal Park Slope will aid Democratic efforts to win a Republican-held House seat in New York.

At The Original Goodfella’s, a well-known Staten Island pizzeria where photographs of Republican politicians are prominently displayed, the news sank in painfully: This borough, a rare conservative outpost of New York City, was being tossed into [*a congressional district*](https://newyork.redistrictingandyou.org/?districtType=cd&amp;propA=current_2012&amp;propB=congress_latfor_20220202&amp;opacity=2&amp;selected=-74.122,40.582&amp;toggledlayers=counties,places#%26map=12.81/40.67173/-73.99456) with the liberal residents of Park Slope, Brooklyn.

“Park Slope is more of a younger crowd with yuppies, hipsters,” said Carlo D’Angelo, 28, a Trump supporter who, when asked about who won the 2020 presidential election, said, “Only the man in the sky, only God, knows.”

Staten Island was more “family-oriented and traditional,” he added, speaking near a framed display of a fork that ex-mayor Bill de Blasio, a Park Slope resident, [*scandalously used to eat pizza*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/11/nyregion/de-blasio-skewered-for-eating-pizza-with-utensils.html). “It’s two different, completely different, viewpoints.”

The feeling was mutual outside the [*Park Slope Food Coop*](https://www.foodcoop.com/mission/), the famously liberal Brooklyn grocery where social consciousness pervades every aisle, in a neighborhood that is home to many left-leaning families. Pamela Plunkett, 57, stood nearby, across the street from a meditation center, as she questioned how the wildly divergent politics and needs of residents in the new district would work.

“I hate to say it, they’re one of the five boroughs, but it’s almost like they’re an outlier,” she said of Staten Island, noting differences in attitudes around issues including politics and the pandemic. “That’s why I’m worried about being grouped in with them.”

The once-in-a-decade redistricting effort has created unusual congressional district lines all over the country, reflecting a partisan [*process*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/02/nyregion/redistricting-gerrymandering-ny.html) embraced by Republicans and Democrats alike. But perhaps no other district in New York City contains constituencies so clearly in opposition to each other as the reconstituted 11th, whose new lines are expected to better position the Democratic Party to seize a seat now held by [*Representative Nicole Malliotakis, the lone Republican*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/12/nyregion/nicole-malliotakis-defeat-max-rose.html) in the New York City delegation.

On Staten Island, the occasional “Thin Blue Line” flag in support of law enforcement flutters in spacious front yards of single-family homes, while in dense brownstone Brooklyn, “Black Lives Matter” signs have often dotted windows, reflecting national debates over both crime and police brutality. Voters on either side of the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge are often vocal about their political identities — but many liberal Brooklynites joined marches to protest the Trump presidency, while conservative Staten Islanders embraced him early, [*even*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/04/19/us/elections/new-york-city-republican-primary-results.html#11/40.6594/-74.0415)with other Republicans in the running in 2016.

“They put two communities together that have literally nothing in common other than they happen to all live in the same city,” said City Councilman David Carr, a Staten Island Republican. “In terms of values, in terms of interests, they couldn’t be further apart. And they’ve created a district that’s going to be permanently at war with itself.”

The new lines reflect [*an aggressive reconfiguration*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/30/nyregion/new-york-redistricting-congressional-map.html) of the state’s congressional districts [*led by*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/02/nyregion/redistricting-gerrymandering-ny.html) Democratic lawmakers, creating clearer opportunities to flip several House seats in this year’s midterm campaigns, as Democrats strain to maintain their congressional majority in a difficult political environment.

Before redistricting, the district was anchored in Staten Island and included parts of more conservative southern Brooklyn enclaves. Under the new lines, the district sweeps into many neighborhoods that are home to wealthy liberal voters and younger left-wing activists — though neither part of the district is monolithic: There are Staten Island Democrats and some Brooklyn conservatives, especially in the Bay Ridge area.

In 2020, the district supported Mr. Trump [*by about*](https://newyork.redistrictingandyou.org/?districtType=cd&amp;propA=current_2012&amp;propB=congress_latfor_20220202&amp;opacity=2&amp;selected=-74.122,40.582&amp;toggledlayers=counties,places#%26map=12.81/40.6633/-74.00455) 10 percentage points. If the new district lines were in place for the 2020 election, the district would have backed President Biden by roughly the same margin, according to data compiled by the City University of New York.

Ms. Malliotakis said the new lines seemed aimed at “silencing the voices of the current district, and tilting the scale to give whoever the Democratic nominee is an advantage.”

The Staten Island Republican Party dubbed redistricting plans “cancel culture,” an effort to “subvert the voices of Staten Islanders by tying our borough to de Blasio’s Park Slope.”

Democrats have defended the congressional maps as fair, while Republicans have [*filed a lawsuit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/04/nyregion/redistricting-lawsuit-gerrymandering-ny.html), which may face an uphill battle.

“Had we sought out people that voted the same way in order to keep them together, that would have been the definition of illegal gerrymandering,” said State Senator Michael Gianaris, a Democrat and leader of a task force that drew the lines.

“Maybe at the end of the day, this will have the effect of bringing people together,” he said.

That will be exceedingly difficult in the 11th, should the lines hold.

But whatever the evident governing difficulties, a fierce battle is unfolding to represent the district as Ms. Malliotakis, who has tied herself closely to Mr. Trump and [*voted against*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/08/nyregion/ny-lawmakers-trump.html) certifying the results of the 2020 election, runs for re-election. She also broke with her party to [*vote for*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/us/politics/republicans-backlash-infrastructure-bill.html) the infrastructure bill.

While candidates in many races face difficult balancing acts between appealing to the most die-hard partisans in a primary and achieving broader appeal in a general election, those tensions will be thrown into sharp relief in the 11th District.

“It certainly gives the Democratic nominee a very good chance,” said John Mollenkopf, director of the Center for Urban Research at the Graduate Center of CUNY, of the new district lines. “But that’s going to take a Democratic nominee who can appeal to the more conservative Democrats on Staten Island.”

On the Democratic side, the biggest open question had been whether Mr. de Blasio would run, an idea that sparked viscerally negative reactions on Staten Island. At Grant City Tavern, where the ceiling is designed to look like an American flag and a portrait of Mr. Trump hangs on the wall, one patron knocked over his drink at the mention of the former mayor.

He commissioned polling around the race, but [*took himself out of contention*](https://twitter.com/BilldeBlasio/status/1493704912902963209?s=20&amp;t=9kz2x2eHzLFODAVt6GgHtA) on Tuesday.

The most high-profile Democrat in the race is former Representative Max Rose, who won the earlier configuration of the district in 2018 and lost to Ms. Malliotakis in 2020. Mr. Rose, who grew up in Park Slope, had cast himself as more of a Staten Island Democrat with a brash personal style and relatively centrist politics, and some party officials see him as a strong general election fit in the new district.

But some previous positions — he was one of the last Democrats to support an impeachment inquiry into Mr. Trump and has [*noted areas of agreement with him*](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2020-election/rep-max-rose-fighting-his-life-nasty-house-race-n1243329); he [*has criticized*](https://www.politico.com/news/2020/10/17/max-rose-nyc-house-race-430005?nname=playbook&amp;nid=0000014f-1646-d88f-a1cf-5f46b7bd0000&amp;nrid=00000168-1513-dd8f-a5fd-1ddf3c250000&amp;nlid=630318) left-wing Democrats like Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and has rejected some sweeping left-leaning policy goals — may unnerve more progressive voters.

“Certainly I stand opposed to Medicare for All, I do not stand opposed to universal health care,” said Mr. Rose as he knocked on doors in Mariners Harbor, a more Democratic neighborhood where he earned a warm reception on a freezing recent evening. He still opposes the Green New Deal because of the scope of its ambitions, but “that doesn’t take away from the fact that I think we have got to get to a net-carbon neutral economy around 2035.”

After spending much of his last campaign [*distancing himself*](https://www.politico.com/news/2020/10/17/max-rose-nyc-house-race-430005?nname=playbook&amp;nid=0000014f-1646-d88f-a1cf-5f46b7bd0000&amp;nrid=00000168-1513-dd8f-a5fd-1ddf3c250000&amp;nlid=630318) from the national party, he is also calibrating that messaging. He said the Democratic Party brand is “toxic” in some parts of the country but was not eager to dwell on that subject, pivoting to his hope to be “bold and nonetheless unifying” through a focus on issues like universal child care and other investments in ***working-class*** Americans. He also cast the upcoming elections as a test of “the very essence of our democracy.”

Brittany Ramos DeBarros, who like Mr. Rose served in the military, is running to his left. She is hoping to energize diverse constituencies to vote in unusually high numbers across the district, and wants to build on recent left-wing local wins in places like Sunset Park and Park Slope.

“We feel really excited about welcoming new neighborhoods that have also had incredible progressive victories recently with other bold women of color,” she said. “We need a bold leader who is focused on the lived experiences of everyday people across the district because it is so diverse.”

Some Democratic officials expect that liberal residents of the district will be motivated to flip it regardless of who the nominee is — and for some voters, perceptions of general election viability may be a factor in the primary, too.

“Especially in these times, I think electability really, really matters,” said Jocelyn Baker, 47, a midwife from Sunset Park, standing outside the food co-op in Park Slope. Still, she extended a hand to new fellow constituents. “As much as I love my bubble, I don’t think it’s helpful for us to just stay in our bubbles and not be exposed to anything else.”

On Staten Island, Mr. Carr, the councilman, took a far dimmer view of the district’s contours.

“There’s no way a congressman of either party is going to be liked by the other half of the district no matter what they do,” he said. “You now have a district where, as soon as that person’s in office, the other half of the district is preparing to try to unseat them.”

PHOTOS: Staten Island, home to many Trump voters, will share a House seat with a liberal area of Brooklyn. (A1); Former Representative Max Rose, a centrist Democrat with a brash style, campaigned this month in Mariners Park in Staten Island. He won there in 2018 before the map changed. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Representative Nicole Malliotakis, a Staten Island Republican and a Trump supporter, is in a fierce battle for re-election. She won in 2020, but her district lines were reconfigured. (PHOTOGRAPH BY STEFANI REYNOLDS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2022

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[***Bitcoin Comes of Age; Jay Caspian Kang***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63XP-XXD1-JBG3-60PK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 25, 2021 Monday 17:03 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1395 words

**Byline:** Jay Caspian Kang

**Highlight:** What does it mean now that cryptocurrency has joined proper society?

**Body**

Bitcoin, which pushed past $66,000 last week, [*setting all-time price highs*](https://www.cnbc.com/2021/10/20/bitcoin-jumps-to-new-record-high-above-65000-after-landmark-us-etf-launch.html), has come a long way since January 2009, when a programmer with the pseudonym Satoshi Nakamoto introduced the cryptocurrency that would become a religion for some, a nuisance for others, and a looming threat to both the [*environment*](https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/why-bitcoin-is-bad-for-the-environment) and the [*financial markets*](https://blogs.imf.org/2021/10/01/crypto-boom-poses-new-challenges-to-financial-stability/). It’s always a bit of a fool’s errand to try to explain why cryptocurrency prices go up or down, but last week’s rally coincided with the [*stock market debut*](https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/19/investing/bitcoin-etf-proshares-bito/index.html) of the first Bitcoin-related exchange-traded fund available to American investors.

The push for a Bitcoin ETF has been going on for years. Most notably, Tyler and Cameron Winklevoss, the twins who were memorialized in “The Social Network,” tried to [*launch a cryptocurrency ETF*](https://www.cnbc.com/2018/07/26/winklevoss-twins-bitcoin-etf-rejected-by-sec.html) in 2018 and were denied by the Securities and Exchange Commission. The Winklevosses, who own the Gemini exchange, one of the most popular places where investors can buy and sell cryptocurrencies, believed that an ETF would legitimize Bitcoin and open up the opportunity for big money investors to boost the price.

The ETF was supposed to be Bitcoin’s debutante ball. The suitors, in this case, would be pension funds, investment banks and even retail investors who wanted a safer, friendlier way to cash in on cryptocurrency. Now that Bitcoin is finally taking the stage as a member of society, it’s worth asking whether this gambit will pay off and how it might change how we think about big, bad Bitcoin.

I started dabbling in Bitcoin in 2017, back when prices were somewhere around $3,000 a coin. (Disclosure: I own about 5 percent of one Bitcoin — each coin can be broken down infinitely.) The spirit around cryptocurrencies back then was far more anarchic and apocalyptic than it is today, which interested me because my own politics tend to run in the opposite direction. And I’m generally drawn to people with big, if sometimes stupid, ideas.

There were plans for [*Bitcoin utopias*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/01/technology/nevada-bitcoin-blockchain-society.html) in the deserts of Nevada, sovereignty movements by groups calling themselves “[*The United States of Bitcoin*](https://medium.com/@blockchainistpapers/the-united-states-of-bitcoin-fadc2d053b34),” and pages and pages of speculation on how the blockchain, the ledger-like technology that powers cryptocurrency, [*would quickly change every industry on the planet*](https://101blockchains.com/blockchain-change-the-world/#:~:text=Blockchain%20technology%20could%20change%20the,its%20process%20to%20new%20heights.). As with so many nascent communities, Bitcoin had evangelists and detractors. The book “[*The Bitcoin Standard*](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07BPM3GZQ/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?_encoding=UTF8&amp;btkr=1),” by Saifedean Ammous, took on sacred properties, like a Talmudic text. At the same time, the economist Nouriel Roubini repeatedly proclaimed that Bitcoin would go to zero and told Congress that it was the “[*mother or father of all scams*](https://www.cnbc.com/2018/10/11/roubini-bitcoin-is-mother-of-all-scams.html).”

In those years, there was also a growing divide between believers. The so-called Bitcoin maximalists supported the extreme libertarian principles of the [*Austrian School of Economics*](https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1n2txkw.8), full decentralization of economies and the end of what they called “[*fiat currency*](https://www.ft.com/content/5e5b2afb-c689-4faf-9b47-92c74fc07e66).” More pragmatic Bitcoin assimilationists, such as the Winklevosses, wanted to clean up cryptocurrencies and weed out the crazies, to get it in front of wealthy investors.

The maximalists would charge the assimilationists with selling out the entire point of the project, which I agree was a fair critique. Bitcoin started as a way to maintain anonymity from central banks and blossomed into a project to create a separate world free from any government intervention such as, say, taxes. If you simply made it into another security that could be bought and traded like Apple stock, what would be the point?

The assimilationists won, as they usually do in these battles between ideology and economic expediency. Bitcoin maximalism still exists, but it’s already seen as an unfortunate and ultimately divisive relic by many in the cryptocurrency space. Most of the talk about blockchaining the world has gone away.

The last time cryptocurrency felt actually threatening or destabilizing to the world order came in 2019, when Facebook [*announced*](https://techcrunch.com/2019/06/18/facebook-libra/)plans to launch Libra, a coin that could be used across its multinational platform. The implications for this on international finance — think of the currency disruption that could take place if wealthy people in developing countries suddenly converted their fortunes into a Facebook coin — were clear from the start. Libra was [*rejected by the Group of 7*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-g7-stablecoin/facebooks-libra-must-not-start-until-properly-regulated-g7-draft-idUSKBN26X21I), the coalition of the seven most powerful countries in the world.

Since then, things have been pretty tame. In an earlier [*edition*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/20/opinion/NFT-crypto-art.html)of this newsletter, I wrote about non-fungible tokens and how we should think of them as online communes and not only as get-rich-quick schemes. The mix of shared purpose and alienation in NFT online communities came, in part, from earlier iterations of Bitcoiners, who, aside from spreading their gospel, would proselytize about everything from food choices (for a while, a whole bunch of Bitcoin maximalists I know ate only meat) to politics. None of this was particularly pretty, but it did cohere into something of a vision for the world.

The underlying question back then was whether the ideology of Bitcoin was central to its economic viability. Did trying to overthrow the existing order make the price go up or down?

That question, at least for now, seems to have been answered. Bitcoin’s market cap now weighs in at over [*$1 trillion*](https://coinmarketcap.com/), and while it’s hard to tell how this ETF will continue to affect the market, it’s also become increasingly unclear what Bitcoin is supposed to do. Newer projects such as “[*decentralized finance*](https://www.cnbc.com/2021/06/18/whats-defi-crypto-based-decentralized-finance-explained.html)” and NFTs have tenuously taken over Bitcoin’s role as chief disrupter, faintly echoing the call to leave the central banks and the traditional ways of life. (They do not, however, ask people to move to a lawless patch of the Nevada desert.) This is ultimately a good thing, but it does inspire the question: If Bitcoin isn’t about taking power away from central banks and governments, then what, exactly, is it?

Community colleges lose again

Last Wednesday, the [*news*](https://www.npr.org/2021/10/20/1047609415/white-house-drops-free-community-college-from-its-spending-bill)came out that the White House would be cutting free community college from its highly contested economic plan. I’ve written [*about standardized*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/13/opinion/SAT-universities-admissions.html) testing and its effects on diversity efforts in the University of California system in the past. What’s clear to me is that the problem with equity in the system isn’t really because of testing, but has to do with overall exclusivity. As long as admissions rates stay low, diversity will continue to be a problem, regardless of whether you require testing.

My solution to this problem is to expand significantly the community college transfer program. This would offer students from more ***working-class*** backgrounds, who may not be able to afford four years at the university, or who, perhaps in some instances, suffered through instability that made it harder to do well in high school, a better shot at attending the state’s pre-eminent institutions.

Higher education has long been an unsustainable mess. Tuitions are too high, and the admission rates at many state schools are too low, which then forces high school students to focus on competing with one another. Standardized tests have long been villainized as a major culprit, but those who look only at the means of competition oftentimes fail to see the larger picture.

The bigger problem is that there aren’t enough paths into these schools, which, in turn, forces too many students to try to push through a narrow doorway. If state-run higher education institutions actually want to have a socioeconomically and racially diverse student body, which includes students who may not have the wherewithal to join the academic death march, they should reserve a significant portion of their student body for students who want to transfer in from community colleges in their state.

Biden’s plan would not have solved all that ails higher education, but it shouldn’t surprise anyone that community colleges and their students would be first up to the budget chopping block — they are always an afterthought in any conversations about higher education. Now the focus is likely to shift toward how to [*assist*](https://www.ncan.org/news/567562/President-Biden-Proposes-Historic-Pell-Grant-Increase-in-First-Budget.htm)students attending four-year schools. This is a worthy cause, but not one that radically opens up the possibilities for what higher education could look like in the future.

Have feedback? Send a note to [*kang-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:kang-newsletter@nytimes.com).

Jay Caspian Kang ([*@jaycaspiankang*](https://twitter.com/jaycaspiankang?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)), a writer for Opinion and The New York Times Magazine, is the author of “The Loneliest Americans.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alberto Miranda FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 25, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Yellen Steers Economy With Brooklyn on Her Mind***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:630F-5F21-JBG3-63GT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 24, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1082 words

**Byline:** By Alan Rappeport

**Body**

The Treasury secretary's economic philosophy was shaped by her youth in Bay Ridge.

When Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen thinks about restoring the millions of jobs lost to the pandemic and making the economy more equitable, her mind sometimes turns to a place that shaped her views: Bay Ridge, Brooklyn.

The daughter of a doctor, Ms. Yellen, 74, grew up in the shadow of the Brooklyn waterfront and watched as longshoremen and laborers who were struggling with health problems and lost jobs came to her father's office on the bottom floor of their family's brownstone. Ms. Yellen, who would sit on her stoop and listen to their stories, became interested in how economics could help.

On Wednesday, Ms. Yellen recalled those days during a virtual keynote address to new graduates of Fort Hamilton High School, where she was valedictorian of the class of 1963. It was in her old neighborhood, she said, where she learned to measure success through the lens of public service.

''The lesson Bay Ridge taught us was that a happy and successful life -- like a happy, successful community -- depends not just on others' love and respect for you but, even more, on your love and respect for them,'' Ms. Yellen told the students in a recorded speech that was streamed to their smartphones.

In a brief interview ahead of the graduation, Ms. Yellen explained how growing up in a ***working-class*** enclave of Brooklyn had been formative.

''One of the reasons I became an economist, and ended up focusing on the labor market and on employment and things like that, is because of what we saw growing up, particularly with my father's patients,'' Ms. Yellen said. ''The ups and downs in the economy, people would lose jobs, and there were a lot of stories growing up of problems that families had.''

Back then, immigrants from Scandinavia, Ireland and Italy populated the neighborhood that is encircled by the Belt Parkway on the west and the Gowanus Expressway on the east. These days the demographics have shifted to include more Hispanics and immigrants from China, Russia, Greece and the Middle East.

The pandemic hit many of them hard.

Ms. Yellen explained that before the 1980s, fortunes tended to rise more or less with the broader economic tides. That has shifted in recent decades as structural problems like access to quality education, health care and child care helped perpetuate economic inequalities. The downside of that has been felt acutely in areas where immigrants and minorities live.

''Here you have a pandemic that has disproportionately fallen on low-income workers and minorities who are struggling anyhow in this economy, and knowing what unemployment is like, which is really what I've been thinking about, more or less my whole life,'' Ms. Yellen said. ''Of course it immediately focused us on wanting to help, intervening in ways that would enable people to get back on their feet, get the economy operating again and creating jobs as rapidly as possible.''

The sentiment comes at a pivotal moment in the early days of Ms. Yellen's tenure as Treasury secretary. The Biden administration is engaged in talks with Republicans over the fate of its $4 trillion jobs and infrastructure proposals, Ms. Yellen is in the midst of fraught international negotiations over an overhaul of the global tax system, and inflation is looming as a threat to the economic recovery.

Ms. Yellen served as chair of the Federal Reserve from 2014 to 2018 and has faced criticism for exacerbating some of the economic trends that she laments. Beginning in 2015, she oversaw a series of rate increases that were historically slow, but that many economists have come to see as premature. Higher rates may have taken some momentum out of the economy, making for a slower job market rebound and weaker-than-necessary wage gains, especially at the bottom of the income scale.

At the same time, some conservatives have said the Fed's low-rate policies exacerbate wealth inequality, a characterization that former central bank officials including Ben S. Bernanke dispute.

After leaving the Fed, Ms. Yellen earned millions of dollars making paid speeches to the kinds of financial firms that she says should pay more in taxes.

Ms. Yellen's parents lived through the Great Depression, but her youth was comfortable, studded with academic accolades and intellectual hobbies, including a rock collection. She would take 5-cent ferry rides to Staten Island to play in Clove Lakes Park with friends. A trip to the American Museum of Natural History with her brother sparked an interest in gems. And in her junior year of high school, Ms. Yellen took a geology course on Saturdays and then would meet up with friends around New York City to participate in a rock collection club.

Although there has been speculation that Ms. Yellen is also an avid stamp collector, the Treasury secretary said such rumors were ''hooey.'' In fact, she says, she has been keeping the collection of her late mother in a safe deposit box for many years.

Despite her early interest in economics, Ms. Yellen told the class of 2021 that her passion in high school had actually been journalism. As a reporter for The Pilot, the Fort Hamilton High School newspaper, she covered the construction of the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge and helped uncover Bay Ridge's forgotten Revolutionary War cemetery. A trove of clippings from the newspaper unearthed by The New York Times in 2013 revealed that she once penned an absurdist column on current affairs called ''Yellen Around.''

At the graduation ceremony, she told the students that journalism had taught her to embrace assignments that at the time seemed small. The lesson was helpful when she started a new career at the Fed as a policymaker after being denied tenure at Harvard University -- a blow to someone who was named ''class scholar'' by the yearbook editors at Fort Hamilton High School.

''And my previous disappointment vanished from my mind,'' Ms. Yellen said. ''I had discovered a new joy.''

These days, Ms. Yellen has hero status at Fort Hamilton High School, which was named after a military installation that honors Alexander Hamilton, the first Treasury secretary.

''She is our most famous graduate,'' said Kaye Houlihan, the school's principal, adding that Ms. Yellen's name often comes up in the school's economics classes and as an example of where a Fort Hamilton education can lead.

Jeanna Smialek contributed reporting.Jeanna Smialek contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/us/politics/yellen-brooklyn-commencement.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/us/politics/yellen-brooklyn-commencement.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Janet Yellen's photo in the 1963 yearbook of Fort Hamilton High in Bay Ridge. (B1)

New graduates of Fort Hamilton High School, where Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen was valedictorian in 1963. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JONAH MARKOWITZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B5)

**Load-Date:** June 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A Renegade Pop Music Genre Challenges the Old Guard***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64JJ-K7F1-DXY4-X4FJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 17, 2022 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1552 words

**Byline:** By Mona El-Naggar

**Body**

Leaders of a musicians' licensing group are trying to curb mahraganat, a bold genre wildly popular with young people. It is not clear if they can.

CAIRO -- The song starts out like standard fare for Egyptian pop music: A secret infatuation between two young neighbors who, unable to marry, sneak flirtatious glances at each other and commit their hearts in a bittersweet dance of longing and waiting.

But then the lyrics take a radical turn.

''If you leave me,'' blasts the singer, Hassan Shakosh, ''I'll be lost and gone, drinking alcohol and smoking hash.''

The song, ''The Neighbors' Daughter,'' has become a giant hit, garnering more than a half- billion views of its video on YouTube alone and catapulting Mr. Shakosh to stardom. But the explicit reference to drugs and booze, culturally prohibited substances in Egypt, has made the song, released in 2019, a lightning rod in a culture war over what is an acceptable face and subject matter for popular music and who gets to decide.

The battle, which pits Egypt's cultural establishment against a renegade musical genre embraced by millions of young Egyptians, has heated up recently after the organization that licenses musicians barred at least 19 young artists from singing and performing in Egypt.

The organization, the Egyptian Musicians' Syndicate, accused Mr. Shakosh and other singers of the genre, known as mahraganat, of normalizing, and thus encouraging, decadent behavior, of misrepresenting Egypt and of spoiling public taste.

''They are creating a chaotic movement in the country,'' said Tarek Mortada, the spokesman for the syndicate, a professional union that issues permits for artists to perform onstage and that while technically not an arm of the state, is governed by state law and its budget is supervised by the state. ''What we're confronting right now is the face of depravity and regression.''

The barred singers have been iced out of clubs, concerts and weddings. Some have continued to perform abroad or at private parties, but they have had to say no to advertising deals and other income opportunities.

The syndicate's stance has also cast a pall over Egypt's cultural scene, sending a strong message that artists are not free agents and must still toe restrictive lines set by civil and state institutions. The musicians see the syndicate as an outmoded entity desperately clinging to a strictly curated vision and image of Egyptian culture that is smashing against an inevitable wave of youth-driven change.

''They can't get themselves to be convinced that we're here to stay,'' said Ibrahim Soliman, 33, Mr. Shakosh's manager and childhood friend. ''How can you say someone like Shakosh misrepresents Egypt when his songs are being heard and shared by the entire country?''

Fans were incensed. One meme depicted the leader of the syndicate, a pop singer of love classics from the 1970s, ordering people to stop singing in the bathroom.

The battle mirrors cultural conflicts across the region where autocratic governments in socially conservative countries have tried to censor any expression that challenges traditional mores. For example, Iran has arrested teenage girls who posted videos of themselves dancing, which is a crime there. And in 2020, Northwestern University in Qatar called off a concert by a Lebanese indie rock band whose lead singer is openly gay.

But online streaming and social media platforms have poked giant holes in that effort, allowing artists to bypass state-sanctioned media, like television and record companies, and reach a generation of new fans hungry for what they see as more authentic and relevant content.

Iran's draconian restrictions on unacceptable music have produced a flourishing underground rock and hip-hop scene. The question facing Egypt is who now has the power to regulate matters of taste -- the 12 men and one woman who run the syndicate, or the millions of fans who have been streaming and downloading mahraganat.

Mahraganat first rose out of the dense, rowdy ***working-class*** neighborhoods of Cairo more than a decade ago and is still generally made in low-tech home studios, often with no more equipment than a cheap microphone and pirated software.

The raw, straight-talking genre -- with blunt lyrics about love, sex, power and poverty -- mirrors the experience and culture of a broad section of the disenfranchised youth who live in those districts set to a danceable, throbbing beat.

But its catchy rhymes and electronic rhythms quickly went mainstream and now echo from the glamorous wedding ballrooms of Egypt's French-speaking elite to exclusive nightclubs in Mediterranean resorts to concert halls in oil-rich Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

''Mahraganat is a true representation of this moment in time, of globalization and information technology, and of social media in directing our tastes,'' said Sayed Mahmoud, a culture writer and former editor of a weekly newspaper called ''Alkahera'' issued by the Ministry of Culture. ''If you remove the reference to drugs and alcohol, does it mean they don't exist? The songs represent real life and real culture.''

They are certainly more direct, avoiding the sanitized euphemisms and poetic hints of sexuality that characterize traditional lyrics.

''We use the words that are close to our tongue, without embellishing or beautifying, and it reaches people,'' said Islam Ramadan, who goes by the name DJ Saso, the 27-year-old producer of Mr. Shakosh's blockbuster hit.

Many lawyers and experts say the syndicate has no legal right to ban artists, insisting that Egypt's Constitution explicitly protects creative liberty. But these arguments seem academic in the authoritarian state of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, which has stifled freedom of speech, tightened control on the media and passed laws to help monitor and criminalize so-called immoral behavior on the internet.

The syndicate's executive members have adamantly defended their move, arguing that a key part of their job is to safeguard the profession against inferior work that they say is made by uncultured impostors who tarnish the image of the country.

And government authorities have reinforced the message.

In 2017, a special division of the police that targets moral crimes arrested the makers of a mahraganat song, and promised to continue searching for work that ''presents offensive content for the Egyptian viewer or contains sexual insinuations.''

In 2020, after a video circulated showing dozens of students at an all-girls high school singing along to ''The Neighbors' Daughter,'' the Ministry of Education warned schools against the ''noticeable'' spread of songs that incite ''bad behavior.''

A short time later, the minister of youth and sports vowed to ''combat depravity'' by banning mahraganat music from being played in athletic arenas and sports facilities.

The head of the syndicate, Hany Shaker, defended the ban on a late-night television show, saying, ''We can't be in the era of Sisi and allow this to be the leading art.''

So far, the syndicate claims to be winning the fight.

''We have in fact stopped them because they can't get onstage in Egypt,'' said Mr. Mortada, the organization's spokesman, adding that it went so far as to ask YouTube to remove videos of the banned singers. It has not received a response from YouTube, he said.

But who will win in the long run remains to be seen.

The syndicate's very structure smacks of a bygone era. To be admitted and allowed to sing and perform onstage, an artist must pass a test that includes a classical singing audition. The test is anathema to a genre that relies on autotune and prioritizes rhythm and flow over melody.

While the syndicate's efforts may be keeping mahraganat out of clubs and concert halls, the music has never stopped.

Mr. Shakosh's popularity continues to rise. He has more than six million followers on Facebook and over four million on Instagram and TikTok, and his music videos have exceeded two billion views on YouTube.

He is one of the Arab world's leading performers. Since he was barred, he has performed in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Iraq, and ''The Neighbors' Daughter'' has become one of the biggest Arabic hits to date.

''It's not the same old love songs,'' said Yasmine el-Assal, a 41-year-old bank executive, after attending one of Mr. Shakosh's concerts before the ban. ''His stage presence, the music, the vibe, it's fresh and it's all about having fun.''

Mr. Shakosh would not agree to be interviewed, preferring to keep a low profile, his manager said, rather than to appear to publicly challenge the authorities. The ban has been harder on other artists, many of whom do not have the wherewithal or the international profile to tour abroad.

They have mostly kept quiet, refusing to make statements that they fear could ruffle more feathers.

Despite the squeeze, however, many are confident that their music falls beyond the grip of any single authority or government.

Kareem Gaber, a 23-year-old experimental music producer known by the stage name El Waili, is still burning tracks, sitting in his bedroom with a twin mattress on the floor, bare walls and his instrument, a personal computer with $100 MIDI keyboard.

''Mahraganat taught us that you can do something new,'' he said, ''and it will be heard.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/16/world/middleeast/egypt-mahraganat-music.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/16/world/middleeast/egypt-mahraganat-music.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Mahraganat music stoked revelry at a bachelor party in 2019 in Cairo, where the genre arose more than a decade ago. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MOHAMED HOSSAM/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

Left, Hany Shaker, head of the Egyptian Musicians' Syndicate, center, in 2019. The syndicate has curbed mahraganat singers like Hassan Shakos, right, whose hit song ''The Neighbors' Daughter'' makes references to drugs and alcohol. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAHMOUD AHMED/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK

HASSAN SHAKOSH, VIA YOUTUBE)

**Load-Date:** January 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[***A Ban on 19 Singers in Egypt Tests the Old Guard’s Power***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64JD-0921-DXY4-X476-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 16, 2022 Sunday 14:35 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; middleeast

**Length:** 1622 words

**Byline:** Mona El-Naggar

**Highlight:** Leaders of a musicians’ licensing group are trying to curb mahraganat, a bold genre wildly popular with young people. It is not clear if they can.

**Body**

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Audio produced by Parin Behrooz.

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**Load-Date:** June 22, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Omicron, Instagram, Great Performers: Your Wednesday Evening Briefing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6484-5XD1-DXY4-X2H2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 8, 2021 Wednesday 17:33 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1407 words

**Byline:** Remy Tumin

**Highlight:** Here’s what you need to know at the end of the day.

**Body**

Here’s what you need to know at the end of the day.

(Want to get this newsletter in your inbox? Here’s [*the sign-up*](http://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/nyt-now-evening-briefing?module=inline).)

Good evening. Here’s the latest at the end of Wednesday.

1. Pfizer and BioNTech said booster shots of their vaccine offer significant protection against the Omicron variant.

Blood tests from people who received two doses [*had much lower antibody levels*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/08/world/omicron-variant-covid/pfizer-says-blood-samples-showed-a-third-dose-of-its-vaccine-provides-significant-protection-against-omicron) against the coronavirus variant compared with an earlier version of the virus, and “may not be sufficient to protect against infection,” the companies said.

Blood samples obtained from people one month after they received a booster shot showed neutralizing antibodies against Omicron, comparable to the levels of antibodies against a previous version of the virus after two doses, the companies said.

The laboratory tests cannot determine for sure how the vaccines will perform in the real world, but the results seem to underscore the importance of booster shots. A study out of South Africa suggested that Omicron might cause more breakthrough infections but [*not necessarily more severe illness*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/health/omicron-variant-pfizer-vaccine.html).

Separately, a new study found that [*the virus infects fat cells and immune cells within body fat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/health/covid-fat-obesity.html), which may help explain why people who are overweight have been at higher risk of severe illness from Covid.

2. President Biden ordered that federal vehicles and buildings use renewable energy, with the goal of making the government carbon neutral by 2050.

[*In a series of executive orders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/climate/biden-government-carbon-neutral.html), Biden directed the government to power its 300,000 buildings by wind, solar or other carbon-free electricity by 2050 and stop buying gasoline-powered vehicles by 2035. The government currently operates 600,000 cars and trucks.

The move is just one piece of Biden’s climate plan, which now has the backing of unions representing electricians and steelworkers. But at least one group of workers appears less enthusiastic: [*coal workers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/business/economy/coal-miners-unions-climate.html), who continue to regard clean-energy jobs as a major risk to their standard of living.

3. Lawmakers grilled the head of Instagram over the social media app’s reported harms to young users.

Adam Mosseri was the highest-ranking executive from Meta, the parent company of Instagram, to [*testify before Congress*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/technology/adam-mosseri-instagram-senate.html) after a whistle-blower leaked internal research that said Instagram had a toxic effect on some teenagers. Mosseri said Instagram has a positive role in the lives of teenagers, helping young users establish connections during a difficult time. Lawmakers didn’t buy it.

“Parents are asking, what is Congress doing to protect our kids and the resounding bipartisan message from this committee is that legislation is coming,” Senator Richard Blumental said. “We can’t rely on self-policing.”

Also on Capitol Hill, the chief executives of six cryptocurrency companies testified before the House Financial Services Committee [*about the promises and perils of crypto*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/business/house-financial-services-crypto.html).

4. The Merkel era is over.

Angela Merkel handed over the chancellery to Olaf Scholz, [*beginning a new chapter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/world/europe/germany-merkel-scholz-chancellor-government.html) for Germany. Scholz will lead the first center-left government in 16 years and will be in the difficult position of living up to the high expectations set by Merkel.

Several crises demand his immediate attention, chief among them the pandemic and a possible Russian military invasion of Ukraine. Scholz is also working to [*win back a* ***working-class*** *base*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/08/world/germany-scholz-merkel/can-olaf-scholz-win-back-a-working-class-base).

Under Merkel, Germany became Europe’s leading power for the first time in modern history. We looked at [*Merkel’s tenure in photos*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/08/world/germany-scholz-merkel/in-pictures-angela-merkels-tenure-through-the-years). In her farewell remarks, Merkel called the chancellorship “one of the most beautiful duties there are.”

5. A group of lawyers defending rioters in the Jan. 6 attack is planning to make an audacious legal claim: self-defense.

With the first trials connected to the riot set to begin early next year, some lawyers intend to argue that police officers [*used excessive force*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/us/politics/jan-6-riot-police-brutality-defense.html) while defending the Capitol from a group of Trump supporters and that their clients merely responded. The approach has gathered steam in recent weeks as defense lawyers reviewed thousands of hours of videos of the attack.

A House panel investigating the attack will move forward with a criminal contempt of Congress referral [*against Mark Meadows*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/us/mark-meadows-jan-6-contempt.html), Donald Trump’s former chief of staff, after he refused to appear for a scheduled deposition.

6. China silenced the tennis star Peng Shuai in minutes. But Beijing’s top-down strategy has stumbled.

Twenty minutes was all it took to mobilize China’s censors after Peng accused a former vice premier of sexual assault. They got help from a familiar resource: a big network of bots.

A joint investigation from The Times and ProPublica [*found 97 fake accounts*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/08/world/asia/peng-shuai-china-censorship.html) that amplified Chinese state media’s messaging about Peng, who had disappeared from public life. Some footage showing Peng came across as heavily scripted, and failed to convince Beijing’s critics.

Separately, Britain, Australia and Canada were the latest countries to join the U.S. in [*pulling their top officials from the 2022 Beijing Olympics*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/world/europe/uk-china-olympics-diplomatic-boycott.html) to protest human rights abuses.

7. Manatees, threatened with extinction, will get some help: food.

As manatee deaths spike and Florida rescue centers fill up with manatees so malnourished that they need medical intervention, federal and state wildlife officials are trying something new: [*They will provide food*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/climate/manatees-florida-feeding.html) for hundreds of manatees at a location on the state’s east coast in an urgent effort to help the mammals survive the winter.

Scientists have found that feeding wild animals can sometimes do more harm than good, but in this case, an “unprecedented event is worth unprecedented actions,” one official said. Statewide, more than 1,000 manatees have died this year — a record. The deaths have been linked to the loss of sea grass, killed off by algae blooms fueled largely by human waste and fertilizer runoff.

8. This year’s best actors showed us why Hollywood still matters.

That’s [*the conclusion from our film critic A.O. Scott*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/magazine/great-performers.html) after making the selection for the Great Performers, an annual celebration of movie stars whose presence he couldn’t shake. “The illusion they create isn’t that they really are who they are playing,” Scott writes, “but rather that, whoever they are, we know them.”

Among this year’s 14 greats are Kristen Stewart, Benedict Cumberbatch, Ruth Negga, Denzel Washington and Will Smith. [*See the full list*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/07/magazine/best-actors.html?).

Scott also reviewed [*Steven Spielberg’s remake of “West Side Story,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/movies/west-side-story-review.html) in which the director and his team rediscovered the “breathing, thrilling essence” of a classic.

9. Roger Hargreaves’s 8-year-old son once asked him what a tickle looked like. “Mr. Tickle” and nearly 100 silly, messy, topsy-turvy characters followed suit.

The beloved children’s series, Mr. Men Little Miss, stands the test of time 50 years later. Book experts say that the key to its longevity is the straightforward way the characters personify emotion and behavior, and their Pop Art visual appeal. [*We looked back at the series*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/books/mr-men-little-miss-books.html).

Also from Books: We have reviews of [*“Accidental Gods” by Anna Della Subin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/books/review-accidental-gods-anna-della-subin.html), about “men unwittingly turned divine,” including Julius Caesar, Gandhi and Douglas MacArthur, and Amanda Gorman’s poetry collection, [*“Call Us What We Carry,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/books/review-call-us-what-we-carry-amanda-gorman.html) with references ranging from “Ghostbusters” to Shakespeare.

10. And finally, an extra, extra, extra large Christmas sweater.

The replica Tyrannosaurus rex at the Natural History Museum in London often startles visitors with its roaring sound effects. But the animatronic dinosaur was in merrier spirits this week: A British company [*made a giant holiday sweater for the T. rex*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/world/europe/t-rex-christmas-jumper-natural-history-museum.html), replete with Christmas trees and snowflakes.

It took about 100 hours to knit the dinosaur-sized turtleneck, which fits snuggly around its wide upper body and tapers into sleeves short enough to encircle the dinosaur’s wee arms. Pulling the turtleneck over its head proved difficult and designers had to add a zipper to the sweater’s back.

Have a festive night.

Bryan Denton compiled photos for this briefing.

Your Evening Briefing is posted at 6 p.m. Eastern.

Want to catch up on past briefings? [*You can browse them here*](https://www.nytimes.com/series/us-evening-briefing).

What did you like? What do you want to see here? Let us know at [*briefing@nytimes.com*](mailto:briefing@nytimes.com?subject=Evening%20Briefing%20Feedback).

Here are [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini) and [*Spelling Bee*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee). If you’re in the mood to play more, [*find all our games here*](https://www.nytimes.com/games).

Bryan Denton compiled photos for this briefing.

PHOTO: A nurse prepares Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines in McMinnville, Ore., in October. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alisha Jucevic for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 8, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Towers Rise Over London's Brick Lane, Clouding Its Future***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64JC-HC91-DXY4-X3S3-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Aina J. Khan

**Body**

Luxury developments and rising rents have ignited concerns about gentrification and displacement in a district that has long been a sanctuary for minority communities.

LONDON -- Ornate English and Bengali typography adorns the signs of Taj Stores, one of the oldest Bangladeshi-run supermarkets in the Brick Lane neighborhood of East London. The signs evoke a part of the area's past, when it became known as ''Banglatown,'' and eventually home to the largest Bangladeshi community in Britain.

But Brick Lane's future is looking very uncertain, said Jamal Khalique, standing inside a supermarket opened in 1936 by his great-uncle and now run by Mr. Khalique and his two brothers.

Modern office buildings of glass and steel and a cluster of apartments and cranes tower above the skyline. New coffee shops, restaurants, food markets and hotels appear in the neighborhood each year. According to one study, the borough of Tower Hamlets, which contains Brick Lane, had the most gentrification in London from 2010 to 2016.

In September, a borough committee approved plans -- under discussion for five years -- to build a five-story shopping mall in and around a disused parking lot beside a former brewery complex that houses independent shops, galleries, markets, bars and restaurants.

The project would include brand-name chain stores, office spaces and a public square.

Like many Brick Lane residents, Mr. Khalique is ambivalent about the development. Initially, he was not opposed. ''I've seen a hell of a change from a deprived, dirty area, to a trendy, diversified, multicultural area,'' said Mr. Khalique, 50.

But now he worries that the new shopping center will undermine the area's architectural character by adding glass features amid the weathered brick, and will siphon customers from long-established stores. ''It will really kill small, independent businesses,'' he said.

In a statement, Zeloof Partnership, which owns the brewery site and a handful of other nearby properties, said the new center would create several hundred jobs, mostly for local people. Its design was consistent with the look of the area and did not involve demolishing buildings, the statement said.

It added that a fixed discount for rent would be offered to a select number of independent businesses currently operating from the brewery.

The company said there was no firm date yet for when construction would start or when the new center would open.

The plans have met fierce resistance from some local residents and campaigners.

The district's member of Parliament, Rushanara Ali of the opposition Labour Party, said residents had expressed concerns about the ''limited concessions'' made by the developers, adding that the Conservative government had reduced ''local powers and accountability to local communities'' over development.

Opponents of the development also argue that it could cause rents and housing prices to rise in what has long been a ***working-class*** area.

In December 2020, a ''Save Brick Lane'' campaign gained widespread attention online, in part through the participation of Nijjor Manush, a British Bangladeshi activist group. The borough council received more than 7,000 letters of objection, though only several hundred were from local residents, a sign of what a point of contention the proposed development had become beyond just Brick Lane.

In September last year, soon after Zeloof's plans were approved, campaigners and residents marched in protest, unfurling ''Save Brick Lane'' banners behind pallbearers carrying an empty coffin to represent what they describe as the corrosive effects of gentrification.

Still, not everyone is opposed to the plans.

''Brick Lane was dying a long time ago,'' said Shams Uddin, 62, who arrived in the area from Bangladesh in 1976 and has been the proprietor of Monsoon, one of the many Bangladeshi-run curry restaurants that once flourished in the neighborhood, since 1999.

Indeed, in the past 15 years, 62 percent of Brick Lane's curry restaurants have closed because of rising rent, difficulties obtaining visas for new chefs and a lack of government support, according to a study by Runnymede Trust, a research institute focusing on racial equality.

Mr. Uddin said that international travel restrictions imposed by the pandemic, the chilling effect of Brexit and the opening of franchises in a historic market area nearby had deterred customers from visiting. In this environment, he said, the new shopping center could lift up the waning businesses around it.

''When customers finish their business with the shopping center, they may come to my restaurant,'' he said. ''This is a good thing for our business.''

The changing face of Brick Lane is startling to many longtime residents who remember the many empty properties in London's East End five decades ago.

''This area had been abandoned,'' said Dan Cruickshank, a historian and member of the Spitalfields Trust, a local heritage and conservation group.

When he bought his home in Spitalfields in the 1970s -- a property that had stood empty for more than 10 years -- Mr. Cruickshank said he struggled to secure a mortgage. East London, he said, was ''deemed dark, dangerous, remote and to be avoided'' by mortgage lenders and property developers.

Now, in what Mr. Cruickshank derides as a ''peculiar case of gentrification,'' homes in Brick Lane have acquired a Midas touch. Average property prices in the neighborhood have tripled in little over a decade, according to real estate agents' collations of government data, with some soaring over millions of dollars.

With the average home in London costing nearly 12 times the average salary in Britain, affordable housing options are scarce.

For centuries, Brick Lane has been a sanctuary for minority communities: Huguenot silk weavers who fled religious persecution in 17th-century France, Ashkenazi Jews escaping antisemitism and pogroms in Eastern Europe, and then Bangladeshi Muslims in the 1970s, during Bangladesh's fight for independence from Pakistan and the ensuing violence. Since the 1990s, it has become a symbol of multicultural London, celebrated in novels, memoirs, movies and museum exhibits.

In the 1970s, Bangladeshis were drawn to Brick Lane by cheap places to live and abundant work opportunities in the textile industry.

But the arrivals were greeted by discriminatory housing policies and occasional racist violence from followers of the National Front -- a far-right British political party with headquarters nearby. Racists smeared swastikas and ''KKK'' on some buildings. Mr. Khalique, the grocery store owner, said he was permanently scarred on his right leg when he was attacked in his youth by a dog belonging to a National Front supporter.

Hundreds of Bangladeshi families squatted in empty properties in defiance of the attacks -- squatting was not then a criminal offense in England -- while demanding better housing options.

Among those families was Halima Begum's. For years, as a child, she lived in a derelict building marked for demolition until her father, a factory worker, broke into an abandoned flat close to Brick Lane. Ms. Begum lived there until she left for college.

Now the director of Runnymede Trust, Ms. Begum has witnessed Brick Lane's transformation into what she described as a ''tale of two cities,'' where wealthy workers from the neighboring financial district live in an area with what the charity Trust for London says are the capital's highest child poverty rates.

Overcrowding is rampant in Tower Hamlets, where more than 20,000 applicants await low-income housing. Opponents of the shopping center point out that the plans do not include any social housing.

''How on earth would British Bangladeshi communities who are experiencing significant poverty be able to maintain a lifestyle where this area develops into Manhattan?'' she said, citing the gentrification of the East Village in New York City in the 1980s. ''The way in which we regenerate has to be more inclusive.''

Occasionally, the pushback has gone beyond petitions and local laments. A cafe specializing in hard-to-find varieties of breakfast cereal, which some held up as the ultimate example of ''hipsterfication,'' was vandalized in 2015 by anti-gentrification protesters. (The business closed its doors in Brick Lane in July 2020, but it continues to run a store online.)

Aaron Mo, 39, who in July last year opened a pop-up Chinese bakery, Ong Ong Buns, near the planned development, is cautious about predicting the shopping center's effect on small independent businesses like his.

But he said he learned something instructive when, a nearby branch of the sandwich chain Pret A Manger unexpectedly closed for two weeks last year. The effect was palpable, he said: ''We got more customers.''

For Mr. Khalique, the concerns about gentrification go beyond business -- they are also deeply personal.

Outside his store, Brick Lane's history is visible in the lamp posts painted in green and red, the colors of the Bangladeshi flag, and in street signs that are in both English and Bengali.

''Our elders have fought really hard for this area,'' he said of his father's generation. ''It's in my blood.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/15/world/europe/bangladesh-london-brick-lane-gentrification.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/15/world/europe/bangladesh-london-brick-lane-gentrification.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The Brick Lane neighborhood of East London will soon have a five-story mall, and residents worry about displacement and gentrification. The area is widely known for its curry restaurants, above, though one study found 62 percent of them had closed in the past 15 years.

From left: Modern office buildings and construction cranes towering over Brick Lane

Ms. Begum, who is the director of Runnymeade Trust, a research institute focusing on racial equality, says the story of Brick Lane is a ''tale of two cities''

and stalls in the neighborhood's old brewery complex, behind which the new shopping mall will rise. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARY TURNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 16, 2022

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[***Yellen Steers the Economy With Brooklyn on Her Mind***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6307-P2F1-DXY4-X40D-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Alan Rappeport

**Highlight:** The Treasury secretary’s economic philosophy was shaped by her youth in Bay Ridge.

**Body**

The Treasury secretary’s economic philosophy was shaped by her youth in Bay Ridge.

When Treasury Secretary [*Janet L. Yellen*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/16/business/economy/yellen-powell-federal-reserve.html) thinks about restoring the millions of jobs lost to the pandemic and making the economy more equitable, her mind sometimes turns to a place that shaped her views: Bay Ridge, Brooklyn.

The daughter of a doctor, Ms. Yellen, 74, grew up in the shadow of the Brooklyn waterfront and watched as longshoremen and laborers who were struggling with health problems and lost jobs came to her father’s office on the bottom floor of their family’s brownstone. Ms. Yellen, who would sit on her stoop and listen to their stories, became interested in how economics could help.

On Wednesday, Ms. Yellen recalled those days during a virtual keynote address to new graduates of Fort Hamilton High School, where she was valedictorian of the class of 1963. It was in her old neighborhood, she said, where she learned to measure success through the lens of public service.

“The lesson Bay Ridge taught us was that a happy and successful life — like a happy, successful community — depends not just on others’ love and respect for you but, even more, on your love and respect for them,” Ms. Yellen told the students in a recorded speech that was streamed to their smartphones.

In a brief interview ahead of the graduation, Ms. Yellen explained how growing up in a ***working-class*** enclave of Brooklyn had been formative.

“One of the reasons I became an economist, and ended up focusing on the labor market and on employment and things like that, is because of what we saw growing up, particularly with my father’s patients,” Ms. Yellen said. “The ups and downs in the economy, people would lose jobs, and there were a lot of stories growing up of problems that families had.”

Back then, immigrants from Scandinavia, Ireland and Italy populated the neighborhood that is encircled by the Belt Parkway on the west and the Gowanus Expressway on the east. These days the [*demographics have shifted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/16/business/economy/yellen-powell-federal-reserve.html) to include more Hispanics and immigrants from China, Russia, Greece and the Middle East.

The pandemic hit many of them hard.

Ms. Yellen explained that before the 1980s, fortunes tended to rise more or less with the broader economic tides. That has shifted in recent decades as structural problems like access to quality education, health care and child care helped perpetuate economic inequalities. The downside of that has been felt acutely in areas where immigrants and minorities live.

“Here you have a pandemic that has disproportionately fallen on low-income workers and minorities who are struggling anyhow in this economy, and knowing what unemployment is like, which is really what I’ve been thinking about, more or less my whole life,” Ms. Yellen said. “Of course it immediately focused us on wanting to help, intervening in ways that would enable people to get back on their feet, get the economy operating again and creating jobs as rapidly as possible.”

The sentiment comes at a pivotal moment in the early days of Ms. Yellen’s tenure as Treasury secretary. The Biden administration is engaged in talks with Republicans over the fate of its $4 trillion jobs and infrastructure proposals, Ms. Yellen is in the midst of fraught international negotiations over an overhaul of the global tax system, and inflation is looming as a threat to the economic recovery.

Ms. Yellen served as chair of the Federal Reserve from 2014 to 2018 and has [*faced criticism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/16/business/economy/yellen-powell-federal-reserve.html) for exacerbating some of the economic trends that she laments. Beginning in 2015, she oversaw a series of rate increases that were historically slow, but that many economists have come to see as premature. Higher rates may have taken some momentum out of the economy, making for a slower job market rebound and weaker-than-necessary wage gains, especially at the bottom of the income scale.

At the same time, some conservatives have said the Fed’s low-rate policies exacerbate wealth inequality, a characterization that former central bank officials including Ben S. Bernanke dispute.

After leaving the Fed, Ms. Yellen earned millions of dollars [*making paid speeches*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/16/business/economy/yellen-powell-federal-reserve.html) to the kinds of financial firms that she says should pay more in taxes.

Ms. Yellen’s parents lived through the Great Depression, but her youth was comfortable, studded with academic accolades and intellectual hobbies, including a rock collection. She would take 5-cent ferry rides to Staten Island to play in Clove Lakes Park with friends. A trip to the American Museum of Natural History with her brother sparked an interest in gems. And in her junior year of high school, Ms. Yellen took a geology course on Saturdays and then would meet up with friends around New York City to participate in a rock collection club.

Although there has been [*speculation that Ms. Yellen is also an avid stamp collector*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/16/business/economy/yellen-powell-federal-reserve.html), the Treasury secretary said such rumors were “hooey.” In fact, she says, she has been keeping the collection of her late mother in a safe deposit box for many years.

Despite her early interest in economics, Ms. Yellen told the class of 2021 that her passion in high school had actually been journalism. As a reporter for The Pilot, the Fort Hamilton High School newspaper, she covered the construction of the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge and helped uncover Bay Ridge’s forgotten Revolutionary War cemetery. A trove of clippings from the newspaper [*unearthed by The New York Times in 2013*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/16/business/economy/yellen-powell-federal-reserve.html)revealed that she once penned an absurdist column on current affairs called “Yellen Around.”

At the graduation ceremony, she told the students that journalism had taught her to embrace assignments that at the time seemed small. The lesson was helpful when she started a new career at the Fed as a policymaker after being denied tenure at Harvard University — a blow to someone who was named “class scholar” by the yearbook editors at Fort Hamilton High School.

“And my previous disappointment vanished from my mind,” Ms. Yellen said. “I had discovered a new joy.”

These days, Ms. Yellen has hero status at Fort Hamilton High School, which was named after a military installation that honors Alexander Hamilton, the first Treasury secretary.

“She is our most famous graduate,” said Kaye Houlihan, the school’s principal, adding that Ms. Yellen’s name often comes up in the school’s economics classes and as an example of where a Fort Hamilton education can lead.

Jeanna Smialek contributed reporting.

Jeanna Smialek contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Janet Yellen’s photo in the 1963 yearbook of Fort Hamilton High in Bay Ridge. (B1); New graduates of Fort Hamilton High School, where Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen was valedictorian in 1963. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JONAH MARKOWITZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B5)

**Load-Date:** August 16, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Is My Little Library Contributing to Gentrification?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:647T-ST01-DXY4-X3HP-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1316 words

**Byline:** By Erin Aubry Kaplan

**Body**

INGLEWOOD, Calif. -- About a year ago, I decided to build a library on my front lawn. By library, I mean one of those little free-standing library boxes that dot lawns in bedroom communities around the country -- charming, birdhouse-like structures filled with books that invite neighbors and passers-by to take a book, or donate a book, or both.

I'd spotted the phenomenon on walks through upscale, largely white neighborhoods around Los Angeles and immediately resolved to bring it home to Inglewood. Why not? A library is not so much a marker of wealth and whiteness as it is an affirmation of community and cozy, small-town camaraderie that Inglewood, a mostly Black and Latino city in southwestern Los Angeles County, has plenty of. We deserved no less.

Prepandemic, Inglewood was gentrifying, another reason I'd been inspired to do the library: I wanted to signal to my longtime neighbors that we had our own ideas about improvement, and could carry them out in our own way. There are organizations that help people build these little libraries, but I did mine independently. I envisioned it as a place for my neighbors to stay connected during the pandemic. The wooden post on which the library sat was a stake in the ground, literally.

The response to the library was slow at first -- it was the first in the area, and some people mistook it for a birdhouse, or a mailbox. But I was pleased to soon see people stopping by to browse and take home books.

Then one morning, glancing out my front window, I saw a young white couple stopped at the library. Instantly, I was flooded with emotions -- astonishment, and then resentment, and then astonishment at my resentment. It all converged into a silent scream in my head of, Get off my lawn!

The moment jolted me into realizing some things I'm not especially proud of. I had set out this library for all who lived here, and even for those who didn't, in theory. I would not want to restrict anyone from looking at it or taking books, based on race or anything else. But while I had seen white newcomers to the neighborhood here and there, the truth was, I hadn't set it out to appeal to white residents.

Now that they were in front of my house, curious about this new neighborhood attraction, I didn't know how to feel. By bringing this modern cultural artifact here from white neighborhoods, had I set myself up, set up the neighborhood? Was I contributing to gentrification and sending the wrong message about how I wanted the neighborhood to be?

What I resented was not this specific couple. It was their whiteness, and my feelings of helplessness at not knowing how to maintain the integrity of a Black space that I had created. I was seeing up close how fragile that space can be, how its meaning can be changed in my mind, even by people who have no conscious intention to change it. That library was on my lawn, but for that moment it became theirs. I built it and drove it into the ground because I love books and always have. But I suddenly felt that I could not own even this, something that was clearly and intimately mine.

As the couple wandered on, no books in hand, I thought about how fragile my feeling of being settled is. It didn't matter that I own my house, as many of my neighbors do. Generations of racism, Jim Crow, disinvestment and redlining have meant that we don't really control our own spaces. In that moment, I had been overwhelmed by a kind of fear, one that's connected to the historical reality of Black people being run off the land they lived on, expelled by force, high prices or some whim of white people.

One of the most famous examples of that displacement happened several miles south of Inglewood. Bruce's Beach, a Black-owned resort, once thrived along the coast of tony Manhattan Beach, until it was seized by eminent domain in 1924 by white city officials. They claimed they needed the land for a public park, but they didn't build one for more than three decades. It's clear they simply wanted the bustling holiday and leisure spot and the Black people it attracted gone. That parcel was recently returned to the descendants of Willa and Charles Bruce, who owned it -- an extraordinary example of reparation, but an isolated one that still leaves the problem of Black unsettledness intact.

When my uncle, Paul Aubry, bought a house in Los Angeles in the predominantly white, ***working-class*** South Central neighborhood of the late 1940s, he wasn't just buying a house; he was putting his stake in the ground, making his claim to the American ideal of belonging.

My uncle's claim was rejected. A cross was burned on his lawn. As more Black families moved to the neighborhood, white people moved out in droves. The ground shifted under Uncle Paul's feet. That white flight forged the chiefly Black and brown South Central of popular imagination and created similar demographics in other city neighborhoods across the country, including Inglewood.

It has to be said that there's nothing inherently wrong with the Black-, Latino- and immigrant-rich neighborhoods that resulted from those flights. Community has always been our greatest asset, and its greatest source of capital. But now, as younger generations of white people move back to the neighborhoods their parents shunned, in the phenomenon I call ''white return,'' it all suddenly feels up for grabs -- again.

Instead of the blatant racism of what happened at Bruce's Beach, we now have gentrification. It's perfectly legal, but ultimately it causes the same racial displacement, on a much larger scale. The stratospheric rise in home prices alone has meant that the Black population of Los Angeles has been declining for decades, and has dropped to around 9 percent.

The anti-gentrification strategy articulated by many of my longtime Black neighbors is this: Stay put. Don't sell. Stand your ground. While that is possible for some of us (I won't be selling because, really, where would I go?), it's not for everyone, and it's not a permanent solution. It also doesn't solve the bigger crisis of belonging.

Ultimately, the moment with the couple I saw through my window raised for me a serious moral question about how I should act. Screaming at them to get off my lawn would be adopting the values of the oppressor, as my racial-justice activist father used to say. Yet my resentment was not analogous to the white resentment of generations past (and of now, I'd argue). White resentment has always been legitimized, and reinforced, by legal and cultural dominance, a dynamic evident in everything from the rise of Trumpism to the current battle against the political boogeyman of critical race theory.

My little library, affirming as it is, is also an illusion; it can't save our neighborhood. Still, in 2021, it has become increasingly important to maintain and grow Black space, on its own terms. As I watched the white couple peruse my little library, the most complicated feeling of all was the brief, bittersweet satisfaction I took in watching them drawn to my lawn, and to my idea. It felt empowering and hopeful on the one hand, defeating on the other.

So what message do I hope they took from my library? The same message I wanted to send to the rest of my neighbors, my community: Black presence has value -- in every sense of the word, and on its own terms.

That value should make the casual displacement of Black people untenable, even immoral. And that will take much more than a little library to rectify.

Erin Aubry Kaplan (@aubry\_erin) is a journalist and author who has lived in Inglewood, Calif., since 2001.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/05/opinion/gentrification-los-angeles-little-library.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/05/opinion/gentrification-los-angeles-little-library.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The author in her home in Inglewood, Calif. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TERGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 7, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Ukraine, Omicron, Best Songs of 2021: Your Tuesday Evening Briefing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:647X-9181-DXY4-X4GS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 7, 2021 Tuesday 18:25 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1356 words

**Byline:** Remy Tumin

**Highlight:** Here’s what you need to know at the end of the day.

**Body**

Here’s what you need to know at the end of the day.

(Want to get this newsletter in your inbox? Here’s [*the sign-up*](http://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/nyt-now-evening-briefing?module=inline).)

Good evening. Here’s the latest at the end of Tuesday.

1. President Biden warned President Vladimir Putin of heavy economic penalties if Russia invaded Ukraine.

Biden also said that in response NATO could reposition its troops and that an invasion would end Russia’s hopes of completing a major Russian gas pipeline to Europe, measures that he said would go well beyond what the West did after Russia annexed Crimea seven years ago. The high-stakes virtual meeting came as tens of thousands of Russian troops massed along the Ukrainian border, raising fears of an invasion.

Jake Sullivan, the national security adviser, [*described Biden’s comments to reporters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/us/politics/biden-putin-ukraine-summit.html) but declined to go into detail about the consequences facing Russia. He said that Biden had told the Russian leader that “things we did not do in 2014 we are prepared to do now.”

[*Here are five takeaways from the call*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/world/europe/here-are-five-takeaways-from-the-biden-putin-call.html).

2. The U.S. surgeon general warned of a “devastating” mental health crisis among young people made worse by the pandemic.

The message was part of a rare public advisory from the nation’s top physician, Dr. Vivek Murthy, in a 53-page report noting that [*the pandemic intensified mental health issues*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/science/pandemic-adolescents-depression-anxiety.html) that were already widespread by the spring of 2020. The report cited significant increases in self-reports of depression, anxiety and emergency room visits for mental health challenges.

We visited a clinic for low-income children in Charlotte, N.C., where treatment for health problems that have gone unchecked during the pandemic [*is more in demand than coronavirus shots*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/us/politics/children-vaccine-pediatricians.html).

In other virus news:

* The U.S. plans to spend [*$400 million to deliver vaccines globally*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/07/world/covid-omicron-vaccine/us-400-million-global-distribution) and help “overcome vaccine access barriers.”

1. [*Two new Covid-19 pills are coming soon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/science/merck-pfizer-covid-pill-treatment.html?), and are expected to work against all versions of the virus.
2. Here’s what we know about the [*Omicron variant and booster shots*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/booster-shots-questions-answers.html) and what they mean for [*holiday travel*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/travel/holiday-travel-omicron-restrictions.html).

3. Americans’ pandemic-era savings are dwindling.

Infusions of government cash warded off an economic calamity and buoyed the bank balances of millions of households. But many low-income Americans [*find their savings shrinking or even depleted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/business/pandemic-savings.html). The drop in cash reserves has vast implications for the ***working class*** and could dampen consumer spending.

The Fed has spent the past two years trying to support the economy. But the newfound focus on inflation, which is rising at its fastest pace in 31 years, [*may limit the central bank’s ability to cushion any blow*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/business/economy/federal-reserve-inflation-omicron.html) Omicron might deal to America’s growth and the labor market.

4. As legislators across the country draw new House maps to protect incumbents, California could become the only true battlefield for 2022.

While the California Citizens Redistricting Commission is still finalizing the new plan, the state [*could end up with eight or nine battleground districts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/us/politics/california-redistricting-midterms.html). The state’s likely new map played a large part in Representative Devin Nunes’s decision [*to resign at year’s end in order to lead former President Donald Trump’s media company*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/us/politics/devin-nunes-trump.html).

In other political news, Mark Meadows, Trump’s former chief of staff, said he was no longer willing to be interviewed by the Jan. 6 investigators, [*reversing a commitment he made last week*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/us/politics/meadows-cooperate-jan-6.html).

5. The French police arrested a man in connection with the assassination of the dissident writer Jamal Khashoggi.

But a Saudi official [*said the arrest was a case of mistaken identity*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/world/middleeast/khashoggi-arrest-france-alotaiba.html), and French authorities warned that they were still verifying that they had the right man. The man, identified as Khalid Alotaibi, 33, was arrested at Roissy-Charles de Gaulle Airport north of Paris on the basis of an international arrest warrant issued by Turkey, just before he was to board a flight for Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

A man by that name is accused of being a member of the team that killed Khashoggi inside the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul in 2018.

6. A new Tesla safety concern: Drivers can play video games in moving cars.

The automaker added the games in a software update that was [*sent to most of its cars this summer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/business/tesla-video-game-driving.html). The video games can be played by a driver or by a passenger in full view of the driver, raising fresh questions about whether Tesla is compromising safety as it rushes to add new features. Tesla’s Autopilot system has [*faced criticism for years*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/technology/tesla-autopilot-elon-musk.html).

In other tech news, changes are coming fast and furiously to airports, including advancements in biometrics that can verify passengers’ identities and shorten security procedures for those who opt into the programs. [*Here’s what you need to know*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/travel/biometrics-airports-security.html).

7. The assault of a French women’s soccer star made headlines. But what if the story was wrong?

It’s been three weeks since Aminata Diallo, a midfielder for Paris St.-Germain, was questioned by the police as a possible suspect in what they had suggested was an orchestrated attack on her teammate, Kheira Hamraoui. Diallo has repeatedly denied any involvement, but the police have declined to clear her of suspicion.

[*The Times interviewed nearly a dozen people*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/sports/soccer/psg-attack-diallo-hamraoui.html) with direct knowledge of the attack. As details emerge — about marital infidelity; about accusations implicating other members of the team; about reports of menacing phone calls to players disparaging the victim before she was attacked — the initial account of the assault has been turned on its head. And now no one is sure what, or whom, to believe.

8. A posthumous political statement. A hyperpop star finding his footing. An emerging force’s debut smash. A superstar’s 10-minute redo.

These are among [*the 66 songs that tell the story of 2021*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/arts/music/best-songs.html), selected by three of our music critics. Not all great songs are on the year’s best albums — [*they discussed those here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/02/arts/music/best-pop-albums.html). They’re on TikTok. They’re on YouTube or television. They’re lurking in shaded corners of the internet, waiting to be unearthed.

We also rounded up [*21 things that happened for the first time this year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/special-series/2021-year-in-review.html). Among them: A human brain was wirelessly connected to a computer; National Geographic cartographers recognized the world’s fifth ocean; and the world’s first 3-D-printed school opened in Malawi.

9. Utah’s soda shops, which sell hundreds of bubbly variations, may be coming to a neighborhood near you.

Mixed soda drinks made with flavored syrups, fresh fruit and creamers have grown rapidly in the Mountain West over the last decade, hitting a fever pitch during the pandemic. Now the “dirty” soda shops, which first became popular among members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — the church prohibits hot caffeinated drinks like coffee and tea — [*are popping up around the country*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/dining/swig-soda-shop-chains.html).

Our Food desk also looked at [*the Iranian celebration of the winter solstice*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/dining/yalda-winter-solstice-pomegranate.html), Shab-e Yalda. Symbolic foods, pomegranates chief among them, are passed around to welcome back the light and longer days.

10. And finally, a jumping robotic pancake.

Legs, it turns out, are not necessary for something as flat as a flapjack to hop around. A group of scientists has designed [*a tortilla-shaped robot that can jump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/science/robots-pancake-jump.html) several times per second and higher than seven centimeters (about two and a half inches). It weighs the same as a paper clip and is around the size of a squished tennis ball.

For inspiration, the researchers looked to maggots that miraculously hurl themselves across distances 30 times as long as their log-like bodies. The new robot ran an obstacle course of gravel mounds, slopes, wires and steps, and may eventually be used to inspect machines or explore extraterrestrial surfaces.

Have an energetic night.

Angela Jimenez compiled photos for this briefing.

Your Evening Briefing is posted at 6 p.m. Eastern.

Want to catch up on past briefings? [*You can browse them here*](https://www.nytimes.com/series/us-evening-briefing).

What did you like? What do you want to see here? Let us know at [*briefing@nytimes.com*](mailto:briefing@nytimes.com?subject=Evening%20Briefing%20Feedback).

Here are [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini) and [*Spelling Bee*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee). If you’re in the mood to play more, [*find all our games here*](https://www.nytimes.com/games).

Angela Jimenez compiled photos for this briefing.

PHOTO: Images released by the White House (top) and Sputnik (bottom) depict President Biden and President Vladimir V. Putin participating in a virtual meeting on Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY White House (top), Sputnik FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 7, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Towers Rise Over London’s Brick Lane, Clouding Its Future***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64J5-0BM1-JBG3-62VP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 15, 2022 Saturday 09:50 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

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**Byline:** Aina J. Khan

**Highlight:** Luxury developments and rising rents have ignited concerns about gentrification and displacement in a district that has long been a sanctuary for minority communities.

**Body**

Luxury developments and rising rents have ignited concerns about gentrification and displacement in a district that has long been a sanctuary for minority communities.

LONDON — Ornate English and Bengali typography adorns the signs of Taj Stores, one of the oldest Bangladeshi-run supermarkets in the Brick Lane neighborhood of East London. The signs evoke a part of the area’s past, when it became known as “Banglatown,” and eventually home to the largest Bangladeshi community in Britain.

But Brick Lane’s future is looking very uncertain, said Jamal Khalique, standing inside a supermarket opened in 1936 by his great-uncle and now run by Mr. Khalique and his two brothers.

Modern office buildings of glass and steel and a cluster of apartments and cranes tower above the skyline. New coffee shops, restaurants, food markets and hotels appear in the neighborhood each year. According to one study, the borough of Tower Hamlets, which contains Brick Lane, had the [*most gentrification in London*](https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/projects/Gentrificiation/Pushed%2520to%2520the%2520Margins%2520Gentrification%2520Report.pdf) from 2010 to 2016.

In September, a borough committee approved plans — under discussion for [*five years*](https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s190863/Appendix%201%20-%20PA2000415%20-%20DC%20Report_FINAL.pdf) — to build a five-story shopping mall in and around a disused parking lot beside a former brewery complex that houses independent shops, galleries, markets, bars and restaurants.

The project would include brand-name chain stores, office spaces and a public square.

Like many Brick Lane residents, Mr. Khalique is ambivalent about the development. Initially, he was not opposed. “I’ve seen a hell of a change from a deprived, dirty area, to a trendy, diversified, multicultural area,” said Mr. Khalique, 50.

But now he worries that the new shopping center will undermine the area’s architectural character by adding glass features amid the weathered brick, and will siphon customers from long-established stores. “It will really kill small, independent businesses,” he said.

In a statement, Zeloof Partnership, which owns the brewery site and a handful of other nearby properties, said the new center would create several hundred jobs, mostly for local people. Its design was consistent with the look of the area and did not involve demolishing buildings, the statement said.

It added that a fixed discount for rent would be offered to a select number of independent businesses currently operating from the brewery.

The company said there was no firm date yet for when construction would start or when the new center would open.

The plans have met fierce resistance from some local residents and campaigners.

The district’s member of Parliament, Rushanara Ali of the opposition Labour Party, said residents had expressed concerns about the “limited concessions” made by the developers, adding that the Conservative government had reduced “local powers and accountability to local communities” over development.

Opponents of the development also argue that it could cause rents and housing prices to rise in what has long been a ***working-class*** area.

In December 2020, a “Save Brick Lane” campaign gained widespread attention online, in part through the participation of Nijjor Manush, a British Bangladeshi activist group. The borough council received more than 7,000 letters of objection, though only several hundred were from local residents, a sign of what a point of contention the proposed development had become beyond just Brick Lane.

In September last year, soon after Zeloof’s plans were approved, campaigners and residents marched in protest, unfurling “Save Brick Lane” banners behind pallbearers carrying an empty coffin to represent what they describe as the corrosive effects of gentrification.

Still, not everyone is opposed to the plans.

“Brick Lane was dying a long time ago,” said Shams Uddin, 62, who arrived in the area from Bangladesh in 1976 and has been the proprietor of Monsoon, one of the many Bangladeshi-run curry restaurants that once flourished in the neighborhood, since 1999.

Indeed, in the past 15 years, [*62 percent of Brick Lane’s curry restaurants have closed*](https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/RunnymedeBanglatownReport.pdf) because of rising rent, difficulties obtaining visas for new chefs and a lack of government support, according to a study by Runnymede Trust, a research institute focusing on racial equality.

Mr. Uddin said that international travel restrictions imposed by the pandemic, the chilling effect of Brexit and the [*opening of franchises in a historic market area nearby*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-32707564) had deterred customers from visiting. In this environment, he said, the new shopping center could lift up the waning businesses around it.

“When customers finish their business with the shopping center, they may come to my restaurant,” he said. “This is a good thing for our business.”

The changing face of Brick Lane is startling to many longtime residents who remember the many empty properties in London’s East End five decades ago.

“This area had been abandoned,” said Dan Cruickshank, a historian and member of the Spitalfields Trust, a local heritage and conservation group.

When he bought his home in Spitalfields in the 1970s — a property that had stood empty for more than 10 years — Mr. Cruickshank said he struggled to secure a mortgage. East London, he said, was “deemed dark, dangerous, remote and to be avoided” by mortgage lenders and property developers.

Now, in what Mr. Cruickshank derides as a “peculiar case of gentrification,” homes in Brick Lane have acquired a Midas touch. Average property prices in the neighborhood have tripled in little over a decade, according to [*real estate agents’ collations of government data*](https://www.foxtons.co.uk/living-in/brick-lane/), with some soaring over millions of dollars.

With the average home in London costing nearly [*12 times the average salary*](https://www.standard.co.uk/homesandproperty/property-news/london-house-prices-average-salaries-affordability-stamp-duty-holiday-b946785.html) in Britain, [*affordable housing options*](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-32707564) are scarce.

For centuries, Brick Lane has been a sanctuary for minority communities: Huguenot silk weavers who fled religious persecution in 17th-century France, Ashkenazi Jews escaping antisemitism and pogroms in [*Eastern Europe*](http://www.cablestreet.uk/), and then Bangladeshi Muslims in the 1970s, during Bangladesh’s fight for independence from Pakistan and the ensuing violence. Since the 1990s, it has become a symbol of multicultural London, celebrated in novels, memoirs, movies and museum exhibits.

In the 1970s, Bangladeshis were drawn to Brick Lane by cheap places to live and abundant work opportunities in the textile industry.

But the arrivals were greeted by discriminatory housing policies and occasional racist violence from followers of the National Front — a far-right British political party with headquarters nearby. Racists smeared [*swastikas and “KKK”*](https://www.fourcornersfilm.co.uk/blog/brick-lane-1978-the-turning-point) on some buildings. Mr. Khalique, the grocery store owner, said he was permanently scarred on his right leg when he was attacked in his youth by a dog belonging to a National Front supporter.

Hundreds of Bangladeshi families [*squatted in empty properties*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-36191020) in defiance of the attacks — squatting was not then a criminal offense in England — while demanding better housing options.

Among those families was Halima Begum’s. For years, as a child, she lived in a derelict building marked for demolition until her father, a factory worker, broke into an abandoned flat close to Brick Lane. Ms. Begum lived there until she left for college.

Now the director of Runnymede Trust, Ms. Begum has witnessed Brick Lane’s transformation into what she described as a “tale of two cities,” where wealthy workers from the neighboring financial district live in an area with what the charity Trust for London says are the capital’s [*highest child poverty rates*](https://www.trustforlondon.org.uk/data/boroughs/tower-hamlets-poverty-and-inequality-indicators/).

Overcrowding is rampant in Tower Hamlets, where [*more than 20,000 applicants*](https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s93859/5.3e%20-%20Appendix%205%20Evidence%20base.pdf) await low-income housing. Opponents of the shopping center point out that the plans do not include any social housing.

“How on earth would British Bangladeshi communities who are experiencing significant poverty be able to maintain a lifestyle where this area develops into Manhattan?” she said, citing the [*gentrification of the East Village in New York City in the 1980s*](https://www.nytimes.com/1984/09/02/realestate/the-gentrification-of-the-east-village.html). “The way in which we regenerate has to be more inclusive.”

Occasionally, the pushback has gone beyond petitions and local laments. A cafe specializing in hard-to-find varieties of breakfast cereal, which some held up as the ultimate example of “hipsterfication,” was vandalized [*in 2015*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/29/world/europe/london-cereal-cafe-damaged-by-anti-gentrification-protests-was-unfairly-targeted-owner-says.html) by anti-gentrification protesters. (The business closed its doors in Brick Lane in July 2020, but it continues to run a store online.)

Aaron Mo, 39, who in July last year opened a pop-up Chinese bakery, Ong Ong Buns, near the planned development, is cautious about predicting the shopping center’s effect on small independent businesses like his.

But he said he learned something instructive when, a nearby branch of the sandwich chain [*Pret A Manger*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/14/business/pret-a-manger-london-pandemic.html) unexpectedly closed for two weeks last year. The effect was palpable, he said: “We got more customers.”

For Mr. Khalique, the concerns about gentrification go beyond business — they are also deeply personal.

Outside his store, Brick Lane’s history is visible in the lamp posts painted in green and red, the colors of the Bangladeshi flag, and in street signs that are in both English and Bengali.

“Our elders have fought really hard for this area,” he said of his father’s generation. “It’s in my blood.’’

PHOTOS: The Brick Lane neighborhood of East London will soon have a five-story mall, and residents worry about displacement and gentrification. The area is widely known for its curry restaurants, above, though one study found 62 percent of them had closed in the past 15 years.; From left: Modern office buildings and construction cranes towering over Brick Lane; Ms. Begum, who is the director of Runnymeade Trust, a research institute focusing on racial equality, says the story of Brick Lane is a “tale of two cities”; and stalls in the neighborhood’s old brewery complex, behind which the new shopping mall will rise. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARY TURNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 16, 2022

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[***On Sidney Poitier, Code Switching and the Black Voice; John McWhorter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64J0-C621-JBG3-62MR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1506 words

**Byline:** John McWhorter

**Highlight:** He was a pioneer — in the transitional sense.

**Body**

Sidney Poitier’s passing has me thinking about the Black voice.

And first, let’s look at the idea of a Black voice. Because Black people have been subjected to so much stereotyping and because there is a considerable overlap of white Southern speech with Black English, we must be wary of the idea that there is only one Black way of talking.

But amid this wariness it is relevant that linguists note aspects of speech that are much more typical of Black Americans than other people. To wit: Our sense that there is a such thing as “sounding Black” is not based on mere stereotype, but fact.

It’s largely a matter of the shadings of certain vowels and a certain way of shading the voice in general. People’s speaking styles diverge as they spend more time with one another than with others, and in ways no one is conscious of. This is true whether we’re talking about Central Europe, the Pacific islands or the Amazon, and is true in different regions and within different ethnic groups in the United States. It’s about who you feel comfortable with as much as who you encounter — most of us talk like the people we know.

“Why is there a Black way of talking?” isn’t where linguists would start. We’d start with “Why wouldn’t there be a Black way of talking?” Black English isn’t a distortion or diminution of mainstream American English; it’s one of many kinds of American English. Over the years, linguists have richly documented that it’s complicated, just like all speech, with its own grammar, pronunciation and cadence.

So, let’s get back to Poitier, but by way of the 19th century. After the end of American slavery, Black Americans faced, of course, many instances of violent repression and codified second-class citizenship. Among the barriers faced was that for a Black person who wanted to gain influence in broader circles, he or she had to, in many cases, learn to speak in an utterly unfamiliar way.

[*Booker T. Washington*](https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/bday/0405.html) was born enslaved in 1856. He grew up speaking Black English, as nearly any enslaved person living on a plantation would have. Yet in [*recordings*](https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/civil-rights-act/multimedia/booker-t-washington.html) of him speaking, you wouldn’t necessarily know, if not apprised, that he was Black.

The educator, feminist and activist [*Mary McLeod Bethune*](https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/mary-mcleod-bethune) was born in 1875, after slavery, and as a child worked in some of the same fields where her parents had been enslaved. Listening to [*recordings*](https://www.nps.gov/media/video/view.htm%3Fid%3D5FECF1B3-1DD8-B71B-0B5B497327BA2199) of her speaking, if you didn’t know better, you might think you were hearing someone who had been reared in the drawing room of a society matron of the era. Bethune had to master this way of speaking — what today we might call code switching — to be heard at all in her time.

The celebrated contralto [*Marian Anderson*](https://www.nytimes.com/1993/04/09/obituaries/marian-anderson-is-dead-at-96-singer-shattered-racial-barriers.html), perhaps best known for her 1939 [*performance*](https://www.npr.org/2014/04/09/298760473/denied-a-stage-she-sang-for-a-nation) at the Lincoln Memorial, is another example. To many people, she, too, sounded white [*when she spoke*](https://www.wqxr.org/story/archives-george-shirley-interviews-marian-anderson/).

Generally speaking, Black public figures in the mid-20th century, including performers — with a notable exception among comedians such as Redd Foxx and Moms Mabley, [*whose comedy*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXhwQDIbvUg) leaned into an [*embrace of Black English*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a0k-45Jgk8I) — could also get downright creative with how they sounded when they spoke, particularly when they wanted to reach white audiences. Listening to these figures today, one senses that one was to avoid sounding “too Black” even to the point of embracing an accent other than one they might have known early in life. The chanteuse [*Eartha Kitt*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/26/arts/26kitt.html) was born in 1927 in segregated South Carolina. In her public persona — [*in songs*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UeRSqekHh1g), [*interviews*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPgrmf6PZUE) and her memorable turn [*as Catwoman*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_LQXv37RtU) in the campy late 1960s “Batman” series — her signature became a vocal style splitting the difference between Eleanor Roosevelt and Edith Piaf. [*Nina Simone*](https://www.nytimes.com/2003/04/22/arts/nina-simone-70-soulful-diva-and-voice-of-civil-rights-dies.html) was born in North Carolina in 1933. She sounded Black American vocal notes in much of her music, but when speaking publicly often adopted a hard-to-classify speaking style that sounded faintly Caribbean.

Back to Poitier, then. [*He’s celebrated as a pioneer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/07/movies/sidney-poitier-dead.html), and justly so, as the first Black winner of an Oscar for best actor and one of the first Black leading men in mainstream Hollywood films, among them “No Way Out,” “The Defiant Ones,” “A Raisin in the Sun,” “Lilies of the Field” (for which he won that Oscar) and “In the Heat of the Night.”

But in my callow youth, I must admit I never saw him as a trailblazer in the way that I was supposed to. The reason: I loved what he did, but I sensed him as a Caribbean man.

Poitier was Bahamian (he was born in Miami but spent his early years in the Bahamas) and always sounded it, especially in more passionate moments. Indeed, in 1967’s “To Sir, With Love,” he played a teacher of Guyanese descent working in a struggling multiracial ***working-class*** London school. As a kid, it never occurred to me that I was to process him in his roles as someone who had grown up on, say, Chicago’s South Side. In “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner,” I saw him as, well, a young Caribbean gentleman coming to dinner.

And while the Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy characters in that film wouldn’t have been at all thrilled about a Caribbean gent marrying their daughter, it seemed to me that they would have been even less enthusiastic if the suitor was a Black man from somewhere like Chicago’s South Side — a point that would have been underscored if the part had been played by a different Black actor of the period, such as the lacrosse and football great Jim Brown, who was in dozens of movies after his N.F.L. career, or Billy Dee Williams, of “[*Lady Sings the Blues*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbSg2f7wIjQ)” and “The Empire Strikes Back” fame (though both were a few years younger than Poitier). A “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner” with Williams, no matter how gracefully he would have played the lead role, almost certainly would never have been made in 1967.

Poitier was certainly a pioneer — but in the sense that he was transitional. In a mid-20th-century America that feared and scorned Blackness and especially Black maleness that came with a hint of sexuality, the first real Black matinee idol was almost inevitably going to be someone who didn’t talk (or move) in modes more typically associated with American Black men. A more local, less global Black voice would have made (or have been assumed to have made) white audiences back then too uncomfortable for a big studio to have greenlighted Poitier’s classic films. He was, quietly but decisively, different. He was from somewhere else, even if you only thought of that subconsciously — as we do to a [*major degree*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/21/books/review/how-you-say-it-katherine-kinzler.html) about language in all of its facets.

But he was a bridge. He was Black, after all, and his Caribbean cadences certainly weren’t white-sounding. He helped pave the way not only for other Black actors, but also for acceptance of more varied Black speech. In the 1960s, the [*Black Power*](https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/black-power) movement and the [*Black Is Beautiful*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/03/arts/design/kwame-brathwaite-black-is-beautiful-photography.html) movement — proud displays of Blackness in aesthetic mediums including clothing and hairstyles — became part of the Black mainstream and increasingly (if not widely) accepted by the broader society. Language norms transformed alongside, and from then on, American Black English was more acceptable in the public sphere than ever before.

Black English sounded forth in the so-called Blaxploitation genre of the 1970s as well as on network TV shows with Black casts like “The Jeffersons” and “Sanford and Son,” starring Foxx. In the late 1980s and early 1990s there was an explosion in Black film where Black English was woven throughout the dialogue, from Spike Lee’s early work to John Singleton’s “Boyz N The Hood.” Rap started its gradual penetration into mainstream American music such that now there are any number of hip-hop tracks almost guaranteed to be played by DJs at even all-white wedding receptions.

And in ways that were rarely possible in earlier generations, Black political figures could marshal sounding Black to amplify their voices in public discourse. Jesse Jackson’s oratory calls to mind a traditional Black preacher — he is, after all, a minister — and that was an asset, not a hindrance, during the 1988 presidential race, in which he won a string of Democratic primaries and caucuses. At carefully chosen intervals, Barack Obama summoned Black English on the way to becoming the first Black president. In New York City today, Mayor Eric Adams speaks with a Black New York accent that is as familiar to New Yorkers as any of the city’s many accents.

A linguistic hallmark of our times is that Black people no longer must abandon Black English to be taken seriously as movers and shakers. It’s evidence that even if change happens slowly, it happens. Poitier, an artistic giant, has always struck me, linguistically, as one of the last reminders of a time when white America didn’t take Black American speech seriously.

Have feedback? Send a note to [*McWhorter-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:McWhorter-newsletter@nytimes.com).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Covid and the ‘Very Liberal’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651C-82Y1-DXY4-X4G3-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1850 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** There’s a schism among Democrats. And the latest on Ukraine.

**Body**

There’s a schism among Democrats. And the latest on Ukraine.

The left-right divide over Covid-19 — with blue America taking the virus more seriously than red America — has never been the pandemic’s only political divide. Each partisan tribe has also had its internal disagreements.

Republicans have long been [*split over vaccination*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/18/briefing/red-covid-partisan-deaths-vaccines.html), with many eagerly getting shots while many others refuse. Democrats have their own growing schism, between those who believe Covid precautions should continue to be paramount and those who favor moves toward normalcy.

The key dividing line appears to be ideology. Americans who identify as “very liberal” are much more worried about Covid than Americans who identify as “somewhat liberal” or “liberal.” Increasingly, the very liberal look like outliers on Covid: The merely liberal are sometimes closer to moderates than to the very liberal.

That is a central finding of a poll conducted last week by [*Morning Consult*](https://morningconsult.com/return-to-normal/) for this newsletter. The poll is a follow-up to [*one from January*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/25/briefing/covid-behavior-vaccinated-unvaccinated.html). This time, to go deeper than partisan identification, we asked respondents to choose one of seven labels: very liberal, liberal, slightly liberal, moderate, slightly conservative, conservative or very conservative.

Among the results:

* Nearly 50 percent of very liberal Americans say that they believe Covid presents a “great risk” to their personal health. Other liberals, moderates and conservatives tend to be less worried.
* When parents were asked about the threat to their children, the pattern was similar.
* More than 60 percent of very liberal Americans believe that mask mandates should continue for the foreseeable future. Most moderates and conservatives see mandates as a temporary strategy that should end this year.

Personal safety

Why does political ideology so strongly shape Covid beliefs?

Donald Trump certainly plays a role. As president, he repeatedly made [*false statements*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/15/opinion/trump-coronavirus.html) downplaying Covid. Many Republican voters adopted his view, while many liberal Democrats went in the other direction. They came to equate any loosening of Covid restrictions with Trumpism, even after vaccines tamed the virus’s worst effects.

But I don’t think Trump is the only explanation. Every group of Democrats disdains him, yet Democrats disagree about Covid. Apart from Trump, the pandemic seems to be tapping into different views of risk perception.

Very liberal Americans make up almost 10 percent of adults, according to our poll and others. Many are younger than 50 and have a four-year college degree. They span all races but are disproportionately white, the Pew Research Center [*has found*](https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/11/09/beyond-red-vs-blue-the-political-typology-2/).

In recent years, these progressive professionals have tended to adopt a cautious approach to personal safety. You might even call it conservative.

It is especially notable in child rearing. Parents seek out the healthiest food, sturdiest car seats and safest playgrounds. They do not let their children play tackle football, and they worry about soccer concussions. The sociologist Annette Lareau [*has described*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/18/upshot/rich-children-and-poor-ones-are-raised-very-differently.html) the upper-middle-class parenting style as “concerted cultivation” and contrasted it with a ***working-class*** style of “natural growth.”

A cautious approach to personal safety has big benefits. It has helped popularize bicycle helmets, for example. In the case of Covid, very liberal Americans have been eloquent advocates for protecting the elderly and immunocompromised and for showing empathy toward the unvaccinated.

Yet the approach also has downsides. It can lead people to obsess over small, salient risks while ignoring bigger ones. A regimented childhood, with scheduled lessons replacing unstructured neighborhood play time, may lead to fewer broken bones, but it does not necessarily maximize creativity, independence or happiness.

When it comes to Covid, there is abundant evidence that the most liberal Americans are exaggerating the risks to the vaccinated and to children.

Consider that Democrats younger than 45 are [*more likely*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/26/podcasts/the-daily/omicron-coronavirus-behaviors.html) to say the virus poses a great risk to them than those older than 65 are — which is inconsistent with scientific reality but consistent with younger Democrats’ more intense liberalism. Or consider that many liberals ([*including Sonia Sotomayor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/14/briefing/supreme-court-covid-mask-mandate.html)) feel deep anxiety about Covid’s effects on children — even though the flu kills more children in a typical year and car crashes kill about five times as many. Long Covid, similarly, appears to be rare in both [*children*](https://www.statnews.com/2022/02/14/controlled-studies-ease-worries-widespread-long-covid-kids/) and [*vaccinated people*](https://www.bbc.com/news/health-60393588).

The truth is that [*the vast majority*](https://coronavirus-dashboard.utah.gov/risk.html) of severe Covid illness is occurring among those Americans who have chosen not to be vaccinated and boosted.

‘Public Health 101’

I know that this newsletter’s emphasis on liberals’ Covid fears has [*angered some people*](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2022/02/david-leonhardt-the-pandemic-interpreter.html). And I understand why many Americans — including some moderates and conservatives, as our poll shows — remain so focused on the virus. It has dominated daily life for more than two years, and some risk remains. Shifting gears is hard.

But trying to eliminate Covid risk, and allowing the virus [*to distort daily life*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/09/briefing/covid-precautions-red-blue-states.html), has costs, too. That’s why much of Europe, which is hardly a bastion of Trumpism, [*has stopped*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/29/business/england-covid-rules.html) trying to minimize caseloads.

The American focus on Covid’s dangers, by contrast, has caused disruption and isolation that feed educational losses, mental health troubles, drug overdoses, violent crime and vehicle crashes. [*These damages*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/15/briefing/vehicle-crashes-deaths-pandemic.html) have fallen disproportionately on low-income, Black and Latino Americans, exacerbating inequality in ways that would seem to violate liberal values.

“Rather than eliminating the risk of Covid, you’ve got to manage the risk,” Elizabeth H. Bradley, a public health expert and the president of Vassar College, told me recently. “If you really go for minimizing the risk, you’re going to have unintended consequences to people’s physical health, their mental health, their social health.”

She added: “It’s Public Health 101.”

Many Americans seem to have adopted this view. But there are still holdouts.

More on the virus:

* Moderna asked the F.D.A. to authorize a second booster dose [*for all adults*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/03/17/world/covid-19-mandates-cases-vaccine/second-booster-covid-moderna).

1. Thirty-five manufacturers will produce [*inexpensive versions of Pfizer’s pills*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/03/17/world/covid-19-mandates-cases-vaccine/35-companies-sign-on-to-produce-generic-versions-of-pfizers-covid-pill) to sell in poorer countries.
2. President Biden [*named Dr. Ashish Jha*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/us/politics/jeffrey-zients-ashish-jha.html), a dean at Brown University, as his new Covid policy coordinator.

THE LATEST NEWS

State of the War

* Russian forces remain stalled outside Kyiv, taking heavy casualties. The Ukrainian military yesterday claimed to have shot down 10 Russian planes and cruise missiles.

1. Russia does control large sections of eastern and southern Ukraine. Many cities there are [*desolate and ruined*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/03/17/world/ukraine-russia-war#in-russia-controlled-cities-witnesses-describe-flames-and-ruins): “There is no one to bury the dead,” an official said.
2. This morning, Russian missiles struck the outskirts of the western city of Lviv, which had been a haven, its mayor said.
3. In Mariupol, a southern city that hasn’t fallen, rescuers are pulling survivors from a bombed theater. The death toll is unclear.
4. The House voted [*to allow higher tariffs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/us/politics/house-russia-trade-status.html) on Russian goods. The bill now moves to the Senate.
5. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that [*the U.S. would punish China*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/us/politics/russia-china-weapons.html) if it gave Russia military aid.

More on Ukraine

* Vladimir Putin falsely claims that Ukraine is run by Nazis. [*Here’s the origin of that myth*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/world/europe/ukraine-putin-nazis.html).

1. By labeling Putin a “war criminal,” [*Biden personalized the conflict*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/us/politics/biden-putin-war-criminal.html), The Times’s David Sanger writes.
2. A Russian court extended the detention of the W.N.B.A. star Brittney Griner by two months. [*She was said to be “OK.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/sports/basketball/brittney-griner-russia-house-arrest.html)

* Arnold Schwarzenegger [*released an emotional video*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/world/europe/arnold-schwarzenegger-video-putin.html) directed at Russians and debunking misinformation.

1. These photos capture the [*desperation and resolve of Kyiv’s residents*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/03/18/magazine/ukraine-war-kyiv.html).

Politics

* Republicans are targeting [*a crime wave that doesn’t exist*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/us/politics/republican-voter-fraud.html): voter fraud.

1. Biden wants to move away from fossil fuels. The largest federally owned utility [*plans to invest in them instead*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/climate/tennessee-valley-authority-biden-climate.html).

Other Big Stories

* Three Doctors Without Borders workers were [*executed by soldiers in Ethiopia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/world/africa/ethiopia-tigray-aid-workers-killed.html), a Times investigation found.

1. A [*13-year-old was driving*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/sports/golf/golf-team-crash-texas.html) the truck that hit a van in Texas, killing nine people — including a college golf coach and six players.
2. Anthony Veasna So’s “Afterparties” won the [*National Book Critics Circle Award*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/books/national-book-critics-circle-winners.html) for best debut.

Opinions

Russia’s stumbles in Ukraine reveal [*the weaknesses of autocracies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/opinion/why-autocracies-fail.html), says David Brooks.

Michelle Goldberg profiles Peter Marki-Zay, the Hungarian politician [*trying to unseat Prime Minister Viktor Orban*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/18/opinion/hungary-viktor-orban-opposition.html).

MORNING READS

Up close: Campbell Addy is [*the photographer of the moment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/style/campbell-addy-feeling-seen.html).

Modern Love: On (not) [*wasting time with a younger man*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/18/style/modern-love-not-wasting-my-time-with-a-younger-man.html).

A Times classic: The [*best memoirs since 1969*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/06/26/books/best-memoirs.html).

Advice from Wirecutter: [*Consider a string trimmer*](https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/best-string-trimmers/).

Lives Lived: The Yankees pitcher Ralph Terry threw two of the most dramatic pitches in baseball history. Both ended a World Series, but with different outcomes. He [*died at 86*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/sports/baseball/ralph-terry-dead.html).

ARTS AND IDEAS

Read like Ferrante

Elena Ferrante, the [*pseudonymous*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/03/books/elena-ferrante-anita-raja-domenico-starnone.html) author of the Neapolitan novels and more, has [*published a collection of lectures*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/15/books/review-in-margins-elena-ferrante.html) about writing and reading. Here are a few takeaways:

She kept a notebook as a teenager. “The writer,” her young self wrote, “has a duty to put into words the shoves he gives and those he receives from others.”

She balances tidiness with disorder. “Love stories become interesting to Ferrante at the moment when a character falls out of love; mysteries gain intrigue when she understands that the puzzle won’t be solved,” The Times’s Molly Young writes.

She’s a rereader. “To read a book is to absorb, consciously or not, all the other books that influenced that book, as well as the books that influenced those books, and so on; to interpret even one paragraph on a page is to vector endlessly back in time,” Molly writes.

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

Get crunch from your tofu with [*this McDonald’s-inspired recipe*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1022410-crispy-tofu-with-sweet-and-sour-sauce). (The Times is starting a weekly newsletter about [*where to eat in New York City*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/where-to-eat-new-york-city).)

What to Listen to

The Spanish pop singer Rosalía smashed together new sounds from the Latin world and beyond [*on her latest album, “Motomami.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/arts/music/rosalia-motomami.html)

What to Watch

Sandra Bullock, Channing Tatum and Daniel Radcliffe (and Brad Pitt!) gallivant in the jungle in [*the comedy adventure “The Lost City.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/movies/the-lost-city-sandra-bullock-channing-tatum-daniel-radcliffe.html)

Late Night

The hosts discussed [*Biden calling Putin a “war criminal.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/18/arts/television/late-night-biden-putin-war-criminal.html)

Take the News Quiz

Test your [*knowledge of this week’s headlines*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/03/18/briefing/news-quiz-federal-reserve-daylight-saving.html).

Now Time to Play

The pangrams from yesterday’s Spelling Bee were whippoorwill and whirlpool. Here is today’s puzzle — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

Here’s [*today’s Wordle*](https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html). Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Somersault (four letters).

If you’re in the mood to play more, find [*all our games here*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. — David

P.S. A University of Kansas scholarship will honor Carlos Tejada, a Times editor who died recently. [*You can donate here*](https://www.launchku.org/project/30998).

Here’s [*today’s front page*](https://static01.nyt.com/images/2022/03/18/nytfrontpage/scan.pdf).

“[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about the metal of the future. On “[*Popcast*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/15/arts/music/popcast-ukraine-pop-music.html),” the sounds of Ukrainian pop.

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Tom Wright-Piersanti, Ashley Wu and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](mailto:themorning@nytimes.com).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

PHOTO: Returning to school after the mask mandate was lifted in New York City. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Andres Kudacki for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***A Noisy, Filthy City Hangout Is Back. Cheers to That.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:647D-RN91-DXY4-X1M9-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4; RIO DE JANEIRO DISPATCH

**Length:** 1262 words

**Byline:** By Jack Nicas and Dado Galdieri

**Body**

RIO DE JANEIRO -- The Blowfish's Den was a mess. The tables were crowded with empty bottles, dirty plates were stacked up and the bathroom had run out of soap.

The bar's owner, Marco Antônio Targino, was drinking a beer in the corner. ''For those who like filth,'' he said with a smile, ''this here is a beauty.''

Out front, the cobblestone alley was packed with unmasked revelers, swaying and singing around a makeshift samba band. It was the biggest crowd since the start of the pandemic, and Mr. Targino was soaking it all in.

''It feels like I'm alive again,'' he said. ''I didn't die.''

Neither did his bar. The pandemic lockdowns and lost sales nearly killed the place, and the hundreds of drinking spots like it. But now, in one of the clearest signs that Rio de Janeiro is returning to something like normal, the city's ''dirty feet'' are back.

That's the name for the hole-in-the-wall joints that spill out onto Rio's sidewalks with plastic tables and chairs, offering cold beer and something fried at almost any hour of the day. Known as ''pé sujo'' in Portuguese, a dirty foot is a cross between a dive bar and a greasy spoon, where the grit and grime are part of the charm. The countertops are rusty, the prices cut-rate, and shoes and shirts often optional.

''The big restaurants don't let you smoke. Here you can smoke almost anything,'' said Sandro Lima Rodrigues, a bald, goateed server at La Paris, a dirty foot where a breakfast of espresso and grilled bread smeared with processed cheese costs 90 cents.

''We're the essence of Rio,'' he added.

Yes, Rio de Janeiro has golden beaches, breathtaking views and its colorful Carnival, but many Cariocas, as its residents are known, agree that to discover their city's spirit, you need to experience a dirty foot.

''Rio is not a democratic place,'' said Marcelo Freixo, a history professor who now represents Rio in Brazil's Congress. ''But you can escape that inequality in a few places: the sambas, the beaches and the dive bars.''

The pandemic forced a quarter of Rio's restaurants and bars to close, according to a local trade group, and the city just set new rules restricting the unvaccinated from entering bars amid concerns over the Omicron variant. Yet, in a relief to many Cariocas, most of the dirty feet are still going strong.

Fernando Blower, a Rio bar owner who runs the trade group, attributed their resilience to the fact that many are family-run operations that got creative.

The Blowfish's Den, or Toca do Baiacú, sold art donated by a well-known cartoonist who regularly drinks at the bar. La Paris opened when the police weren't watching and sold takeout beer when they were. Confectionary and Bar Solange (that's one bar, and no, it doesn't make candy) hand-delivered plates of beef ribs and liver to its neighborhood regulars. All three kept paying their employees through the lockdowns, even without government assistance.

The Senate Warehouse, or Armazém Senado, sold toothpaste, toilet paper and bleach. The two brothers who own the place took out a roughly $5,000 loan and then restarted their samba nights at a time when the city still restricted gatherings. (Their decision made headlines when the mayor showed up -- and was photographed singing without a mask. He paid a fine.)

Mr. Targino, 64, first began drinking at what would become the Blowfish's Den in the 1980s after days working as a banker nearby. Over cheap beer and cachaça, he befriended the other regulars, including a local boat mechanic.

In 2007, the bar went up for sale. Worried it would turn into another gentrified restaurant, he bought it and renamed the place after a longtime waiter who he said resembled a blowfish. He sketched a new logo on cigarette papers: an overweight, beer-drinking fish.

''It was really filthy,'' Mr. Targino said. ''Deplorable. A latrine.''

''Now it's just a mess,'' he said.

To clean up the place, Mr. Targino hired the boat mechanic, Geraldo Serrador. Now the bar's janitor and handyman, he did not appreciate his boss's description of its hygiene.

''I'm worried right now there's a dirty glass in the kitchen,'' Mr. Serrador, 61, shouted over a samba band.

Dirty feet are close siblings of other types of casual bars, the boteco and botequim, which started as corner stores and derive their name from ''bodega.''

The origins of the term ''dirty foot'' aren't so clear. Some bar owners attribute it to poor clientele who wore only sandals or lacked shoes. Others said it was because customers used to spit on the floors, which the bars would clean with sawdust.

''You came out of there with your feet dirty,'' said Paulo Mussoi, a Rio journalist who has written a column about dirty feet for more than 20 years using the pen name ''Juarez Becoza.''

For decades, the bars were mostly for ***working-class*** men. Many even lacked women's bathrooms. But in the 1990s, Rio's middle class discovered dirty feet and boteco, and they quickly became fashionable, celebrated as hidden culinary gems.

The food in dirty feet bars shows influences from Portugal, West Africa and Brazil's Northeast. There are fried sardines, fried pork cracklings, pickled eggs, gizzards and stews made from cow's feet and oxtail. The bars have inspired imitators that mimic their low-key style but with higher prices. Cariocas call them ''clean feet.'' (It's an insult.)

Your average dirty foot is a neighborhood hangout that reflects the rhythms of Rio life. Take Confectionary and Bar Solange, in a residential section of Rio's middle-class Gloria neighborhood, south of downtown.

Pelé Joensson, 57, a Swedish immigrant, said he arrives most days around 6 a.m. to buy coffee and carry one of the bar's plastic chairs across the street to watch his neighborhood wake up. He then spends hours socializing.

''If you live alone, this is where you have your social life,'' he said.

By late morning, a waiter and cook known to everyone as ''Toninho,'' or Little Tony, put out fresh pork stew ($3 a plate). Three construction workers on break leaned against the other end of the bar, sipping soda. Hours later, neighbors celebrated a local doorman's birthday with cake and a raffle for frozen cod.

By nightfall, the scene got louder. Customers pulled the flimsy plastic chairs from a stack by the door and added them to widening circles of friends. Each group shared one 20-ounce bottle of beer ($1.40) at a time, split into small glasses. The approach is designed to keep anyone from drinking warm beer, sacrilege in Brazil. The bottles sit in snug coolers known as ''little shirts,'' which, in Portuguese, is slang for a condom.

One particularly boisterous group included a taxi driver, a real estate agent, one of the first transgender executives at Unilever, and a retired salesman in leather pants.

''What makes a dirty foot?'' asked the real estate agent, Luiz Felipe Cavalcante. ''Beer, food, people, friendship, soccer. Oh, and women, women!''

Aparecida Araújo, a cement saleswoman, chimed in with another missing ingredient: ''Drunks talking nonsense.''

Mr. Targino, the Blowfish's Den owner, said that what defines a dirty foot is not its food or drinks, but its laid-back ethos.

''If you take a pig, bring it into your house, bathe it, put a bow around its neck and leave it in your backyard, what's it going to do? It'll throw itself in the mud and get dirty all over again,'' he said. ''I want to go where I feel good, have my shirt open and wear flip flops. That's where I'm in my natural habitat, just like that healthy little pig.''

Breno Salvador contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/03/world/americas/rio-de-janeiro-bars.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/03/world/americas/rio-de-janeiro-bars.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top left: Marco Antônio Targino, who owns the Blowfish's Den in Rio de Janeiro, a gritty hole-in-the-wall joint known as a ''dirty foot,'' or ''pé sujo'' in Portuguese

Daniela Leme and Margot, patrons at another bar in the city

Geraldo Serrador, the janitor and handyman at the Blowfish's Den.

Samba jam sessions have resumed at the Senate Warehouse, or Armazém Senado, a dirty foot in downtown Rio. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DADO GALDIERI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Is My Little Library Contributing to the Gentrification of My Black Neighborhood?; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:647F-5BP1-DXY4-X25N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 5, 2021 Sunday 23:32 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1324 words

**Byline:** Erin Aubry Kaplan

**Highlight:** Thoughts I had as I watched a white couple browsing books.

**Body**

INGLEWOOD, Calif. — About a year ago, I decided to build a library on my front lawn. By library, I mean one of those little free-standing library boxes that dot lawns in bedroom communities around the country — charming, birdhouse-like structures filled with books that invite neighbors and passers-by to take a book, or donate a book, or both.

I’d spotted the phenomenon on walks through upscale, largely white neighborhoods around Los Angeles and immediately resolved to bring it home to Inglewood. Why not? A library is not so much a marker of wealth and whiteness as it is an affirmation of community and cozy, small-town camaraderie that Inglewood, a mostly Black and Latino city in southwestern Los Angeles County, has plenty of. We deserved no less.

Prepandemic, [*Inglewood was gentrifying*](https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-inglewood-gentrification-rent-crenshaw-rams-stadium-20190410-htmlstory.html), another reason I’d been inspired to do the library: I wanted to signal to my longtime neighbors that we had our own ideas about improvement, and could carry them out in our own way. There are organizations that help people build these little libraries, but I did mine independently. I envisioned it as a place for my neighbors to stay connected during the pandemic. The wooden post on which the library sat was a stake in the ground, literally.

The response to the library was slow at first — it was the first in the area, and some people mistook it for a birdhouse, or a mailbox. But I was pleased to soon see people stopping by to browse and take home books.

Then one morning, glancing out my front window, I saw a young white couple stopped at the library. Instantly, I was flooded with emotions — astonishment, and then resentment, and then astonishment at my resentment. It all converged into a silent scream in my head of, Get off my lawn!

The moment jolted me into realizing some things I’m not especially proud of. I had set out this library for all who lived here, and even for those who didn’t, in theory. I would not want to restrict anyone from looking at it or taking books, based on race or anything else. But while I had seen white newcomers to the neighborhood here and there, the truth was, I hadn’t set it out to appeal to white residents.

Now that they were in front of my house, curious about this new neighborhood attraction, I didn’t know how to feel. By bringing this modern cultural artifact here from white neighborhoods, had I set myself up, set up the neighborhood? Was I contributing to gentrification and sending the wrong message about how I wanted the neighborhood to be?

What I resented was not this specific couple. It was their whiteness, and my feelings of helplessness at not knowing how to maintain the integrity of a Black space that I had created. I was seeing up close how fragile that space can be, how its meaning can be changed in my mind, even by people who have no conscious intention to change it. That library was on my lawn, but for that moment it became theirs. I built it and drove it into the ground because I love books and always have. But I suddenly felt that I could not own even this, something that was clearly and intimately mine.

As the couple wandered on, no books in hand, I thought about how fragile my feeling of being settled is. It didn’t matter that I own my house, as many of my neighbors do. Generations of racism, Jim Crow, disinvestment and redlining have meant that we don’t really control our own spaces. In that moment, I had been overwhelmed by a kind of fear, one that’s connected to the historical reality of Black people being run off the land they lived on, expelled by force, high prices or some whim of white people.

One of the most famous examples of that displacement happened several miles south of Inglewood. Bruce’s Beach, a Black-owned resort, once thrived along the coast of tony Manhattan Beach, until it [*was seized by eminent domain in 1924*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/18/us/bruces-beach-manhattan-california.html) by white city officials. They claimed they needed the land for a public park, but they didn’t build one for more than three decades. It’s clear they simply wanted the bustling holiday and leisure spot and the Black people it attracted gone. That parcel was recently [*returned to the descendants*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-09-30/photos-bruces-beach-property-returned-to-family) of Willa and Charles Bruce, who owned it — an extraordinary example of reparation, but an isolated one that still leaves the problem of Black unsettledness intact.

When my uncle, Paul Aubry, bought a house in Los Angeles in the predominantly white, ***working-class*** South Central neighborhood of the late 1940s, he wasn’t just buying a house; he was putting his stake in the ground, making his claim to the American ideal of belonging.

My uncle’s claim was rejected. A cross was burned on his lawn. As more Black families moved to the neighborhood, white people moved out in droves. The ground shifted under Uncle Paul’s feet. That white flight forged the chiefly Black and brown South Central of popular imagination and created similar demographics in other city neighborhoods across the country, including Inglewood.

It has to be said that there’s nothing inherently wrong with the Black-, Latino- and immigrant-rich neighborhoods that resulted from those flights. Community has always been our greatest asset, and its greatest source of capital. But now, as younger generations of white people [*move back to the neighborhoods*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/27/upshot/diversity-housing-maps-raleigh-gentrification.html) their parents shunned, in the phenomenon I call “white return,” it all suddenly feels up for grabs — again.

Instead of the blatant racism of what happened at Bruce’s Beach, we now have gentrification. It’s perfectly legal, but ultimately it causes the same racial displacement, on a much larger scale. The stratospheric rise in home prices alone has meant that the Black population of Los Angeles has been declining for decades, and has dropped to [*around 9 percent*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/losangelescitycalifornia).

The anti-gentrification strategy articulated by many of my longtime Black neighbors is this: Stay put. Don’t sell. Stand your ground. While that is possible for some of us (I won’t be selling because, really, where would I go?), it’s not for everyone, and it’s not a permanent solution. It also doesn’t solve the bigger crisis of belonging.

Ultimately, the moment with the couple I saw through my window raised for me a serious moral question about how I should act. Screaming at them to get off my lawn would be adopting the values of the oppressor, as my racial-justice activist father used to say. Yet my resentment was not analogous to the white resentment of generations past (and of now, I’d argue). White resentment has always been legitimized, and reinforced, by legal and cultural dominance, a dynamic evident in everything from the rise of Trumpism to the current battle against the [*political boogeyman of critical race theory*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/30/opinion/virginia-election-2021.html).

My little library, affirming as it is, is also an illusion; it can’t save our neighborhood. Still, in 2021, it has become increasingly important to maintain and grow Black space, on its own terms. As I watched the white couple peruse my little library, the most complicated feeling of all was the brief, bittersweet satisfaction I took in watching them drawn to my lawn, and to my idea. It felt empowering and hopeful on the one hand, defeating on the other.

So what message do I hope they took from my library? The same message I wanted to send to the rest of my neighbors, my community: Black presence has value — in every sense of the word, and on its own terms.

That value should make the casual displacement of Black people untenable, even immoral. And that will take much more than a little library to rectify.

Erin Aubry Kaplan ([*@aubry\_erin*](https://twitter.com/aubry_erin)) is a journalist and author who has lived in Inglewood, Calif., since 2001.

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PHOTO: The author in her home in Inglewood, Calif. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TERGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Revolutionary Model Turned Uncompromising Painter; Critic’s Pick***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63WM-YMN1-DXY4-X06D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 20, 2021 Wednesday 14:45 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 1256 words

**Byline:** Will Heinrich

**Highlight:** Suzanne Valadon taught herself to paint while modeling for Renoir and Toulouse-Lautrec. A revelatory new survey at the Barnes Collection shows what she learned.

**Body**

Suzanne Valadon taught herself to paint while modeling for Renoir and Toulouse-Lautrec. A revelatory new survey at the Barnes Collection shows what she learned.

PHILADELPHIA — It’s hard to believe that “Suzanne Valadon: Model, Painter, Rebel” at the Barnes Foundation is the first American museum show for this sensational French painter.

Born in Bessines-sur-Gartempe and raised in Paris by a single mother, Valadon (1865-1938) began drawing at the age of 9. After a few unsuccessful career attempts, which she later claimed included a circus act, Valadon began modeling for artists in her teens. Gustav Wertheimer made her a siren, floating naked from the wave to entrap sailors with a kiss. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, who painted her hung over, nicknamed her “Suzanna” — a reference to a biblical parable about voyeurism and lust that she liked so much she dropped her actual birth name, Marie-Clémentine.

At 18 she gave birth to a son, whom her friend Miguel Utrillo later endowed with a surname, though he may not have been the father. (The child, Maurice Utrillo, also became a successful painter, though he struggled with alcohol and mental illness.) Valadon sold drawings and etchings, befriended Edgar Degas, and carefully studied the painters who painted her, learning from the way they worked. Just shy of 30, she made an advantageous marriage that let her give up modeling and devote her time to drawing. But she didn’t pick up a paintbrush herself till 1909, at 44, when she left her businessman husband for the painter André Utter, a friend and contemporary of her son’s.

Once she did start painting, Valadon exhibited widely, and sold enough to support her unconventional family. But in the longer term her art was overshadowed by her son’s career, diminished by the usual misogyny and obscured by prurient interest in her lifestyle. The show at the Barnes, curated by Nancy Ireson, is a thrilling tour of her portraits, nudes, still lifes and drawings.

At the Barnes, temporary shows appear in a sequestered space adjoining the permanent collection, which cannot be altered. (As it happens, the Museum founder, Albert Barnes, overlooked Valadon completely, though he did collect Utrillo.) But with 36 paintings, many of them large, and 14 works on paper, the Valadon show feels like a small museum in itself.

We first meet the artist as a model for Renoir, Pierre Puvis de Chavannes and others in color reproductions as well as in four actual canvases, including “The Kiss of the Siren” and she comes through as charming, passionate and uncommonly self-aware. Only when you enter the exhibit’s second room and encounter her own work do you see how uncompromising she was.

Her bohemian lifestyle, with its artist lovers and second marriage to a man two decades her junior, could have resulted as much from circumstance as from inclination. As Martha Lucy, an art historian, put it in her catalog essay, speaking of Valadon’s modeling, “***working-class*** status meant that there were fewer moral impediments to pursuing such disreputable employment.”

But Valadon’s art was certainly rebellious. Her 1909 “Adam and Eve,” a moody, greenish-gray self portrait with Utter that shows them plucking fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, may have been the first full male nude ever painted by a European woman; 11 years later, to show it at the Salon des Indépendants, Valadon had to add a leafy loincloth. Her frank and unsexy treatment of other nudes, her candid self portraits, the defiantly bored and irritated expressions she often gave her models, even the trousers on the cigarette-smoking woman lounging across “The Blue Room,” all do count as brazen steps forward for their time.

Still, the real revelation is the shocking visual splendor of Valadon’s work. And that all starts with her precise but powerful line, as the exhibit makes clear in a tantalizing handful of drawings and prints.

Utrillo steps naked out of a washtub in “Maurice and His Grandmother,” a black crayon drawing from around 1890. His arms extend forward but bend back again to hold a towel behind his shoulders, and his head tilts down in concentration. Behind him, Valadon’s mother, his caretaker, squats on the floor half-drawn, an apparition.

Though Valadon contours her son beautifully, capturing the tautness of his belly and the turn of his foot, even conveying the childish smoothness of his skin, the line itself is slow and thick. The boy stands out like a paper doll come to life, but only so far — the smoldering line that cuts him out of the scene also welds him back in.

When Valadon finally began painting, she carried on this sublimated conflict, the mesmerizing mix of alienation and claustrophobia that she plumbed in her drawings. She and Utter look happy enough in “Adam and Eve” — at least “Eve” does — even if their naked bodies are a bit wan and underfed. And though Valadon’s color choices rely on Cézanne-like contrasts, with sickly green undertones for her lover and splotchy faces for both of them, they do add up to an inviting surface. But the picture’s crisp outlines still give it a tense, glassy feeling, like a tightly set mosaic.

In a 1912 “Family Portrait,” it’s the content that’s unnerving. Valadon’s son slumps over disconsolately; her elderly mother stares passively; her tall young lover earnestly occupies his corner; while Valadon herself looks out warily, her mind somewhere else. (She looks, naturally enough, like a woman gazing into a mirror.) Behind them hangs a mustard-colored curtain that emphasizes the waxy stiffness of their faces. They seem about as familiar as strangers in an elevator.

In “Marie Coca and Her Daughter Gilberte,” the artist simply twists her subjects in opposite directions. Mother sits in an armchair facing left; daughter sits on a cushion on the floor, her head against her mother’s knees; and a doll sits on the daughter’s lap, staring straight down the middle. The greenish shadow of the daughter’s red velvet cushion is echoed in the papered wall, which recedes at another sharp angle, and her flaring cheeks are the brightest spot in a room of black clothing and brown upholstery. At first sight, the surface is as placid as any bourgeois drawing room — but it roils, on any closer inspection, with hostility and violence.

In later paintings, Valadon juxtaposes clashing patterns of vibrant color to create a different, less specifically anchored sort of tension. She even lets her wiry outlines evaporate occasionally in gorgeous still lifes of flower arrangements. But the same low hum of discord continues. And nearly all these elements — the patterns, the vivid characterization of women, the self-aware discontent — come together in “The Blue Room.”

A young woman in a pink camisole and striped pants, her black hair pulled back, stretches at full length on a bed covered with an ivy-patterned blue blanket. Matching drapes hang down like theater curtains on either side, and an unlit cigarette sticks straight out of her lips, brazen as a cigar. At the center of a maelstrom of color, on display but in command, she’s perfectly at ease.

Suzanne Valadon: Model, Painter, Rebel

Through Jan. 9, Barnes Foundation, 2025 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia; 215.278.7000, barnesfoundation.org.

PHOTOS: Works by Suzanne Valadon, from left: “Family Portrait” (1912); “The Blue Room” (1923); “Marie Coca and Her Daughter Gilberte” (1913). (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTIST RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK; RMN-GRAND PALAIS/ART RESOURCE; ARTIST RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK; DEA PICTURE LIBRARY/ART RESOURCE)

**Load-Date:** October 22, 2021

**End of Document**



[***When the Majority Becomes a Plurality***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63FN-8PH1-DXY4-X2XH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 25, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 22; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1244 words

**Byline:** By Justin Gest

**Body**

In 2015, the Census Bureau published a report projecting that by 2044, the United States' white majority would become merely a white plurality: immigration and fertility trends would lead to America's ethnic and racial minorities outnumbering its white population.

Since then, for a certain subset of Americans, each annual release by the bureau -- neutral, nonpartisan researchers who produce deliberately staid reports -- has become a sort of countdown to the white apocalypse. Worse, we now talk about cross-racial fertility rates Darwinistically, as if the census were monitoring a population of elephant seals in competition for a rookery.

In a country whose history has been shaped by the boundaries among racial groups, this projected demographic shift is undoubtedly important. Given the racialized nature of our political parties, it also has electoral consequences. However, if we are to overcome the division that defined our past, we must stop reinforcing the salience of those boundaries in the future.

I am not arguing that the Census Bureau should stop collecting this valuable data, à la France's farcical attempt to be secular and race blind. Rather, I am arguing that we should place far less stock in the importance of the results to the future of our country. There is no future in which white people disappear from America, but there is also no future in which the understanding of whiteness stays the same.

The truth is, just as populations in the United States ebb and flow, the salience of racial and ethnic identities emerges and disappears. From 1845 to 1854, an influx of Irish people arrived on the East Coast that outnumbered immigrants from all other countries since 1776 combined. The resulting backlash created a wave of support for the xenophobic Know Nothing movement and its nativist American Party. Today, of course, being Irish is a social boundary mostly reduced to the front of Urban Outfitters T-shirts.

Our history shows that America's demographic boundaries evolve with the country's composition. No group goes extinct or disappears; it just gets absorbed into new ways that people define community and feel belonging.

Around the turn of the 20th century, American leaders began to recognize the accumulating effects of immigration and civil rights. After the arrival of millions of Irish, the 15th Amendment enfranchised millions of African American men in 1870. And in subsequent decades, the United States admitted millions of Italians, Jews and other ethnicities, with their foreign languages, religions and complexions. There was a gradual realization that the Anglo-Protestant orientation of whiteness was unlikely to sustain a dominant majority indefinitely.

Soon to win the White House, Theodore Roosevelt found these developments alarming. With much of the ''competition between the races reducing itself to the warfare of the cradle,'' he wrote in 1894, ''no race has any chance to win a great place unless it consists of good breeders as well as of good fighters.''

But by the time America's initial ''majority minority'' milestone would have been reached, whiteness had been reinterpreted to incorporate the Irish, Italians, Jews and Slavs, such that the milestone was effectively postponed. The country broadened the definition of white people enough to maintain power over African Americans and Asian people (and later Hispanics).

It is possible that we are now in the process of similarly altering our conception of whiteness again. Many Hispanics identify as white, and marriages between Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites make up more than 40 percent of recent interracial marriages. That may be enough to artificially postpone America's majority minority milestone again and reassure the millions of ''white'' Americans who feel threatened by the increasing status and power of today's ethnic minorities.

Stoking fears of white decline reinforces the myth that this whiteness always included all who now identify with it -- as if the Irish had never been demonized, as if Italians had never endured discrimination, as if Jews had never been excluded. Through a historical lens, being white in America today is like belonging to a once-exclusive social club that had to loosen its membership criteria to stay afloat.

Because of the status white people retain in American society, a degree of privilege and belonging still awaits those who can claim it. People who identify as white hold disproportionate power and resources today, and this pernicious reality seems unlikely to change even if white people do become a 49 percent plurality in about two decades. And there is precious little evidence of real solidarity among America's diverse minority ethnic groups. So a 51 percent pan-minority share is unlikely to yield any new majority status without a new pan-ethnic sense of community.

Despite his susceptibility to eugenics and racial theories of supremacy, Roosevelt also offers us a way forward. His American nationalism was defiantly civic -- rather than only ethnic or racial -- in nature.

In his narrative histories published from 1885 to 1894, Roosevelt argued that as European immigrants were assimilated, their heritages were being absorbed into the American body, fusing Americans into a single people forged in the ''crucible'' of the frontier. The acts of claiming and developing land and defending it against the forces of nature all constituted rites of passage that transformed foreigners into Americans.

In Roosevelt's understanding, Americans were born through no document; they were made by their encounters with the wilderness and their cultivation of strength, individualism and democratic community -- their commitment to a set of principles. For him, the new ethnicities admitted into the United States were not entitled to their American identity; it was to be earned.

There is no frontier anymore, but the grind of modern capitalism is just as stern a forge for fashioning American identity. In counting the American people, the Census Bureau may distinguish between Black, white, Asian and Hispanic, but it indiscriminately recognizes them all as fellow Americans -- as people who count and therefore must be counted.

And even if the Census Bureau's categories reinforce the racial boundaries that too often divide American society, these categories are also starting to show signs of their mutability. Underreported, the number of mixed-race Americans increased nearly threefold in the past decade alone; 80 percent of intermarriages in the United States today unite non-Hispanic white partners with members of an ethnic or a racial minority.

Older generations may still be focused on century-old divisions, but younger Americans are starting to blur them. Future Americans will identify with new communities. May they be as broad and inclusive as possible.

Justin Gest (@\_JustinGest) is an associate professor of policy and government at George Mason University's Schar School of Policy and Government. He is the author of ''The New Minority: White ***Working Class*** Politics in an Age of Immigration and Inequality'' and the forthcoming book ''Majority Minority.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/24/opinion/us-census-majority-minority.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/24/opinion/us-census-majority-minority.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSEPH PREZIOSO/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** August 25, 2021

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[***What the ‘Majority Minority’ Shift Really Means for America; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63FK-H6V1-DXY4-X2KM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 24, 2021 Tuesday 14:21 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1246 words

**Byline:** Justin Gest

**Highlight:** The census should collect data about race. But we should stop obsessing over it.

**Body**

In 2015, the [*Census*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/28/us/detroit-census-mike-duggan.html) Bureau published [*a report*](https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p25-1143.pdf) projecting that by 2044, the United States’ white majority would become merely a white plurality: [*immigration*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/08/20/key-findings-about-u-s-immigrants/) and [*fertility trends*](https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/population-changes-nations-diversity.html) would lead to America’s ethnic and racial minorities outnumbering its white population.

Since then, for a certain subset of Americans, each annual release by the bureau — neutral, nonpartisan researchers who produce deliberately staid reports — has become a sort of countdown to the white apocalypse. Worse, we now talk about cross-racial fertility rates Darwinistically, as if the census were monitoring a population of elephant seals in competition for a rookery.

In a country whose history has been shaped by the [*boundaries*](https://wwnorton.com/books/the-color-of-law/) among racial groups, this projected demographic shift is undoubtedly important. Given the [*racialized*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/27/opinion/trump-obama-race.html) nature of our political parties, it also has electoral consequences. However, if we are to [*overcome the division*](https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2021/02/03/how-biden-can-unify-america-465241) that defined our past, we must stop reinforcing the salience of those boundaries in the future.

I am not arguing that the Census Bureau should stop collecting this valuable data, à la France’s [*farcical*](https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2020/07/france-race-racism-grande-ecoles/613924/) attempt to be secular and race blind. Rather, I am arguing that we should place far less stock in the importance of the results to the future of our country. There is no future in which white people disappear from America, but there is also no future in which the understanding of whiteness stays the same.

The truth is, just as populations in the United States ebb and flow, the salience of racial and ethnic identities emerges and disappears. From 1845 to 1854, an [*influx*](https://global.oup.com/academic/product/expelling-the-poor-9780190619213?cc=us&amp;lang=en&amp;) of Irish people arrived on the East Coast that outnumbered immigrants from all other countries since 1776 combined. The resulting backlash created a wave of support for the xenophobic Know Nothing movement and its nativist American Party. Today, of course, being Irish is a social boundary mostly reduced to the front of Urban Outfitters [*T-shirts*](https://www.urbanoutfitters.com/fr-ca/shop/tmd-everybody-loves-an-ir?quantity=1).

Our history shows that America’s demographic boundaries evolve with the country’s composition. No group goes extinct or disappears; it just gets absorbed into new ways that people define community and feel [*belonging*](https://belongingbeginswithus.org/).

Around the turn of the 20th century, American leaders began to recognize the accumulating effects of immigration and civil rights. After the arrival of millions of Irish, the 15th Amendment enfranchised millions of African American men in 1870. And in subsequent decades, the United States admitted millions of Italians, Jews and other ethnicities, with their foreign languages, religions and complexions. There was a gradual [*realization*](https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/drawing-the-global-colour-line/6086724C986974CCE003AC628986E36F) that the Anglo-Protestant orientation of whiteness was unlikely to sustain a dominant majority indefinitely.

Soon to win the White House, Theodore Roosevelt found these developments alarming. With much of the “competition between the races reducing itself to the warfare of the cradle,” he [*wrote*](https://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/national-life-and-character/) in 1894, “no race has any chance to win a great place unless it consists of good breeders as well as of good fighters.”

But by the time America’s initial “[*majority minority*](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1369183X.2020.1774113)” milestone would have been reached, whiteness had been reinterpreted to incorporate the Irish, Italians, Jews and Slavs, such that the milestone was effectively postponed. The country [*broadened*](https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/drawing-the-global-colour-line/6086724C986974CCE003AC628986E36F) the definition of white people enough to maintain power over African Americans and Asian people (and later Hispanics).

It is possible that we are now in the process of similarly altering our conception of whiteness again. Many Hispanics [*identify as white*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/22/upshot/more-hispanics-declaring-themselves-white.html), and marriages between Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites make up more than [*40 percent*](https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691201634/the-great-demographic-illusion) of recent interracial marriages. That may be enough to artificially postpone America’s [*majority minority*](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1369183X.2020.1774113) milestone again and reassure the millions of “white” Americans who feel threatened by the increasing status and power of today’s ethnic minorities.

Stoking fears of white decline reinforces the myth that this whiteness always included all who now identify with it — as if the Irish had never been demonized, as if Italians had never endured discrimination, as if Jews had never been excluded. Through a historical lens, being white in America today is like belonging to a once-exclusive social club that had to loosen its membership criteria to stay afloat.

Because of the status white people retain in American society, a degree of privilege and belonging still awaits those who can claim it. People who identify as white hold disproportionate [*power and resources*](https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/2020/06/18/12-charts-racial-disparities-persist-across-wealth-health-and-beyond/3201129001/) today, and this pernicious reality seems unlikely to change even if white people do become a 49 percent plurality in about two decades. And there is precious [*little evidence*](https://www.ipsos.com/en-us/knowledge/society/The-Fault-Lines-of-America) of real solidarity among America’s diverse minority ethnic groups. So a 51 percent pan-minority share is unlikely to yield any new majority status without a new pan-ethnic sense of community.

Despite his susceptibility to eugenics and racial theories of supremacy, Roosevelt also offers us a way forward. His American nationalism was defiantly civic — rather than only ethnic or racial — in nature.

In his narrative histories published from 1885 to 1894, Roosevelt argued that as European immigrants were [*assimilated*](https://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/national-life-and-character/), their heritages were being absorbed into the American body, fusing Americans into a single people forged in the “crucible” of the frontier. The acts of claiming and developing land and defending it against the forces of nature all constituted rites of passage that transformed foreigners into Americans.

In Roosevelt’s understanding, Americans were born through no document; they were made by their encounters with the wilderness and their cultivation of strength, individualism and democratic community — their commitment to a set of principles. For him, the new ethnicities admitted into the United States were not entitled to their American identity; it was to be earned.

There is no frontier anymore, but the grind of modern capitalism is just as stern a forge for fashioning American identity. In counting the American people, the Census Bureau may distinguish between Black, white, Asian and Hispanic, but it indiscriminately recognizes them all as fellow Americans — as people who count and therefore must be counted.

And even if the Census Bureau’s categories reinforce the racial boundaries that too often divide American society, these categories are also starting to show signs of their mutability. Underreported, the number of mixed-race Americans increased nearly [*threefold*](https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/population-changes-nations-diversity.html) in the past decade alone; [*80 percent*](https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691201634/the-great-demographic-illusion) of intermarriages in the United States today unite non-Hispanic white partners with members of an ethnic or a racial minority.

Older generations may still be focused on century-old divisions, but younger Americans are starting to blur them. Future Americans will identify with new communities. May they be as broad and inclusive as possible.

Justin Gest ([*@\_JustinGest*](https://twitter.com/_JustinGest)) is an associate professor of policy and government at George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government. He is the author of “The New Minority: White ***Working Class*** Politics in an Age of Immigration and Inequality” and the forthcoming book “Majority Minority.”

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[***Samba, Cachaça and Pickled Eggs: ‘Dirty Feet’ Bars Are ‘Essence of Rio’; Rio de Janeiro Dispatch***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6472-8W61-JBG3-60TD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 3, 2021 Friday 09:12 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; americas

**Length:** 1321 words

**Byline:** Jack Nicas and Dado Galdieri

**Highlight:** A cross between a dive bar and a greasy spoon, Rio de Janeiro’s beloved (and proudly filthy) hole-in-the wall joints are some of the most democratic spaces in a deeply unequal city.

**Body**

RIO DE JANEIRO — The Blowfish’s Den was a mess. The tables were crowded with empty bottles, dirty plates were stacked up and the bathroom had run out of soap.

The bar’s owner, Marco Antônio Targino, was drinking a beer in the corner. “For those who like filth,” he said with a smile, “this here is a beauty.”

Out front, the cobblestone alley was packed with unmasked revelers, swaying and singing around a makeshift samba band. It was the biggest crowd since the start of the pandemic, and Mr. Targino was soaking it all in.

“It feels like I’m alive again,” he said. “I didn’t die.”

Neither did his bar. The pandemic lockdowns and lost sales nearly killed the place, and the hundreds of drinking spots like it. But now, in one of the clearest signs that Rio de Janeiro is returning to something like normal, the city’s “dirty feet” are back.

That’s the name for the hole-in-the-wall joints that spill out onto Rio’s sidewalks with plastic tables and chairs, offering cold beer and something fried at almost any hour of the day. Known as “pé sujo” in Portuguese, a dirty foot is a cross between a dive bar and a greasy spoon, where the grit and grime are part of the charm. The countertops are rusty, the prices cut-rate, and shoes and shirts often optional.

“The big restaurants don’t let you smoke. Here you can smoke almost anything,” said Sandro Lima Rodrigues, a bald, goateed server at La Paris, a dirty foot where a breakfast of espresso and grilled bread smeared with processed cheese costs 90 cents.

“We’re the essence of Rio,” he added.

Yes, Rio de Janeiro has golden beaches, breathtaking views and its colorful Carnival, but many Cariocas, as its residents are known, agree that to discover their city’s spirit, you need to experience a dirty foot.

“Rio is not a democratic place,” said Marcelo Freixo, a history professor who now represents Rio in Brazil’s Congress. “But you can escape that inequality in a few places: the sambas, the beaches and the dive bars.”

The pandemic forced a quarter of Rio’s restaurants and bars to close, according to a local trade group, and the city just [*set new rules*](https://www.cnnbrasil.com.br/nacional/prefeitura-do-rj-recua-e-nao-vai-cobrar-passaporte-da-vacina-em-taxis-e-shoppings/) restricting the unvaccinated from entering bars amid concerns over the Omicron variant. Yet, in a relief to many Cariocas, most of the dirty feet are still going strong.

Fernando Blower, a Rio bar owner who runs the trade group, attributed their resilience to the fact that many are family-run operations that got creative.

The Blowfish’s Den, or Toca do Baiacú, sold art donated by a well-known cartoonist who regularly drinks at the bar. La Paris opened when the police weren’t watching and sold takeout beer when they were. Confectionary and Bar Solange (that’s one bar, and no, it doesn’t make candy) hand-delivered plates of beef ribs and liver to its neighborhood regulars. All three kept paying their employees through the lockdowns, even without government assistance.

The Senate Warehouse, or Armazém Senado, sold toothpaste, toilet paper and bleach. The two brothers who own the place took out a roughly $5,000 loan and then restarted their samba nights at a time when the city still restricted gatherings. (Their decision made headlines when the mayor showed up — and was [*photographed singing without a mask*](https://revistaforum.com.br/politica/errei-e-me-desculpo-diz-eduardo-paes-apos-cantar-em-roda-de-samba-sem-mascara/). He [*paid a fine*](https://g1.globo.com/rj/rio-de-janeiro/noticia/2021/05/19/paes-e-multado-por-ficar-sem-mascara-em-bar-no-centro-do-rio.ghtml).)

Mr. Targino, 64, first began drinking at what would become the Blowfish’s Den in the 1980s after days working as a banker nearby. Over cheap beer and cachaça, he befriended the other regulars, including a local boat mechanic.

In 2007, the bar went up for sale. Worried it would turn into another gentrified restaurant, he bought it and renamed the place after a longtime waiter who he said resembled a blowfish. He sketched a new logo on cigarette papers: an overweight, beer-drinking fish.

“It was really filthy,” Mr. Targino said. “Deplorable. A latrine.”

“Now it’s just a mess,” he said.

To clean up the place, Mr. Targino hired the boat mechanic, Geraldo Serrador. Now the bar’s janitor and handyman, he did not appreciate his boss’s description of its hygiene.

“I’m worried right now there’s a dirty glass in the kitchen,” Mr. Serrador, 61, shouted over a samba band.

Dirty feet are close siblings of other types of casual bars, the boteco and botequim, which started as corner stores and derive their name from “bodega.”

The origins of the term “dirty foot” aren’t so clear. Some bar owners attribute it to poor clientele who wore only sandals or lacked shoes. Others said it was because customers used to spit on the floors, which the bars would clean with sawdust.

“You came out of there with your feet dirty,” said Paulo Mussoi, a Rio journalist who has written [*a column about dirty feet*](https://vejario.abril.com.br/blog/beco-do-becoza/) for more than 20 years using the pen name “Juarez Becoza.”

For decades, the bars were mostly for ***working-class*** men. Many even lacked women’s bathrooms. But in the 1990s, Rio’s middle class discovered dirty feet and boteco, and they quickly became fashionable, celebrated as hidden culinary gems.

The food in dirty feet bars shows influences from Portugal, West Africa and Brazil’s Northeast. There are fried sardines, fried pork cracklings, pickled eggs, gizzards and stews made from cow’s feet and oxtail. The bars have inspired imitators that mimic their low-key style but with higher prices. Cariocas call them “clean feet.” (It’s an insult.)

Your average dirty foot is a neighborhood hangout that reflects the rhythms of Rio life. Take Confectionary and Bar Solange, in a residential section of Rio’s middle-class Gloria neighborhood, south of downtown.

Pelé Joensson, 57, a Swedish immigrant, said he arrives most days around 6 a.m. to buy coffee and carry one of the bar’s plastic chairs across the street to watch his neighborhood wake up. He then spends hours socializing.

“If you live alone, this is where you have your social life,” he said.

By late morning, a waiter and cook known to everyone as “Toninho,” or Little Tony, put out fresh pork stew ($3 a plate). Three construction workers on break leaned against the other end of the bar, sipping soda. Hours later, neighbors celebrated a local doorman’s birthday with cake and a raffle for frozen cod.

By nightfall, the scene got louder. Customers pulled the flimsy plastic chairs from a stack by the door and added them to widening circles of friends. Each group shared one 20-ounce bottle of beer ($1.40) at a time, split into small glasses. The approach is designed to keep anyone from drinking warm beer, sacrilege in Brazil. The bottles sit in snug coolers known as “little shirts,” which, in Portuguese, is slang for a condom.

One particularly boisterous group included a taxi driver, a real estate agent, [*one of the first transgender executives at Unilever*](https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/mercado/2021/06/primeira-transexual-da-unilever-educa-sobre-diversidade.shtml?origin=folha), and a retired salesman in leather pants.

“What makes a dirty foot?” asked the real estate agent, Luiz Felipe Cavalcante. “Beer, food, people, friendship, soccer. Oh, and women, women!”

Aparecida Araújo, a cement saleswoman, chimed in with another missing ingredient: “Drunks talking nonsense.”

Mr. Targino, the Blowfish’s Den owner, said that what defines a dirty foot is not its food or drinks, but its laid-back ethos.

“If you take a pig, bring it into your house, bathe it, put a bow around its neck and leave it in your backyard, what’s it going to do? It’ll throw itself in the mud and get dirty all over again,” he said. “I want to go where I feel good, have my shirt open and wear flip flops. That’s where I’m in my natural habitat, just like that healthy little pig.”

Breno Salvador contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top left: Marco Antônio Targino, who owns the Blowfish’s Den in Rio de Janeiro, a gritty hole-in-the-wall joint known as a “dirty foot,” or “pé sujo” in Portuguese; Daniela Leme and Margot, patrons at another bar in the city; Geraldo Serrador, the janitor and handyman at the Blowfish’s Den.; Samba jam sessions have resumed at the Senate Warehouse, or Armazém Senado, a dirty foot in downtown Rio. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DADO GALDIERI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 11, 2021

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[***I Was the Governor of Montana. My Fellow Democrats, You Need to Get Out of the City More.; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6470-8N51-DXY4-X4RY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1318 words

**Byline:** Steve Bullock

**Highlight:** It’s time to ditch the grand ideological narratives and talk to voters about their real needs.

**Body**

I take no joy in sounding the alarm, but I do so as a proud Democrat who has won three statewide races in a rural, red state — the Democrats are in trouble in rural America, and their struggles there could doom the party in 2022.

The warning signs were already there in 2020 when Democrats fell short in congressional and state races despite electing Joe Biden president. I know because I was on the ballot for U.S. Senate and lost. In the last decade and a half, we’ve seen Senate seats flip red in Arkansas, Indiana, North Dakota, and more. Democrats have lost [*more than 900*](https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2015/jan/25/cokie-roberts/have-democrats-lost-900-seats-state-legislatures-o/) state legislative seats around the country since 2008. And in this year’s governor’s races in Virginia and New Jersey, we saw the Democratic vote in rural areas plummet, [*costing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/us/elections/youngkin-wins-virginia-governor.html) the party one seat and [*nearly losing us*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/murphy-wins-nj-governor.html) the other. It was [*even worse*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/republican-election-results-new-york.html) for Democrats down ballot, as Democrats lost state legislative, county, and municipal seats.

The core problem is a familiar one — Democrats are out of touch with the needs of the ordinary voter. In 2021, voters watched Congress debate for months the cost of an infrastructure bill while holding a social spending bill hostage. Both measures contain policies that address the challenges Americans across the country face. Yet to anyone outside the Beltway, the infighting and procedural brinkmanship haven’t done a lick to meet their needs at a moment of health challenges, inflation and economic struggles. You had Democrats fighting Democrats, letting the perfect be the enemy of the good, and desperately needed progress was delayed. It’s no wonder rural voters think Democrats are not focused on helping them.

I was re-elected as Montana’s governor in 2016 at the same time Donald Trump took our state by more than 20 points. It’s never easy for Democrats to get elected in Montana, because Democrats here are running against not only the opponent on the ballot, but also against conservative media’s (and at times our own) typecast of the national Democratic brand: coastal, overly educated, elitist, judgmental, socialist — a bundle of identity groups and interests lacking any shared principles. The problem isn’t the candidates we nominate. It’s the perception of the party we belong to.

To overcome these obstacles, Democrats need to show up, listen, and respect voters in rural America by finding common ground instead of talking down to them. Eliminating student loans isn’t a top-of-mind matter for the two-thirds of Americans lacking a college degree. Being told that climate change is the most critical issue our nation faces rings hollow if you’re struggling to make it to the end of the month. And the most insulting thing is being told what your self-interest should be.

Get out of the cities and you will learn we have a libertarian streak, with a healthy distrust of government. We listen when folks talk about opportunity and fairness, not entitlements. We expect government to play a role in our having a fair shot at a better life, not solve all our problems.

We need to frame our policies, not in terms of grand ideological narratives, but around the material concerns of voters. Despite our differences and no matter where we live, we generally all want the same things: a decent job, a safe place to call home, good schools, clean air and water, and the promise of a better life for our kids and grandkids.

For me, that meant talking about Obamacare not as an entitlement, but as a way to save rural hospitals and keep local communities and small businesses afloat. It meant talking about expanding apprenticeships, not just lowering the costs of college. It meant framing public lands as a great equalizer and as a driver for small business. It meant talking about universal pre-K not as an abstract policy goal, but being essential for our children and for keeping parents in the work force. It meant talking about climate change not just as a crisis, but as an opportunity to create good jobs, preserve our outdoor heritage, and as a promise not to leave communities behind.

These lessons apply broadly, not just to swing states. We need to do the hard work of convincing voters that we are fighting for every American, regardless of party or where they live, or it’ll only get worse for us in the 2022 midterms and beyond.

It’s in the void of inaction and failure to solve problems real people face that racially tinged cultural fights, like we saw in Virginia, take hold. My children are in high school and have never heard of critical race theory — nor have their teachers. What voters want to know is that Democrats will fight for racial justice and to improve the lives of rural Americans, no matter the color of their skin. After all, that’s what we’ve always done.

In the parts of America that are completely rural, there are [*nine infants and toddlers*](https://americanprogress.org/article/understanding-infant-toddler-child-care-deserts/) for every day care slot, [*one in eight*](https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2019/04/health-insurance-rural-america.html) lacks health insurance, and for [*one in four*](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/99045/rental_housing_for_a_21st_century_rural_america.pdf), over half of income goes to rent. High-speed internet has eluded many parts of our country. Voters in my state may have grown cynical about the legislative process, infighting and eye-popping price tags in Washington, but enacting the Build Back Better bill, along with the bipartisan infrastructure bill, gives Democrats something to run on: proof that we have voters’ backs, including those who live in rural America.

It’s time for Democrats to get uncomfortable and go beyond friendly urban and suburban settings to hear directly from folks in small towns who are trying to run a business, pay the bills, and maintain access to health care. They have stories to tell and ideas to share, and we should listen. When then-candidate Barack Obama [*spent the Fourth of July*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/10/us/politics/10obama.html) 2008 in Butte, Mont., he didn’t go there because Butte was suddenly key to winning in November, but showing up there sent a loud and clear message to places like Butte all across our country that he gives a damn about us.

Butte and Scranton may be a long way from each other geographically, but they’re not that far apart in terms of ***working-class*** roots, values and attitudes. President Biden can help rural Americans know and believe Democrats are tackling the challenges they face. Democrats need to get off the polling and consultant calls, get into the community and engage voters directly: Do you have a decent job that covers the bills and leaves a little left over? Can you afford your home and pay for health care? Do you feel safe? Do you believe we are doing right for your kids, educationally, environmentally and economically? Do you see a path forward toward a better life for you and your family?

Fighting for every American means that, whether you live in Manhattan, N.Y. or Manhattan, Mont., you have an opportunity to climb the economic ladder and a temporary safety net to catch you if you stumble. Too often the Democratic Party comes off as a buffet line of policies, each prepared for a different group of voters. If we talk about — and work to address — the issues that people discuss around their kitchen table or at the fence line, the issues that fill endless hours of cable television become a hell of a lot less relevant. Our kitchen tables might look and feel different, but we need to learn to talk in a way that makes sense around everyone’s table.

Voters are facing real challenges — and so is our country. They need to know that Democrats are listening, working, and fighting for them. The voters deserve that level of respect and need to know we have their back.

Steve Bullock is a co-chair of American Bridge 21st Century. He was the governor of Montana from 2013 to 2021.

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[***In 100 Days as Mayor, Adams Cites Progress In the Face of Criticism***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:656G-0YG1-JBG3-652W-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Jeffery C. Mays and Dana Rubinstein

**Body**

On an unusually cold morning in late March, Mayor Eric Adams began his day visiting a child-care center in Queens. Roughly seven miles away, police officers in Brooklyn were carrying out his order to clear homeless encampments, tossing away tents and other belongings in a garbage truck as part of a new public safety initiative.

The mayor also held a jobs-related announcement with JetBlue and later attended the premiere of the Broadway show ''Plaza Suite.'' His day ended at Manhattan's newest office skyscraper, at an event promoting a credit card that encourages people to pay their rent with plastic, where he was photographed partying with the model Cara Delevingne.

It was Day 87 of the Adams administration, a day that reflected the new mayor's robust agenda and his early priorities. The homeless sweeps, criticized by advocates as uncaring and simplistic, represent a key part of his crime strategy to attack symbols of lawlessness. The star-studded events and jobs announcements are part of his business-friendly, cheerleader approach to governing.

Mr. Adams, in an interview at City Hall to discuss his first 100 days as mayor, insisted that addressing homelessness and attending to the city's nightlife were part of his job, and not in conflict with his image during the campaign as a champion of ***working-class*** New Yorkers.

''I got to feed my nightlife to get tourists back here -- a multibillion-dollar industry,'' he said. ''And so people who subscribe to the theory that 'OK, you're removing encampments, and so you now must sit at home and not be seen in the other aspects of your job,' that's just silly. My job is so multifaceted.''

Mr. Adams, who is known to work long hours and who revealed that he slept only four hours at night, said that his evening included another stop not listed on his public schedule.

''Now I left that event -- know what I did?'' he said. ''I went in the subway system and made sure that we were handing out information about being in a homeless shelter.''

His motto is ''Get Stuff Done,'' and Mr. Adams pointed to several accomplishments ahead of his 100th day on Sunday: creating new anti-gun police units and more beds at shelters, and expanding a summer school program to include 110,000 students and a youth jobs program to include 100,000 young people.

But Mr. Adams has also been contending with challenges that have few quick solutions, including the city's recovery from the coronavirus pandemic. On Sunday, the mayor's 100th day in office, his press secretary announced that Mr. Adams had tested positive for the virus and would be canceling public events for the week.

Crime has risen this year, and Mr. Adams has faced plenty of criticism over his policies and hiring decisions. He has not offered up detailed plans for more affordable housing or for the future of the gifted and talented program in city schools.

His relationship with the City Council also seems to be in question. The Council speaker recently castigated the mayor because three city agencies skipped a five-hour Council oversight hearing on a Bronx fire that killed 17 people. The speaker, Adrienne Adams, said that the agencies' absence ''leads me to presume that your administration does not treat this important topic with the full seriousness deserved.''

Other council members have taken issue with the mayor's proposed budget cuts, contending that they would hurt the city's most vulnerable residents and that the police units could harass Black and Latino residents.

But given his emphasis on criminal justice in his mayoral campaign, Mr. Adams's first term is likely to be judged on whether his administration can begin to lower crime -- a national issue that could prove difficult for him to control.

On Wednesday, the city's police commissioner announced new crime figures that showed a 36 percent increase in major crimes and a 16 percent rise in shootings over the past year.

Mr. Adams has recently deployed seven new anti-gun police units, one of the key elements of his anti-crime plan, and said last week that the units had taken nearly 30 guns off the streets.

''I do not get the grade that I deserve until we start seeing crime move in the right direction,'' Mr. Adams said in the interview at City Hall.

Mr. Adams, a former police captain, was immediately confronted by a spate of high-profile violent crimes in January, including the shooting deaths of two police officers in Manhattan and the death of a woman who was pushed in front of a train at the Times Square subway station.

Last month, the Police Department began to enforce so-called quality-of-life matters, a throwback to the city's embrace of ''broken windows'' policing -- enforcement of low-level offenses in an effort to prevent more serious crimes.

Mr. Adams also ordered the police to keep people from sheltering in the subway system and then followed up with his push to clear homeless encampments.

The progressive caucus in the City Council -- more than half of council members -- said that Mr. Adams had ''displayed cruelty'' with his homeless sweeps and asked the mayor to stop them. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has been a high-profile critic, raising alarm about his policing tactics and changes to solitary confinement at the Rikers Island jail.

Ms. Adams, the Council speaker, laid out a platform with her members to oppose some of the mayor's public-safety moves and called for increasing the number of beds for the homeless.

''Public safety can be achieved when we invest in ensuring our communities are strong, so we can actually prevent crime and violence before they occur,'' Ms. Adams said in a statement. ''A balanced and comprehensive approach to public safety that focuses more on prevention is the most effective.''

Other stumbling blocks quickly emerged. His push to restore the city's economy was tempered by the Omicron surge of the coronavirus. He took heat for certain hires, including a former police official who left the department while under federal investigation and three pastors who have been criticized for espousing homophobic views.

Mr. Adams, a vegan enthusiast who wrote a book about his plant-based diet, was even forced to acknowledge that he eats fish.

His frustrations with how his message is being received have occasionally surfaced at his news conferences. At one, he chided the City Hall press corps and threatened to stop taking off-topic questions, arguing that he was doing a ''darn good job.''

More recently, Mr. Adams warned staffers that anyone violating his ''discipline of message'' in front of a ''gotcha'' press corps would be fired, according to audio obtained by Politico. Mr. Adams confirmed in the interview at City Hall that he was now personally reviewing every city news release each morning and said that it took only about 15 minutes.

''We're going to be one team with one message,'' he said, adding that people who had their own personal agenda were ''not a fit'' for his administration.

The mayor's relationship with state leaders is also still something of a work in progress. While he has established a good rapport with Gov. Kathy Hochul -- something that his predecessor, Bill de Blasio, never managed with the former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo -- he has seen mixed results in Albany.

Michael Gianaris, the deputy majority leader of the State Senate who represents western Queens, said he had not had a conversation or a private meeting with Mr. Adams since the mayor took office. Mr. Gianaris said the mayor had instead appeared to rely on Governor Hochul for support.

''There are dozens of people in the State Legislature whose interests are to do what's best for New York City,'' he said. ''It's an odd strategy.''

Mr. Adams's lone trip to the State Capitol in February did not go well. The tabloids focused on pushback from state lawmakers on the mayor's request to toughen the state bail law, with The Daily News running a front-page headline that said: ''Eric 'Beat Up' in Crime Fight.''

The $220 billion state budget, which was agreed upon on Thursday, did include some of Mr. Adams's priorities, including some changes to the bail law, an expansion of the earned-income tax credit and extra funding for child care. He said in the interview at City Hall that he was disappointed that mayoral control of schools, another top priority, was not included in the budget, but added that he was confident it would be approved separately.

The mayor said he was proud of initiatives like expanding a doula program for new mothers to 500 families and vocational training for 90 foster care youth. Two ideas he talked about on the campaign trail -- universal dyslexia screenings in schools and a ''MyCity'' app to offer government services like food stamps in one place -- should arrive later this year or early next year, he said.

He has also courted business leaders to help with the city's economic recovery and has sought their input on how best to push the city forward as it emerges from the pandemic.

But at a time when the city is facing a worsening affordability crisis, the mayor has not issued a housing plan despite promising the State Legislature in February that he would do so. After he missed his own deadline, Rachel Fee, the executive director of the New York Housing Conference, checked in with his housing team to see if it had a new timeline, but it did not.

''For the last eight years, we've been producing upward of 20,000 units of affordable housing a year -- that's either new construction or preservation,'' Ms. Fee said. ''We're going to see a real slowdown.''

The pandemic remains a daunting challenge, with cases, fueled by the BA.2 subvariant of the coronavirus, rising again, from about 600 daily cases on average in early March to about 1,500 daily cases now.

Mr. Adams, who has been vocal about people returning to offices and removing mask requirements, may have to make difficult decisions about whether to bring back some restrictions. He already had to delay an announced move to lift a mask requirement for young preschool children.

The mayor holds a briefing with his health team every day at 8:30 a.m. to review the latest virus figures. On a recent call, Mr. Adams sat on his exercise bike while his advisers warned him about rising case levels that could peak in the next two or three weeks. He peppered them with questions, asking about how to spread public awareness on antiviral treatments.

''Is there any room to have those messages or notes in the backpacks of children they can take home to their families?'' the mayor asked a school official. The official said he would work on it.

Mr. Adams gave himself a grade of ''incomplete'' in a series of 100-day interviews on Friday.

''We are dealing with historical problems, and you're seeing them play out across our country with the increase in violence, the mental health issues that stemmed from Covid,'' he said on ''Good Day New York'' on Fox 5. ''But clearly, we're laying the foundation to move our city in the right direction.''

The mayor was upbeat at the interview at City Hall, saying that he did not find the job difficult after a lifetime of public service.

''These last 100 days -- there have been painful moments,'' he said. ''But there was nothing new for me and the totality of this life that I have lived, and so I don't find this job hard at all.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/10/nyregion/eric-adams-100-days.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/10/nyregion/eric-adams-100-days.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Eric Adams has served as a city cheerleader while taking an aggressive stance against homeless encampments. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AN RONG XU FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Eight Decades, One Album***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63F1-MVT1-DXY4-X0SF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1030 words

**Byline:** By Chris Colin

**Body**

''It's Never Too Late'' is a new series that tells the stories of people who decide to pursue their dreams on their own terms.

One day a couple years back, the woman who has long cleaned Russ Ellis's house in Berkeley, Calif., showed up with a new helper. Mr. Ellis did not think to ask her name.

Perhaps he forgot. Or maybe the recovering academic -- a celebrated architecture professor at the University of California, Berkeley, later a vice chancellor -- had other things on his mind. Whatever the case, the lapse rattled him.

''Russell Ellis, your father's mother was born into slavery,'' he said to himself. ''You have the right to invisibilize no one.''

He not only learned the woman's name then and there -- Eliza -- but pledged to sing it next time she came by. With that pledge, something strange shook loose in him.

''A song walked right in. Eliiiiiza. Eliiiiiiiiiza. And then the urge kept coming.''

Calling on experienced musician friends to help, Mr. Ellis spent the following year recording ''Songs from My Garden,'' his first-ever album. He was 85. (He turned 86 in June.) It consists of 11 original songs, released online with an extremely local label, in a variety of genres.

The experience delighted him at a new level -- he got to explore all new terrain, with a creative abandon he'd never known. Then, with that, he was delighted to conclude his brief recording career. (The following interview has been edited and condensed.)

Q: Tell me about your life before the ''Eliza'' moment.

A: I never bit down on any one thing. Over the years I've been an athlete, a parent, a friend, a lover. ''In the golden sandbox'' -- that's how I think of my life in California. As a kid growing up in the ***working-class*** Black world, you wanted a secure job at the post office or teaching school. But doing new things has always been part of my life.

After retiring, I got into stone carving, then modeling clay, then steel work and painting. Sometimes I'd see former colleagues from Berkeley and they were still kind of wearing the clothes of the old office. I couldn't have been happier to let go of all that.

How hard was it to start writing music for the first time?

Not hard at all. The songs just started coming, easily and naturally. I have always been a laborer, but I suddenly had the experience of a muse saying, ''I gotcha, I'm taking over.''

What did it feel like, doing this entirely new thing?

Having that muse -- it's like I was accompanied by another self, more sophisticated and supple than I was. I'm an empiricist. But if I had to romanticize, I'd say it was a spirit that came to visit. It was one of the best experiences of my life. What a joy to have stuff flow like that.

One side effect: You know how you get a song in your head sometimes? I now get whole orchestrated movements. New doors still open as you age. Along with creaky limbs, interesting things happen, too.

How did you learn about recording and songwriting?

I'm kind of connected to the musical world through my children and their friends. I exploited any contacts I had: Would you mind helping me with this for free? Everyone was very generous.

Were you nervous, taking the first steps into this new world?

There are benefits to age. Not a lot, but some. I'm too old to get nervous. And nothing was riding on this.

What kinds of challenges did you encounter at the beginning?

The hardest thing was the blues. Recording my song ''Night Driver (The Next-to-Last Old-Ass Black Man's Bragging Blues)'' was intimidating. Singing the blues ain't just something you stand up and do. You have to be in it, you have to mean it, you have to deliver it in a way that people get into it themselves.

How did this album change you?

A big surprise to me about aging is that you do keep changing. I think doing the album made me a kinder person. Having my kids' clear respect and support with it -- it helped me feel better about myself, and when you feel better about yourself, you feel better about other people.

Also, I was onstage for a living, teaching classes for 150 students, then representing the university in my administrative role. Before that I was a track star at U.C.L.A., from '54 to '58. If I ran a good race, my stroll across campus was an act of celebrity.

All that stage time was not good for me. I felt somewhat unreal. I realized, when I finished this album, that was my last expression of my desire for it. I have been happy to get offstage.

What's next for you?

My wife is suffering some significant health problems. It's normal trouble, as they say -- but it's not trivial. Right now my life is about caregiving.

What would you tell someone who's feeling stuck in their life?

Do something that involves other people. Even one other person. Getting out of a groove -- sometimes you just need company.

There's this fantasy that creativity is something you do alone, by candlelight. No! Do something with other people who are as genuinely interested as you are.

What do you wish you'd known about life when you were younger?

That doesn't involve sex?

Life is shorter than you think and longer than you think. My two best friends are also Black men in their 80s. We marvel about our actuarial improbability. I'm happy to have used my time in so many different ways -- ways that connected me to the world, to people.

Were there experiences before the album that helped prepare you for it?

Over the last 10 years I've actually had a bit of an art career. In the process I discovered that I wasn't as vulnerable as I thought. At one point I had a piece in a group show, at a gallery. I walked by it just as a guy was saying, ''this painting sucks.'' And I didn't die! I actually went over and, without telling him I was the artist, asked why he said that. Turned out he was a painter, and he told me his reasons. I learned a whole bunch.

Any other lessons you can pass on?

Take note of what's interesting in your life. Don't keep every little scrap of paper. But take note.

We're looking for people who decide that it's never too late to switch gears, change their life and pursue dreams. Should we talk to you or someone you know? Share your story here.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/17/style/adult-record-first-album.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/17/style/adult-record-first-album.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: At the age of 85, after a long career at Berkeley, Russ Ellis got it in his head to record an album. So he did. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AUBREY TRINNAMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 22, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A Reborn Steel Hub Weighs Trump***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y1C-B761-JBG3-625D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1898 words

**Byline:** By Patricia Cohen

**Body**

The Lehigh Valley rebuilt its economy after foreign competition wiped out its mills. Now good times and bad memories may both help the president.

BETHLEHEM, Pa. -- Just a few blocks from the rusted 16-story blast furnaces that once fired hulking steel beams for the Hoover Dam and the Golden Gate Bridge, OraSure Technologies each day produces thousands of thumbnail-size pads made to spit on.

These oral swabs, part of a home H.I.V. test kit, are products of a matrix of manufacturers, financial companies and health care institutions powering the Lehigh Valley's $41 billion economy.

The region's success distinguishes it from onetime industrial dynamos in the Northeast and Midwest that have struggled to replace shuttered plants and vanishing jobs. While many midsize and smaller cities have lost out to the superstars -- large urban metropolises that gulp up scads of employers, workers and customers -- the Lehigh Valley is booming.

''There's jobs everywhere,'' said Stephen Polczer, 46, as he inspected assembled swabs. Mr. Polczer, outfitted with a blue mesh apron for his beard and a head cap, started at the biomedical company less than two months ago, drawn by a $17-an-hour wage for manufacturing technicians and a four-day workweek.

The economic renaissance has been more than a decade in the making in this eastern stretch of Pennsylvania, and it has much to do with location, luck and local leaders.

''It's transcended presidents and administrations,'' said Don Cunningham, the president and chief executive of the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation, a public-private partnership. In the last five years, employers created 26,000 additional jobs. ''It began under Obama and continued under Trump,'' he said.

The valley's political affinities have been less steady recently. The area includes Northampton County, one of the few counties nationwide -- and among only three in the state -- that voted for Barack Obama twice before giving Donald J. Trump a plurality in 2016. That pivot, in a county that a Republican presidential candidate had not won since 1988, helped Mr. Trump capture Pennsylvania by less than one percentage point.

Mr. Trump's message on trade and defending jobs resonated in the Lehigh Valley, where there are memories of how foreign competition clobbered the local steel and cement industries.

Whenever the rebound began, people here are feeling more secure economically, and many credit the president. ''The economy is 100 times better,'' Mr. Polczer said, ''and it has a lot to do with President Trump.''

Incentives for business and amenities for workers

A junction for interstate highways and rail lines, the Lehigh Valley is within an eight-hour drive of one-third of American consumers. That has helped attract an army of warehouses and distribution centers built by Amazon, Walmart, FedEx and UPS as they scramble to keep up with the explosion of online shopping.

A network of nearby universities, community colleges and vocational high schools pumps out workers with a range of skills. And there is more available land, cheaper housing and lower taxes than in neighboring New Jersey, Philadelphia or New York City.

Local and state officials laid the groundwork for a possible revival after Bethlehem's colossal mills closed completely in 1998. They built industrial and office parks, and offered millions of dollars in tax credits and abatements to lure companies to Northampton and Lehigh Counties.

More recent development efforts have centered on creating urban playgrounds of restaurants, bars, entertainment and culture that will attract millennial workers.

The valley's three small cities, Bethlehem, Easton and Allentown, are within 15 miles of one another. Among them, residents can find an ice hockey rink, concert venues and music festivals, a casino, arts walks, breweries, a minor-league baseball park, golf courses and new downtown apartments.

Freshpet joined a growing cluster of food and beverage companies, including Boston Beer, Nestlé Purina, Ocean Spray and Just Born (maker of the chick-shaped marshmallow treat Peeps), when it took over an old dairy factory in Northampton County in 2013. Sales of Freshpet's refrigerated meals for dogs and cats -- made from giant vats of slow-cooked meat, vegetables and fruit that can be smelled before entering the parking lot -- grew 27 percent in the last year.

Now the company is building a $100 million facility in its own backyard that will ultimately add 150 people to the payroll. The state and county kicked in $900,000 in grants and tax credits.

A couple of blocks away in the same Hanover Township industrial park, Stuffed Puffs -- chocolate-filled marshmallows that first appeared in stores in May -- broke ground in November on a 150,000-square-foot manufacturing plant that will employ 134 people.

The venture is backed by Factory, a business innovation center for growing food and beverage companies founded by Richard Thompson, a former chief executive at Freshpet. Hoisting up a couple of bags, he explained that the creator of Stuffed Puffs had ''spent seven years figuring out how to put the chocolate inside the marshmallow.''

With support from a New York hedge fund, Mr. Thompson opened the center in 2019. ''I looked everywhere from Boston to Jacksonville,'' he said, before choosing a site once occupied by Bethlehem Steel.

Building 96, a former tool-and-die shop built during World War II, is now, after a $10 million overhaul, Factory's airy headquarters. The site offers a sensory lab, a podcasting studio, a kitchen, a packaging center and a stage. For offices, he hauled in bright red shipping containers from Port Newark and put them on wheels that bring to mind mobile dorm rooms. There's also a simulated golfing range and a climbing wall, as well as a gondola cabin from a ski lift and a firepit surrounded by Adirondack chairs to hang out.

Just to the north in rural Upper Mount Bethel Township, Air Liquide opened a plant in 2018 to produce specialty chemicals for semiconductors, and construction on an adjoining facility has started.

Tony Stump began working there over the summer in a full-time maintenance job for $26.50 an hour, plus benefits.

He moved from Apollo, a former coal-mining town about 35 miles from Pittsburgh, to take the job. ''It's like two different worlds,'' he said.

''There's a lot of job opportunities,'' Mr. Stump said of the Pittsburgh area, ''but it's harder to make a good wage.''

At his previous job, Mr. Stump made $15 an hour and had not had a raise in seven years. ''There's no way to survive,'' he said.

Lots of jobs, but 'not real good jobs'

Many of the jobs available are like the one Mr. Stump left behind. ''They're not real good jobs,'' said Tom Sedor, 78. A third-generation steelworker on both sides of his family, Mr. Sedor sat with a group of other retirees in a small storefront office in the mall that houses the Steelworkers' Archives, an oral history project.

The rich and the well-educated techies are doing well, but the ***working class*** and the poor ''are the ones that are really getting hammered,'' Mr. Sedor said. ''It hasn't trickled down to them.''

Although the area's median income is more than $65,000, a new report from the United Way of Pennsylvania found that 30 percent of the households in Northampton County and 25 percent in Lehigh County could be counted among the working poor.

The steelworkers, both Democrats and Republicans, who crowded into the Wind Creek office don't like Mr. Trump, whom they characterized as anti-union. But Mr. Sedor acknowledged that a lot of other retired steelworkers voted for him over Hillary Clinton in 2016.

''Hillary and the Democratic Party didn't pay enough attention to trade,'' Mr. Sedor said. Many of the men he meets for breakfast or sees in the union hall are still behind the president. ''They're adamant about it because of trade,'' he said.

There were other motivations as well, the group agreed. ''They also loved what Trump was saying about immigrants and gun control,'' said Lester Clore, a 33-year veteran of Bethlehem Steel, referring to the president's pledge to keep out immigrants and oppose gun restrictions.

In Pennsylvania, enough ***working-class*** Democrats and moderate suburban Republicans joined with enthusiastic conservative rural voters to help swing the election to Mr. Trump.

Whether this coalition will form again in 2020, and turn out in sufficient numbers to return him to the White House, is the question. As the recent clash between the United States and Iran demonstrated, foreign events could quickly overshadow domestic ones. And the economy's stable progress could unexpectedly reverse.

'I would keep riding the horse that works'

Since the last presidential election, the Democrats have had a wave of victories in the Lehigh Valley, sweeping local elections. A Democrat won a reconfigured congressional seat in 2018 after a moderate Republican retired. In statewide elections, the Democratic governor and senator were both re-elected with hearty margins.

Although it is a quintessentially purple area, registered Democrats far outnumber registered Republicans in both Northampton and Lehigh Counties.

According to one recent statewide poll, 57 percent of those surveyed said they did not think the president deserved re-election.

But Christopher Borick, director of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion in Allentown, said that across Pennsylvania, the president remained popular among those who said they had voted for him.

''I don't see an obvious reason they wouldn't turn out to the ballot box in 2020 to support him,'' he said.

Walter Dealtrey Jr., president and chief executive of Service Tire Truck Centers in Bethlehem, is a registered Republican who said he and many people he knew often split their votes between the parties. He voted for Mr. Trump in 2016, and for Representative Susan Wild, a Democrat, last year.

He does not care for Mr. Trump's personal style, but he said, ''As far as the economy, I would keep riding the horse that works.''

Recent polling by The New York Times/Siena College found that in Pennsylvania and five other battleground states, nearly two-thirds of voters with a similar pattern -- supporting Mr. Trump in 2016 and a Democrat in the midterms -- said they intended to back the president.

Among the more than 30 business owners, professionals and employees interviewed in the two counties, many said their votes were still up for grabs. But ''Medicare for all,'' free public college tuition and other left-leaning proposals championed by candidates like Senators Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Bernie Sanders of Vermont aroused more skepticism than enthusiasm.

The Democrats named as possibilities were all moderates, like former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr.; Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota; former Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Ind.; or the latest entrant, the billionaire businessman Michael Bloomberg.

''I think there's going to be a strong pull for Democrats in the county to come home if they can,'' said John Kincaid, a government professor at Lafayette College in Easton. But the Democrats will need to offer more than someone-who-is-not-Trump.

''If Warren or Sanders is the candidate,'' he said, ''it's going to be harder to bring those Democrats who voted for Trump over.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/09/business/economy/trump-pennsylvania-economy.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/09/business/economy/trump-pennsylvania-economy.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Blast furnaces once used by Bethlehem Steel are now part of SteelStacks, a center for the arts and other events. The Lehigh Valley's $41 billion economy is a rare success story for onetime industrial towns in the Northeast and Midwest. (B1)

Bethlehem Steel was the second-largest steel manufacturer in the nation but closed in 2003. The question in the Lehigh Valley is whether ***working-class*** Democrats and moderate suburban Republicans will again join enthusiastic conservative rural voters for President Trump in 2020. Stephen Polczer, left, and Jessica Viera, right, at OraSure Technologies. At Freshpet, right, the company is building a $100 million facility in its own backyard. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HANNAH YOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B6)

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2020

**End of Document**



[***New York's Basement Bind***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63W0-1441-DXY4-X4Y3-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Mihir Zaveri

**Body**

The devastation wrought by Ida underscored the need for a better way to legalize basement homes. But one woman's experience shows the difficulties of finding a solution.

When Mildred Velez was looking for her first home in 1965, she settled on a modest place in the Bronx because it had a basement unit for her mother-in-law. Years later, after her mother-in-law died, Mrs. Velez rented the unit to a disabled woman and then to a retired law enforcement officer.

The spacious apartment -- with several windows and three ways in and out, including to a backyard -- felt like an ideal space for anyone looking for an affordable home in one of the most expensive cities in the country.

But one day in 2018, a city inspector showed up at Mrs. Velez's front door and delivered some startling news: City regulations prohibited anyone from living in the basement. She was breaking the law.

The violations have plunged Mrs. Velez, 90 -- who is still renting out her basement -- into a yearslong morass of fines and bureaucracy. It has also made her an emblem of one of New York's most urgent housing problems: how to deal with the tens of thousands of illegal basement homes that remain an intractable feature of the city's housing stock.

Those problems were put on stark display in September, when the remnants of Hurricane Ida killed 11 people in basement homes, most of them illegal, prompting calls for a better way to legalize and regulate the homes.

There is no reliable data on basements and cellars that are being illegally rented out across New York City. Some may pose deadly threats to the people who live in them -- as illustrated by the deaths during Ida where people drowned and had no way to escape because there were not enough exits. But others may only be illegal because they run afoul of a tangle of technical and possibly outdated city regulations.

The homes are not just important sources of income for ***working-class*** or lower income New Yorkers like Mrs. Velez. They are also crucial to addressing the city's affordable housing shortage.

Yet the case of Mrs. Velez shows how challenging it can be, under existing law, to find a solution.

Her violations, which stemmed from an anonymous complaint, appear to center on paperwork filed more than 50 years ago that incorrectly classified the unit as a cellar. Cellars are underground units where at least half the unit is below curb level, and can never be legally rented. But Mrs. Velez's unit is only a fraction of a foot below curb level.

Getting the paperwork fixed would, according to one estimate provided to Mrs. Velez, involve at least $6,500 for an architect and thousands more in engineering and other work, which Mrs. Velez said she cannot afford. Even if she could, she would then would not be likely to meet other requirements for basement units, like having enough parking space.

Mrs. Velez said her only other income is Social Security, and she needs the rental income from the basement -- she charges $800 a month -- to support herself. So she continues to accumulate fines on what she maintains has been a livable apartment for decades. City records show, that as of Oct. 6, she faced $18,000 in fines.

''If it wasn't working in 52 years, you don't think something would have gone wrong?'' she said. ''I'm not asking for them to give me anything. I'm just asking them to give me some peace of mind.''

But the city's Buildings Department maintains that Mrs. Velez needs to stop renting the basement unit or get the permits to amend her paperwork and legalize the apartment. Those permits would be necessary for the city to ensure that qualified people had done any construction work on the unit and that it was a safe place to live.

Andrew Rudansky, a spokesman for the agency, said Mrs. Velez has ''been repeatedly provided with detailed guidance'' by the department ''on how to correct the violating conditions in her cellar.''

''To date, the owner has failed to take the necessary steps to correct the violations,'' he said.

Jessica Katz, executive director of the Citizens Housing and Planning Council, a nonprofit housing group, said Mrs. Velez was ''caught in this web of all the regulations around basements.''

Ms. Katz has been trying to help Mrs. Velez find a solution, but she said her situation shows the need to ease city requirements for some homes and to offer financial support for legalization.

''We fail to provide homeowners with a tool kit on how to know and understand what their obligations are, and the tools and the resources to comply with those obligations,'' she said.

There are some efforts to address those issues. A bill in the State Legislature would allow basement units to evade some cumbersome regulations, including by eliminating parking requirements, and would direct the state to find a way to help pay for renovations.

Mrs. Velez's case does not reflect all the issues with illegal basement and cellar homes. Several of the apartments where people died in Ida, for example, only had one way in or out.

Still, city officials have been grappling with the problem for decades: The number of low-income New Yorkers far exceeds the number of affordable homes, prompting many to seek refuge in cheaper basements. And for many lower-income or older New Yorkers, basements are a crucial source of income.

Mayor Bill de Blasio, who has estimated that there are at least 50,000 illegal units, had pledged to find a way to legalize them. But the city's one serious attempt, a pilot program in Brooklyn, has largely fallen short amid pandemic-related budget cuts, and Mr. de Blasio last month expressed skepticism that a realistic solution was possible.

Mrs. Velez, who used to rent an apartment in another part of the Bronx, said she never would have moved to Throgs Neck with her husband if it had not been for the basement unit. And she remains adamant that for decades there has been no reason to believe that it is not a safe place to live.

The first tenant in the mid 1990s after her mother-in-law died was a disabled woman who relied on Section 8 housing vouchers, she said. Federal officials had inspected the basement and found it to be an acceptable home, Mrs. Velez said.

The current tenant, who has been living in the apartment since 2005, declined to speak on the record because he is a retired law enforcement officer who said he feared retaliation from criminals he once apprehended.

But he said he has had no problems with Mrs. Velez or the apartment other than a few inches of water that flooded the basement during Ida. He said he first heard about the basement from Mrs. Velez's neighbors across the street who used to babysit his brother's children and thought it would be affordable and convenient.

He has grown close to Mrs. Velez and plays dominoes with her every Saturday. He said he has thought about moving out because of the problems with the city, but the basement is comfortable and he and Mrs. Velez have come to depend on each other.

Mrs. Velez, who no longer has any family living nearby, agrees that the living situation has been harmonious. The rent payments are crucial, but the tenant also helps her with chores and groceries.

''My tenant downstairs is as if I had a son downstairs,'' she said.

But the unpaid fines could lead to the placement of a lien on her property, and the fear of losing her home has Mrs. Velez feeling stressed.

Every 90 days, she receives a letter reminding her of her failure to address the violations stemming from the 2018 complaint. And last month, a fresh complaint was anonymously filed against her.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/13/nyregion/basement-apartment-bronx-illegal.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/13/nyregion/basement-apartment-bronx-illegal.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Mildred Velez, 90, at left, had been renting out her basement unit for decades when a building inspector showed up three years ago and told her it was illegal. (MB1)

Mildred Velez's basement apartment has several windows and three ways in and out. ''If it wasn't working in 52 years, you don't think something would have gone wrong?'' she said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DESIREE RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB8)

**Load-Date:** October 17, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Mayor Adams’s First 100 Days: A Focus on Crime, Covid and Crises***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6569-RCX1-DXY4-X311-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 10, 2022 Sunday 11:47 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1898 words

**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Jeffery C. Mays and Dana Rubinstein

**Highlight:** Eric Adams has served as a cheerleader for New York City’s revival while taking an aggressive stance against homeless encampments and signs of lawlessness.

**Body**

On an unusually cold morning in late March, [*Mayor Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/eric-adams-mayor-nyc) began his day visiting a child-care center in Queens. Roughly seven miles away, police officers in Brooklyn were carrying out his order to [*clear homeless encampments,*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/03/28/nyregion/homeless-encampment-removed.html)tossing away tents and other belongings in a garbage truck as part of a new public safety initiative.

The mayor also held a jobs-related announcement with JetBlue and later attended the premiere of the Broadway show “Plaza Suite.” His day ended at Manhattan’s newest office skyscraper, at an event promoting a credit card that encourages people to pay their rent with plastic, where he was photographed [*partying with the model Cara Delevingne*](https://www.thecut.com/2022/03/cara-delevingne-eric-adams-partying.html).

It was Day 87 of the Adams administration, a day that reflected the new mayor’s robust agenda and his early priorities. The homeless sweeps, criticized by advocates as uncaring and simplistic, represent a key part of his crime strategy to attack symbols of lawlessness. The [*star-studded events*](https://www.instagram.com/p/Cbq7XfBAIF5/?utm_medium=copy_link) and jobs announcements are part of his business-friendly, cheerleader approach to governing.

Mr. Adams, in an interview at City Hall to discuss his first 100 days as mayor, insisted that addressing homelessness and attending to the city’s nightlife were part of his job, and not in conflict with his image during the campaign as a champion of ***working-class*** New Yorkers.

“I got to feed my nightlife to get tourists back here — a multibillion-dollar industry,” he said. “And so people who subscribe to the theory that ‘OK, you’re removing encampments, and so you now must sit at home and not be seen in the other aspects of your job,’ that’s just silly. My job is so multifaceted.”

Mr. Adams, who is known to work long hours and who revealed that he slept only four hours at night, said that his evening included another stop not listed on his public schedule.

“Now I left that event — know what I did?” he said. “I went in the subway system and made sure that we were handing out information about being in a homeless shelter.”

His motto is “Get Stuff Done,” and Mr. Adams pointed to several accomplishments ahead of his 100th day on Sunday: creating new anti-gun police units and more beds at shelters, and expanding a summer school program to include 110,000 students and a youth jobs program to include 100,000 young people.

But Mr. Adams has also been contending with challenges that have few quick solutions, including the city’s recovery from the coronavirus pandemic. On Sunday, the mayor’s 100th day in office, his press secretary announced that Mr. Adams had tested positive for the virus and would be canceling public events for the week.

[*Crime has risen this year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/nyregion/shootings-new-york-city-safety.html), and Mr. Adams has faced plenty of criticism over his policies and hiring decisions. He has not offered up detailed plans for more affordable housing or for the future of the gifted and talented program in city schools.

His relationship with the City Council also seems to be in question. The Council speaker recently [*castigated the mayor*](https://council.nyc.gov/press/wp-content/uploads/sites/56/2022/04/Letter-to-Mayor-Adams-re-April-6-Fire-Oversight-Hearing.pdf) because three city agencies skipped a five-hour Council oversight hearing on a Bronx fire that killed 17 people. The speaker, Adrienne Adams, said that the agencies’ absence “leads me to presume that your administration does not treat this important topic with the full seriousness deserved.”

Other council members have taken issue with the mayor’s proposed budget cuts, contending that they would hurt the city’s most vulnerable residents and that the police units could harass Black and Latino residents.

But given his emphasis on criminal justice in his mayoral campaign, Mr. Adams’s first term is likely to be judged on whether his administration can begin to lower crime — a national issue that could prove difficult for him to control.

On Wednesday, the city’s police commissioner [*announced new crime figures*](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nypd/news/p00041/nypd-citywide-crime-statistics-march-2022) that showed a 36 percent increase in major crimes and a 16 percent rise in shootings over the past year.

Mr. Adams has recently deployed seven new anti-gun police units, one of the key elements of his anti-crime plan, and said last week that the units had taken nearly 30 guns off the streets.

“I do not get the grade that I deserve until we start seeing crime move in the right direction,” Mr. Adams said in the interview at City Hall.

Mr. Adams, a former police captain, was immediately confronted by a spate of high-profile violent crimes in January, including the shooting deaths of two police officers in Manhattan and the death of a woman who was pushed in front of a train [*at the Times Square subway station*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/17/nyregion/eric-adams-crime-subway-shoving.html).

Last month, the Police Department began to enforce so-called quality-of-life matters, a throwback to the city’s embrace of “broken windows” policing — enforcement of low-level offenses in an effort to prevent more serious crimes.

Mr. Adams also ordered the police to [*keep people from sheltering in the subway system*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/18/nyregion/homeless-people-subway-trains-mta.html) and then followed up with his push to clear homeless encampments.

The progressive caucus in the City Council — more than half of council members — [*said that Mr. Adams had “displayed cruelty”*](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mx4_QUPBCGdD8cbFkAAoA02rs5ipaAtRDuP2YfC8LKs/edit) with his homeless sweeps and asked the mayor to stop them. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has been a high-profile critic, [*raising alarm about his policing tactics*](https://twitter.com/emmagf/status/1510663244368781313?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) and changes to solitary confinement at the Rikers Island jail.

Ms. Adams, the Council speaker, laid out a platform with her members to oppose some of the mayor’s public-safety moves and called for increasing the number of beds for the homeless.

“Public safety can be achieved when we invest in ensuring our communities are strong, so we can actually prevent crime and violence before they occur,” Ms. Adams said in a statement. “A balanced and comprehensive approach to public safety that focuses more on prevention is the most effective.”

Other stumbling blocks quickly emerged. His push to restore the city’s economy was tempered by the Omicron surge of the coronavirus. He [*took heat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/27/nyregion/philip-banks-corruption-investigation.html) for certain [*hires*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/22/nyregion/cabrera-eric-adams-lgbtq-protests.html), including a former police official who left the department while under federal investigation and three pastors who have been criticized for espousing homophobic views.

Mr. Adams, a vegan enthusiast who wrote a book about his plant-based diet, was even [*forced to acknowledge that he eats fish*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/07/nyregion/eric-adams-fish-vegan.html).

His frustrations with how his message is being received have occasionally surfaced at his news conferences. At one, he [*chided the City Hall press corps*](https://nypost.com/2022/02/15/mayor-eric-adams-claims-white-journalists-misrepresent-him/) and threatened to stop taking off-topic questions, arguing that he was doing a “darn good job.”

More recently, Mr. Adams warned staffers that anyone violating his “discipline of message” in front of a “gotcha” press corps would be fired, according to [*audio obtained by Politico*](https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/2022/04/adams-demands-discipline-of-message-to-combat-gotcha-press-corps-audio-reveals-00022569). Mr. Adams confirmed in the interview at City Hall that he was now personally reviewing every city news release each morning and said that it took only about 15 minutes.

“We’re going to be one team with one message,” he said, adding that people who had their own personal agenda were “not a fit” for his administration.

The mayor’s relationship with state leaders is also still something of a work in progress. While he has [*established a good rapport with Gov. Kathy Hochul*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/03/nyregion/kathy-hochul-eric-adams.html) — something that his predecessor, Bill de Blasio, never managed with the former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo — he has seen mixed results in Albany.

Michael Gianaris, the deputy majority leader of the State Senate who represents western Queens, said he had not had a conversation or a private meeting with Mr. Adams since the mayor took office. Mr. Gianaris said the mayor had instead appeared to rely on Governor Hochul for support.

“There are dozens of people in the State Legislature whose interests are to do what’s best for New York City,” he said. “It’s an odd strategy.”

Mr. Adams’s lone trip to the State Capitol in February did not go well. The tabloids focused on pushback from state lawmakers on the mayor’s request to toughen the state bail law, with The Daily News running a front-page headline that said: “Eric ‘Beat Up’ in Crime Fight.”

The $220 billion state budget, which was agreed upon on Thursday, did include some of Mr. Adams’s priorities, including some changes to the bail law, an expansion of the earned-income tax credit and extra funding for child care. He said in the interview at City Hall that he was disappointed that mayoral control of schools, another top priority, was not included in the budget, but added that he was confident it would be approved separately.

The mayor said he was proud of initiatives like expanding a doula program for new mothers to 500 families and vocational training for 90 foster care youth. Two [*ideas he talked about on the campaign trail*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/20/nyregion/nyc-mayor-candidates-ideas.html) — universal dyslexia screenings in schools and a “MyCity” app to offer government services like food stamps in one place — should arrive later this year or early next year, he said.

He has also courted business leaders to help with the city’s economic recovery and has sought their input on how best to push the city forward as it emerges from the pandemic.

But at a time when the city is facing a worsening affordability crisis, the mayor has not issued a housing plan despite promising the State Legislature in February that he would do so. After he missed his own deadline, Rachel Fee, the executive director of the New York Housing Conference, checked in with his housing team to see if it had a new timeline, but it did not.

“For the last eight years, we’ve been producing upward of 20,000 units of affordable housing a year — that’s either new construction or preservation,” Ms. Fee said. “We’re going to see a real slowdown.”

The pandemic remains a daunting challenge, with cases, fueled by the BA.2 subvariant of the coronavirus, rising again, from about 600 daily cases on average in early March to [*about 1,500 daily cases now*](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data.page#daily).

Mr. Adams, who has been vocal about people returning to offices and removing mask requirements, may have to make difficult decisions about whether to bring back some restrictions. He already had to delay an [*announced move*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/22/nyregion/mask-mandate-children-nyc.html) to lift a mask requirement for young preschool children.

The mayor holds a briefing with his health team every day at 8:30 a.m. to review the latest virus figures. On a recent call, Mr. Adams sat on his exercise bike while his advisers warned him about rising case levels that could peak in the next two or three weeks. He peppered them with questions, asking about how to spread public awareness on antiviral treatments.

“Is there any room to have those messages or notes in the backpacks of children they can take home to their families?” the mayor asked a school official. The official said he would work on it.

Mr. Adams gave himself a grade of “incomplete” in a series of 100-day interviews on Friday.

“We are dealing with historical problems, and you’re seeing them play out across our country with the increase in violence, the mental health issues that stemmed from Covid,” he said on “Good Day New York” on Fox 5. “But clearly, we’re laying the foundation to move our city in the right direction.”

The mayor was upbeat at the interview at City Hall, saying that he did not find the job difficult after a lifetime of public service.

“These last 100 days — there have been painful moments,” he said. “But there was nothing new for me and the totality of this life that I have lived, and so I don’t find this job hard at all.”

PHOTO: Eric Adams has served as a city cheerleader while taking an aggressive stance against homeless encampments. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AN RONG XU FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The Psychic Contortions of the Black Mogul-Entertainer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6568-X3X1-DXY4-X2JR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1840 words

**Byline:** By Blair McClendon

**Body**

To hear more audio stories from publications like The New York Times, download Audm for iPhone or Android.

The story is so good it hurts to hear. In an era of stupefying inequality, one of the most famous members of the upper class is a former drug dealer from a notorious public-housing project. He switched the product and rode CD sales to a new ZIP code. He went from nobody to somebody to a fixture in public consciousness who hangs out with a former president. If you've been rapping along with Jay-Z since ''Reasonable Doubt,'' or maybe even his feature on the early Jaz-O single ''Hawaiian Sophie,'' you'd be forgiven for seeing that star scream across the sky and thinking his song was right: There's nothing you can't do.

But when the force of his flow isn't in your ears, what he did seems impossible once again. He is not just rich; he is, according to Forbes, a billionaire. Rappers aren't supposed to make that much money. For starters, part of the job is knowing how to spend it, and Jay-Z has done plenty of that. But also, rappers, like athletes, tend to have short careers -- the genre reinvents itself too quickly for elder statesmen to hang on. And it is a cutthroat business. Get rich or die trying is the injunction for this heady mix of the mostly male, mostly Black, cocksure young musicians rehearsing punch lines in the nation's ghettos, where making it very well might be a matter of survival. It is a dreamer's music, by necessity. But more than four decades into the genre's reign, there are levels now. Some artists get paid. Others acquire capital.

This is an uncomfortable situation. According to a recent survey conducted by the Federal Reserve, the median family wealth for Black households is $24,100. (The median white household has nearly eight times that.) Somewhere in that data set are eight Black American billionaires, at least according to the Forbes list. Whether your politics lead you to believe that these eight are inspirations or a problem, the last several centuries of history might lead you to ask how it is even possible they exist. Four of them -- Oprah Winfrey, Jay-Z, Tyler Perry and Kanye West -- made their names as entertainers. (There's also Rihanna, who is a resident of the U.S. but not a citizen.) Rapper, as an occupation, appears more frequently on this short list than an Ivy League education does.

It is a strange fact of this country's economic system that the most common way for Black people to become obscenely wealthy is to first become obscenely famous. Among other things, this means that much of their net worth is tied to the value of their public personas in ways that do not hold true for other billionaires. Whatever you think of Stephen A. Schwarzman, Miriam Adelson or even Bill Gates, their wealth is untethered to their Q Scores. Of course there are outliers. Elon Musk does relish playing to the crowd as the enfant terrible of auto manufacturing, generating an insulating admiration from his fans, but Kanye and Jay-Z are truly in a bind.

For as long as it has existed, rap was, or was supposed to be, the crafted but splenetic outpouring of the dispossessed. At the same time, it has been about a life that most of its listeners cannot lead, but it held on, however tenuously, to its lower-class roots. Jay-Z always rapped as if he had the planet in his palm, even when it was really just a few blocks in Brooklyn. Over the years, he really did gain the whole world. And now a globally popular form of ***working-class*** youth music has, as its most powerful representatives, a pair of billionaires in their 40s and 50s. It has not been an easy balance to strike.

Entertainers occupy a curious position where the lines between worker and owner sometimes blur. Rappers are signed to labels and then often open their own. Some of these labels collapse, often in a wave of recriminations about shady business practices. The contracts can control artists' entire output, leaving them almost entirely dependent on the label to actually make something of their labor. Maximize revenue, cut labor costs. That, more than all the drug dealing said to take place, is the business world that produces many of these rappers. And they have, as often as not, leaned into this ethos. When they promise you that they're reciting what they know, it is not really a reference to some social truth ripped from the depths of poor, Black neighborhoods. What they know is capital: What it is to have none, what it is to get a taste, what it takes to try to make peace with winding up on the other side of that divide.

From the beginning, Jay-Z was a businessman. His debut album was released on the auspiciously named Roc-A-Fella Records, which he founded with two friends, Kareem Burke and Damon Dash. It made sense to have a piece of the action, because he helped popularize Mafioso rap, which took the bleak air of street-corner hustling and gave it the baroque mystique of gangster films. If there had not been a Black James Cagney or Francis Ford Coppola, there was at least a Shawn Carter. But the business world is brutal, inside and outside the law.

At its peak in the '00s, Roc-A-Fella featured a stacked cast: Just Blaze on production; the Philadelphia icons Beanie Sigel, Peedi Crakk and Freeway; the sprawling Dipset crew in Harlem; a young producer from Chicago named Kanye West. When Cam'ron appeared on the show ''Rap City'' in an oversize pink T-shirt, counting off a large pile of bills while freestyling that he'd ''seen all islands, Cayman to Rikers,'' it seemed unfathomable that the Roc era would ever end. But in a few years, Def Jam bought out the label's founding partners and appointed Jay as the umbrella corporation's president. Fights over shelved albums, loyalty, blocked promotions and due credit broke up what had looked like a street family.

This led to a peculiar situation in which boardroom drama spilled out in the form of diss tracks by Def Jam artists aimed at their employer's lead executive. Roc-A-Fella eventually folded. But still, to this day, Jay-Z owes much of his image as a business magnate to the dynastic sheen his labelmates gave ''the Roc,'' not to mention the marketers, graphic designers and interns that made them icons of New York street swagger.

Jay diversified his portfolio in the years after that. He has a stake in Oatly, two separate highly valued liquor companies -- Armand de Brignac Champagne and D'Ussé Cognac -- several homes, the streaming platform Tidal, a club near Madison Square and an expansive art collection. If on his debut he spoke a little beyond his means when he said he was ''well connected,'' he has made it true. It is hard to think of a door he cannot open. Even as he has outgrown what made him Jay-Z, that project remains central to his business. He is the best rapper alive, the entrepreneur who made it out of the projects, the kingpin. The albums remind you why the Cognac is worth so much money.

This situation is not unique. In the entertainment world, people must become corporations if they want to become truly wealthy. High-profile singers, athletes, actors and so on often make their real money from endorsement deals rather than their day jobs. What separates the billionaires from their peers is that they turned endorsements into equity. Michael Jordan gets a percentage of Nike's Jordan brand revenue. Kanye, who owns the Yeezy brand outright, has major deals with Adidas and Gap. Winfrey and Perry have sprawling media concerns. Rihanna's Fenty Beauty is a subsidiary of the LVMH luxury conglomerate.

Many of these businesses could keep running without their famed figureheads, but the sheen would dissipate somewhat. Dell does not sell its computers by trading on the fact that it and its founder share a name. But without Kanye's imprimatur, it's hard to imagine Yeezy's moon-boot look becoming a default sneaker silhouette. Fenty, by contrast, seems to have capitalized on a real gap in the market by broadening the available shades for foundation and concealer. Still, the entertainer-billionaire is as much the product as the shoe or concealer up for sale. From the outside looking in, this seems like a shaky foundation for a fortune so vast. Stars lose their luster all the time. It's part of their appeal.

On ''The Story of O.J.,'' from his latest album, ''4:44,'' Jay-Z raps about the psychic drama of successful Black Americans. In the animated video, his character tells his therapist that he failed to invest in Dumbo real estate early and missed out on a 1,250 percent return. Later he explains that art he bought for $1 million appreciated in value and is now worth 8. The song weaves back and forth between an examination of racial stereotypes and a guidebook to gaining freedom through asset ownership.

You could hear Jay-Z, over time, growing more comfortable with his newfound status. On ''The Black Album,'' he rapped, ''I can't help the poor if I'm one of them, so I got rich and gave back, to me that's the win-win.'' It's a defensive sentiment. The poor do help one another; there is often no other choice. That song is called ''Moment of Clarity'' -- but nothing seems very clear at all. All the old signifiers, the ones linking public prominence and political progress, are slipping. They have to be reasserted from the top down. ''What's better than one billionaire? Two. Especially if they from the same hue as you,'' Jay-Z rhymed on ''4:44.'' The ghetto's music is starting to sound like prosperity gospel. Rap is relatable because the fan embodies the rapper. The ''you'' is rarely the listener, rather an invitation to adopt a new ''I.'' That ''I'' might get high, duck, dive, sling, get shot at and shoot back. But who is this ''I'' who accumulates such an immense sum of money, he starts to see things from the other side while insisting we're still the same? The hue tells me nothing about what you've become.

For once, through drive and circumstance, a few Black artists actually stand to be the main beneficiaries of the popularity of Black culture. On paper that might be progress. But two things remain clear: Black art sells, and wealth collects. Money pools in rooms that remain hard to get into. Years ago, Forbes magazine organized a meeting between Jay-Z and Warren Buffett, treating the rapper like the heir apparent. They both spoke about the role of chance. Buffett talked at length about being white, male and born in the U.S. at the right time. It was the discourse of what we would now call ''privilege,'' which feels like an understatement when talking about one of the wealthiest men alive. When Jay-Z spoke, he told a story about a nearly inseparable friend of his who was arrested during a sting operation. Jay-Z happened to be out of the country for an early recording date. His friend was incarcerated for over a decade. That's luck, the vicious kind that fortunes are made of.

Blair McClendon is a writer, an editor and a filmmaker in New York. His writing has appeared in n+1, The New Republic and The New Yorker.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/05/magazine/black-billionaire-entertainers.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/05/magazine/black-billionaire-entertainers.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY RYAN HASKINS

GETTY IMAGES, SHUTTERSTOCK) (MM29

MM31)

**Load-Date:** April 10, 2022

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[***Elizabeth Warren Was the Wrong Kind of Radical***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YC0-F2R1-JBG3-645T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 5, 2020 Thursday 12:16 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1319 words

**Byline:** Timothy Shenk

**Highlight:** She wanted to reform everything except the Democratic Party itself.

**Body**

Remember when Elizabeth Warren was going to save the Democratic Party?

Back in 2016, it looked as if she had been engineered in a lab to broker a truce between the Democratic establishment and a resurgent left. Instead, she has spent the last year caught in the crossfire between the two camps. It’s a bloody tale with important lessons for would-be peacemakers in the Democratic civil war.

Senator Warren’s supporters have rightly pointed to the obstacles facing a woman running for president at any time, and the especially high burden Democrats have put on candidates in the wake of Hillary Clinton’s defeat. But Ms. Warren’s collapse is about more than Ms. Warren herself. It’s about the breakdown of a political strategy premised on the notion that a progressive can demand big structural change everywhere — except for inside the Democratic Party.

The story goes back to the autumn of 2003, when Ms. Warren walked into a sparsely attended fund-raiser hosted by one of her colleagues at Harvard Law School. The guest of honor was a long-shot Senate candidate named Barack Obama.

Already, Mr. Obama was thinking big. He argued that if Democrats could persuade the American people to make just a slight shift in priorities, the party could move beyond Clintonesque triangulation, build a new progressive majority and revive a beleaguered middle class. Ms. Warren wrote Mr. Obama a $250 check, making her one of the campaign’s earliest supporters.

She remained in his camp, joining an advisory team that helped shape his 2004 agenda and providing a glowing endorsement for his 2008 campaign book “Change We Can Believe In.” Their relationship grew rockier after Mr. Obama entered the White House, but these felt like family squabbles. When Ms. Warren jabbed at Mr. Obama for being too soft on Wall Street, she was criticizing him for not living up to his own ideals.

This election was supposed to be Ms. Warren’s opportunity to prove that she could do a better job executing Mr. Obama’s strategy than Mr. Obama himself. Rather than calling for a Sanders-style political revolution, she would remake the Democratic establishment from within. In 2018 alone, she raised or donated more than $11 million for over 160 Democratic congressional candidates. She launched a charm offensive with leading progressive activists and staked out bold positions on subjects ranging from impeachment to reparations to the wealth tax.

Underlying all of this was her conviction that she could rally the Obama coalition — young people, African-Americans, Hispanics and liberal white college graduates, with just enough of the white ***working class*** to win the Midwest — behind policies that took on the 1 percent. Then she would staff her administration with the best of the Democratic wonkocracy rather than the next generation of Goldman Sachs alumni.

And it wasn’t just Ms. Warren. Around the same time she started advising Mr. Obama, two precocious Harvard undergrads — her future adviser Ganesh Sitaraman and her future rival Pete Buttigieg — hatched the idea for a reading group considering new directions for liberalism.

Called the Democratic Renaissance Project, it attracted a rotating cast of ambitious 20-somethings looking to get past the doldrums of the Bush-Clinton-Bush era without succumbing to utopian radicalism. As these elder millennials aged into maturity, the same ideal gave rise to new journalistic outlets like Vox. They gained new champions too, like the Warren protégée Katie Porter, who turned her suburban Orange County, Calif., congressional district blue in the 2018 wave election. By the time the 2020 campaign got underway, liberal reformers had a bevy of candidates to select from, none more impressive than Ms. Warren.

Except here we are, refighting 2016, with Joe Biden taking up Mrs. Clinton’s role and Bernie Sanders playing himself. To baffled Warren supporters, the last year seems like a string of avoidable disasters. If only activists hadn’t been so fixated on Medicare for All, then she could have finessed her way around health care. If only Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez hadn’t endorsed Mr. Sanders after his heart attack, then he could have quietly wrapped up his candidacy. If only the Sanders campaign wasn’t a personality cult that refused to take yes for an answer, the left could have united behind a politician with a real shot at winning.

But that misses the true nature of the movement that has grown up around Mr. Sanders. Ms. Warren tried to bend the Democratic Party to the left. Mr. Sanders’s core supporters are intent on remaking it from the ground up.

They want a new coalition grounded in the multiracial ***working-class*** and less dependent on affluent professionals; a new donor class made up of grass-roots contributors; a new base of activists who read magazines like Jacobin and come out of groups like Democratic Socialists of America; and new politicians like Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, who trounced New York’s Democratic machine.

Mr. Sanders’s most loyal followers are as much part of a counterculture as they are members of a political campaign. Rather than asking the best and brightest to lead the way beyond left and right, they have come up with a novel fusion of populism and socialism that marries a critique of the inequalities generated by capitalism with a rejection of technocratic nudging and meritocratic striving. Tell them that Elizabeth Warren is the real radical, and they’ll ask what you can expect from an administration dominated by products of the same elite institutions that ran the Obama White House. Insist that they should be practical, and they’ll wonder how progressives will be able to change the country if they can’t even change the Democratic Party. See the world from this perspective, and Ms. Warren looks like the left wing of a broken status quo, not the start of something different.

Yes, the Sanders campaign has its fair share of Ivy-trained policy specialists. But to its millennial base, the difference between their tribe and the rest of the party is obvious at first sight. It’s what separates Ms. Ocasio-Cortez from Katie Porter, Jacobin from Vox and Democratic Socialists of America from the Democratic Renaissance Project. They can’t stand MSNBC; their attitude toward Russia, Ukraine and impeachment tended toward indifference; and don’t get them started on “The West Wing.” While Mr. Sanders offered them red meat, the other candidates were trying to sell an Impossible Burger.

The problem for Mr. Sanders is that this group is still a distinct minority among Democrats, and the populist revolution that was supposed to sweep new voters to the polls has failed to arrive. But Democratic leaders shouldn’t celebrate for long. Mr. Sanders remains a formidable opponent, and President Trump will be waiting in the fall. The Democratic establishment has put all its chips on Mr. Biden, and the costs will be high if the gamble doesn’t pay off.

Progressives who thought Mr. Buttigieg could bring about real change will remember how quickly he lined up with Mr. Biden. Warren backers will recall how difficult it was to translate elite support into votes. Meanwhile, every year more young people are entering adulthood disillusioned with a system that loads them up with debt and then drops them on an escalator to nowhere. And Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez will turn 35, the minimum age required to serve as president, on Oct. 13, 2024.

Timothy Shenk ([*@Tim\_Shenk*](https://twitter.com/tim_shenk?lang=en)), a co-editor of Dissent, is writing a history of the American political elite.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2020

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[***In Trump's Shadow, Ohio Republicans Campaign Ahead of Primary***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65BY-C351-DXY4-X0NB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 2, 2022 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

**Length:** 1965 words

**Byline:** By Trip Gabriel

**Body**

Donald Trump's endorsement of the author and venture capitalist J.D. Vance has shaken up the Republican race for the first major Senate midterm election.

COLUMBUS, Ohio -- Josh Mandel's wager was simple: No one would outflank him in mirroring Donald J. Trump, either on hard-right America First positions or the bellicose, come-at-me style of the former president.

So, Mr. Mandel said of Black Lives Matter activists, ''They are the racists, not us.'' He stirred animosity toward migrants, including refugees from Afghanistan, and falsely claimed the 2020 election was stolen from Mr. Trump. The Jewish grandson of a Holocaust survivor whose website features a Christian cross, Mr. Mandel stumped mostly in evangelical churches, claiming ''there's no such thing'' as separation of church and state.

For a long time, it worked. Mr. Mandel was the presumed front-runner in the crowded Republican field for U.S. senator from Ohio.

But two weeks ago, the one person he sought most to impress -- the former president himself -- spurned Mr. Mandel, a former state treasurer, and bestowed his coveted endorsement on J.D. Vance, the ''Hillbilly Elegy'' author, remaking the race overnight.

Mr. Vance, who had been trailing in polls and running low on money, has seen a surge in donations and support since Mr. Trump's embrace, as the first major Senate midterm primary election entered its final weekend before Tuesday's voting.

And around the state, Republicans including Mr. Mandel; Mr. Vance; Mike Gibbons, a self-funded businessman; and State Senator Matt Dolan fanned out in a preview of national G.O.P. politics to come -- different moons circling Mr. Trump's sun.

On Saturday, Mr. Vance campaigned with two far-right members of Congress, Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia and Matt Gaetz of Florida. Mr. Mandel hopscotched across the state's big cities -- Toledo, Columbus and Cincinnati -- with a conservative ally of his own, Senator Ted Cruz of Texas.

To longtime acquaintances and observers of Mr. Mandel, 44, who early in his career promoted civility and bipartisanship, his unrequited embrace of Trumpism and divisiveness suggested there was a price on political calculation.

''I see the desperation there these last few months,'' said Matt Cox, a former Republican operative who was an early adviser to Mr. Mandel before a falling-out. ''I think his strategy was: All right, Trump won Ohio by eight points twice. All I have to do to become the nominee is to become the most like Trump.''

The candidate most left on the sidelines since Mr. Trump's nod at Mr. Vance, according to polls, has been Jane Timken. The only woman running, Ms. Timken was endorsed by Ohio's retiring senator, Rob Portman, a center-right throwback to an earlier Ohio G.O.P. who voted with Senate Democrats for the bipartisan infrastructure bill.

Ms. Timken has solid Trump-era credentials -- she chaired the state party while Mr. Trump was in office -- but she does not mimic the former president's aggrieved style, which has been a key to unlocking the most fervent Republican voters. She has set herself apart from rivals who she says seek every day to get themselves ''canceled on Twitter'' with their statements and antics.

In a debate in March, Mr. Mandel nearly got into a physical confrontation with Mr. Gibbons.

At a Baptist church in Columbus on Saturday, Mr. Mandel took aim at popular targets of the right, including transgender people, Republicans with ''jelly knees'' like Senator Mitt Romney of Utah and the ''liberal media in the back of the room'' (just minutes after greeting reporters amicably by name in a private room).

Fitting the setting, the largely older crowd in the pews called out encouraging ''amens!'' or groaned audibly when Mr. Mandel named enemies.

''The reason that we're going to win on Tuesday is because we have this army of Christian warriors throughout the state,'' he pledged.

One pastor present, Dan Wolvin, said he ''felt sorry'' for Mr. Trump over the Vance endorsement, saying he was ''listening to the wrong people.'' Still, Mr. Wolvin predicted the Trump nod would gain Mr. Vance ''about five points'' on Election Day, while conceding, ''it's a lot for Josh to make up.''

Spurned or not, Mr. Mandel was still flying the Trump flag.

''I supported President Trump yesterday. I support him today, and I'll continue to support him tomorrow,'' he said. He predicted the former president would return to the White House, ''and I look forward to working with him.''

The candidates, to varying degrees, all concur. Here are snapshots from around Ohio in the last weekend of campaigning.

J.D. Vance in Newark, Ohio

J.D. Vance, the author and venture capitalist, bounded onto the stage at the Trout Club in Newark, Ohio, with the confidence of the nominal front-runner, a status bestowed by Mr. Trump's endorsement on April 15.

The crowd of about 75 in the bar and restaurant of a well-manicured country club had been warmed up by Mr. Gaetz and Ms. Greene, who ticked through the talking points of the fringe right: ''medical tyranny,'' ''open borders,'' ''gender pediatric clinics'' turning boys into girls, men in women's bathrooms and women's sports, The Walt Disney Company ''grooming'' children into homosexuals and transgender people.

Mr. Vance breezed through some of the same themes, but he appeared more intent on previewing the larger issues he planned to argue in the general election to come.

He castigated both parties for free trade agreements that he said had sent Ohio manufacturing to Mexico and China, for the ''bipartisan decision to allow American Wall Street firms to get rich off the growth of China and not off the growth of the American middle class.'' He also accused financial firms of allowing ''the Chinese into this country, buying up our farmland, buying up our single-family homes, making it impossible for young families to buy a home, to own a stake in their own country.''

''That is the game they play, and I'm running for the U.S. Senate to go and play a different game, a game where we put our citizens and the people in this room first,'' he said to cheers.

The people in that room -- just off a verdant golf course, far away from the illegal immigrant, drug-infested cities that Mr. Vance speaks of on the stump -- were hardly the down-and-out white workers central to his memoir, ''Hillbilly Elegy.'' But an unspoken truth is, his audience is the true core of the pro-Trump vote in Ohio. The one income group that President Biden won in this state in 2020 was that of voters who earn less than $50,000. More affluent voters went for Mr. Trump.

But economic themes in general -- and the China threat in particular -- resonated.

''That's in the DNA in Ohio,'' said Representative Tim Ryan, the likely Democratic nominee for the coming Senate race.

Mr. Vance was asked by a reporter why he invited Ms. Greene and Mr. Gaetz to barnstorm through Ohio with him on the closing weekend of the primary campaign.

''There is nothing more disgusting in politics than the way that leadership asks you to stab your friends in the back,'' he said before heading with them to West Chester, outside Cincinnati. He added for emphasis, ''I'm not going to disavow them because some scumbag who doesn't have the best interest of Ohio at heart wants me to.''

Jonathan Weisman

Mike Gibbons in Dublin, Ohio

Mr. Gibbons likes to sport a navy blue suit coat and red tie reminiscent of Mr. Trump. He has a habit of reminding voters that he is a businessman, not a politician. And he speaks often of how, in 1989, he started his investment banking and financial advisory firm in a small Cleveland office with nothing but a desk and a phone.

But imitation did not win Mr. Gibbons the endorsement of the former president he so sought to emulate, and he is closing out the final stretch of the primary much the way he started: with his own gumption and personal wealth.

In an interview on his campaign bus Saturday, Mr. Gibbons emphasized his lifelong Ohio roots and business credentials as the best fit for Ohio voters.

''I was shocked,'' Mr. Gibbons said of Mr. Trump's endorsement of Mr. Vance, referring to his opponent as someone who ''flew in from the West Coast.'' He added: ''Ohioans should be insulted.''

Outside, a couple of volunteers mingled in a grocery store parking lot near Columbus, picking up Gibbons swag and eating pizza, before fanning out to knock on doors.

Mr. Gibbons grew up in Parma, a ***working-class*** suburb outside of Cleveland. He was a one-time professional football player, and at 37, he founded Brown Gibbons Lang & Company. He ran unsuccessfully for the Senate in 2018, and this time has pumped roughly $17 million into his campaign, making him the largest self-funder in the race.

He drew some scrutiny in March for comments he made in 2013 on China and Asian people that used offensive stereotypes and was later criticized for the heated debate stage encounter with Mr. Mandel.

Mr. Gibbons served as Mr. Trump's Ohio fundraising co-chair in 2016. But in one crucial way, his supporters say, his path has sharply diverged from Mr. Trump's: Mr. Gibbons did not receive a multimillion-dollar loan from his father to launch his business empire.

''I like that he is from Parma, Ohio -- real down-to-earth kind of guy who worked hard for everything he has in life and earned his way,'' said Michael Palcisko, 54, a schoolteacher and military veteran in Cleveland.

Jazmine Ulloa and Kevin Williams

Matt Dolan in North Royalton, Ohio

On an overcast Saturday morning, Mr. Dolan knocked on doors in an affluent suburb just south of Cleveland. He was making a last-minute push to get voters to the polls, and on his target list were registered Republicans who had yet to cast a ballot. But on his route, he was just as likely to encounter Democrats and independents who were backing his candidacy -- or simply cheering him on.

''If it has to be a Republican, I hope it is you,'' Rich Evans, 69, a retired educator, told him, as he stopped manicuring his lawn to shake hands.

From the beginning, Mr. Dolan, who has served in the statehouse since 2017 and whose family owns the Cleveland Guardians baseball team, has been walking in his own lonely lane. He is the only Republican candidate who supports Mr. Trump but has attempted to put some distance between himself and Mr. Trump.

Mr. Trump ''did a lot of good things for Ohio,'' Mr. Dolan said. But he said he wanted his own campaign to remain focused on Ohio. He wanted to get back to discussing policy, and he certainly did not want to re-litigate the last election.

''I am not looking backwards,'' he said.

Like the other Republicans in the race, he said he wants to secure the border, cut the flow of fentanyl into the state and tackle inflation. But he also said he could do more than his competitors to bring workers to the state and put together a unique economic development agenda.

He's hardly a never Trumper. He said he voted for Mr. Trump in the last presidential election, opposed both impeachment cases against him and has said he would support the former president should he become the 2024 Republican nominee.

But on Jan. 6, Mr. Dolan did not shy away from criticizing Mr. Trump for spreading lies about the results of the November 2020 election, writing on Twitter, ''Real leaders lead not manipulate.'' Unlike the other leading Republican candidates in the race, he also acknowledges President Biden is the nation's legitimate leader.

It was a stance that Pat Ryan, 64, said he respected. Standing at his front door, Ryan, who considers himself a Democrat, said he planned to vote in the Republican primary this year because of Mr. Dolan. ''I looked at all the candidates, and he's the most honest one,'' he said.

Jazmine Ulloa

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/01/us/politics/josh-mandel-vance-ohio-senate.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/01/us/politics/josh-mandel-vance-ohio-senate.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The author J.D. Vance campaigned with Representatives Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia and Matt Gaetz of Florida. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MADDIE MCGARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Jane Timken has been endorsed by Senator Rob Portman, who is vacating his seat. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GAELEN MORSE/REUTERS)

The banker Mike Gibbons has pumped nearly $17 million of his own money into the race. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HAIYUN JIANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Josh Mandel was long presumed to be the front-runner in the crowded Republican field for a Senate seat in Ohio. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN KAISER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Unlike the others, State Senator Matt Dolan acknowledges President Biden is the legitimate leader. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DUSTIN FRANZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 2, 2022

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[***Should Plastic Bags Be Banned Everywhere?; student opinion***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YB8-XR01-DXY4-X0WG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 2, 2020 Monday 12:44 EST

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**Section:** LEARNING

**Length:** 1203 words

**Byline:** Shannon Doyne

**Highlight:** New York has a new law that bans most single-use plastic bags like the ones found in grocery stores, drugstores and boutiques. Do you think all communities should do the same?

**Body**

New York has a new law that bans most single-use plastic bags like the ones found in grocery stores, drugstores and boutiques. Do you think all communities should do the same?

[*Find all our Student Opinion questions here.*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-student-opinion)

When you buy something in a store, do you rely on the store’s plastic bags to get your items home? Or do you bring your own reusable bag — or just skip the bag entirely? For residents of New York state, the store-provided plastic bag won’t be an option any more as of March 1.

What do you think about New York’s new law? Is something similar in effect where you live? If not, do you wish it were? Why or why not? How concerned are you about the negative environmental effects of errant bags that end up in animal habitats and landfills?

In “[*Get Ready, New York: The Plastic Bag Ban Is Starting*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-student-opinion),” Anne Barnard writes about the law and its intended outcomes:

New York is banning the distribution of single-use plastic bags statewide on Sunday, a move with the ambitious goal of reducing the billions of discarded bags that stream annually into landfills, rivers and oceans.

The law forbids most businesses from handing out the thin bags that are ubiquitous in supermarkets, bodegas and boutiques, making New York the third state to bar the bags after California, where a ban has already changed the way millions of people shop, and Oregon, where one took effect last month.

If successful, the transition could spur a cultural sea change as significant as the end of smoking in bars, or the shift in attitudes ushered by seatbelt laws: Once optional, buckling up is now so automatic for most people that it happens almost unconsciously.

New Yorkers currently use 23 billion plastic bags each year, state officials say, many of which end up as one of the most problematic forms of garbage. They blow across streets and become caught in trees. They harm birds and marine creatures. They clog sorting machines, making recycling them cumbersome.

The article goes on to describe successes in other places that have worked to decrease the use of plastic bags:

[*Measures in other countries and localities*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-student-opinion) have significantly reduced plastic bag use, and a study in Washington found a 5-cent bag fee there had cut down on plastic pollution in waterways. The laws — including a de facto ban in Hawaii, where all counties forbid such bags — also aim to address climate change by reducing the planet-warming emissions from making the petroleum-based bags.

[*California’s ban*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-student-opinion) led to a 72 percent drop in plastic bag use. Although the law passed narrowly in a referendum — and opinions on it remain divided — implementation was relatively smooth.

Not all plastic bags are subject to the ban:

There are [*exceptions to the bag ban*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-student-opinion): Plastic can be used for takeout food; uncooked meat or fish and other products that could contaminate items; weighed produce; and prescription drugs. Newspaper bags, garment bags and bags sold in bulk, like trash or recycling bags, are also exempt.

Paper bags are still allowed, and local governments can impose a 5-cent fee for each one a customer takes. The cities and counties that opt in to that fee will keep 2 cents per bag to spend on programs aimed at distributing reusable bags, and the remaining 3 cents will go to New York’s Environmental Protection Fund.

Customers on food stamps and public assistance will be exempt from paper-bag fees.

The article notes that the new law has some opposition:

There, of course, are skeptics of the plastic ban, especially in New York City, where most people do not drive to supermarkets and shops. A bedrock feature of life in the city is running errands on the spur of the moment, or making impulse buys while walking or using public transportation.

“This is going to be the worst thing to happen to this store,” said Sal Husain, who manages a C-Town grocery store in the Inwood section of Manhattan. “It’s OK to protect the environment, but there’s going to be a lot of problems with customers.”

…. Across the street, Fatih Demir has been selling fruits for the past 15 years from a stand pitched below a white canopy. Most of his business comes from subway riders heading to and from the A train, he said.

“Our customers keep asking, ‘What’s going to happen?’” he said. “The woman who sells next to me keeps asking, ‘What’s going to happen?’ People don’t have the time to prepare for this stuff. This is America, where people most value their time.”

However, other New Yorkers have embraced the ban:

In some ways, the transition has already begun, as eco-conscious New Yorkers have voluntarily adopted reusable bags and the stores cater to them. For some shoppers and stores, bags emblazoned with slogans and images have become a fashion statement, a method of virtue signaling and even an economic opportunity.

That transition was on display on Thursday in Manhattan. Some residents could be seen trying to untangle bundles of loaded plastic bags spinning between their fingers. Others gripped reusable totes with both hands or pushed hand carts stuffed with both plastic and reusable bags.

Sylvie Kande, 62, of Harlem, was carrying paper bags out of a Whole Foods Market in Midtown. She said the ban was a good idea.

“It’s been done already in countries all around the world, and if it’s done there, it could be done here,” Ms. Kande said. “Everybody has to make sacrifices. And I know this is much easier for the bourgeoisie than it is for the ***working class***, and it’s going to take some time. But we have to do it. This is an important transition.”

Students, read the entire article, then tell us:

* To what degree do you agree with Ms. Kande who stated that no longer using single-use plastic bags is an “important transition”?

1. Do you think the ban will motivate shoppers to bring their own bags to stores? Do you and your family tend to use reusable bags? What are the pros and cons of embracing this practice?
2. Some people think that the ban will be more of a hardship on ***working class*** people — such as those who walk instead of get around in cars or those who rely on public transportation? What do you think? In light of this, should the ban be selectively enforced? Why or why not?
3. The article mentions that some people like plastic bags because they reuse them at home for various purposes. Does this happen in your house? If so, how are these bags used?
4. You read about the types of single-use bags as well as purchases that are not subject to the ban. Do you think each of these exemptions is sensible? Explain. Do the exceptions reduce the ban’s effectiveness, in your opinion?
5. A [*related interactive*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-student-opinion) notes that in New York City, plastic bags “have become part of the city’s visual landscape, the kind of everyday objects so pervasive that they seem invisible.” Look at the bag designs in the collection. Do you think plastic bags tell us something about the time and place in which they are or were used? If so, what?

Students 13 and older are invited to comment. All comments are moderated by the Learning Network staff, but please keep in mind that once your comment is accepted, it will be made public.

PHOTO: New Yorkers use 23 billion plastic bags each year, state officials say. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Mark Abramson for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 23, 2020

**End of Document**



[***In Trump’s Shadow, Ohio Republicans Campaign Ahead of Tuesday’s Primary***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65BS-86Y1-DXY4-X2CW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 1, 2022 Sunday 12:14 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 2059 words

**Byline:** Trip Gabriel

**Highlight:** Donald Trump’s endorsement of the author and venture capitalist J.D. Vance has shaken up the Republican race for the first major Senate midterm election.

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So, Mr. Mandel said of Black Lives Matter activists, “They are the racists, not us.” He stirred animosity toward migrants, including [*refugees from Afghanistan*](https://twitter.com/JoshMandelOhio/status/1441803392356126722?s=20&amp;t=okOSmS2R6Jug4S-g9PJe9w), and falsely claimed the 2020 election was stolen from Mr. Trump. The Jewish grandson of a Holocaust survivor whose website features a Christian cross, Mr. Mandel stumped mostly in evangelical churches, claiming “there’s no such thing” as separation of church and state.

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But two weeks ago, the one person he sought most to impress — the former president himself — spurned Mr. Mandel, a former state treasurer, and bestowed his coveted endorsement on J.D. Vance, the “Hillbilly Elegy” author, remaking the race overnight.

Mr. Vance, who had been trailing in polls and running low on money, has seen a surge in donations and support since Mr. Trump’s embrace, as the first major [*Senate midterm primary election*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/2022-midterm-elections) entered its final weekend before Tuesday’s voting.

And around the state, Republicans including Mr. Mandel; Mr. Vance; Mike Gibbons, a self-funded businessman; and State Senator Matt Dolan fanned out in a preview of national G.O.P. politics to come — different moons circling Mr. Trump’s sun.

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He castigated both parties for free trade agreements that he said had sent Ohio manufacturing to Mexico and China, for the “bipartisan decision to allow American Wall Street firms to get rich off the growth of China and not off the growth of the American middle class.” He also accused financial firms of allowing “the Chinese into this country, buying up our farmland, buying up our single-family homes, making it impossible for young families to buy a home, to own a stake in their own country.”

“That is the game they play, and I’m running for the U.S. Senate to go and play a different game, a game where we put our citizens and the people in this room first,” he said to cheers.

The people in that room — just off a verdant golf course, far away from the illegal immigrant, drug-infested cities that Mr. Vance speaks of on the stump — were hardly the down-and-out white workers central to his memoir, “Hillbilly Elegy.” But an unspoken truth is, his audience is the true core of the pro-Trump vote in Ohio. The one income group that [*President Biden won in this state in 2020*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/exit-polls-ohio.html) was that of voters who earn less than $50,000. More affluent voters went for Mr. Trump.

But economic themes in general — and the China threat in particular — resonated.

“That’s in the DNA in Ohio,” said Representative Tim Ryan, the likely Democratic nominee for the coming Senate race.

Mr. Vance was asked by a reporter why he invited Ms. Greene and Mr. Gaetz to barnstorm through Ohio with him on the closing weekend of the primary campaign.

“There is nothing more disgusting in politics than the way that leadership asks you to stab your friends in the back,” he said before heading with them to West Chester, outside Cincinnati. He added for emphasis, “I’m not going to disavow them because some scumbag who doesn’t have the best interest of Ohio at heart wants me to.”

Jonathan Weisman

Mike Gibbons in Dublin, Ohio

Mr. Gibbons likes to sport a navy blue suit coat and red tie reminiscent of Mr. Trump. He has a habit of reminding voters that he is a businessman, not a politician. And he speaks often of how, in 1989, he started his investment banking and financial advisory firm in a small Cleveland office with nothing but a desk and a phone.

But imitation did not win Mr. Gibbons the endorsement of the former president he so sought to emulate, and he is closing out the final stretch of the primary much the way he started: with his own gumption and personal wealth.

In an interview on his campaign bus Saturday, Mr. Gibbons emphasized his lifelong Ohio roots and business credentials as the best fit for Ohio voters.

“I was shocked,” Mr. Gibbons said of Mr. Trump’s endorsement of Mr. Vance, referring to his opponent as someone who “flew in from the West Coast.” He added: “Ohioans should be insulted.”

Outside, a couple of volunteers mingled in a grocery store parking lot near Columbus, picking up Gibbons swag and eating pizza, before fanning out to knock on doors.

Mr. Gibbons grew up in Parma, a ***working-class*** suburb outside of Cleveland. He was a one-time professional football player, and at 37, he founded Brown Gibbons Lang &amp; Company. He ran unsuccessfully for the Senate in 2018, and this time has pumped roughly $17 million into his campaign, making him the largest self-funder in the race.

He drew some scrutiny in March for comments he made in 2013 on China and Asian people that used [*offensive stereotypes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/15/us/politics/mike-gibbons-ohio.html) and was later criticized for the heated[*debate stage*](https://www.cincinnati.com/story/news/politics/2022/03/19/josh-mandel-mike-gibbons-react-after-ohio-republican-senate-debate/7060368001/) encounter with Mr. Mandel.

Mr. Gibbons served as Mr. Trump’s Ohio fundraising co-chair in 2016. But in one crucial way, his supporters say, his path has sharply diverged from Mr. Trump’s: Mr. Gibbons did not receive a multimillion-dollar loan from his father to launch his business empire.

“I like that he is from Parma, Ohio — real down-to-earth kind of guy who worked hard for everything he has in life and earned his way,” said Michael Palcisko, 54, a schoolteacher and military veteran in Cleveland.

Jazmine Ulloa and Kevin Williams

Matt Dolan in North Royalton, Ohio

On an overcast Saturday morning, Mr. Dolan knocked on doors in an affluent suburb just south of Cleveland. He was making a last-minute push to get voters to the polls, and on his target list were registered Republicans who had yet to cast a ballot. But on his route, he was just as likely to encounter Democrats and independents who were backing his candidacy — or simply cheering him on.

“If it has to be a Republican, I hope it is you,” Rich Evans, 69, a retired educator, told him, as he stopped manicuring his lawn to shake hands.

From the beginning, Mr. Dolan, who has served in the statehouse since 2017 and whose family owns the Cleveland Guardians baseball team, has been walking in his own lonely lane. He is the only Republican candidate who supports Mr. Trump but has attempted to put some distance between himself and Mr. Trump.

Mr. Trump “did a lot of good things for Ohio,” Mr. Dolan said. But he said he wanted his own campaign to remain focused on Ohio. He wanted to get back to discussing policy, and he certainly did not want to re-litigate the last election.

“I am not looking backwards,” he said.

Like the other Republicans in the race, he said he wants to secure the border, cut the flow of fentanyl into the state and tackle inflation. But he also said he could do more than his competitors to bring workers to the state and put together a unique economic development agenda.

He’s hardly a never Trumper. He said he voted for Mr. Trump in the last presidential election, opposed both impeachment cases against him and has said he would support the former president should he become the 2024 Republican nominee.

But on Jan. 6, Mr. Dolan did not shy away from criticizing Mr. Trump for spreading lies about the results of the November 2020 election, [*writing on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/electmattdolan/status/1346913623210401794?lang=en), “Real leaders lead not manipulate.” Unlike the other leading Republican candidates in the race, he also acknowledges President Biden is the nation’s legitimate leader.

It was a stance that Pat Ryan, 64, said he respected. Standing at his front door, Ryan, who considers himself a Democrat, said he planned to vote in the Republican primary this year because of Mr. Dolan. “I looked at all the candidates, and he’s the most honest one,” he said.

Jazmine Ulloa

PHOTOS: The author J.D. Vance campaigned with Representatives Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia and Matt Gaetz of Florida. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MADDIE MCGARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Jane Timken has been endorsed by Senator Rob Portman, who is vacating his seat. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GAELEN MORSE/REUTERS); The banker Mike Gibbons has pumped nearly $17 million of his own money into the race. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HAIYUN JIANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Josh Mandel was long presumed to be the front-runner in the crowded Republican field for a Senate seat in Ohio. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN KAISER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Unlike the others, State Senator Matt Dolan acknowledges President Biden is the legitimate leader. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DUSTIN FRANZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Trade Barriers Nudge Northern Ireland Away From the U.K.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64RW-W001-JBG3-60H7-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

A dispute over trading checks has left the main pro-British party in disarray, creating the potential for a momentous political shift.

BELFAST, Northern Ireland -- Michelle O'Neill was forced to greet visitors this week in a drab upstairs meeting room at the rear of the Stormont Parliament Buildings in Belfast, its faded posters and scattered chairs a stark contrast to the classical grandeur of the chambers at the front of the complex.

A leader of the Irish nationalist Sinn Fein party, Ms. O'Neill had just vacated her office as deputy first minister of Northern Ireland's government after the first minister, Paul Givan, a member of the main unionist party -- that is, the main party supporting Northern Ireland's current status as part of the United Kingdom -- abruptly resigned. Under the power-sharing agreement that governs the territory, she automatically lost her post as well.

But if the upheaval turned Ms. O'Neill into a temporary vagabond, it also served to underline a momentous political shift in Northern Ireland: Assuming that current polls hold, Sinn Fein, with its vestigial ties to the paramilitary Irish Republican Army and fervent commitment to Irish unification, will become the largest party in the Northern Ireland Assembly after elections scheduled for May.

That could catapult the 45-year-old Ms. O'Neill into the post of first minister, and it helps explain why Mr. Givan quit when he did.

His Democratic Unionist Party is desperate to rally its voters before the election. Its most emotive issue is the North's trade status in the wake of Brexit, which is governed by a complex legal arrangement known as the Northern Ireland Protocol. Unionists complain that the protocol, which requires border checks on goods passing between Northern Ireland and mainland Britain, has driven a wedge between the North and the rest of the United Kingdom.

By pulling their leader out of Stormont, the Democratic Unionists are trying to put pressure on the British government, which is in the process of renegotiating the protocol with European Union. Unless the trade rules are radically overhauled, unionists say, they will not return to the government and Northern Ireland's on-again off-again experiment in power-sharing will collapse.

''We've had enough of being promised that this issue would be dealt with,'' said Gordon Lyons, 35, a Democratic Unionist who serves as economy minister in the government and who will stay in his position until the election. ''There's a general sense that we unionists are always being asked to suck it up.''

Ms. O'Neill dismissed Mr. Givan's exit as a ''reckless stunt.'' It came days after another unionist minister, Edwin Poots, declared that the government would stop inspecting agricultural goods coming in from Britain, a violation of the protocol. A judge ruled that the checks must continue until the issue was decided in court.

''They've been on the wrong side of the Brexit debate,'' Ms. O'Neill said. ''Now they're bringing their dysfunction into this building.''

Behind the theatrics, however, is a deadly serious contest for the future of Northern Ireland, one that could reverberate widely, destabilizing not just the island but also Britain's relations with the European Union and the United States.

Nearly a quarter century after the Good Friday Agreement ended the sectarian violence known as the Troubles, Brexit has scrambled Northern Ireland's politics. Few want a return to the bloody 30-year guerrilla war that set mostly Catholic nationalists and republicans, seeking unification with Ireland, against predominantly Protestant loyalists and unionists, who want to stay in the United Kingdom.

But the fallout from Brexit has left unionists angry and divided, and it has tilted the political landscape in favor of Sinn Fein, which opposed Brexit and seeks ever closer ties between the north and south of Ireland.

''This does feel like a critical juncture,'' said Katy Hayward, a professor of politics at Queen's University in Belfast. ''We can't avoid the fact that 100 years after its creation, Northern Ireland has fundamentally changed.''

If Sinn Fein does win the largest number of seats -- it is currently eight points ahead of the Democratic Unionists in polls -- the most likely scenario would be a prolonged negotiation as the two parties tried to figure out how to live with each other. But some experts said they doubted the Democratic Unionists could ever take part in a government with a Sinn Fein representative as first minister.

As a practical matter, the first minister and deputy first minister have equal powers in overseeing the government -- an arrangement designed to force parties from opposing traditions to work together. But in the identity politics of Northern Ireland, symbolic details matter.

Unionists complain that Sinn Fein vetoed their plans to plant a rose bush at Stormont last year to mark the centenary of the establishment of Northern Ireland. Nationalists point out that the unionists opposed legislation that would give the Irish language similar status to that of English, as Welsh has in Wales.

''It's about a sense of loss,'' said Monica McWilliams, an academic and former politician who was involved in the 1998 peace negotiations. ''The unionists say, 'If this is going to be good for the Irish economy, it's going to be bad for us up north.'''

On its face, the Northern Ireland Protocol would not seem to have the visceral power of issues like language. It is a technical arrangement that grew out of a deal between London and Brussels to avoid resurrecting a hard border between Ireland, an E.U. member state, and Northern Ireland, which left the European Union as part of the United Kingdom. To achieve this, it requires checks on goods flowing across the Irish Sea from mainland Britain to the North.

Mr. Givan's party enthusiastically supported Brexit, and when Prime Minister Boris Johnson struck the deal on the protocol, they grudgingly went along with it. But as the checks have begun to be enforced, unionists say they have imposed an onerous burden, with one widely quoted analysis estimating that Brexit adds 850 million pounds, or $1.15 billion, a year in costs. Other experts cast doubt on those figures and point out that Northern Ireland has bounced back more quickly from the pandemic than much of Britain.

Still, there is a palpable sense of betrayal at the hands of Mr. Johnson. First, he promised the unionists that the protocol would not disrupt trade across the Irish Sea. Then he told them that Britain would drive a hard bargain with the European Union, scrapping the protocol, if necessary, to remove barriers.

Now, however, Mr. Johnson, embattled by his own scandals at home, is wary of igniting a trade war with the European Union. He also recognizes that stirring up tensions over Northern Ireland would antagonize President Biden, who takes a particular interest in the preservation of the Good Friday Agreement.

When Mr. Johnson's hard-line trade negotiator, David Frost, resigned last December -- in part over concerns about this softer stance on the protocol -- he was replaced by a more emollient figure, Liz Truss, the foreign secretary. While the negotiations remain tough, Britain and the European Union are stressing progress and seem less likely to come to blows.

''The least difficult option for Boris Johnson is to sacrifice Northern Ireland,'' said David Campbell, chairman of the Loyalist Communities Council, which represents a group of pro-union paramilitary groups that vehemently oppose the protocol.

Some of those groups were suspected of instigating clashes with the police in April last year when tensions over the protocol first boiled over. Mr. Campbell insisted in an interview that was not the case, though he warned that if London were to cut another deal with Brussels, ''The message it would send is that the only thing that works is violence.''

In the short term, the protocol's biggest threat is to the Democratic Unionists, who are being challenged by rival parties on both their right and left. ''How do you reward these people for all their blunders?'' Mr. Campbell said.

The Democratic Unionist Party, which was founded by the Rev. Ian Paisley during the height of the Troubles, has cycled through leaders and lurched sharply to the right as it struggles to shore up its base.

''Someone in Europe needs to wake up to the reality that they are not doing this to assist the peace process,'' Mr. Poots declared in the Assembly on Monday. ''The political element of the peace process has had a bomb put in it, and it hasn't been by terrorists, it has been by the European Union.''

Such fiery words pose a problem for both the European Union and Britain. While London could resort to imposing direct rule on the North -- as it has during previous breakdowns in relations between the Northern Irish parties -- that would further inflame tensions. To make the protocol work smoothly, both sides need a functioning administration in Belfast to set up and enforce much of the border checks.

''It can, in theory, be overridden, but we shouldn't underestimate the political costs of doing this,'' said Raoul Ruparel, a former special adviser to the British prime minister on Europe. ''The U.K. government tramping into Northern Ireland just doesn't seem to be a reasonable request.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/10/world/europe/northern-ireland-brexit.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/10/world/europe/northern-ireland-brexit.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A service in Londonderry, Northern Ireland, on Jan. 30, the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, a British massacre of Irish nationalist protesters.

Michelle O'Neill was deputy first minister of Northern Ireland. Her party, Sinn Fein, is heavily favored in legislative elections this spring. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CLODAGH KILCOYNE/REUTERS)

A customs post was established at a port in Antrim. Brexit has slowed trade between Northern Ireland and the rest of the U.K. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL FAITH/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

A unionist mural in Sandy Row, a predominantly Protestant Loyalist, ***working-class*** neighborhood in Belfast, in memory of the 17th-century King William of Orange. He defeated a Catholic army in the Battle of Boyne. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PAULO NUNES DOS SANTOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**Byline:** By David Marchese

**Body**

In Elizabeth Banks's upcoming movie, ''Call Jane,'' which is in theaters on Oct. 28, she plays a conservative housewife who winds up working for the Jane Collective, the underground organization that helped women procure safe abortions in the years before Roe v. Wade was decided in 1973. The film is, at moments, wrenching; it's also a gas, with a groovy period soundtrack and an uplifting narrative arc. The way ''Call Jane'' balances political ideas and entertainment value makes it a useful stand-in for Banks's work in general. Whether as an actress (Effie Trinket in ''The Hunger Games'' films; Laura Bush in ''W.''), director (''Pitch Perfect 2''; the intriguingly titled thriller ''Cocaine Bear,'' due in February) or an increasingly prolific producer (the Hulu series ''Shrill''; the ABC game show ''Press Your Luck,'' which she also hosts), Banks has proved adept at bringing both pure pop and her own political sensibility to screens. Though that blend is not free of complications and frustrations.

''I don't want to have to always represent my gender,'' says Banks, who is 48, ''because it politicizes my work in a way that doesn't acknowledge I'm just trying to make a living. I'm trying to entertain people. I don't want to deny that my choices feed my personal belief system. What I don't want to be presented as is some sort of feminist warrior, like, woo-ha, I'm fighting the system all the time.''

''Call Jane'' was obviously finished before the Dobbs decision came down. What does the new context around abortion mean for how the film might now be received? I have no idea how people are going to receive the movie. I will say that the Dobbs decision has solidified our commitment to getting audiences to see the movie in the right light, which is to say that there's maybe a bigger responsibility on the movie that I didn't feel when we were making it. I don't want to give it too much import, but we have a midterm election happening right after the movie comes out and, well, my hope is that it invites Republican women voters to go vote. The Democratic women I know, we've done all we can do. I want the movie to inspire people to vote out Republicans who don't support reproductive justice.

There's that old conservative trope of liberal Hollywood elites judging other people's morality and telling them what to believe. Do you worry at all that being explicit about your political goals for the movie might turn off as many people as it compels? No, I don't worry about that. I didn't use the word ''judge.'' I used the word ''inspire.'' I want people to see the movie and be inspired to act. I know that's possible because I'm inspired by art and stories. I study how people live, and I put it into stories. When you do that for your job, you become more open to different people and experiences. I didn't stay in my small town. Once you get out in the world and get your hands dirty and meet a lot of people, you have to be super [expletive] open to everybody's perspectives and ideas, and it makes you, frankly, a liberal. The whole point of Hollywood liberals is we don't want anyone telling anyone else how to live their life. We want you to figure out what's best for you. That's how I feel about abortion. You don't want to get an abortion? Don't get an abortion.

For a smaller film like ''Call Jane'' to be effective in the way you described, people have to see it. But what are your expectations for it in that sense? Because right now feels like an especially hard time for smaller films to find their audience. The theatrical model of staying in the theater for 25 weeks, that's not happening. But I made this movie called ''Walk of Shame'' -- so long ago -- and I get stopped in airports for that movie now more than ever. I don't know where, but people are seeing it. ''Wet Hot American Summer'' affects my life to this day. When it came out, it made no money, but people found it because it was interesting and good. Lorne Michaels gave me advice: Don't do things unless you think they'll be part of the cultural conversation. I've tried to make choices based on that. I'm getting older, and I want to stay relevant and be in the conversation.

How do you interpret that phrase ''the cultural conversation''? Does it mean something that speaks in a direct way to currents in the culture, like ''Call Jane,'' or does it mean something that's popular? It can mean multiple things. For instance, making ''Mrs. America'' felt easy because I'm on the creative council of the Center for Reproductive Rights. I live a life with a bunch of women activists working at the highest levels on American policy. That's what that was about and basically how nothing has improved in 45 years. It felt like there was a way to make that relevant. Also, Cate Blanchett: I'm like, she'll get nominated for everything, so the show will stay in the conversation for a period of time, and it did.

But what about something poppier like ''Press Your Luck''? Do you see that as also part of the conversation? Well, this year a big conversation I had with my partners at Fremantle and ABC was about marketing the show around our contestants. You put up three people, and at the end you get a great personal story out of each of these contestants, and we're literally either changing their lives or not. Our contestants are up there crying because their mom has multiple sclerosis and we're about to give them an accessible van so that their mom can go to their wedding. That's great drama. Everybody can cheer on that person. I felt like there was a way for us to create conversation around the contestants and their lives and the real stories, and I think it's proven out. We've done really well this year.

But you're always working on something ahead of whatever the news or cultural mood is going to be. Are there specific factors that you look for that can help you be in the conversation? ''Shrill'' is a good example. Being able to take Lindy's voice and put it onscreen and put Aidy Bryant in a lead role on a comedy -- it's culturally interesting to see a fat woman as the star of a television show and someone who's having a real life, a sex life, the whole thing. It's for someone specific, and at the same time that opens it up to be for everybody. That's Marketing 101: Make people love it, and the cool flows out. ''Cocaine Bear'': It's a fun conversation piece inspired by this insane true event from 1985 and an opportunity to cut through a little noise. The title alone! I was clear with Universal. I made them make sure that we could use the title in America. I was like, I don't want to direct this if you're going to tell me it's going to be called ''Bear in the Woods.''

''Cocaine Bear'' is the first movie you directed after ''Charlie's Angels,'' which didn't do as well as you hoped. What did you learn from that experience that you could apply to this movie? That's a long conversation that I don't know that I want to get into.

We've got time. I'll just be in trouble. Let me say I'm proud of the movie. I loved Kristen Stewart being funny and light. I loved introducing Ella Balinska to the world. I loved working with Patrick Stewart. It was an incredible experience. It was very stressful, partly because when women do things in Hollywood it becomes this story. There was a story around ''Charlie's Angels'' that I was creating some feminist manifesto. I was just making an action movie. I would've liked to have made ''Mission: Impossible,'' but women aren't directing ''Mission: Impossible.'' I was able to direct an action movie, frankly, because it starred women and I'm a female director, and that is the confine right now in Hollywood. I wish that the movie had not been presented as just for girls, because I didn't make it just for girls. There was a disconnect on the marketing side of it for me.

You said you were able to get that job because it was an action movie starring women. Has that dynamic shifted since then? One of my least favorite things to do in talking to people like you is to represent all women in Hollywood who are doing interesting things. I am in a rarefied category. There are very few female directors in Hollywood. There are even fewer who are actresses who have become directors. I've [expletive] worked my tail off to be able to do what I'm doing. I would love for you to interview the studio heads and the corporations and ask them these questions, because I can't solve it. I'm putting my head down and showing these big corporations that if they give women the opportunity to do this job, they can make a good product that can make them a profit. It's a male-dominated industry. It's a male-dominated world. That's what I'm up against, but I can't solve it and I don't really want to analyze it. It's not interesting to me. It puts me, frankly, in a position where the studio head is going to read it in The New York Times and be like, ''Wow, that Liz Banks has got a lot to say.'' I don't need that added pressure. I truly feel that it's dangerous to talk about these things now.

I'm not trying to put you on the spot. Thank you for saying that. I've just been put in this position of my statements' being perceived as being grand when they're really just about my personal experience, which is all I should be talking about. I was told by a big producer of big action movies that I couldn't direct action, that male actors were not going to follow me. He was flummoxed at the idea that a woman would be able to lead the Rock on a C.G.I. screen, I guess? That was said by someone with a lot of power in our industry to my face.

Let me ask about your acting career. Early on, the dream was that you could follow in the footsteps of a Julia Roberts or a Reese Witherspoon. But the kinds of movies that made them stars stopped being made. How would your goals be different if you were starting out now? It's all different. When I came into the business, they were making romcoms. I felt I was always a natural lead in those movies. When I made ''Zack and Miri Make a Porno,'' I felt like it was exactly what I was supposed to be doing with my life. Then the movie didn't work. They marketed the movie with a poster with stick figures or something. I don't know what they thought that movie was meant to be marketing-wise, but it was a little gem for us. Anyway, coming into the business, when I lived in New York, if you weren't on an episode of ''Law & Order,'' you weren't going to be an actor. That was a rite of passage. I don't know what those rites of passage are now. There are people who say to me -- they're living in Ohio -- and they're like, I really want to be an actor, but I don't know what to do. Well, first you have to leave Ohio. You have to actually get started. You have to make [expletive]. I cast Scott Seiss. It's not like he was doing nothing. He was a standup comedian. He had an agent. But he made us laugh so much with his TikTok videos, and when we were auditioning people for ''Cocaine Bear,'' I was like, ''You know who would be fun?'' He came in and auditioned, and he was great. You've got to do your stuff and put it out there.

''Cocaine Bear'' is one of Ray Liotta's last performances. What's a memory that stands out? I worked with him on a little film called ''The Details'' long ago, and he provided me with a great life lesson. I'll give you the back story: Tobey Maguire's character was cheating on his wife, me, with Ray's wife from the movie, Kerry Washington. Ray was extorting him. He basically said, Pay me or I'm going to tell your wife. So the scene is Tobey Maguire's character delivering the money to Ray Liotta. Ray Liotta takes the money; they're out on this bridge, and he opens the package up and empties all the money. It rains down into the river below, shocking Tobey Maguire's character, and Ray Liotta gives this great speech about how, essentially: You're a coward. I don't need your money. I wanted to test you to see if you would come clean, and you didn't. Ray Liotta did this with scathing intensity. It was amazing. The director came out and said: ''That was incredible. Let's do another one.'' Ray said, ''OK, what do you want me to do differently?'' The director said: ''I don't know. I feel like we just need one more for safety.'' Ray said: ''No. If you're not going to direct me, then I did my work. I'm done.'' And he turned around and left the set.

Just to go back to this, because I want to make sure I understand: You said you don't want to be put in a position where you're speaking for all women in Hollywood because there's danger in it. The danger being that people could decide they don't want to work with you? Is that correct? Let me be clear: I'm a leader in Hollywood, so I'm not trying to shirk my responsibility. I just want the framing device around me to not consistently be that I'm some sort of feminist activist. That's all I'm saying. I find, no offense, that talking to male journalists who are never going to understand foundationally what women go through, especially female actresses in Hollywood -- I got into an industry that values only my youth and my beauty. I've been on sets where I've watched a big-time actress go up to a big-time director and say, ''Listen, I'm wondering in this scene, what is our relationship?'' And this man said to this woman: ''Baby, don't worry about it. It's all about your hair and your sunglasses.'' That's the baseline that I'm coming from. I went to sets for a long time in my career where my ideas were not valued or I didn't get jobs because I was too ''uppity.'' That's the place that I started, and that is the hurdle that I'm still having to overcome. I'm also grateful for all the opportunity and investment that is being made in me. So I like to front that stuff right now. Look, I made a political piece of art called ''Call Jane.'' It's about women's reproductive justice. I understand that's a topic for conversation.

I'm asking about these things because I'm interested. I appreciate that. I get myself in trouble. It's not you; it's me. I can talk to you all day about feminist issues, but you're never going to have a deep understanding because it's not something that happens in your life. I hope that you take something away from this conversation and have a deeper understanding of what women, even rich, self-made powerful women like myself, are up against daily. I hope that resonates for you. But I don't know that you get it. It's an intellectual exercise for you, and it's an emotional exercise for me. It's the parameters in which I live my life, do my job.

Let me get back to ''Call Jane.'' What are movies that affected you in the way you hope ''Call Jane'' will affect people? ''Working Girl'' comes to mind. ''Flashdance.'' I grew up in a very small town. ***Working class***. The idea that this Staten Island girl could go to Wall Street, and she was underestimated by everybody. It's the same basic story line in ''Flashdance'': This woman wants to be a ballerina, but she's a welder. There were also all of the John Hughes movies of my youth that starred the underdog, Molly Ringwald, who was not some traditional beauty. All those movies were about this system in place that tells women that they're not good enough as they are and that they're going to have to overcome that system. That being said, the characters I watched where I was like, Oh, I want to be that person! They were Harrison Fords. I'm a type-A personality. I'm an ambitious go-getter. The idea of being Molly Ringwald sitting in the back of the class, Oh, nobody's looking at me -- that wasn't my experience as a young person. I found love in high school. I got into the university that I wanted to go to. I took advantage of these looks as much as I could. These qualities that we look at in men and boys and think, This is the recipe to create a winner in life -- I had those. So the things I watched that I loved? I'll think of a more recent example: ''The Martian,'' with Matt Damon. I watched ''The Martian,'' and I was like, I could have crushed this role. Matt Damon, love him. He's having to figure out how to survive. I want that role.

He's so good at showing the act of thinking in front of a camera. You know what's interesting, though? A lot of that is directing. Meaning, it's an editorial choice. I know a lot of actors who look good thinking on camera, but if you cut away from the shot, you never see that work. I was in this movie ''Love & Mercy'' about the Beach Boys. I got a lot of praise for that performance, and when I watch it, what I notice the most is that the editor spent a lot of time on me processing Brian Wilson. Taking him in, wondering about him and falling in love with him. None of that was verbal. I was so grateful to the editor for letting that stay in the film, because so much of the actor's job is listening.

Speaking of which, what did you learn about storytelling from doing a podcast? That was the first time you've worked without images. I definitely learned about the intimacy of being in someone's ear. It creates a visual in their mind's eye, and when you provide them the visual, it's maybe less engaging. It does make you focus on how to invite people's imagination. They're participating in the story. I find that interesting. And of course, it's bled into my other work, because I'm very intelligent and I would've processed that.

This is maybe overly philosophical: When you said that my asking certain questions was just an intellectual exercise but it's the emotional foundation of your life -- isn't an interview an intellectual exercise? Isn't that why we're here? It's more that sometimes when I'm talking about these things with a woman, there's a connection to a deeper -- most women I know, for instance, have seen some unwanted penises in their lives. They've been harassed. I don't know that there's any way to communicate that to you. It's a state of being. It's constant, and it's why when we're talking in the media, it would be a pleasure to not have it feel like ... I don't know -- people presume that women who are doing interesting, powerful things in a man's world -- it's all politicized in some way. But I'm on ''Press Your Luck'' because I love that job. It's fun to change people's lives with money.

This interview has been edited and condensed from two conversations.

Opening illustration: Source photograph by John Fleenor/ABC, via Getty Images

David Marchese is a staff writer for the magazine and the columnist for Talk. Recently he interviewed Neal Stephenson about portraying a utopian future, Laurie Santos about happiness and Christopher Walken about acting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/27/magazine/elizabeth-banks-thinks-this-interview-is-dangerous-for-her.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/27/magazine/elizabeth-banks-thinks-this-interview-is-dangerous-for-her.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAULIO AMADO

JOHN FLEENOR/ABC, VIA GETY IMAGES) (MM13)

This page, from top: Elizabeth Banks with Jennifer Lawrence in ''The Hunger Games'' (2012), and in the forthcoming ''Call Jane.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MURRAY CLOSE/LIONSGATE, VIA EVERETT COLLECTION

WILSON WEBB/ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS) (MM14)

Opposite page: Banks hosting ''Press Your Luck.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN FLEENOR/ABC, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (MM15)

**Load-Date:** October 2, 2022

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[***What Trump Needs Now: A Polling Error Much Bigger Than 2016's***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:616R-VMK1-JBG3-60W5-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Nate Cohn

**Body**

Several factors that led to the misfire last time are no longer in play.

If the polls are right, Joe Biden could post the most decisive victory in a presidential election in three and a half decades, surpassing Bill Clinton's win in 1996.

That's a big ''if.''

The indelible memory of 2016's polling misfire, when Donald J. Trump trailed in virtually every pre-election poll and yet swept the battleground states and won the Electoral College, has hovered over the 2020 campaign. Mr. Biden's unusually persistent lead has done little to dispel questions about whether the polls could be off again.

But while President Trump's surprising victory has imbued him with an aura of political invincibility, the polls today put him in a far bigger predicament than the one he faced heading into Election Day in 2016. The polls show Mr. Biden with a far more significant lead than the one held by Hillary Clinton, and many of the likeliest explanations for the polling misfire do not appear to be in play today.

Of course, it's possible the polls could be off by even more than they were four years ago. But to win, that's exactly what Mr. Trump needs. He would need polls to be even worse than they were in the Northern battleground states four years ago. Crucially, he would also need polls to be off to a far greater extent at the national level as well as in the Sun Belt -- and those polls have been relatively accurate in recent contests.

Another way to think of it: Pollsters would have far fewer excuses than they did for missing the mark four years ago. Mr. Trump's upset victory was undoubtedly a surprise, but pollsters argued, with credibility, that the polling wasn't quite as bad as it seemed. Mrs. Clinton did win the national vote, as polls suggested she would, and even the state polls weren't so bad outside of a handful of mostly white ***working-class*** states where there were relatively few high-quality polls late in the election.

In post-election post-mortems, pollsters arrived at a series of valid explanations for what went wrong. None of those would hold up if Mr. Trump won this time.

Here are the many ways the polls are different today than they were in 2016.

The national polls show a decisive Biden win. Four years ago, the national polls showed Mrs. Clinton with a lead of around four percentage points, quite close to her eventual 2.1-point margin in the national vote. This year, the national polls show Mr. Biden up by 8.5 percentage points, according to our average. The higher-quality national surveys generally show him ahead by even more.

Unlike in 2016, the national polls do not foreshadow the gains Mr. Trump made in the Northern battleground states.

Four years ago, national polls showed Mr. Trump making huge gains among white voters without a college degree. It hinted that he was within striking distance of winning in the Electoral College, with possible victories in relatively white ***working-class*** states like Wisconsin, even though the state polls still showed Mrs. Clinton ahead.

This year, the national polls have consistently shown Mr. Biden making big gains among white voters and particularly among white voters without a degree. In this respect, the national polls are quite similar to state polls showing Mr. Biden running well in relatively white Northern battleground states like Wisconsin and Michigan. The national pollsters won't be able to sidestep blame while pointing fingers at the state pollsters.

There are far fewer undecided or minor-party voters. Four years ago, polls showed a large number of voters who were either undecided or backing a minor-party candidate, and it was always an open question how these voters would break at the end.

Over all, Mrs. Clinton led Mr. Trump, 45.7 to 41.8, in the FiveThirtyEight average, and 12.5 percent of voters were either undecided or supporting a minor-party candidate like Gary Johnson or Jill Stein.

There's significant evidence that undecided and minor-party voters shifted to Mr. Trump in 2016. The exit polls found that late deciders broke toward him, 45-42 -- but by even higher margins in the states where the polling error was worst, like Wisconsin, where late deciders broke toward him, 59-30, in the last week. Post-election surveys, which sought to re-contact voters reached in pre-election polls, found voters drifting to Mr. Trump. And all of this was foreshadowed by pre-election polls, which showed the race tightening after the third debate and the Comey letter. It doesn't explain the whole polling error four years ago, but it probably does explain part of it.

This year, just 4.6 percent are undecided or backing a minor-party candidate, according to the FiveThirtyEight average. Even if these voters broke unanimously to Mr. Trump, he would be far short of victory across the battleground states and nationwide.

Some pollsters -- including the New York Times/Siena poll -- do show more undecided voters, voters backing a minor-party candidate, or voters who simply refuse to state whom they'll back for president. Yet there's little evidence that they're poised to break unanimously for the president.

In the final Times/Siena polls of the six battleground states likeliest to decide the election, the 8 percent of likely voters who didn't back either Mr. Trump or Mr. Biden were slightly likelier than average to be young, nonwhite, less educated and male. They were slightly likelier than average to be registered Democrats. They disapproved of the president's performance by the same modest margin as voters over all, and didn't have a favorable view of either Mr. Biden or Mr. Trump. They were far less likely to have voted in a recent election. One wonders whether many of these voters will ultimately turn out at all, even though they say they will.

Many more state pollsters now properly represent voters without a college degree. The failure of many state pollsters to do so four years ago is probably one of the biggest reasons the polls underestimated Mr. Trump. It's not 100 percent solved in 2020, but it's a lot better.

The issue is simple: Voters without a college degree are less likely to respond to telephone surveys. To compensate, pollsters need to weight by education, which means giving more weight to certain respondents to ensure that less educated voters represent the appropriate share of a survey.

This has been true for decades, but Democrats and Republicans used to fare about the same among white voters in both groups, so many political pollsters glossed over whether their samples had too many college graduates. That changed in 2016: Mr. Trump fared far better among white voters without a degree, and suddenly polls that had been accurate for years were woefully biased against Mr. Trump.

By Upshot estimates, failing to weight by education would have biased a national survey by four points against Mr. Trump in 2016. It would have had no effect at all in 2012.

Importantly, most national surveys in recent cycles weighted by education. There's an arcane reason: They mainly sample all adults, and adjust their samples to match census demographic variables -- like educational attainment. Many state polls, in contrast, called voters from lists of registered voters and adjusted their samples to match variables that voters provided when they registered to vote, like their party registration or age -- but not their educational attainment.

Fortunately, most state pollsters now weight by education. There are a couple of exceptions, but they're generally not polls that get talked about too much anyway. Virtually all of the polling you're looking at shows white voters without a degree as a very large share of the electorate. They're just supporting Mr. Biden in far greater numbers than four years ago.

No guaranteed improvement. There's no reason to assume the polls will be very accurate this year. There's not even reason to be sure that the polls will be better than they were in 2016, which wasn't exactly the worst polling error of all time. In fact, the polls were even worse in 2014 and quite bad in 2012 -- though few cared, since they erred in understating the winner's eventual margin of victory. The polls could easily be worse than last time.

Even if the polls do fare better than they did in 2016, they might still be off in ways that matter. In the 2018 midterms, the polls were far more accurate than they were in 2016, but the geographic distribution of the polling error was still highly reminiscent of the error in the presidential election.

Today, polls show Mr. Biden faring best in many of the same states where the polls were off by the most four years ago. Take Wisconsin. It was the highest-profile miss of 2016; now, it's a battleground state that Mr. Biden seems to have put away.

We won't know until Election Day whether that simply reflects real strength among white voters, as shown repeatedly in national polls, or whether it's an artifact of an underlying bias in polls of states. Four years ago, undecided voters broke to Mr. Trump at the end, leading to an error in his direction; today, perhaps they've swung back to Mr. Biden.

The survey research industry faces real challenges. Response rates to telephone polls are in decline. More and more polls are conducted online, and it's still hard to collect a representative sample from the internet. Polling has always depended on whether a pollster can design a survey that yields an unbiased sample, but now it increasingly depends on whether a pollster can identify and control for a source of bias.

Nonetheless, pollsters emerged from the 2016 election mostly if not completely convinced that the underestimation of Mr. Trump was either circumstantial -- like the late movement among a large number of undecided voters -- or could be fixed if pollsters adhered to traditional survey research standards like weighting by education. If Mr. Trump wins this time, they will be in for a whole new round of self-examination. This time, they might not find a satisfactory answer.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/02/upshot/polling-what-trump-needs-to-win.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/02/upshot/polling-what-trump-needs-to-win.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Waiting to vote in Queens on the last day of early voting in New York City. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Dave Sanders for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 3, 2020

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[***What the Rebirth of This Old Steel Center Means for Trump***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XY5-M1B1-JBG3-650W-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BUSINESS; economy

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**Byline:** Patricia Cohen

**Highlight:** The Lehigh Valley rebuilt its economy after foreign competition wiped out its mills. Now good times and bad memories may both help the president.

**Body**

The Lehigh Valley rebuilt its economy after foreign competition wiped out its mills. Now good times and bad memories may both help the president.

BETHLEHEM, Pa. — Just a few blocks from the rusted 16-story blast furnaces that once fired hulking steel beams for the Hoover Dam and the Golden Gate Bridge, OraSure Technologies each day produces thousands of thumbnail-size pads made to spit on.

These oral swabs, part of a home [*H.I.V. test kit*](http://www.oraquick.com/), are products of a matrix of manufacturers, financial companies and health care institutions powering the Lehigh Valley’s $41 billion economy.

The [*region’s success*](http://www.oraquick.com/) distinguishes it from onetime industrial dynamos in the Northeast and Midwest that have struggled to replace shuttered plants and vanishing jobs. While many midsize and smaller cities have lost out to the [*superstars*](http://www.oraquick.com/) — large urban metropolises that gulp up scads of employers, [*workers*](http://www.oraquick.com/) and customers — the Lehigh Valley is booming.

“There’s jobs everywhere,” said Stephen Polczer, 46, as he inspected assembled swabs. Mr. Polczer, outfitted with a blue mesh apron for his beard and a head cap, started at the biomedical company less than two months ago, drawn by a $17-an-hour wage for manufacturing technicians and a four-day workweek.

The economic renaissance has been [*more than a decade in the making*](http://www.oraquick.com/) in this eastern stretch of [*Pennsylvania*](http://www.oraquick.com/), and it has much to do with location, luck and local leaders.

“It’s transcended presidents and administrations,” said Don Cunningham, the president and chief executive of the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation, a public-private partnership. In the last five years, employers created 26,000 additional jobs. “It began under Obama and continued under Trump,” he said.

The valley’s political affinities have been less steady recently. The area includes Northampton County, one of the few counties nationwide — and among only three in the state — that voted for Barack Obama twice before giving Donald J. Trump [*a plurality in 2016.*](http://www.oraquick.com/) That pivot, in a county that a Republican presidential candidate had not won since 1988, helped Mr. Trump capture Pennsylvania by less than one percentage point.

[*Mr. Trump’s*](http://www.oraquick.com/) message on trade and defending jobs resonated in the Lehigh Valley, where there are memories of how foreign competition clobbered the local steel and cement industries.

Whenever the rebound began, people here are feeling more secure economically, and many credit the president. “The economy is 100 times better,” Mr. Polczer said, “and it has a lot to do with President Trump.”

Incentives for business and amenities for workers

A junction for interstate highways and rail lines, the Lehigh Valley is within an eight-hour drive of one-third of American consumers. That has helped attract an army of warehouses and distribution centers built by Amazon, Walmart, FedEx and UPS as they scramble to keep up with the explosion of online shopping.

A network of nearby universities, community colleges and vocational high schools pumps out workers with a range of skills. And there is more available land, cheaper housing and lower taxes than in neighboring New Jersey, Philadelphia or New York City.

Local and state officials laid the groundwork for a possible revival after Bethlehem’s colossal mills closed completely in 1998. They built industrial and office parks, and offered millions of dollars in tax credits and abatements to lure companies to Northampton and Lehigh Counties.

More recent development efforts have centered on creating urban playgrounds of restaurants, bars, entertainment and culture that will attract millennial workers.

The valley’s three small cities, Bethlehem, Easton and Allentown, are within 15 miles of one another. Among them, residents can find an ice hockey rink, concert venues and music festivals, a casino, arts walks, breweries, a minor-league baseball park, golf courses and new downtown apartments.

Freshpet joined a growing cluster of food and beverage companies, including Boston Beer, Nestlé Purina, Ocean Spray and Just Born (maker of the chick-shaped marshmallow treat Peeps), when it took over an old dairy factory in Northampton County in 2013. Sales of Freshpet’s refrigerated meals for dogs and cats — made from giant vats of slow-cooked meat, vegetables and fruit that can be smelled before entering the parking lot — grew 27 percent in the last year.

Now the company is building a $100 million facility in its own backyard that will ultimately add 150 people to the payroll. The state and county kicked in $900,000 in grants and tax credits.

A couple of blocks away in the same Hanover Township industrial park, Stuffed Puffs — chocolate-filled marshmallows that first appeared in stores in May — broke ground in November on a 150,000-square-foot manufacturing plant that will employ 134 people.

The venture is backed by [*Factory*](http://www.oraquick.com/), a business innovation center for growing food and beverage companies founded by Richard Thompson, a former chief executive at Freshpet. Hoisting up a couple of bags, he explained that the creator of Stuffed Puffs had “spent seven years figuring out how to put the chocolate inside the marshmallow.”

With support from a New York hedge fund, Mr. Thompson opened the center in 2019. “I looked everywhere from Boston to Jacksonville,” he said, before choosing a site once occupied by Bethlehem Steel.

Building 96, a former tool-and-die shop built during World War II, is now, after a $10 million overhaul, Factory’s airy headquarters. The site offers a sensory lab, a podcasting studio, a kitchen, a packaging center and a stage. For offices, he hauled in bright red shipping containers from Port Newark and put them on wheels that bring to mind mobile dorm rooms. There’s also a simulated golfing range and a climbing wall, as well as a gondola cabin from a ski lift and a firepit surrounded by Adirondack chairs to hang out.

Just to the north in rural Upper Mount Bethel Township, Air Liquide opened a plant in 2018 to produce specialty chemicals for semiconductors, and construction on an adjoining facility has started.

Tony Stump began working there over the summer in a full-time maintenance job for $26.50 an hour, plus benefits.

He moved from Apollo, a former coal-mining town about 35 miles from Pittsburgh, to take the job. “It’s like two different worlds,” he said.

“There’s a lot of job opportunities,” Mr. Stump said of the Pittsburgh area, “but it’s harder to make a good wage.”

At his previous job, Mr. Stump made $15 an hour and had not had a raise in seven years. “There’s no way to survive,” he said.

Lots of jobs, but ‘not real good jobs’

Many of the jobs available are like the one Mr. Stump left behind. “They’re not real good jobs,” said Tom Sedor, 78. A third-generation steelworker on both sides of his family, Mr. Sedor sat with a group of other retirees in a small storefront office in the mall that houses the [*Steelworkers’ Archives*](http://www.oraquick.com/), an oral history project.

The rich and the well-educated techies are doing well, but the ***working class*** and the poor “are the ones that are really getting hammered,” Mr. Sedor said. “It hasn’t trickled down to them.”

Although the area’s median income is more than $65,000, a new report from the [*United Way of Pennsylvania*](http://www.oraquick.com/) found that 30 percent of the households in Northampton County and 25 percent in Lehigh County could be counted among the working poor.

The steelworkers, both Democrats and Republicans, who crowded into the Wind Creek office don’t like Mr. Trump, whom they characterized as anti-union. But Mr. Sedor acknowledged that a lot of other retired steelworkers voted for him over Hillary Clinton in 2016.

“Hillary and the Democratic Party didn’t pay enough attention to trade,” Mr. Sedor said. Many of the men he meets for breakfast or sees in the union hall are still behind the president. “They’re adamant about it because of trade,” he said.

There were other motivations as well, the group agreed. “They also loved what Trump was saying about immigrants and gun control,” said Lester Clore, a 33-year veteran of Bethlehem Steel, referring to the president’s pledge to keep out immigrants and oppose gun restrictions.

In Pennsylvania, enough ***working-class*** Democrats and moderate suburban Republicans joined with enthusiastic conservative rural voters to help swing the election to Mr. Trump.

Whether this coalition will form again in 2020, and turn out in sufficient numbers to return him to the White House, is the question. As the recent clash between the United States and Iran demonstrated, foreign events could quickly overshadow domestic ones. And the economy’s stable progress could unexpectedly reverse.

‘I would keep riding the horse that works’

Since the last presidential election, the Democrats have had a wave of victories in the Lehigh Valley, sweeping local elections. A Democrat won a reconfigured congressional seat in 2018 after a moderate Republican retired. In statewide elections, the Democratic governor and senator were both re-elected with hearty margins.

Although it is a quintessentially purple area, registered Democrats far outnumber registered Republicans in both Northampton and Lehigh Counties.

According to one recent [*statewide poll, 57 percent*](http://www.oraquick.com/) of those surveyed said they did not think the president deserved re-election.

But Christopher Borick, director of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion in Allentown, said that across Pennsylvania, the [*president remained popular*](http://www.oraquick.com/) among those who said they had voted for him.

“I don’t see an obvious reason they wouldn’t turn out to the ballot box in 2020 to support him,” he said.

Walter Dealtrey Jr., president and chief executive of Service Tire Truck Centers in Bethlehem, is a registered Republican who said he and many people he knew often split their votes between the parties. He voted for Mr. Trump in 2016, and for Representative Susan Wild, a Democrat, last year.

He does not care for Mr. Trump’s personal style, but he said, “As far as the economy, I would keep riding the horse that works.”

[*Recent polling by The New York Times/Siena College*](http://www.oraquick.com/) found that in Pennsylvania and five other battleground states, nearly two-thirds of voters with a similar pattern — supporting Mr. Trump in 2016 and a Democrat in the midterms — said they intended to back the president.

Among the more than 30 business owners, professionals and employees interviewed in the two counties, many said their votes were still up for grabs. But [*“Medicare for all,”*](http://www.oraquick.com/) free public college tuition and other left-leaning proposals championed by candidates like Senators Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Bernie Sanders of Vermont aroused more skepticism than enthusiasm.

The Democrats named as possibilities were all moderates, like former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr.; Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota; former Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Ind.; or the latest entrant, the billionaire businessman Michael Bloomberg.

“I think there’s going to be a strong pull for Democrats in the county to come home if they can,” said John Kincaid, a government professor at Lafayette College in Easton. But the Democrats will need to offer more than someone-who-is-not-Trump.

“If Warren or Sanders is the candidate,” he said, “it’s going to be harder to bring those Democrats who voted for Trump over.”

PHOTOS: Blast furnaces once used by Bethlehem Steel are now part of SteelStacks, a center for the arts and other events. The Lehigh Valley’s $41 billion economy is a rare success story for onetime industrial towns in the Northeast and Midwest. (B1); Bethlehem Steel was the second-largest steel manufacturer in the nation but closed in 2003. The question in the Lehigh Valley is whether ***working-class*** Democrats and moderate suburban Republicans will again join enthusiastic conservative rural voters for President Trump in 2020. Stephen Polczer, left, and Jessica Viera, right, at OraSure Technologies. At Freshpet, right, the company is building a $100 million facility in its own backyard. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HANNAH YOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B6)

**Load-Date:** August 20, 2020

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[***Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Michael Brendan Dougherty; The Ezra Klein Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:670M-GDX1-DXY4-X3Y6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 2, 2022 Friday 10:13 EST

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**Section:** PODCASTS

**Length:** 10101 words

**Highlight:** The Dec. 2, 2022 episode of “The Ezra Klein Show”

**Body**

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, like today’s episode with Michael Brendan Dougherty. Listen [*wherever you get your podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/how-to-listen-ezra-klein-show-nyt.html).

Transcripts of our episodes are made available as soon as possible. They are not fully edited for grammar or spelling.

[MUSIC PLAYING] EZRA KLEIN: I’m Ezra Klein. This is “The Ezra Klein Show.”

[MUSIC PLAYING]

All right, before we begin, we are doing an end of the year “Ask Me Anything.” If you have questions, challenges, whatever, something you would like to hear me talk about on the air, send it to [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com) with “A.M.A.” in the subject line. Again, send your questions to [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com) with “A.M.A.” in the subject line. We will only keep this open for another week or so. We get a lot of these. So if you’ve got a question, send it in now.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

So the story we’re telling about the 2022 election is that Republicans underperformed. They did much worse than people expected them to. And I think that’s right. But again, that is compared to expectations. It’s a weird way we process politics compared to stories we had in our heads of how things would go as opposed to just the reality of how they did go.

And the truth is that, in 2023, Republicans are going to hold an enormous amount of power. They will control the House. They’ll have appointed six of the nine members of the Supreme Court. More states are going to have Republican governing trifectas than Democratic governing trifectas. And the G.O.P.’s 2024 presidential primary — it has begun. Donald Trump officially announced he’ll run again. Ron DeSantis has emerged as, by far, his clearest rival.

And that, of course, won’t be the only election in 2024. The 2024 Senate map — it is so much worse for Democrats than the 2022 map was. So if a Republican wins the presidency in 2024, they’re very likely to have control of Congress, too. This is not a party far from power. It is a party partially in power and not at all far from gaining a tremendous amount of policymaking, governing power.

So what the Republican Party is, what it wants, who actually has influence in it and power to shape it, it matters enormously. And so I wanted to have a post-election conversation with someone deeper inside the Republican tent than I am — about how the party is processing the last election, how it is preparing for the next one, what the factions are, what the structure is, and what a Kevin McCarthy speakership might look like in between.

Michael Brendan Dougherty is a senior writer at the National Review. He’s author of the book, “My Father Left Me Ireland.” I’ve always found him a sharp observer of the Republican Party and all the more so when I disagree with him. So this one was a fun and, for me, quite interesting conversation. As always, my email, [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com)

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Michael Brendan Dougherty, welcome to the show.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Thanks for having me.

EZRA KLEIN: So let’s begin with a big question. What’s your model of the Republican Party right now? How would you describe what it is?

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Uh, it’s not the Democratic Party. [LAUGHS]

EZRA KLEIN: It’s a good answer, actually. [LAUGHS]

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: I mean that both as a punt for a very complex question, but as a good starting point, which is I view the Republican Party as a coalition of voters who, for whatever reason, object to Democratic rule. By that I mean rule by the Democratic Party, not by democracy. Although we could get into those questions later, too.

And it is a complex mix of older-line conservatives, populists, and what I would almost call, like, dissenters from the, quote unquote, “liberal establishment.” It’s actually always been something like this mix. I mean, you can see in previous Republican Party incarnations, like the Nixon coalition, a party like the one we have today.

But that is what it is. It’s just a coalition of voters. It’s not the embodiment of a coherent philosophy. It is not the coherent representative of one particular class or class interest, although those are implicated in it. And it’s not the voice of one ideology, like of capitalism or conservatism or national populism. It’s just the collection of voters. And it’s a protean force. And it will look like it has a different personality every time its leadership changes.

EZRA KLEIN: I was going to ask you about that leadership change because the Republican Party certainly looks and feels different to people, to me, than it did in 2004 or 2012. And I was curious if you think it is different, as in compositionally different people are in it or they’re in it in different proportions, or simply different parts of it that were always there and always as strong have simply been able to win out to become the dominant expression of the party.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: So I think it is different proportions, and so it is different people. If we expand the scope a little bit larger than 2004 — I mean, in 1992, when George H.W. Bush lost to Bill Clinton, Republicans were still the party for college graduates in the United States.

That’s no longer the case. College graduates vote for Democrats. In the simple majority, it fluctuates. So Glenn Youngkin wins 45 percent of college graduates in Virginia, whereas Donald Trump wins 38 percent nationwide. That shift of college graduates into the Democratic Party and maybe non-college whites going into the Republican Party, I mean I think that is a consequence of the 1994 realignment just working itself out over decades.

But you still have, in the Republican Party today, and going back all the way to the 1920s, you still have a class of individual business owners, people that Romney spoke to where he said, you built this. So there are some constants, too. But it is a different party.

And we’ve even seen a shift during the last four or five years. I mean, I think, in 2018, you see evidence of suburban women, particularly with some college or no college, defecting from the Republican Party. And then you’ve seen during the Covid era, people that were skeptical of lockdowns or anti-vaxxers that were associated with the left coming into the Republican Party on the other side.

So yeah, the shifts are still happening, and I expect them to be a constant. The only thing is, though, is that people have been talking about this idea of realignment for a long time. And it is slower and more complicated process than a single election.

And as I think we saw in 2022, Republicans can repel college-educated whites faster than they can attract the Latino vote on the other side. So their Latino vote share is growing but not fast enough to stop the losses among college-educated whites.

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah, and I want to come back to that because that is, I think, a really interesting dynamic. But I want to pull out something embedded in these answers, which is when I ask you about the Republican Party — and I think this is probably how I would answer, too — you describe the people in it, not any kind of organization, right? You’re not describing really a party structure where there are people who have influence and can chart a course.

And you remember — I mean, we came up in journalism around the same time — and it used to be a very common line about politics that Democrats fall in love and Republicans fall in line.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Right.

EZRA KLEIN: There was this idea that the Republican Party, you could always predict what they were going to do. They would nominate the runner-up, the next person in line. And Democrats, who knew what the hell Democrats were going to do.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Right.

EZRA KLEIN: And it really seems to be the reverse to me now, right? Democrats really fall in line. If you look at who they’ve nominated for president. They make much more strategically-oriented decisions where they’ll knock off this flank in order to appeal to a voter set they’re worried about losing.

And Republicans, it’s more all over the place. Why do you think the Republican Party structure has diminished in influence so much?

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: I think it’s partly a story of that realignment that’s happening from below. There was a very famous story in the 2015 cycle where Byron York goes up to New Hampshire and talks to the local Republican Party apparatus there. And the local Republican Party apparatus in a small state, crucial for the primaries, says we have no idea who these people are that are voting for Donald Trump. We’ve never met these people. [LAUGHS]

So yeah, I mean, there’s a story of literally the Republican Party is collecting voters who are not attached to institutions, right? I mean, some of these non-college whites, their grandparents might have been in unions that helped organize and channel their political activity. Now they are not. So they don’t have that.

They are maybe politically activated and organized by Fox News or talk radio or the websites they go to, or just the chatter around the break room over copies of the New York Post. So yeah, the Republican Party as an organization is almost incidental. [LAUGHS]

It does not — the R.N.C. is not making strategic decisions that matter. And that’s why I think you’re seeing some hope among some Republicans that if they could put maybe Lee Zeldin, the New York Republican gubernatorial candidate who did pretty well in a losing effort — I think there’s some hope, oh, if we put him in there, maybe we could rebuild as an organization and make choices again.

Not that they could rebuild the smoke-filled rooms of the 1930s and ’40s, but at least impose some control. But I don’t see it coming up in time for the next presidential cycle. I think it’s going to be another clown rodeo where 30 people are pouring out of a minibus competing for attention.

EZRA KLEIN: So I think it’s fair to say Republicans didn’t have the election night they’d wanted to have a couple of weeks back. How is that being processed? What are the dominant theories of why?

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Well, listen, I’m at National Review, and I think the predominant answer among my colleagues would be Trump was an electoral anchor on Republicans for the third election in a row. The Republican Party underperformed in 2018, in 2020 and in 2022, all because there is a voter who is highly motivated to vote against Donald Trump. And if the Republican candidate in the races they can vote in is a proxy for Donald Trump, there is a huge penalty for that candidate.

EZRA KLEIN: It arguably underperformed in 2016.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: I would argue that as well. Yes, that in a sense Hillary Clinton united just enough of the traditional Republican Party; add on Trump’s rural votes, and you get the four Brexit state disaster for Democrats — Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin — which, again, a few score thousands of votes changes the outcome. So that’s one narrative.

There’s another one. I would propose, too, that the Republican Party is neither fish nor fowl. That is, it’s neither populist enough to unite the Trump coalition without Trump, and it’s not traditionally conservative enough to unite the 2012 Romney coalition anymore either. And it’s falling between two different versions of itself, whereas Democrats are still held together, partly out of total fear of Donald Trump. So I think that’s another thing to look at.

And a lot of us are also processing the role that the Dobbs decision played. We’re curious if it’s going to be an ongoing ordeal for Republicans or whether it is a kind of one-year penalty while all states are putting their state laws in, which should reflect the majority views of their state and whether the issue will settle in the long-term. But it was obviously highly motivating for Democrats to get out there and punish a party that, in effect, was able to change the status quo through its judicial appointments even while it’s out of power in the two elected branches.

EZRA KLEIN: One thing I find a little bit odd about the modern Republican Party is how personality-driven its strategic discussions appear to be. So you have 2016, which is a trauma for Democrats. And they talk a lot about Bernie Sanders or Joe Biden or whomever. But there’s a much broader debate about the white ***working class*** and whether Democrats are losing touch with the white ***working class*** and rural voters and anti-establishment voters.

And there’s a kind of argument that’s about broad positioning that a lot of different kind of candidates could fit into. And it’s something I don’t really hear on the Republican side. I hear a lot about Donald Trump. I hear a lot about Ron DeSantis, who we’ll talk about as an answer to Donald Trump.

But the party seems very distinctively channeled through its standard bearers or its potential standard bearers in a way that I think people are coming into politics now might find normal. But I feel like it didn’t used to be the way parties processed defeat. I mean, there’s a Republican autopsy in 2012, where they start thinking about needing to appeal more to multiethnic voters and change the nature of their coalition. There’s Democrats after ’04 and heartland voters.

I mean, it used to be about the voters you needed to win back. And now it’s about who might be the person who wins the primary. Does that feel right to you? And if so, why do you think it is?

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: I think it is partly because that attempt in the 2012 autopsy proved such a disaster. For one, their party then lurched in the exact opposite direction of the recommendations, which is we’re going to nominate a candidate who seems to be calling Mexicans rapists and murderers and saying they’re not sending their best. And yet, he’s going to improve the party’s share among Hispanics over the lifetime of his presidency in a way that would have been totally unthinkable in 2012.

If you’d suggested you’re going to get the most anti-immigrant campaign in 100 years in the United States, possibly ever, and you’re going to improve among Hispanics, that’s not what anyone would have predicted in 2012, least of all me. So yeah, there’s a feeling that, again, going back to Byron York, we don’t know who these voters are. We don’t identify them well. The Republican Party doesn’t organize its voters well.

Outside of Florida, where it actually seems like the Republican Party has, since the Jeb Bush era, consciously tried to take itself seriously as an organization that identifies potential new blocks of voters and tests strategies for appealing to them and adding them to their coalition. And now you’re seeing, partly, I think the success of that in Florida, which experienced the red tsunami that landed nowhere else. But nationally, I think Republican leaders just don’t know where they are.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to talk about Florida, where you say the red tsunami showed up. Let’s start with this about Ron DeSantis, because I think my audience probably mostly gets Ron DeSantis filtered through more liberal media and then also filtered through stunts and messaging Ron DeSantis does to provoke them. So how would you describe who, or, politically, what Ron DeSantis is?

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: So Ron DeSantis was a conventional conservative in Congress before he ran for governor who was sort of where the trend lines were in his party. So before he ran for governor, he was a little bit more associated with the Club for Growth and the Tea Party causes.

Then he runs for governor and tacks really hard for the Trump endorsement and the Trump vote, which solidified his image nationally in those famous and somewhat cringey commercials where he’s, like, reading “The Art of the Deal” to his infant child. [LAUGHS]

And at that point, I think he became a punchline for liberals going forward. This is mini-Trump. This is what is going to happen to Republicans now in the Trump era is they’re going to become these doltish figures. But it turns out Ron DeSantis is a bit of a nerd and confident, and he took a calculated risk during the Covid era. And I think the Covid era transformed him politically into something entirely different.

And he is not a conventional conservative still, but he made Florida into this alternative where he took, basically, almost the Great Barrington Declaration approach to Covid, which is we’re going to focus a lot of resources on nursing homes and elder care facilities, but otherwise we’re going to open up everything else as soon as possible and let people make their own decisions about their risk levels.

I want to totally abstract whether he was right to do that or wrong to do that. There was a big demand for that among people, and it showed in Florida tourism, both nationally and from internationally, that a lot of people wanted this, at least temporarily. And hundreds of thousands of people moved into Florida in the last couple of years. I don’t think all of them would consider themselves conservatives, but many of them moved for that approach.

And I think that calculated risk and the way he put himself out front, even more so than Brian Kemp in Georgia, made him a kind of conservative hero. He was also standing up to the media, standing up to Fauci, in a way that Donald Trump wasn’t standing up to Dr. Fauci.

And I think the thing that really has driven DeSantis to the top of alternatives to Donald Trump in the Republican Party is that he is identifiably bringing people into the Republican Party. We have seen an exodus of people from the Republican Party under Trump.

In Florida, when Ron DeSantis was elected, Democrats outnumbered Republicans by 270,000 in registrations in Florida. In the summer of this year, Republicans outnumber Democrats by over 300,000 on the registries in Florida. That’s from in-migration. That’s from the Florida G.O.P. working hard to register new people. There’s a little bit of roll clearing, too, which I will acknowledge. Probably pushed some Democrats off the registered rolls.

He’s brought in people that were skeptical of the Covid era guidelines. And many of them have made a political transformation. They no longer identify with their previous maybe center left politics or maybe far crunchy left politics, and they’ve come over to the Republicans as like an anti-establishment alternative. And I think that is what puts him so far ahead of a Brian Kemp or Greg Abbott in these past couple of years, and why he’s polling as high as he is.

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah, so there are a couple of things there I want to try to unpack. So one about Covid and how he remade himself around that. I am not a deep expert on specifically Florida’s policies compared to other states. But I covered Covid and had a general sense.

And when I looked at it at that time, he didn’t look very different to me than Texas, didn’t look very different to me than Georgia, didn’t look very different to me, actually, than a lot of the Southwest, which took this approach. What did seem different about DeSantis was his level of identifying that the out-group to those policies, the antagonist to them, was somewhere in between the public health establishment, the C.D.C., Anthony Fauci and the media — the liberal media.

And that in a way that was not true for some of the other governors who took very similar stances to him on Covid, he used Covid as a ground upon which to create a conflict that he’s then tried to extend in other areas like this immigration stunt, but where he wants himself to be in opposition to the media, to certain kinds of expert bureaucrats.

And what makes him different, it often appears to me, is not dramatically different policies but a mastery of the antagonisms and resentments and a sense of who the fight is actually between that some of his gubernatorial colleagues who are just out there fighting with Democrats or Joe Biden or whatever, they don’t really get in the way he does.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: I think that’s right. But I think you might be underestimating how Florida became a focus precisely because DeSantis was seen as this mini-Trump or more Trump than Trump. And he was also seen by Democrats as electorally vulnerable. He’d won a squeaker of an election against Andrew Gillum to become governor. So he seemed more vulnerable than maybe a Greg Abbott.

And Florida became a kind of obsession in media about, oh, my gosh, look at them, they’re on the beaches. This is disgusting. Everyone’s going to die under DeathSantis. There’s no nickname for Brian Kemp or Greg Abbott like DeathSantis. And so he used that. He used the energy that was thrown at him and used it like a good martial artist. I’m going to take the punch you’re throwing at me and use that energy for my own purpose.

So yeah, he wasn’t that different from others, but he benefited from this Eye of Sauron-like attention that was put on Florida in particular. And it was a mix of things. It was the idea that he was seen as more Trump than Trump. It was also a little bit the Florida man reputation. That Florida is this kind of strange swamp at the bottom of our country where all the weird stories come from. He has benefited from it, though, for sure.

EZRA KLEIN: It’s funny. I wonder now listening to that if some of this is geographic, because I just, in California, always heard much more about Texas.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Oh, interesting.

EZRA KLEIN: And you’re up in New York, and you clearly hear much more about Florida. And when Californians leave, they go to Texas, not to, as often, Florida.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: That’s right. When New Yorkers leave, they go to Florida.

EZRA KLEIN: Exactly. So I wonder how much of this is actually a geographic thing. But let me ask you about his election night. Because I’ve been genuinely somewhat puzzled by how unique his victory has been treated as.

Mike DeWine won Ohio by more than DeSantis won Florida. He won in Ohio by about 25 points. Chris Sununu won New Hampshire, which is a much more purple state — a closer state than Florida is — by 16 points. Phil Scott, the Republican in Vermont — I mean, he had a very weak opponent — but he’s a Republican in Vermont, and he wins by almost 50 points.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Yeah.

EZRA KLEIN: But all anybody will talk about out of this is Ron DeSantis. And I’m curious why the DeWines, the Sununus, why other big Republican wins are getting so little attention.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: It’s a case by case basis. DeWine, because he didn’t face a very strong opponent and this is his 10th race, so it’s like this is a 10-time officeholder in Ohio, a very known quantity against a not very well-funded opponent.

Now, the fact is Charlie Crist was a weak opponent for DeSantis. So DeSantis should have been expected to run up the score. I think one of the reasons he got a lot of attention is he ran up the score larger than the polls suggested. The polls looked like you were going to get a 12, maybe 15-point DeSantis victory, which would have been impressive.

But it ended up coming out much larger than that. And him winning certain counties in Florida, like Miami-Dade or Osceola, that are typically out of reach for Republicans. He had deeper reach with Puerto Rican voters, with Cuban voters than anticipated as well.

But yeah, in a way, Marco Rubio’s 17-point victory over Val Demings is almost more impressive because Val Demings was a really good candidate, a really serious figure in the Democratic Party, arguably should have been vice president, and Marco Rubio trounced her.

But yeah, I think it was funding disparities. But again, Ron DeSantis, I think the reason he’s treated as the big winner that night is he gets a lot of support from Trumpy voters in the Republican Party. He’s not necessarily a turnoff to them. And so he’s seen as a potential viable successor or bridge from Trump to the future.

And further — I mean, one of the reasons DeSantis did so well is his fund-raising in the party was beyond everyone else’s, even Donald Trump’s, in the last year. And like I said, I think that’s because he became this national anti-lockdown, anti-vaccine mandate figure in the party.

EZRA KLEIN: Let’s say I buy your take on DeSantis and Covid. That actually seems in a way to open up a pretty profound question about him because it seems unlikely to me that 2024 is going to be about Covid. I mean, I could prove wrong. There could be a more lethal variant. Terrible things can happen, right? I don’t want to predict the future.

But extrapolating from where we are right now, that doesn’t strike me as likely to be the dominant issue. He’s obviously jumped on a bunch of culture worry issues with various bills about sexual identity and trying to send —

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Education.

EZRA KLEIN: Education, immigrant — sending immigrants to Martha’s Vineyard, which we can talk about. But what does he believe? I mean, what is his profile on the traditional bread and butter issues? I’m one of many liberals who keeps looking at him trying to understand what is his actual economic views — I know what they were when he was in the House — and finding him both hard and vague to place.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Yeah. And there’s another reason for that obscurity or that seeming obscurity in your part, which is that Florida’s Republican legislature and governors have actually removed, from the political discussion, lots of policy options on taxes and spending that would potentially give you clues. So DeSantis doesn’t even have room for maneuver in Florida to part from the low tax, low regulation environment that he’s in.

And I’ve written the same column saying what is DeSantis going to say to voters in Wisconsin, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Ohio? Those four states that gave Donald Trump the victory in 2016 are not growing, experiencing the economic growth that Florida is seeing. And in fact, you could argue that Florida is, in a sense, creaming off the good stuff from other parts of the country that are in decline.

And Ron DeSantis, if he’s going to make the big jump from a state to a national campaign, he has to speak to the whole country’s fate. And we just don’t know where he is on America’s economic model and whether it needs serious alteration. I actually think this is a huge problem for both parties going forward because the numbers are pretty forbidding on the federal budget as far as debt, interest payments, our previous commitments, our military budget.

And I think both parties are going to face this problem of how can we solve issues for our voters and keep our coalitions together without a lot more economic growth than we’ve seen in the past two decades and that we expect to see. And I’m not sure anyone has the answer there.

EZRA KLEIN: Do Republicans care about economic issues at this point? I mean, something that really struck me about the election, one reason I thought Democrats were going to get creamed this year, was inflation that high is a disaster for the governing party, or at least I thought it would be a disaster for the governing party.

And I watched month after month after month as Republicans did not really emphasize, did not develop a coherent, in my view, message on inflation, a sense of why we’re the party you should turn to to fix inflation. I understood why the other party you should turn to to make sure that various insurance policies weren’t going to include surgeries for children who want to switch gender identity. But I did not really ever know what it was Republicans are saying on inflation.

Health care is a little bit of the same issue. Florida never expanded Medicaid. I guess Ron DeSantis doesn’t think you should, but I don’t know what Ron DeSantis thinks you should do about health care for the country. And I think it’s going to be a problem. But it may be just isn’t a problem in Republican primaries if that’s not where the energy is and he’s correct about that. Do Republicans actually have to have views on these issues anymore to be successful within their own party?

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Probably not. I mean, listen, I’m a conservative writer at National Review. I’m not a Republican Party strategist or even an advocate. But yeah, Republicans have been almost policy-phobic for the last decade. They don’t know how to agree on — some of these have been perennial issues among Republicans. Like, do we care about deficits, or do we care about overall government commitments, or do we care about fiscal rectitude at all?

And I know many Democratic commentators and voters are like, this is a party that runs against debts and deficits when Democrats are in charge and then spends like crazy when they’re in charge to please their voters. I mean, there was no party platform in 2020, and there was no even attempt at a coherent policy message on inflation other than the stickers on gas stations saying, Biden did this, which, in fact, wasn’t even entirely true itself, right?

I mean, the whole issue of inflation was it’s a global issue that’s an after-effect of Covid. Maybe you can make a case that the last spending bill that Biden passed, that I think Donald Trump would have passed if he were president, too — something like it — contributed a little bit more.

But overall, they didn’t have a theory for blaming Biden other than he’s in charge, and it’s happening. And they didn’t have a theory for how to overcome it either. I mean, I think they were hoping there would be a red tsunami and the Fed would have solved the problem by the time Republicans showed up in January.

EZRA KLEIN: You know I think that answer just made me pretty radically revise upwards my view of how strong a candidate Donald Trump is. I’m going to put a pin in why I think that is.

But the other big thing that happens right after the midterm, of course, is that Trump announces, which is not a huge surprise but was interesting. What did you think of the announcement itself? What did you hear in what Trump said that was the same or different or telling? And what did you see in how it was covered that was the same or different or telling?

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Oh, well, there was a lot, actually. And the fact that there was a lot surprised me. One, the drama of it was strange. Mar-a-Lago is like the closest thing America has ever had to a court of exile for a royal, right? I mean, it’s literally this gilded ballroom that he announces to his court, literally to the people who live in and around Donald Trump’s life since he became president.

And what was so funny was on Fox News, they didn’t even show the whole speech live. They showed the meat of the speech where he kind of stuck to the teleprompter and then immediately cut to Mike Huckabee, who was saying, like, if he sticks with this message, he’s unstoppable. And it’s like, oh, my gosh, if there’s an unstoppable political message on my television, show it to me. Show me the whole thing.

But it was almost like Sean Hannity and Mike Huckabee were in a sense, in this weird way that Fox News has done for years, trying to communicate back to Donald Trump, saying, good, just focus on the Biden economy and the economy under Trump until 2019, and don’t talk about the 2020 election. It was like that was the subliminal message back to Trump, which is, like, good job, stick to the teleprompter.

And I actually think this is a mistake. And I’m going to say something that might sound upsetting. But part of the speech they cut away from, which was the part of the speech that I think had the most political dynamite in it — and it’s awful to say this — but it’s when he talked about, basically, executing drug dealers the way China does.

That was not a policy I advocate at all, but it was the sort of thing that actually propelled Trump in 2015 and 2016, which was picking an issue that is under-discussed in American politics — the fentanyl epidemic — and proposing an absolutely radical solution that is far outside of the political imagination of our ruling class.

The idea of instituting Chinese-style justice in the United States, of course, is hateful. But it’s the sort of thing that I think actually worked for him politically, is that I’m going to highlight to you how much I care about an issue that isn’t being talked about by saying the most outrageous thing imaginable about it.

But Fox News had cut away. And so most people never saw that. And they only would have heard it if they had been on C-SPAN, or if they’re a political addict that listens to podcasts like this or to the editors on National Review.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: Something about Trump as a political orator is that he talks. He doesn’t orate. He doesn’t give speeches. He talks. And he says stuff that you may not think is wise but that accords with a lot of people’s intuitions. I mean, if you ever talk to normal people who don’t do politics professionally, a lot of ideas that make sense to people, political professionals find worrying, problematic, maybe won’t work all that well. But Trump just works with these passions.

And I think you might have written about this, but I thought Chappelle in a S.N.L. monologue, that has become controversial for other reasons we don’t need to go into, had this good point when he said that the thing that is appealing about Trump is that he’s an honest liar. Can you talk a bit about that idea?

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Yeah, I mean, I think that’s absolutely true, which is that Donald Trump’s appeal is — the way Chappelle said it is Donald Trump came out and said the system is rigged and I know because I used the system, which, again, is like this deep — hits a deep strain in American politics of the F.D.R. traitor to his class politics.

And Trump also communicates in a way that feels — can often feel authentic and more connected emotionally to an audience than his Republican rivals who are used to speaking with nerds like us, journalists and people that write policy white papers.

There are moments in the 2016 campaign where he described, with obvious physical and moral disgust, what a late-term abortion was. That had never been done before by a Republican and it made a huge connection with pro-lifers for whom that kind of description is part of their political cause and culture for decades.

Or when he talked about, solemnly and with evident sadness in his voice, about the waste of the Iraq War. Or if you have a slightly different opinion on the war, which he’ll share with you as well later in the debate, when he speaks with evident anger that we didn’t take the oil. Got nothing out of it.

And I do think Trump’s great strength as a candidate then and even now is that he understands politics is not just about policy. It is about these deep moral passions. And a ton of voters will connect with that if they’re expressed in that way. And I think that’s also why DeSantis sometimes is still learning that vocabulary.

So for instance, when DeSantis defends some of his culture war-style bills about education in Florida, DeSantis will obscure his own role and agency in them. He’ll just say something like, I don’t think Florida parents will stand for that. That’s a C-plus line, right? But it’s much more effective if he says, like, Florida parents know it’s wrong, I know it’s wrong. It makes it personal and expresses some emotion. But Trump is the master of that.

EZRA KLEIN: It reminds me of something that journalist Molly Ball said about Trump in 2016, which I always thought was very smart, where she said, all the other candidates that get up on the stage — and I’m paraphrasing her here, of course — and they say voters are angry, and I understand that. And Trump gets up on the stage and says, I’m angry. [LAUGHS]

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: No, that’s exactly it.

EZRA KLEIN: Now, let me actually — I never liked the cut between policy and passion because I don’t think people think about policy and morality and politics and personality and experience. It’s all like a jumble. It’s all a stew of stuff.

And I want to get to what you said that made me more optimistic about Trump’s shot than I probably was coming into this conversation, which is if you think the economy is actually going to be a major issue, if you think Republican Party and media strategists are a little wrong about the power of some of these cultural issues, if you look at 2022 and say maybe that’s evidence they were a bit wrong about this.

The thing about Trump is that, whether you want to give him credit for it or not, as president, he has a very, very strong economic record. And that backs up the fact that he’s always had this appeal, which people like me will question and poke at and pull apart. But it doesn’t matter that we do that. That he’s a businessman who knows how to get things done.

And if you’ve got a bunch of people running who have no real communication chops on the economy. And you have Trump, who has always knowing how to speak the language of at least the public’s idea of a businessman, of a builder, and now actually of an ex-president who drove unemployment very low and didn’t have, at that point, the inflationary boom period that we’re going through now.

I mean, that gives him an actual lane of substance that I don’t think he’s going to communicate on through white papers and deep analyses of pricing decisions in the economy. But I don’t know, it actually strikes me as a genuine advantage to him because I’m somebody who thinks that the economy and how politicians are able to communicate about it actually still matters hugely.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Yeah, he’s going to have this. I mean, this is — Niall Ferguson made a version of this argument in The Daily Mail, that if, as Niall suspects, we’re headed for recession, where maybe inflation goes down but unemployment goes up, Donald Trump will have a nostalgia message of, like, do you remember what it was like in 2018 and 2019 where before Covid — because in a sense, there was an economic disaster late in Trump’s presidency, but no one blames him for it because it’s literally blamed on an act of God, blamed on a Chinese Communist Party, or a gourmand in the meat markets of China. So Covid isn’t his fault. So people will credit him with the hot economy. And remember, he believed the Fed to try to keep running things hot. He wanted to run the machine hot, which in a way aligns a little bit with where I think the center left has been drifting intellectually, too.

So he was at the forefront of a couple of major trends in thinking about economics. And yeah, he has that fantasy power of, hey, a businessman was in charge. That’s been a Republican fantasy and a populist fantasy for decades, going back to Ross Perot and his candidacies for president.

So yeah, I do think he has potentially that advantage. And again, we’ll see what the vibes are like. Maybe inflation doesn’t hurt Joe Biden or Democrats as much. Partly maybe it’s the Covid exceptional era extending longer. Partly it’s also — there is low unemployment, and there are jobs available, and people have been getting raises slowly.

But in two years, if unemployment is up, if there’s going to be thousands of people who made financial decisions in their life — maybe they’re looking for a mortgage now and they’re looking at the interest rates — there may be a lot of reasons to dislike the economy in a year that will make Trump a more attractive figure.

EZRA KLEIN: Something I find genuinely weird about the Republican Party’s continuing interest in or affection for Trump is that, as you said, he’s just presided over loss after loss. I mean, they lose the House. They have a disastrous midterm in 2018.

They lose the presidency in 2020. I know he says that he didn’t really lose. And I know some portion of Republicans believe him, although I’m always a little skeptical on how sincere I think that belief is. Among a lot of people, I think a lot of people are —

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: They just give an answer to identify themselves with one party or the other.

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah, it’s always hard for me to decompose what people are saying in that answer. But anyway, so obviously a lot of Republicans believe there was things wrong with the 2020 election. And Donald Trump has tried to shift blame onto that lie. But nevertheless, he lost.

In 2022, his candidates don’t do well. I think people believe that he was part of why Republicans didn’t succeed more. And certainly you can’t make an argument that Trump had a magic touch and anybody he touched outperformed other kinds of candidates.

You go back to 2016 and the Democrats, and they just become obsessed with winning. All they want to do is win. And that eventually leads them to Joe Biden, this candidate who most factions of the party feel is fine. But what they feel about him is that maybe the kind of voters who they need to win back also feel like Joe Biden is fine.

You have this very strategic Democratic Party that emerges out of 2016. And I just don’t know. It’s a weird thing to me about Republicans, particularly given Donald Trump’s constant obsession with winning and turning that into the only thing you need to be in life, that it isn’t seen as more of an obvious vulnerability or even disqualifier for him that he’s such a modest electoral performer, whereas there are Republicans who, apparently in these terrible rigged elections, win by overwhelming margins even so.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Yeah, one, he’s always had a temptation to exaggerate the scale of his victories or even exaggerate the crowd size on inauguration day. So he makes — he tries to make his victories even bigger. I mean, I do think the 2016 victory was big. I mean, he was a popular vote loser.

But it was big in that he really did outperform polls. He really did outperform expectations. And it was revealed that his campaign really did have some sense of who his potential voters were and targeted them with messaging that appealed to them and got them out to vote. People didn’t think he had that kind of skill as an operator or would have that skill as a machine in the Republican Party.

But yeah, the thing is is that Trump’s success is not transferable to anyone else in the Republican Party. Doug Mastriano, the Republican candidate for governor in Pennsylvania, is not a billionaire real estate developer who’s been on television for decades and Howard Stern’s show for a decade. And he doesn’t have buildings with his name on them all over the country and golf courses all over the world. I mean, it’s just — he’s not cited in rap songs the way Donald Trump is. Donald Trump is a huge figure, a Titanic figure in our culture.

And so I think Donald Trump can argue, with some credibility, that, yeah, OK, my candidates — I can’t make Blake Masters into gold. I can’t make Don Bolduc into an electoral winner. But that’s because the magic is me. And you need me to turn out these rural voters. You need me to turn out the left behind. You need me to continue growing. And that might not be wrong. I mean, he really energized Democrats to vote against him in 2020. Will they again? I don’t know.

EZRA KLEIN: So we so far have been talking about the governor of Florida, the ex-president of the United States. Normally, after a midterm in which one party takes the House and takes the speakership back, the pretty much sure to be next speaker I think would be a more central topic of political conversation and fascination than Kevin McCarthy has, in fact, been.

There’s a very real way in which McCarthy seemed very overshadowed to me by other players in the Republican Party. But he will, in a way, have the most institutional power of any Republican coming out of this election. And decisions he makes about, say, whether to actually have a big debt ceiling showdown or what to do with investigations and impeachments will create the context in which 2024 happens.

How do you understand who Kevin McCarthy is and what kind of speaker he’s likely to be?

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Kevin McCarthy is — if you could imagine [LAUGHS] a cat herder but all the cats are on fire. This is a thankless job. I think being majority leader in such a slim majority, he doesn’t have the institutional polar weight that Nancy Pelosi had in her party to keep things running smoothly. He’s not particularly liked. So we don’t know.

I mean, he has shown a little bit of ability to let some Republican committees start experimenting with policy ideas. So he’s not showing the kind of iron grip that leadership has in both houses over legislation. So that I’m kind of hopeful for, that elected Republican legislators will have a little bit more to say about legislation, even if it’s not going to go anywhere in the next two years.

But the big question is, like, what kind of investigations or oversight are Republicans going to launch, and whether they’re substantive or whether they are show trials, and what they produce? And you don’t know what they’re going to produce.

I think a lot of people had a very low opinion of the Benghazi hearings. And yet, they ended up being very consequential for the 2016 election when Anthony Weiner’s laptop spills out in the end and forces Comey’s hand, late in the cycle. That’s not something that you can design to happen. That was a little bit of like the butterfly effect in action with Democrats watching in horror the whole way.

But again, those hearings could matter. So far, of course, they’ve picked the Hunter Biden laptop as the juicy target to focus on. And that makes sense because Joe Biden is President. But it is questionable whether Republicans even understand the politics of this.

Joe Biden has shown a remarkable ability to deflect anything scandalous about this story by pointing out to the fact that his son is a drug addict who is suffering, and that he himself, his father, loves his son and wants to support him. In fact, Joe Biden turns it into an asset because there are hundreds of thousands of families who have one troubled member in it who may cause trouble for the family but who is still beloved. And Republicans can misplay this to look like they’re persecuting a man who is not in control of himself.

EZRA KLEIN: So I want to note something in that answer, which is that, very quickly, Kevin McCarthy vanished into complete nothingness at the center of it. [LAUGHS]

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Well, yeah —

EZRA KLEIN: Like he became —

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: That’s right.

EZRA KLEIN: There’s a sense of him as smoke. I mean, I’ve heard this before. People start talking about him and very quickly they’ll just be talking about something else.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Yeah, no, that’s a great observation.

EZRA KLEIN: Who is Kevin McCarthy? What does he believe? What kind of speaker does he want to be? I mean, he’s going to be a very powerful Republican. And speakers do have — I mean, as much as I like your metaphor there — the herding cats on fire — I mean, nobody envies him his job. But that job can be done in very different ways, and always is by different speakers. Who is he?

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: I literally just think he is an ambitious member of the House who wants to be where the center of gravity is in the party. And it’s been harder and harder to figure out where exactly that is. And it matters a huge amount how many seats they have in the majority, right?

Because the Republican Party — the difference between their majority and minority could be like the seats in New York, or the seats in California, or it could be Marjorie Taylor Greene and Lauren Boebert on any particular issue. And in fact, I just would not be surprised if any of these factions, whether more moderate or more radical and populist, are willing to give him more trouble than the Squad or the Progressive House Caucus was ever willing to give Pelosi.

And again, like you said, he disappeared from that answer, too.

I said all the actors are going to be on the fringe. The theme of our conversation is that there is nothing in the center, that the Republican Party is kind of doughnut hole, where the outer edge determines everything and there’s literally a vacuum in the middle — a vacuum of authority.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: So the more I think about what you’ve said, the more I think it is all kind of the same argument, which is there isn’t really a Republican Party right now. There are a lot of Republicans and a bunch of them hold power, but that’s kind of it.

And that actually strikes me as a problem for a political system in which you’re supposed to have, on some level, parties organizing the preferences of voters and then in constant — not just competition with each other, but in a way that I think we’ve a little bit forgotten, in negotiation with each other.

This is a thing that top Democrats complain to journalists about all the time, have been since Obama and Boehner. But this idea that there’s nobody to call on the Republican side. There’s nobody to negotiate with. Nobody who can make a deal happen even if they’ve agreed to that deal before. At some point even including Donald Trump, where Pelosi would think they made a deal on immigration and then Trump would get a bunch of criticism and flip on it the next morning.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Right.

EZRA KLEIN: This is actually a problem for our system of government. [LAUGHS]

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Right. And the problem goes back to this problem of the Republican Party not knowing its own voter base very well.

On a practical level, when you’re covering a Republican campaign event — it’s been a couple of years since I’ve been out on the hustings — but you’re often seeing a candidate who’s been brought in in a Black SUV from a gated community to somewhere else with people he never hangs out with, people he doesn’t intuitively understand, and he’s saying slogans that he sort of believes in and some of them he sort of doesn’t, and it’s plainly obvious which are which. And then he goes back to the gated community and maybe holds a fundraiser in the gated community and then tries to get to work.

And there’s been an institutional failure on the Republican side to translate the instincts and aspirations of the Republican base into policy. Now, you might hate Republican base voter aspirations and say, well, that’s great, or that they can’t be translated into policy because it’s just some kind of cultural resentment or just the belch of the angry party.

But that failure is how Donald Trump stepped in and smashed the party and affected his hostile takeover of it in 2016 is that this connection had been lost, the essential connection in a representative democracy between voters and representatives. And until Republicans restore that, I think you are going to see this kind of mix of populist versus establishment sniping with very little policy substance to the party at all.

So you would need politicians who are intelligent enough and sensitive enough to speak passionately about things that their constituents actually care about and translate that into policy. That is what would restore trust in the Republican Party as an institution rather than as just a platform vehicle on which to run up on the stage and perform slam poetry on the culture war.

EZRA KLEIN: Let me offer a contrary thought to that that goes back to your very first answer to me, which is that the Republican Party is not the Democratic Party. Because, in a way, I have a little bit of trouble buying this.

I don’t think Republicans, Republican voters are all that more diffuse or complex in terms of what they want in policy or what kind of country they want than Democrats are. I mean, I like the polling. I sit in on focus groups. Nothing is perfect. But Democrats are a complex coalition, too. They’re always disappointed in their politicians and so on and so on.

I actually think the problem for Republicans for a long time, in terms of being a party, is that the level of, I think, at this point, actually apocalyptic sentiment towards the Democrats, more broadly towards a kind of sense of liberal woke establishment-ism that is out there, then through Donald Trump, in particular, towards elections and some of the more basic machinery of government.

At some point, if you don’t have full power yourself — if Ron DeSantis is President and he’s got Kevin McCarthy as speaker and Mitch McConnell as majority leader in the Senate, he could just pass bills. And I think they’ll do that.

But if you have to work with the rest of the system and the other party, but you and your media establishment made the other party too toxic to work with, it’s too easy to take you apart in a primary, as happened with the Tea Party and then happened around Donald Trump, if you’re seen as too much of a compromiser. Then you can’t translate what people want into policy because the act of the compromise is more loathed than the possible benefits it could bring.

And I don’t want to say there’s none of this dynamic on the Democratic side. I think by the end of Donald Trump’s presidency, you did see some bipartisan work happen around Covid and some big bills happen in that emergency scenario. But I think Democratic views on Trump are quite apocalyptic, too. And so he’d be very hard for Democrats to compromise with.

But I think there’s something about Republican hatred of the liberal elites that has made it very hard for them to then turn around and say, OK, but we’ve made a deal with the liberal elites, and it’s going to get you more of what you want and you should support it. And it’s like that particular bridge over the rushing waters that Republican leader after leader keeps falling into.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Yeah, and some of it is burned trust from before, which is it’s almost legendary in conservative circles that, oh, Ronald Reagan made a deal on immigration, which was amnesty now and we’re going to get enforcement at the border later. And then the enforcement never really came or kind of fell apart over time.

And so Democrats got what they wanted out of the deal — or liberal-leaning voters on immigration got what they wanted out of the deal — amnesty — and Republicans were left holding the bag. And a lot of people felt, I think justifiably, that that was likely what was going to happen with immigration reform in 2006 or under Boehner in the 2010s.

And so, yeah, there’s definitely a feeling that — and this is, I think, actually a broader problem of conservative parties in the West, is that as establishment liberals consolidate control over a lot of other institutions in national life, whether it’s universities, media — as they set the tone more and more in corporate life, there’s a sense in which all Republican political action or all actions by conservative governments are against the grain of society and are always felt as rough and almost feel violent, whereas Democratic actions are smoothed over because the institutions accept them and internalize and metabolize them much more easily.

And I think that’s going to be a characteristic going forward. And it’s going to make in future Republican administrations, I think a lot of Democrats will feel like, oh, this is much more like Viktor Orban now because it’s like the executive is attacking the institutions of social life in the country in order to get what they want done.

EZRA KLEIN: One reality, I think, of a lot of the institutions, the civil servants we’re talking about, the media, to some degree, is that they would be so relieved by any Republican who seemed just modestly less conflict-oriented and antagonistic than the Trump/DeSantis axis now, that I think there would be a weird level of calm and openness to people who maybe a couple of years ago would have been understood, by these same organizations, as very, very, very conservative.

And now a Mike DeWine or something just looks completely normal. And I have wondered whether or not Trump, DeSantis being at war in a primary doesn’t create room for a Nikki Haley, a Mike Pence, a Tim Scott — you can name your Republican. I don’t think it’s going to be a real moderate like a Larry Haugen.

But there are plenty of fairly conservative Republicans who seem like a quite different kind of Republican right now than those two do. And you can imagine one of them winning New Hampshire when people are tired of the Trump/DeSantis battle and then getting a lot of momentum.

When you look at the party, are there people you see as dark horses or other players who you think aren’t getting enough attention?

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: I don’t know if it’s Nikki Haley. I’ve seen her work relatively friendly crowds and not do all that well. I didn’t think she translated from South Carolina to the national stage perfectly well. Tim Scott sort of has this appeal. There is a Republican and I think global conservative appeal, of course, to say, hey, we’re going to show you our principles are not just white supremacy, because, look, we have a person of color as our candidate.

I’ve seen that latent desire since the first CPAC I went to where I saw buttons for Condoleezza Rice for president. And we’ve seen that in the Tory Party in highlighting how many women or people of color they’re raising up into cabinet. That same impulse exists in the Republican Party and they’ll want to find diverse candidates in the future.

However, I got to say I am on the team put all your eggs in the DeSantis basket. And I am that way for the reason that I think he has brought in voters into the Republican coalition in Florida and nationally. And he still appeals to a lot of Trump voters, even if in a selection straight up between the two of them, there’s a lot of voters who still prefer Trump now.

And I just don’t see any other figure uniting the whole of the Republican Party and presenting opportunities for expansion the way I do in DeSantis. I think everyone else is a little bit too uncreative and probably keeps too much of the old council. And I am declaring very early that I think DeSantis is a special figure in the Republican Party right now.

EZRA KLEIN: I think that’s the place to end then. So always our final question. Michael, what are three books you’d recommend to the audience?

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: To the audience — and I can recommend them like with a full sentence? Can I explain why?

EZRA KLEIN: You can talk as much as you want about them.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: All right, so for the first hour — so one history book I’ve loved reading in the last couple of years and returning to is “The German War” by Nicholas Stargardt.

It is a history of World War II told from the perspective of German people, from common people all the way up to archbishops, and how they experienced World War II. It is a really haunting and frightening book in a lot of ways and more effective than I think a lot of Hannah Arendt essays, just in how people metabolized a dictatorship and genocide in their own borders and slightly beyond them.

Another book, which I think captures a little bit of conservative fears about the direction of history, at the end of history, is this book, “The Demon in Democracy,” by Ryszard Legutko, who is a Polish philosopher and minister in the European Parliament.

And it’s just a brilliant book about how a lot of partisans of liberal democracy in our era effectively have a communist worldview horizon, which is that the direction of history goes in one direction and that’s towards people who no longer have states, national loyalties, religious differences, that we kind of all meld into one global humanity.

And then I want to recommend this book by probably my favorite conservative thinker, Roger Scruton. It’s called “The Face of God.” It’s a very interesting book in that I don’t think Roger Scruton believed in God, or I’m not sure. And yet, this series of essays takes the reader on a journey through thinking about the idea of God in a secular world.

And I think it has a unique ability to show people who don’t believe in God what the rest of us see, this idea of a source and grounding for all of our gratitude and affection for the world and the way that God can rationalize the gift that we make to each other of self-sacrifice.

It’s a very profound work, and it’s not like some treacly Christian apologetic like from Max Lucado. And I think it appeals to people who are immune to C.S. Lewis and other traditional apologists.

EZRA KLEIN: Michael Brendan Dougherty, thank you very much.

MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY: Cool.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

“The Ezra Klein” show is produced by Emefa Agawu, Kristin Lin, Annie Galvin, Jeff Geld and Rogé Karma. Fact-checking by Michelle Harris, Mary Marge Locker and Kate Sinclair. Original music by Isaac Jones, mixing by Jeff Geld. Audience strategy by Shannon Busta.

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[***Upheaval in Northern Ireland, With Brexit at Its Center***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64RP-VNJ1-JBG3-6540-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

A dispute over trading checks has left the main pro-British party in disarray, creating the potential for a momentous political shift.

BELFAST, Northern Ireland — Michelle O’Neill was forced to greet visitors this week in a drab upstairs meeting room at the rear of the Stormont Parliament Buildings in Belfast, its faded posters and scattered chairs a stark contrast to the classical grandeur of the chambers at the front of the complex.

A leader of the Irish nationalist Sinn Fein party, Ms. O’Neill had just vacated her office as deputy first minister of Northern Ireland’s government after the first minister, Paul Givan, a member of the main unionist party — that is, the main party supporting Northern Ireland’s current status as part of the United Kingdom — abruptly resigned. Under the power-sharing agreement that governs the territory, she automatically lost her post as well.

But if the upheaval turned Ms. O’Neill into a temporary vagabond, it also served to underline a momentous political shift in Northern Ireland: Assuming that current polls hold, Sinn Fein, with its vestigial ties to the paramilitary Irish Republican Army and fervent commitment to Irish unification, will become the largest party in the Northern Ireland Assembly after elections scheduled for May.

That could catapult the 45-year-old Ms. O’Neill into the post of first minister, and it helps explain why Mr. Givan quit when he did.

His Democratic Unionist Party is desperate to rally its voters before the election. Its most emotive issue is the North’s trade status in the wake of Brexit, which is governed by a complex legal arrangement [*known as the Northern Ireland Protocol*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/uk-northern-ireland-protocol-eu.html). Unionists complain that the protocol, which requires border checks on goods passing between Northern Ireland and mainland Britain, has driven a wedge between the North and the rest of the United Kingdom.

By pulling their leader out of Stormont, the Democratic Unionists are trying to put pressure on the British government, which is in the process of renegotiating the protocol with European Union. Unless the trade rules are radically overhauled, unionists say, they will not return to the government and Northern Ireland’s on-again off-again experiment in power-sharing will collapse.

“We’ve had enough of being promised that this issue would be dealt with,” said Gordon Lyons, 35, a Democratic Unionist who serves as economy minister in the government and who will stay in his position until the election. “There’s a general sense that we unionists are always being asked to suck it up.”

Ms. O’Neill dismissed Mr. Givan’s exit as a “reckless stunt.” It came days after another unionist minister, Edwin Poots, declared that the government would stop inspecting agricultural goods coming in from Britain, a violation of the protocol. A judge ruled that the checks must continue until the issue was decided in court.

“They’ve been on the wrong side of the Brexit debate,” Ms. O’Neill said. “Now they’re bringing their dysfunction into this building.”

Behind the theatrics, however, is a deadly serious contest for the future of Northern Ireland, one that could reverberate widely, destabilizing not just the island but also Britain’s relations with the European Union and the United States.

Nearly a quarter century after the Good Friday Agreement ended the sectarian violence known as the Troubles, Brexit has scrambled Northern Ireland’s politics. Few want a return to the bloody 30-year guerrilla war that set mostly Catholic nationalists and republicans, seeking unification with Ireland, against predominantly Protestant loyalists and unionists, who want to stay in the United Kingdom.

But the fallout from Brexit has left unionists angry and divided, and it has tilted the political landscape in favor of Sinn Fein, which opposed Brexit and seeks ever closer ties between the north and south of Ireland.

“This does feel like a critical juncture,” said Katy Hayward, a professor of politics at Queen’s University in Belfast. “We can’t avoid the fact that 100 years after its creation, Northern Ireland has fundamentally changed.”

If Sinn Fein does win the largest number of seats — it is currently eight points ahead of the Democratic Unionists in polls — the most likely scenario would be a prolonged negotiation as the two parties tried to figure out how to live with each other. But some experts said they doubted the Democratic Unionists could ever take part in a government with a Sinn Fein representative as first minister.

As a practical matter, the first minister and deputy first minister have equal powers in overseeing the government — an arrangement designed to force parties from opposing traditions to work together. But in the identity politics of Northern Ireland, symbolic details matter.

Unionists complain that Sinn Fein vetoed their plans to plant a rose bush at Stormont last year to mark the centenary of the establishment of Northern Ireland. Nationalists point out that the unionists opposed legislation that would give the Irish language similar status to that of English, as Welsh has in Wales.

“It’s about a sense of loss,” said Monica McWilliams, an academic and former politician who was involved in the 1998 peace negotiations. “The unionists say, ‘If this is going to be good for the Irish economy, it’s going to be bad for us up north.’”

On its face, the Northern Ireland Protocol would not seem to have the visceral power of issues like language. It is a technical arrangement that grew out of a deal between London and Brussels to avoid resurrecting a hard border between Ireland, an E.U. member state, and Northern Ireland, which left the European Union as part of the United Kingdom. To achieve this, it requires checks on goods flowing across the Irish Sea from mainland Britain to the North.

Mr. Givan’s party enthusiastically supported Brexit, and when Prime Minister Boris Johnson struck the deal on the protocol, they grudgingly went along with it. But as the checks have begun to be enforced, unionists say they have imposed an onerous burden, with one widely quoted analysis estimating that Brexit adds 850 million pounds, or $1.15 billion, a year in costs. Other experts cast doubt on those figures and point out that Northern Ireland has bounced back more quickly from the pandemic than much of Britain.

Still, there is a palpable sense of betrayal at the hands of Mr. Johnson. First, he promised the unionists that the protocol would not disrupt trade across the Irish Sea. Then he told them that Britain would drive a hard bargain with the European Union, scrapping the protocol, if necessary, to remove barriers.

Now, however, Mr. Johnson, embattled by his own scandals at home, is wary of igniting a trade war with the European Union. He also recognizes that stirring up tensions over Northern Ireland [*would antagonize President Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/18/world/europe/ireland-biden-eu-uk.html), who takes a particular interest in the preservation of the Good Friday Agreement.

When Mr. Johnson’s hard-line trade negotiator, David Frost, [*resigned last December*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/18/world/europe/brexit-david-frost-resigns.html) — in part over concerns about this softer stance on the protocol — he was replaced by a more emollient figure, Liz Truss, the foreign secretary. While the negotiations remain tough, Britain and the European Union are stressing progress and seem less likely to come to blows.

“The least difficult option for Boris Johnson is to sacrifice Northern Ireland,” said David Campbell, chairman of the Loyalist Communities Council, which represents a group of pro-union paramilitary groups that vehemently oppose the protocol.

Some of those groups were suspected of instigating [*clashes with the police in April last year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/08/world/europe/northern-ireland-violence-brexit-covid.html) when tensions over the protocol first boiled over. Mr. Campbell insisted in an interview that was not the case, though he warned that if London were to cut another deal with Brussels, “The message it would send is that the only thing that works is violence.”

In the short term, the protocol’s biggest threat is to the Democratic Unionists, who are being challenged by rival parties on both their right and left. “How do you reward these people for all their blunders?” Mr. Campbell said.

The Democratic Unionist Party, which was founded by the Rev. Ian Paisley during the height of the Troubles, has cycled through leaders and lurched sharply to the right as it struggles to shore up its base.

“Someone in Europe needs to wake up to the reality that they are not doing this to assist the peace process,” Mr. Poots declared in the Assembly on Monday. “The political element of the peace process has had a bomb put in it, and it hasn’t been by terrorists, it has been by the European Union.”

Such fiery words pose a problem for both the European Union and Britain. While London could resort to imposing direct rule on the North — as it has during previous breakdowns in relations between the Northern Irish parties — that would further inflame tensions. To make the protocol work smoothly, both sides need a functioning administration in Belfast to set up and enforce much of the border checks.

“It can, in theory, be overridden, but we shouldn’t underestimate the political costs of doing this,” said Raoul Ruparel, a former special adviser to the British prime minister on Europe. “The U.K. government tramping into Northern Ireland just doesn’t seem to be a reasonable request.”

PHOTOS: A service in Londonderry, Northern Ireland, on Jan. 30, the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, a British massacre of Irish nationalist protesters.; Michelle O’Neill was deputy first minister of Northern Ireland. Her party, Sinn Fein, is heavily favored in legislative elections this spring. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CLODAGH KILCOYNE/REUTERS); A customs post was established at a port in Antrim. Brexit has slowed trade between Northern Ireland and the rest of the U.K. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL FAITH/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES); A unionist mural in Sandy Row, a predominantly Protestant Loyalist, ***working-class*** neighborhood in Belfast, in memory of the 17th-century King William of Orange. He defeated a Catholic army in the Battle of Boyne. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PAULO NUNES DOS SANTOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Modi Uses India's Antiterror Law to Jail Critics for Years***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63V3-73B1-DXY4-X3F5-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1369 words

**Byline:** By Emily Schmall and Sameer Yasir

**Body**

India's government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has jailed thousands of people through a statute that critics say is aimed at silencing dissent.

NEW DELHI -- The two women walked through the gate of India's notorious Tihar prison raising their fists and chanting protest slogans.

Their release on bail in June after spending a year in custody was unusual given the accusations they face: They have been charged with terrorism.

Natasha Narwal and Devangana Kalita, student activists, were imprisoned under an antiterror law with roots in the British colonial era that critics say the Indian government is increasingly using to silence dissent.

Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, those charged through the antiterrorism law, called the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, have typically spent years languishing in jail before their trials have even begun. Thousands of people -- including poets, political organizers and even a Catholic priest -- have been jailed. The law is increasingly being challenged by the courts, which say it is an abuse of power.

The law ''makes you guilty unless and until you are able to prove yourself innocent,'' said Ms. Narwal, a founder of the women's student collective Pinjra Tod, or Break the Cage.

''Coming out of jail in one year,'' she added, ''is a miracle.''

Mr. Modi's government has developed a playbook to police dissent and free speech, criminal justice experts have said. Since taking office in 2014, Mr. Modi has increasingly relied on laws that give the authorities greater powers to detain people and act against those accused of inciting hatred against the government.

The Modi government in 2019 gave itself greater access to people's online data. Last year, it proposed a law that would make encrypted messages ''traceable,'' prompting a lawsuit from the messaging service WhatsApp, which said it violated Indians' constitutional right to privacy.

Officials have succeeded in persuading social media giants like Facebook and Twitter to shut down millions of accounts in India for a wide range of perceived offenses against citizens and the government. The authorities also routinely turn off internet services during protests, pushing India to the top of a list of global offenders tracked by the watchdog group Access Now.

The antiterror law, which gives judges the right to extend pretrial detention almost indefinitely, has been among Mr. Modi's most repressive tools.

During the prime minister's tenure, the number of cases filed under the antiterror law has surged. More than 8,300 people have been arrested and jailed in the last five years, according to official data. There are no reliable official statistics about the use of the law before 2014, but legal experts say the number of cases was negligible.

The government told Parliament in August that only about 2 percent of cases registered under the law from 2016 to 2019 resulted in a conviction. But even without a conviction, people detained under the law can be jailed for years before their cases go to trial.

''It appears that in its anxiety to suppress dissent and in the morbid fear that matters may get out of hand, the state has blurred the line between the constitutionally guaranteed right to protest and terrorist activity,'' the Delhi High Court said in a hearing in June that resulted in the release on bail of Ms. Narwal and two fellow activists.

''If such blurring gains traction,'' the court continued, ''democracy would be in peril.''

Kanchan Gupta, a government spokesman, defended the law, saying it helps the government ensure the ''security of its citizens and protect them from adversaries of the nation.''

Of the people detained under the antiterror law, the case of the Rev. Stan Swamy has stoked particular outrage. Father Swamy, a Jesuit priest and activist with Parkinson's disease, died in July at 84 while in custody. He was accused of using inflammatory speech and supporting a Maoist rebel insurgency that has been active in India for decades. He was the oldest person in India accused of terrorism.

Father Swamy's death came after his repeated requests for bail on medical grounds were denied. An independent investigation by a digital forensics firm suggested that his computer, which Indian investigators had seized, had been hacked and planted with files. But neither his poor health nor the conclusions of that report was enough to win him bail.

After Father Swamy's death, Justice Deepak Gupta, a former Supreme Court judge, said that the antiterrorism law was being misused, and that courts should draw up clear guidelines.

''Are we human?'' he asked. ''The U.A.P.A. should not remain in this form.''

The various iterations of the law have been contentious for more than a century. Officers under the British Raj introduced a precursor to it in 1908 to quell independence movements. In 1967, when India was fresh from wars with Pakistan and China, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi introduced the U.A.P.A. to punish groups for ''sowing discord.'' It prompted an uproar among lawmakers, and a watered-down version was passed.

Over the decades, the law has been amended to address terrorist activity. Investigators relied on it in 2008 to arrest people suspected in the Mumbai terror attack.

In 2019, Mr. Modi's government further amended the law to give officials more power to make arrests on terrorism charges.

''It strikes at individual liberty and grants government powers to name all and sundry as terrorists,'' said Dushyant Dave, an Indian lawyer. ''There is evidence to suggest that those arrested under the law have been targeted for their political beliefs.''

The students' release on bail in June signaled growing scrutiny of the government's use of the law.

Ms. Narwal and 18 others face charges for their roles in protests against a divisive citizenship law pushed through by the Modi government that excludes Muslims from a program offering South Asian migrants in India a fast track to citizenship. One protest against the law last year in a ***working-class*** neighborhood of New Delhi descended into clashes between Hindus and Muslims. More than two dozen people were killed.

The police arrested more than 1,800 people who they say played a role in the riots. No one has yet been convicted. During court hearings, judges have criticized the quality of the police's witness testimony and evidence.

''It is further painful to note that in a large number of cases of riots, the standard of investigation is very poor,'' Justice Vinod Yadav, a Delhi high court judge, said in August.

In the order granting Ms. Narwal bail in June, a judge questioned the validity of the police force's case.

India's clogged court system means the wheels of justice turn slowly. The antiterrorism law slows things down further.

In May 2020, Ms. Narwal and the two fellow student activists were taken into custody. Because of pandemic restrictions, each spent the first 10 days in solitary confinement.

A judge quickly ruled that Ms. Narwal had been exercising her democratic rights when she participated in protests earlier that year.

But shortly after, the police announced fresh charges: attempted murder, terrorism and organizing protests that instigated deadly religious violence. Ms. Narwal, 32, who has said she is innocent, was returned to her cell.

Ms. Narwal waited in Tihar, a maximum-security prison, for six months before she was granted her first bail hearing. Prosecutors filed an 18,000-page charge sheet, which took the high court another six months and 30 hearings to process, according to her lawyer, Adit Pujari.

''In a sense, the government had a victory,'' Mr. Pujari said. ''If she was outside, she could have been involved with more protests and spearheaded more issues.''

For now, Ms. Narwal has returned to her doctoral studies in Delhi, but the case against her could continue for years. The Supreme Court is considering a petition to revoke her bail.

''We ourselves are prepared for the long haul because the law itself is so stringent,'' Ms. Narwal said. ''You are almost rendered powerless until your trial completes.''

Sameer Yasir reported from Srinagar, Kashmir.Sameer Yasir reported from Srinagar, Kashmir.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/world/asia/modi-india-antiterror-law.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/world/asia/modi-india-antiterror-law.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India, above, has increasingly relied on laws giving the authorities more power to detain activists like Devangana Kalita, center left, and Natasha Narwal, who were imprisoned for a year. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MANISH SWARUP/ASSOCIATED PRESS

XAVIER GALIANA/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** October 13, 2021

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[***What Trump Needs to Win: A Polling Error Much Bigger Than 2016’s***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:616H-SPK1-DXY4-X1GV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 1697 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** Several factors that led to the misfire last time are no longer in play.

**Body**

Several factors that led to the misfire last time are no longer in play.

[Follow our live analysis of the [*Biden inauguration*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/20/us/politics/live-stream-inauguration.html).]

If the polls are right, [*Joe Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/20/us/politics/live-stream-inauguration.html) could post the most decisive victory in a [*presidential election*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/20/us/politics/live-stream-inauguration.html) in three and a half decades, surpassing Bill Clinton’s win in 1996.

That’s a big “if.”

The indelible memory of 2016’s polling misfire, when Donald J. Trump trailed in virtually every pre-election poll and yet [*swept the battleground states*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/20/us/politics/live-stream-inauguration.html) and won the Electoral College, has hovered over the 2020 campaign. Mr. Biden’s unusually persistent lead has done little to dispel questions about whether the polls could be off again.

But while President Trump’s surprising victory has imbued him with an aura of political invincibility, the polls today put him in a far bigger predicament than the one he faced heading into [*Election*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/20/us/politics/live-stream-inauguration.html) Day in 2016. The polls show Mr. Biden with a far more significant lead than the one held by Hillary Clinton, and many of the likeliest explanations for the polling misfire do not appear to be in play today.

Of course, it’s possible the polls could be off by even more than they were four years ago. But to win, that’s exactly what Mr. Trump needs. He would need polls to be even worse than they were in the Northern battleground states four years ago. Crucially, he would also need polls to be off to a far greater extent at the national level as well as in the Sun Belt — and those polls have been relatively accurate in recent contests.

Another way to think of it: Pollsters would have far fewer excuses than they did for missing the mark four years ago. Mr. Trump’s upset victory was undoubtedly a surprise, but pollsters argued, with credibility, that the polling wasn’t quite as bad as it seemed. Mrs. Clinton did win the national vote, as polls suggested she would, and even the state polls weren’t so bad outside of a handful of mostly white ***working-class*** states where there were relatively few high-quality polls late in the election.

In post-election post-mortems, pollsters arrived at a series of valid explanations for what went wrong. None of those would hold up if Mr. Trump won this time.

Here are the many ways the polls are different today than they were in 2016.

The national polls show a decisive Biden win. Four years ago, the national polls showed Mrs. Clinton with a lead of around four percentage points, quite close to her eventual 2.1-point margin in the national vote. This year, the national polls show Mr. Biden up by 8.5 percentage points, [*according to our average*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/20/us/politics/live-stream-inauguration.html). The higher-quality national surveys generally show him ahead by even more.

Unlike in 2016, the national polls do not foreshadow the gains Mr. Trump made in the Northern battleground states.

Four years ago, national polls showed Mr. Trump making huge gains among white voters without a college degree. It hinted that he was within striking distance of winning in the Electoral College, with possible victories in relatively white ***working-class*** states like Wisconsin, even though the state polls still showed Mrs. Clinton ahead.

This year, the national polls have consistently shown Mr. Biden making big gains among white voters and particularly among white voters without a degree. In this respect, the national polls are quite similar to state polls showing Mr. Biden running well in relatively white Northern battleground states like Wisconsin and Michigan. The national pollsters won’t be able to sidestep blame while pointing fingers at the state pollsters.

There are far fewer undecided or minor-party voters. Four years ago, polls showed a large number of voters who were either undecided or backing a minor-party candidate, and it was always an open question how these voters would break at the end.

Over all, Mrs. Clinton led Mr. Trump, 45.7 to 41.8, in the FiveThirtyEight average, and 12.5 percent of voters were either undecided or supporting a minor-party candidate like Gary Johnson or Jill Stein.

There’s significant evidence that undecided and minor-party voters shifted to Mr. Trump in 2016. The exit polls found that late deciders broke toward him, 45-42 — but by even higher margins in the states where the polling error was worst, like Wisconsin, where late deciders broke toward him, 59-30, in the last week. Post-election surveys, which sought to re-contact voters reached in pre-election polls, found voters drifting to Mr. Trump. And all of this was foreshadowed by pre-election polls, which showed the race tightening after the third debate and [*the Comey letter.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/20/us/politics/live-stream-inauguration.html) It doesn’t explain the whole polling error four years ago, but it probably does explain part of it.

This year, just 4.6 percent are undecided or backing a minor-party candidate, according to the FiveThirtyEight average. Even if these voters broke unanimously to Mr. Trump, he would be far short of victory across the battleground states and nationwide.

Some pollsters — including the New York Times/Siena poll — do show more undecided voters, voters backing a minor-party candidate, or voters who simply refuse to state whom they’ll back for president. Yet there’s little evidence that they’re poised to break unanimously for the president.

In the final Times/Siena polls of the six battleground states likeliest to decide the election, the 8 percent of likely voters who didn’t back either Mr. Trump or Mr. Biden were slightly likelier than average to be young, nonwhite, less educated and male. They were slightly likelier than average to be registered Democrats. They disapproved of the president’s performance by the same modest margin as voters over all, and didn’t have a favorable view of either Mr. Biden or Mr. Trump. They were far less likely to have voted in a recent election. One wonders whether many of these voters will ultimately turn out at all, even though they say they will.

Many more state pollsters now properly represent voters without a college degree. The failure of many state pollsters to do so four years ago is probably one of the biggest reasons the polls underestimated Mr. Trump. It’s not 100 percent solved in 2020, but it’s a lot better.

The issue is simple: Voters without a college degree are less likely to respond to telephone surveys. To compensate, pollsters need to weight by education, which means giving more weight to certain respondents to ensure that less educated voters represent the appropriate share of a survey.

This has been true for decades, but Democrats and Republicans used to fare about the same among white voters in both groups, so many political pollsters glossed over whether their samples had too many college graduates. That changed in 2016: Mr. Trump fared far better among white voters without a degree, and suddenly polls that had been accurate for years were woefully biased against Mr. Trump.

By Upshot estimates, failing to weight by education would have biased a national survey by four points against Mr. Trump in 2016. It would have had no effect at all in 2012.

Importantly, most national surveys in recent cycles weighted by education. There’s an arcane reason: They mainly sample all adults, and adjust their samples to match census demographic variables — like educational attainment. Many state polls, in contrast, called voters from lists of registered voters and adjusted their samples to match variables that voters provided when they registered to vote, like their party registration or age — but not their educational attainment.

Fortunately, most state pollsters now weight by education. There are a couple of exceptions, but they’re generally not polls that get talked about too much anyway. Virtually all of the polling you’re looking at shows white voters without a degree as a very large share of the electorate. They’re just supporting Mr. Biden in far greater numbers than four years ago.

No guaranteed improvement. There’s no reason to assume the polls will be very accurate this year. There’s not even reason to be sure that the polls will be better than they were in 2016, which wasn’t exactly the worst polling error of all time. In fact, the polls were even worse in 2014 and quite bad in 2012 — though few cared, since they erred in understating the winner’s eventual margin of victory. The polls could easily be worse than last time.

Even if the polls do fare better than they did in 2016, they might still be off in ways that matter. In the 2018 midterms, the polls were far more accurate than they were in 2016, but the geographic distribution of the polling error [*was still highly reminiscent*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/20/us/politics/live-stream-inauguration.html) of the error in the presidential election.

Today, polls show Mr. Biden faring best in many of the same states where the polls were off by the most four years ago. Take Wisconsin. It was the highest-profile miss of 2016; now, it’s a battleground state that Mr. Biden seems to have put away.

We won’t know until Election Day whether that simply reflects real strength among white voters, as shown repeatedly in national polls, or whether it’s an artifact of an underlying bias in polls of states. Four years ago, undecided voters broke to Mr. Trump at the end, leading to an error in his direction; today, perhaps they’ve swung back to Mr. Biden.

The survey research industry faces real challenges. Response rates to telephone polls are in decline. More and more polls are conducted online, and it’s still hard to collect a representative sample from the internet. Polling has always depended on whether a pollster can design a survey that yields an unbiased sample, but now it increasingly depends on whether a pollster can identify and control for a source of bias.

Nonetheless, pollsters emerged from the 2016 election mostly if not completely convinced that the underestimation of Mr. Trump was either circumstantial — like the late movement among a large number of undecided voters — or could be fixed if pollsters adhered to traditional survey research standards like weighting by education. If Mr. Trump wins this time, they will be in for a whole new round of self-examination. This time, they might not find a satisfactory answer.

PHOTO: Waiting to vote in Queens on the last day of early voting in New York City. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Dave Sanders for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2021

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[***How Republicans Saw Inflation Coming***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64RV-JD61-DXY4-X0YS-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Blake Hounshell and Leah Askarinam

**Highlight:** The White House has been slow to recognize the political potency of rising prices. But Republicans had a plan, and they think the issue can help realign the American electorate.

**Body**

The White House has been slow to recognize the political potency of rising prices. But Republicans had a plan, and they think the issue can help realign the American electorate.

If Democrats lose control of Congress in November, it seems safe to say that inflation will be a major reason for their defeat.

[*Consumer prices have risen by 7.5 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/10/business/inflation-stocks-economy-news) over the last year — the fastest rate in 40 years. President Biden’s approval rating is just 41 percent, according to [*the latest CNN poll*](https://www.cnn.com/2022/02/10/politics/cnn-poll-biden-approval/index.html), and it’s doubtful those two numbers are a coincidence. Food and gas are more expensive, and [*voters are upset about it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/27/business/economy/biden-economy-politics.html). Rocket science it’s not.

While Democrats have struggled to deliver a consistent message on the economy, Republicans have been disciplined. Dating back to the spring, they’ve made inflation the centerpiece of their re-election pitch to voters. And that didn’t happen by accident.

It began, to no small degree, at the grocery store.

Early last year, Representative Elise Stefanik of New York, who was then campaigning to become the No. 3 Republican in the House, began to notice that the prices of fruit, bacon, milk and eggs were creeping up. At the time, [*economists were still debating*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/02/04/larry-summers-biden-covid-stimulus/) whether Biden’s rescue plan would set off an inflationary spiral. The White House and the Federal Reserve pushed back, insisting that inflation was a “transitory” phenomenon. But Stefanik had a hunch.

“I’m the grocery shopper in my family, so I go by my gut,” Stefanik told us. As a new mother, she also saw [*diapers*](https://www.wsj.com/video/series/price-index/inflation-is-hitting-diapers-heres-why/58C1D7D0-19F4-489B-93BE-767437F58890) and formula growing more expensive.

“And I’ll tell you,” she added, “babies use a lot of diapers.”

Stefanik had stumbled on a potent issue, and not just at the ballot box. She rallied her colleagues around a new economic message as she sought to oust Representative Liz Cheney from the leadership role. She said Cheney was “leaving these issues on the table” as chair of the House Republican conference. In a [*May 12 letter*](https://twitter.com/EliseStefanik/status/1392469015654764548/photo/1) to her colleagues, Stefanik promised to go “on offense” every day.

Three days later, by a vote of 134-46, House Republicans elected her to succeed Cheney. Soon thereafter, her staff began breaking out the prices of various goods — used cars, frozen chicken, canned vegetables — and emailing them to members each week.

In meetings, she would hammer home the importance of talking to voters about the rising prices. “Every time we talked about inflation, I could see the heads nodding,” Stefanik said.

As for Democrats, “they are losing the ***working class***,” Stefanik said. “I feel that in my district. And their dismissiveness will be devastating in November.”

Painful inflation memories

One Democrat who is not dismissive is William Galston, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution who served as a domestic policy adviser to Bill Clinton. Now 76, he lived through a time of high inflation in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

“It was vividly etched in my memory,” Galston said, sounding over the phone as if he was wincing while recalling it all. “It seized the center of domestic politics and wouldn’t let go for years.”

Galston watched inflation wreck the re-election hopes of Jimmy Carter in 1980. Then, when he was policy director for Senator Walter Mondale of Minnesota, the Federal Reserve crushed inflation in the early part of Ronald Reagan’s first term, causing a severe recession. In 1983, [*Reagan’s approval rating was 35 percent*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/11887/ronald-reagan-from-peoples-perspective-gallup-poll-review.aspx), and Mondale, the expected Democratic nominee, was [*leading him in hypothetical matchups*](https://theharrispoll.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Harris-Interactive-Poll-Research-MONDALE-LEADS-REAGAN-IN-TRIAL-HEAT-FOR-THE-PRESIDENCY-1983-01.pdf)by nine percentage points.

Then the economy rebounded, setting Reagan on course for [*“Morning in America”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUMqic2IcWA) and the comeback narrative that got him re-elected in the greatest landslide in history.

The lesson, Galston says, is that inflation can be beaten. “The question,” he said, “is whether you’re willing to endure the pain.”

‘You have to be caught trying’

There are signs that some Democrats are beginning to panic.

This week, a group of Democratic senators, led by Mark Kelly of Arizona and Maggie Hassan of New Hampshire, called for [*suspending the federal gas tax*](https://www.kelly.senate.gov/press-releases/sens-kelly-hassan-lead-colleagues-in-introducing-bill-to-lower-high-gas-prices%e2%80%afat-the-pump/), which is 18.4 cents per gallon.

The move likely wouldn’t have much impact, said Joshua Linn, an economist at the University of Maryland who studies the relationship between energy consumption and climate change. At most, he said, suspending the tax would save families a few hundred dollars a year.

The federal gas tax, which goes to the [*Highway Trust Fund*](https://about.bgov.com/news/senators-punt-on-finding-long-term-fix-for-highway-trust-funding/), hasn’t risen since 1993. That has forced Congress to bail it out repeatedly, because the fund doles out more in spending than it takes in from taxes. Last year, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that it would run up [*shortfalls of $195 billion*](https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57138) over the next decade.

But the political calculus for these endangered Democrats is pretty obvious: They want to signal that they’re doing something about inflation, even if the amount is mostly symbolic. As senators, there’s not much else they can do.

And once again, Republicans are already ahead of them. Last year in the Virginia governor’s race, Glenn Youngkin [*ran an entire ad*](https://twitter.com/glennyoungkin/status/1435612212278743041?lang=en) to call for cutting the state’s tax on groceries, which is 2.5 percent. He also proposed rolling back the gas tax by 5 cents a gallon.

And it worked. “We saw that in our polling when we tested those messages and we saw it in real time once those ads went up,” said Chris Wilson, the chief pollster for the Youngkin campaign.

Governors elsewhere took notice. In Florida, Gov. Ron DeSantis has asked lawmakers to “zero out” the state’s 26.5 cents-per-gallon gas tax. In Oklahoma, Gov. Kevin Stitt has [*called for eliminating*](https://heraldcourier.com/lifestyles/health-med-fit/stitt-supports-eliminating-grocery-tax-in-annual-address/article_af8ff8e8-c27f-5fbe-8ac8-54d6e043a2f0.html) the state’s 4.5 percent sales tax on groceries.

It’s not really clear, now that his legislative agenda has stalled, that Biden has a plan of his own. In November, he released 50 million barrels of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, but [*gas prices have gone up since then*](https://gasprices.aaa.com/gas-prices-march-higher-with-no-signs-of-slowing/).

Asked if the president supported suspending the gas tax, a White House spokeswoman, Emilie Simons, gave a two-sentence response.

“President Biden is using every tool available to reduce prices,” she said, pointing to the petroleum release. “All options remain on the table looking ahead.”

Economists say there’s not much Biden can do to stop inflation at this point, short of calling on the Fed to raise rates. Regardless, Galston said that Biden needs to be much more active in showing he’s working on it.

“Presidents are supposed to wield these godlike powers over the economy,” Galston said. And even if that’s not really true, voters believe it to be true.

He recalled a lesson that his former boss, Bill Clinton, once imparted about politics: “Look, you may not be able to fix the problem right away, but you have to be caught trying.”

What to read

* The tension in the Republican Party this week — sparked by the party’s resolution to censure two Republican members of the House — was “[*only a preview of the battles ahead*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/10/us/politics/trump-election-lies-republicans.html),” report Reid J. Epstein and Shane Goldmacher.

1. On the latest episode of The Daily, Lisa Lerer discusses [*why Democratic governors are rolling back mask mandates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/10/podcasts/the-daily/new-york-mask-mandates.html).
2. House investigators found [*gaps in the White House telephone logs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/10/us/politics/jan-6-trump-calls.html) from the day of the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol, report Luke Broadwater, Jonathan Martin, Maggie Haberman and Michael S. Schmidt.

New mood, new ad

Senator Raphael Warnock of Georgia started his last campaign with a funny ad. This time, running for re-election for a full-term, he went with something else: something far more somber.

Warnock, whose Senate race could determine whether Democrats keep their majority, [*declares at the start of the ad*](https://twitter.com/mattholt33/status/1491028431676805123), “People are hurting.” He describes the ways they’re hurting as the camera pans over images of families and others, all looking stonily at the camera. The music is cheerless, and there’s no sunlight. The scene then shifts to Warnock speaking to the camera, saying, “At my heart, I am and always will be a pastor.”

After a brief montage of him talking to constituents, the camera pans back to Warnock: “What I want voters to know is I see you, I hear you, I am you,” he said.

In 2020, Warnock ran as a political newcomer who took issue with the leadership of Senate Republicans. His message was centered around mismanagement of the pandemic and the need for leaders who care about their constituents.

That year, facing Republican Senator Kelly Loeffler, Warnock used his first ad to mock the attacks he’d soon be facing.

[*That spot*](https://twitter.com/ReverendWarnock/status/1324321816102506497) opened with clips of Warnock engaging in evil behavior, such as eating pizza with a fork and hating puppies. It was so over the top — ominous music and all — that it was clear Warnock was in on the joke. Then, it shifted to a brighter shot, with Warnock sitting on a stoop, talking directly to the camera. He warned that his opponent is about to unleash campaign attacks against him to distract from her own shortcomings, and that he, in fact, loves puppies. (A beagle named Alvin [*became a motif throughout his campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/23/us/politics/raphael-warnock-puppy.html).)

The shift in tone in his new ad captures Democrats’ new challenge since the last election. No longer the party in the Senate minority, Democrats are figuring out how to take ownership of the pandemic without being punished for persisting problems.

“To get rehired in the midterms, Democrats don’t have to show that we’re better off than four years ago, just that we’re back up off the mat and facing the right direction,” Jesse Ferguson, a Democratic strategist, told us. “This ad starts to do that.”

Is there anything you think we’re missing? Anything you want to see more of? We’d love to hear from you. Email us at [*onpolitics@nytimes.com*](mailto:onpolitics@nytimes.com).

PHOTO: Republicans have made inflation the centerpiece of their re-election pitch to voters as prices for a variety of goods rise for consumers. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Amir Hamja for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 10, 2022

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[***Vinod Busjeet’s Debut Sets an Origin Story on the Island of Mauritius; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63CY-71T1-JBG3-6562-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 17, 2021 Tuesday 01:39 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1108 words

**Byline:** Kawai Strong Washburn

**Highlight:** In “Silent Wind, Dry Seas,” a man of Indian descent leaves his country behind to chase an American ideal of success.

**Body**

SILENT WINDS, DRY SEAS

By Vinod Busjeet

Humanity has never stopped moving. Since the beginning of the species, we’ve continually migrated, until there isn’t a square foot of Earth that hasn’t felt our presence. The reasons have varied widely — from following the seasons to fleeing collapsing societies, and everything imaginable in between — but if we have one truth, it is nomadism.

Migration and its opportunities are at the heart of Vinod Busjeet’s debut, “Silent Winds, Dry Seas.” The novel is narrated by Vishnu, a young man of Indian descent who has grown up in Mauritius under British colonial rule in the 1950s and 60s, and whose sights are set on success beyond his homeland’s shores. That ambition ultimately lands him in America, within the corridors of some of the country’s most elite institutions. There’s a straightforward story here, a coming-of-age narrative with America as a shining beacon; and yet, given the novel’s principal setting — on an island nation off the coast of East Africa in the Indian Ocean — one hopes we might gain some greater understanding of humankind from the contrasts between the cultures and trajectories of these two starkly different countries. It’s an open question as to whether the story takes up that opportunity.

When the novel begins, Vishnu has returned to the island after 30 years to be at his ailing father’s bedside. His mother recounts his family’s rocky past — from abusive, arranged marriages to siblings battling over property — as it played out against the backdrop of a country beginning to fray at its racial and fiscal seams. Having long “straddled the ***working class*** and the lower middle class” in a socioeconomically, racially and linguistically stratified Mauritius, Vishnu’s Hindi-speaking family is ever angling for a higher station in life, with all their hopes now pinned on him.

So, we have our stakes. And yet, as the plot spools out in a relatively staid order — A then B then C, with some jumps in time and interludes of poetry — Vishnu never seems to engage with those stakes in any significant way; things simply happen, and we move on. Through dialogue, we learn of the family’s ancestral fall from grace, offhand commentary about pigmentation and the anglicizing of names, and surprising admiration for local remnants of French and British colonizers. But neither dialogue nor narration gives way to the characters’ interiority.

This absence is most jarring when the narrator approaches matters of colonialism, class or race as if they are neither good nor bad, but simply the way life is. When Vishnu’s father says a family friend “thinks an English name fits his skin color better,” Busjeet reveals no reaction on Vishnu’s part; the next sentence cuts to another scene. When we do glimpse his thoughts, they often lack depth. When Vishnu’s Mauritian friends predict his future success, “I smiled, but I didn’t know what to say,” Vishnu narrates. “Sure, my goal was to thrive among the elite. I was flattered, but what if I let them down?”

If there’s little of Vishnu’s inward life on the page, there’s certainly plenty of his surroundings. The middle of the novel takes us through natural disasters, political upheaval, bureaucratic corruption and economic instability. For readers unfamiliar with Mauritius, this history is illuminating, the richness of detail showcasing some of the best writing in the book. As Cyclone Carol menaces the island in 1960, Busjeet moves from a description of the marijuana the island’s Hindus partook in on happier occasions, to a sky stained blood-red by storm winds, then to a scrum of customers angling for a shop’s plywood and canned food, overseen by the savvy “white-haired Chinese woman counting on an abacus” while dispensing disaster survival advice. The tension in such moments is palpable enough to inject needed bits of fuel into the story.

Eventually, Vishnu arrives, in more ways than one. He wins a secondary school scholarship on the island, and later travels to London. He’s admitted to one Ivy League university and then another, securing several mentorships that give him contact highs off of old-money America. In several moments where he might be derailed — like when he’s assigned a work-study job he thinks is beneath him, in the kitchen of the Yale dining hall — Vishnu deploys the sort of slick, self-important persuasiveness many a political insider would kill for. While he occasionally overreaches and stumbles (in an entertaining sequence during a college internship in Washington, D.C., a single expensive dinner renders him penniless, forcing him back into the sort of kitchen job he’s previously avoided), Vishnu never second-guesses his ultimate goal of social status and material wealth. He’s most reflective when pridefully examining his “sookwaar,” or delicate, hands, in contrast to the callused hands of the working men around him; but the observation opens no door to deeper thoughts about inequity. Nor is there much room for nuance in Vishnu’s regard for the United States, which he blithely endorses, if not admires.

Is there anything wrong with this? It is a fantasy of the well-heeled that there’s something inherently noble or soul-validating to be found in blue-collar struggles with economic decay. A reasonable level of wealth, and the security and comfort it brings, remains a central goal for most of us, migrant or otherwise. But read in our current moment, when American pursuit — glorification, even — of excess has resulted in one of the most pernicious societies in modern history, Vishnu’s heedless pining for the one percent feels, at best, problematic. There are flashes in the final pages that he might be starting to realize this (“Was I at heart a non-materialist?” Vishnu ponders after failing to secure an investment banking job. “Or did I enjoy the good life that money brings?”), but they’re too ambivalent to count as a moral progression.

In the end, all of Vishnu’s striving leads exactly where we knew it would, as he’d alluded to it all along, narrating from adulthood. And yet, the story has been far from pointless. For one, it’s satisfying to read such a vivid rendering of a world unfamiliar to many. For another, bearing witness to a migratory rise in status gives one a sense of optimism, even if the reality is much more complicated than the novel suggests. That may be enough for many readers, even as the deeper insights into humanity and its heterogeneity remain elusive.

Kawai Strong Washburn is the author of “Sharks in the Time of Saviors.” SILENT WINDS, DRY SEAS By Vinod Busjeet 272 pp. Doubleday. $27.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Gaurab Thakali FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 26, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A Memoir of Filipino American Family Life in the Wake of Colonialism; nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63TW-K9D1-JBG3-637F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 12, 2021 Tuesday 00:47 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1367 words

**Byline:** Roberto Lovato

**Highlight:** “Concepcion,” by Albert Samaha, combines the epic sweep of global history with an intimate family narrative.

**Body**

CONCEPCION

An Immigrant Family’s Fortunes

By Albert Samaha

Albert Samaha’s memoir, “Concepcion: An Immigrant Family’s Fortunes,” stirred middle school memories of my immigrant friend André. André was a short, dark, pugnacious kid who, after breaking my nose on a basketball court, introduced me to the martial art of Filipino cussing. Like a Pinoy Prospero shipwrecked on San Francisco shores by the violent undulations of global history, André taught me to curse like Caliban, combining “putang,” a variation on the Spanish word for prostitute, with “ina mo,” a Tagalog phrase for “your mother” that jingled in my adolescent ears like the English “eenie meenie miney mo.”

Though we shared Spanish words and ***working-class*** roots, André and I had no clue how our family stories echoed the ebb and tide of empires, ancient and modern. Different factors — the profitable tropicalization of our experiences by the media, the daunting challenges of tying imperial forces to personal history, the fear and shame that self-censor us into silence about difficult truths in our families — prevent many a diasporic writer from telling these urgently needed stories. Last year, in her prizewinning essay collection “[*Minor Feelings*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/17/books/review-minor-feelings-cathy-park-hong.html?searchResultPosition=3),” Cathy Park Hong decried this gap in literature, noting, for example, how Asian American family stories too often “set trauma in a distant mother country or within an insular Asian family to ensure that their pain is not a reproof against American imperial geopolitics or domestic racism.” The “outlying forces that cause their pain,” Park wrote, “are remote enough to allow everyone, including the reader, off the hook.”

“Concepcion” puts us forcefully and unapologetically on the hook of U.S. imperial history and its role in shaping Filipino and American identity — and never lets us off. Samaha, a former defensive back at the University of San Diego raised by a Filipino mother, makes his offensive posture clear early on: “For generations, my ancestors navigated the wakes of distant empires, adapting to distant whims, imprinted with the knowledge that their homeland served the needs of distant people, stuck on the wrong side of the colonized world until America invited us in. It seemed intuitive to me that as outsiders we had to pay an entry fee, prove ourselves worthy additions to the empire, deserving the comforts it boasted.”

Taking us far from the boorish anti-imperialist cursing of a schoolyard Caliban, “Concepcion” tells a sophisticated tale. Samaha, a journalist who now works as the inequality editor at BuzzFeed, combines meticulous research into the epic of Spanish, U.S. and other great powers’ colonization of the Philippines with the more intimate story of his mother’s family, the Concepcions, with whom he grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area.

To construct the grand narrative canal connecting the sea of global history to the river of family history, Samaha adopts a nonlinear approach, moving back and forth across time and space in each chapter. In one, for example, a retelling of Ferdinand Magellan’s fateful “discovery” of the Philippine archipelago in 1521 flows into the contemporary migration story of his uncle Spanky. Spanky, Samaha tells us, was a popular “rock star” who entertained both adoring fans and the U.S.-backed dictator Ferdinand Marcos, who ruled over them in Manila, before migrating to join his family in California, where he worked as a baggage handler at the San Francisco airport.

The account of Spanky’s dive from fame and fortune to a déclassé life as an airport worker is one of several such tales in Samaha’s book, object lessons about the “height of the climb and the length of the fall” for the once-elite Concepcion family, as they pursue the American dream — a concept, he notes, that may be “outdated” but nevertheless endures.

At the bighearted center of “Concepcion” is Samaha’s desire “to honor my elders who built the foundation I was born onto, and to offer an account of their journeys for the historical record.” Here he succeeds ably, putting a human face and history on a huge, but mostly faceless community largely left out of the Asian American canon and U.S. literature generally.

Samaha’s remedy to the endemic erasure of the Filipino diaspora — the fourth-largest in the United States, he reminds us — involves recounting fascinating stories, like that of his great-aunt Caridad, a student who became a spy for the Allies in Manila during World War II. In one especially poignant episode reflecting the deep roots of the anti-imperialist struggle in the Philippines, a Japanese soldier threatens to swipe at Caridad’s head with his sword because he suspects her of collecting information about the American P.O.W.s to whom she is delivering food (as well as, secretly, letters, medicine and updates on the state of the war). “Caridad kept cool,” Samaha tells us, because “she had imagined this moment, prepared for it as keenly as she studied for exams or brushed her loose curls before dances. For centuries her ancestors had dealt with colonizers, studied their desires and prejudices, and learned survival tactics they passed on through generations.”

“Concepcion” also raises the galling legacy of empire that has moved some of our relatives to gush over and vote for a strongman like Donald Trump, despite his poisonous racism. Samaha portrays the complicated nature of his mother Lucy’s [*Trumpismo*](https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/trumpismo-latino-republicans-need-call-out-trump-s-authoritarianism-critics-n1241101) in scenes between the two that open and conclude the book. Lucy raised Samaha alone while working at numerous jobs to pursue her version of the American dream: “the best education I can give to my son.” Samaha clearly loves his deeply religious mother, but frequently runs up against her “impenetrable fortress of circular logic” in some of the book’s most compelling episodes. “Concepcion” invites us into the family’s living room conversation in the industrial suburb of Vallejo. In the process, we become privy to the manner in which two separate but linked political phenomena — the colonial history of the Philippines and the resurgence of the radical right in the United States — act as a vise grip on the hearts and minds of our relatives who support extremists like Trump. A similar logic, we’re told, leads other family members to join Samaha’s uncle Pepo in supporting Rodrigo Duterte, the famously brutal Philippine dictator who once told soldiers to shoot female rebels “in the vagina.”

“Concepcion” is at its best when it shares the lessons Filipinos have to teach those of us grappling with life in a kingdom of the north whose growing divisions between rich and poor, and politics of extremism, increasingly resemble those it fostered and still supports in the global south.

In places, Samaha’s passion for history on an epic scale overwhelms his more intimate family story, slowing his narrative and diluting its emotional heft. His book left me wanting more of the dramatic yet homey scenes featuring him and his mother, and more of the very physical but politically subtle storytelling that characterizes other recent narratives of Filipino American experience, including Grace Talusan’s memoir “[*The Body Papers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/17/books/review-body-papers-memoir-grace-talusan.html?searchResultPosition=1)” and Elaine Castillo’s novel “[*America Is Not the Heart*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/02/books/review/america-is-not-the-heart-elaine-castillo.html?searchResultPosition=3).” In “Concepcion,” summary sometimes occupies the spaces where scenes and dialogue might have been more elucidating. In the parts of the book where Samaha does deploy these tools, the important issues he explores — migration, racism, colonialism, identity — burrow into us, making vivid the contradictions that define us.

Samaha is to be admired for taking on the exceptionally difficult task of navigating the abyss of imperial history in order to make clear its invisible but destiny-altering pull on all of us. “Concepcion” does for readers what André did for me, teaching us to curse at empire but with the one-two punch of epic and intimate history.

Roberto Lovato is a journalist and the author of “Unforgetting: A Memoir of Family, Migration, Gangs, and Revolution in the Americas.” CONCEPCION An Immigrant Family’s Fortunes By Albert Samaha 384 pp. Riverhead. $28.

PHOTO: Albert Samaha and his mother in December 2004. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA ALBERT SAMAHA)

**Related Articles**

* [*When Providing for Your Family Means Leaving It Behind*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/20/books/review/a-good-provider-is-one-who-leaves-jason-deparle.html)

**Load-Date:** November 11, 2021

**End of Document**



[***It’s Never Too Late to Record Your First Album; it’s never too late***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63CY-71V1-JBG3-6000-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 17, 2021 Tuesday 13:15 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1045 words

**Byline:** Chris Colin

**Highlight:** For a celebrated architecture professor at the University of California, Berkeley, an album of 11 original songs, in a variety of genres, was eight decades in the making.

**Body**

“It’s Never Too Late” is a new series that tells the stories of people who decide to pursue their dreams on their own terms.

One day a couple years back, the woman who has long cleaned Russ Ellis’s house in Berkeley, Calif., showed up with a new helper. Mr. Ellis did not think to ask her name.

Perhaps he forgot. Or maybe the recovering academic — a celebrated architecture [*professor*](https://ced.berkeley.edu/ced/faculty-staff/william-ellis) at the University of California, Berkeley, later a vice chancellor — had other things on his mind. Whatever the case, the lapse rattled him.

“Russell Ellis, your father’s mother was born into slavery,” he said to himself. “You have the right to invisibilize no one.”

He not only learned the woman’s name then and there — Eliza — but pledged to sing it next time she came by. With that pledge, something strange shook loose in him.

“A song walked right in. Eliiiiiza. Eliiiiiiiiiza. And then the urge kept coming.”

Calling on experienced musician friends to help, Mr. Ellis spent the following year recording “Songs from My Garden,” his first-ever album. He was 85. (He turned 86 in June.) It consists of 11 original songs, [*released online*](https://ced.berkeley.edu/ced/faculty-staff/william-ellis) with an extremely local label, in a variety of genres.

The experience delighted him at a new level — he got to explore all new terrain, with a creative abandon he’d never known. Then, with that, he was delighted to conclude his brief recording career. (The following interview has been edited and condensed.)

Q: Tell me about your life before the “Eliza” moment.

A: I never bit down on any one thing. Over the years I’ve been an athlete, a parent, a friend, a lover. “In the golden sandbox” — that’s how I think of my life in California. As a kid growing up in the ***working-class*** Black world, you wanted a secure job at the post office or teaching school. But doing new things has always been part of my life.

After retiring, I got into stone carving, then modeling clay, then steel work and painting. Sometimes I’d see former colleagues from Berkeley and they were still kind of wearing the clothes of the old office. I couldn’t have been happier to let go of all that.

How hard was it to start writing music for the first time?

Not hard at all. The songs just started coming, easily and naturally. I have always been a laborer, but I suddenly had the experience of a muse saying, “I gotcha, I’m taking over.”

What did it feel like, doing this entirely new thing?

Having that muse — it’s like I was accompanied by another self, more sophisticated and supple than I was. I’m an empiricist. But if I had to romanticize, I’d say it was a spirit that came to visit. It was one of the best experiences of my life. What a joy to have stuff flow like that.

One side effect: You know how you get a song in your head sometimes? I now get whole orchestrated movements. New doors still open as you age. Along with creaky limbs, interesting things happen, too.

How did you learn about recording and songwriting?

I’m kind of connected to the musical world through my children and their friends. I exploited any contacts I had: Would you mind helping me with this for free? Everyone was very generous.

Were you nervous, taking the first steps into this new world?

There are benefits to age. Not a lot, but some. I’m too old to get nervous. And nothing was riding on this.

What kinds of challenges did you encounter at the beginning?

The hardest thing was the blues. Recording my song “Night Driver (The Next-to-Last Old-Ass Black Man’s Bragging Blues)” was intimidating. Singing the blues ain’t just something you stand up and do. You have to be in it, you have to mean it, you have to deliver it in a way that people get into it themselves.

How did this album change you?

A big surprise to me about aging is that you do keep changing. I think doing the album made me a kinder person. Having my kids’ clear respect and support with it — it helped me feel better about myself, and when you feel better about yourself, you feel better about other people.

Also, I was onstage for a living, teaching classes for 150 students, then representing the university in my administrative role. Before that I was a track star at U.C.L.A., from ’54 to ’58. If I ran a good race, my stroll across campus was an act of celebrity.

All that stage time was not good for me. I felt somewhat unreal. I realized, when I finished this album, that was my last expression of my desire for it. I have been happy to get offstage.

What’s next for you?

My wife is suffering some significant health problems. It’s normal trouble, as they say — but it’s not trivial. Right now my life is about caregiving.

What would you tell someone who’s feeling stuck in their life?

Do something that involves other people. Even one other person. Getting out of a groove — sometimes you just need company.

There’s this fantasy that creativity is something you do alone, by candlelight. No! Do something with other people who are as genuinely interested as you are.

What do you wish you’d known about life when you were younger?

That doesn’t involve sex?

Life is shorter than you think and longer than you think. My two best friends are also Black men in their 80s. We marvel about our actuarial improbability. I’m happy to have used my time in so many different ways — ways that connected me to the world, to people.

Were there experiences before the album that helped prepare you for it?

Over the last 10 years I’ve actually had a bit of an art career. In the process I discovered that I wasn’t as vulnerable as I thought. At one point I had a piece in a group show, at a gallery. I walked by it just as a guy was saying, “this painting sucks.” And I didn’t die! I actually went over and, without telling him I was the artist, asked why he said that. Turned out he was a painter, and he told me his reasons. I learned a whole bunch.

Any other lessons you can pass on?

Take note of what’s interesting in your life. Don’t keep every little scrap of paper. But take note.

We’re looking for people who decide that it’s never too late to switch gears, change their life and pursue dreams. Should we talk to you or someone you know? Share your story [*here*](https://ced.berkeley.edu/ced/faculty-staff/william-ellis).

PHOTO: At the age of 85, after a long career in academia, Russ Ellis got it in his head to record an album. So he did. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Aubrey Trinnaman for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 20, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Black History Live In a 3-Story House On Staten Island***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YW-23C1-DXY4-X0VX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 11, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 22

**Length:** 1588 words

**Byline:** By Corey Kilgannon

**Body**

In Elizabeth Meaders's dining room, the horrors of slavery are displayed on the table: reward posters for the capture of people fleeing enslavement and the tools -- a branding iron, wooden hobbles and a bullwhip -- for punishing them.

In the room by her front door, an exhibit of military items used by Black soldiers includes headgear worn by Tuskegee Airmen in World War II and a parade helmet used by the famed buffalo soldiers in the 1800s.

In the living room, the couch is flanked by a life-size wax figure of the baseball slugger Hank Aaron and shelves of items honoring Black athletes, including a pair of Muhammad Ali's tall white boxing shoes.

From the outside, Ms. Meaders's home on Staten Island is unremarkable -- a narrow, three-story box in the ***working-class*** neighborhood of Mariners Harbor. But to step inside, with her as your guide, is to journey through the Black American experience, from the horrors of slavery and the dream of the civil rights movement to the glory of stars like James Brown and Cab Calloway.

The collection of roughly 20,000 items that Ms. Meaders, a retired New York City schoolteacher, has been building for more than six decades is one of the largest collections of African American historical artifacts in the country.

Hundreds of items are arranged thematically throughout the house, turning it into something of a museum, if one that few people have ever seen in person.

''This is just the tip of the iceberg,'' Ms. Meaders said recently while walking through the exhibits. Most of the collection, she added, is kept in storage crates in closets, the basement and the garage.

Ms. Meaders, a retired New York City schoolteacher, said she began collecting in her youth with mementos of Jackie Robinson and other Black athletes, then widened her collecting to ''surround myself with things that lifted my spirits.''

But she is now 90, and with limited years and storage space left, she is finally selling her collection in one bulk offering on March 15 at Guernsey's auction house in Manhattan.

''I can't go any further -- the collection is outgrowing the house and pushing me out,'' said Ms. Meaders, whose two daughters are not interested in taking it over. ''I'm used up and the space is used up, so it has to be transferred into competent hands that can take it to the next level.''

Ms. Meaders said she was hoping to attract a buyer who would make the collection accessible to the public and to scholars, at a museum or university, for example.

''I hope the sale will give it a better life because it doesn't belong in anybody's house any longer -- each piece needs a chance to sing its own song,'' said Ms. Meaders, whose real wish is that the items become the basis of an African American museum in New York.

Many objects lack documented details on their provenance, authenticity and historical significance, leaving Ms. Meaders herself as the sole authority. She has made long video segments detailing the collection.

Arlan Ettinger, president of Guernsey's, said he knew of ''no other collection of this size focusing on Black history ever coming up for sale at auction before.''

''Crammed into this simple home is a collection that tells the whole saga of African American history, from the scourge of slavery to the struggle of civil rights, to Black soldiers in all of our wars from the Revolution through Vietnam,'' said Mr. Ettinger, whose auction house has handled the estate sales of Duke Ellington, John Coltrane, Rosa Parks and Joe Frazier, as well as some Apollo Theater material.

Diane DeBlois, a co-owner of aGatherin' ephemera sellers in West Sand Lake, N.Y., who appraised the collection at $10 million, said it was enhanced by the back story of a plucky schoolteacher who was resourceful enough to acquire items on a shoestring budget.

''She had to go toe-to-toe with some pretty impressive collectors to outbid them,'' Ms. DeBlois said. ''She raised money through bake sales and school raffles, all sorts of ways.''

Ms. Meaders said she funded her acquisitions by working several jobs at a time, as well as buying items on installment plans and borrowing against the value of her house.

''I've never been wealthy, but I refinanced my house a few times and ran up quite a bit of debt,'' she said.

Randy F. Weinstein, founder of the W.E.B. Du Bois Center in Great Barrington, Mass., appraised the collection at $7.5 million in 2009.

''I've seen great collections, but this was something in my wildest dreams I could never imagine, the vastness and depth of it,'' he said.

Mr. Ettinger said he had already been in discussions with potential buyers, including several universities, and that it was possible a deal could be struck before the auction.

Often, he said, a philanthropist might buy such a collection to donate for the public good; that happened with the Rosa Parks estate, which was bought through Guernsey's by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation in 2014 for a reported $4.5 million and donated to the Library of Congress.

Ms. Meaders, a history buff, said her collecting began with fan material related to her teenage idol, Jackie Robinson, who broke professional baseball's color barrier when he joined the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947.

She began visiting sports memorabilia shows and then buying items honoring other Black athletes, like the boxer Joe Louis. An image of Crispus Attucks, believed to be the first American killed in the American Revolution, sparked an interest in Black military items, ''and little by little I just expanded, and it became a labor of love,'' she said.

Ms. Meaders's ancestors, she said, include servants in abolitionists' households in the 1700s and the last slave freed on Staten Island, in the mid-1800s.

Her grandfather, William A. Morris, owned an auction house on Staten Island and founded the island's N.A.A.C.P. branch, she said. He later had a middle school named after him where Ms. Meaders taught history.

''I've struggled to tell a history that's been either ignored or not told correctly, and it's a history that's directly related to me,'' she said. ''The more I found, the more I wanted because the whole thing became a huge puzzle and I began obsessively trying to fill in the missing pieces.''

A main goal was to educate people on forgotten Black stories.

''This is a motherlode of information, with so many stories that have never been told,'' she said. ''That's the purpose of my collection: to educate, heal, inspire and empower.''

Wyatt Houston Day, an historian and appraiser who has visited Ms. Meaders's home, agrees.

''The thing that makes her collection so unique,'' said Mr. Day, who is also a former specialist in African-Americana sales at Swann Auction Galleries in Manhattan, ''is that she has a lot of the connective tissue that fill in the gaps in other accounts, small things you won't find in other collections but that add the important details.''

For example, he said, ''people talk about African Americans in the military, but she has an actual musket that would have been carried from a Black Civil War soldier.''

Ms. Meaders said she did very little buying online since the specialized items she was seeking were best found by looking through sale catalogs at auctions and constantly calling dealers.

She was also a regular at shows for antique vendors and sellers of historical, military, sports and other memorabilia.

At many sales, she said, ''I was often the only Black woman there, and I was considered an oddball.''

Ms. Meaders has devoted her life to the collection, Mr. Day said: ''When she started, no one knew who she was, and now she's legendary in collecting circles -- everybody knows Elizabeth.''

There were some items that her limited budget made out of reach. For example, when bidding by phone on one of the pens used to sign the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Ms. Meaders reluctantly withdrew when the bid went up to $8,000 with no installment plan available.

She still regrets it. ''That would have been the highlight of my civil rights collection,'' she said.

Down a narrow, creaky stairway to her basement is an exhibit that she calls ''Civil Rights and Civil Wrongs.''

There is a Ku Klux Klan grand dragon robe and a K.K.K. brand water pistol for children. Next to the boiler are posters from Harlem's famous Apollo Theater and a rocking chair that belonged to the pitcher Satchel Paige. Nearby is a golf bag that belonged to the pioneer Black golfer Charlie Sifford.

A treasured piece is an Army of the James Medal given by the white Civil War general Benjamin Butler to one of his Black soldiers.

Asked about the possibility of fire or burglars, she shrugged. ''I hate to tell you,'' she added, ''but there aren't too many people who would even know what they were looking at.''

Many items are one-of-a-kind, such as the hand-carved wooden mantelpiece depicting the abolitionist John Brown. One item Ms. Meaders holds dear is a medal honoring Crispus Attucks that she said she acquired from a ''top dealer who's well known as a crank.''

''I had to go through hell to get it, but it was worth it,'' she said.

Selling her collection will finally get Ms. Meaders some living space, but she admitted that it might not completely halt her collecting.

When a desired item came up at auction recently -- a Ku Klux Klan robe made for a child -- she resisted and instead implored a fellow collector to buy it.

''I think that even when I'm in my coffin and something comes up for auction,'' she said, ''I'll probably toss a bid out.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/07/nyregion/black-history-artifacts-staten-island.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/07/nyregion/black-history-artifacts-staten-island.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A Jim Crow-era sign

A slave brand

An Army of the James Medal

A statue of Ida B. Wells

A John Brown candle holder

A Nazi flag captured by Black American troops in World War II

Muhammad Ali's boxing boots

An event poster for a Ku Klux Klan ''Kolossal Karnival''

A poster from the civil rights era

A bust of Paul Robeson

A 25th United States Colored Infantry Regiment hat (A22)

''I hope the sale will give it a better life because it doesn't belong in anybody's house any longer -- each piece needs a chance to sing its own song,'' said Elizabeth Meaders, 90. (A22-A23)

A civil-rights-era N.A.A.C.P. cap

A ''store closed'' sign after Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination

A pamphlet from Henry Wallace's 1948 presidential campaign

A Ku Klux Klan-branded toy water gun

A Vietnam-era antiwar hat

A Jim Crow-era bus sign

A whip used during slavery

A Ku Klux Klan quilt

A poster offering a reward for a runaway slave

A Molineaux vs. Cribb heavyweight bout commemorative pitcher

A buffalo soldier parade helmet (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DESEAN McCLINTON-HOLLAND FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A23)

**Load-Date:** March 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Time Running Short, Trump and Biden Return to Northern Battlegrounds***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6160-49D1-JBG3-628R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 30, 2020 Friday 13:13 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1702 words

**Byline:** Thomas Kaplan and Annie Karni

**Highlight:** Surprise victories in the Midwest catapulted President Trump to victory four years ago, and the region again looms as the critical battleground. Both candidates are focusing on it in the final days.

**Body**

Surprise victories in the Midwest catapulted President Trump to victory four years ago, and the region again looms as the critical battleground. Both candidates are focusing on it in the final days.

[Read our [*2020 presidential election electoral college explainer*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/the-electoral-college.html).]

DES MOINES — [*President Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/the-electoral-college.html) stunned the political universe in 2016 with a sweep of critical Northern swing states, winning Michigan, Pennsylvania and [*Wisconsin*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/the-electoral-college.html) by less than one percentage point and forcing Democrats into four years of soul-searching about what went wrong in their historic geographic base.

Four years later, the chilly Midwest looms again as the principal battleground of the election, and on Friday Mr. Trump and former Vice President [*Joseph R. Biden Jr.*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/the-electoral-college.html) crisscrossed the region campaigning in states that are not only must-win for the president but also central to the identities of both parties.

For [*Democrats*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/the-electoral-college.html), their blue wall in the Midwest was for years their only defense against the Republican Party’s stronghold in the South, a demonstration that they were still the party of labor, ***working-class*** families and predominantly Black urban centers. For [*Republicans*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/the-electoral-college.html), these states are a key part of their rural base, and Mr. Trump has made his pitch to farmers and white ***working-class*** voters here.

As the country reported a record number of [*coronavirus cases*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/the-electoral-college.html) in the past week, Mr. Trump continued to insist on Friday that the disease the virus causes was not serious. At a rally in Michigan, a state that reported a 91 percent increase in new cases from the average two weeks earlier, [*he made the extraordinary and unfounded accusation*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/the-electoral-college.html) that American doctors were profiteering from coronavirus deaths, claiming they were paid more if patients die. He also mocked the Fox News host Laura Ingraham, who attended the rally, for wearing a mask. “I’ve never seen her in a mask,” he said. “She’s being very politically correct.”

Mr. Biden, in Iowa, took the opposite approach, pointing out the record number of new cases in the state and noting that the Iowa State Fair had been canceled this year for the first time since World War II. “And Donald Trump has given up,” Mr. Biden said.

Later in Minnesota, Mr. Biden lashed Mr. Trump for his comments about doctors profiting from virus deaths. “Doctors and nurses go to work every day to save lives,” he said. “They do their jobs. Donald Trump should stop attacking them and do his job.”

If Round 1 of election night will be fought in the Sun Belt — in Southeastern states like Florida, North Carolina and Georgia — Round 2 will be fought in Pennsylvania and the Midwest. Trailing in most polls and with an increasingly narrow path to victory, Mr. Trump has been forced to hold a series of large rallies in states he cannot afford to lose.

That pressure was reflected in the Trump campaign’s last dash, beginning with stops in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota on Friday. Just before Mr. Trump took the stage at his first rally in Waterford Township, Mich., dressed in a black overcoat and black leather gloves, his campaign announced that he would be back in the state for two more rallies on Monday, with additional stops in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania the same day.

“He’s sort of trying to repeat the 2016 playbook,” said Charles Franklin, director of the Marquette Law School poll. “He’s coming back to these three states. He did that effectively, surprised us all and won with that strategy.”

But this time, the landscape is more challenging. Mr. Biden led Mr. Trump by eight percentage points in Michigan [*in a recent poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/the-electoral-college.html) from The New York Times and Siena College, underscoring his troubled standing in Midwestern battleground states where his base of white voters without college degrees appears to be drifting away from him. In Wisconsin, [*an average of polls*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/the-electoral-college.html) shows Mr. Biden with a 10-point lead.

Over all, across all four states the candidates visited on Friday, the Biden campaign outspent Mr. Trump on the airwaves, $2.2 million to $1.4 million, over the past 24 hours, according to Advertising Analytics. The most aired message by the cash-strapped Trump campaign seemed plucked from his 2016 White House run: a [*promise*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/the-electoral-college.html) of “bringing jobs back home.”

Mr. Biden, flush with money, is running a much more complex advertising campaign with 27 different ads on the air in the four states; his [*most frequently aired ad focused on controlling the virus*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/the-electoral-college.html).

Neither campaign made major alterations to its paid media strategy on Friday, though the Trump campaign added $1.8 million to its national cable buy, running on channels with a conservative audience like Fox News and the History Channel.

Trump campaign advisers, while expressing confidence in the president’s prospects, have pointed to a number of outside factors that make this year more challenging in Northern battlegrounds. The governorships of Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin are all now held by elected officials they refer to as “anti-Trump Democrats.” Early voting, they concede, is a major “X factor” whose impact is not yet fully understood.

And the pandemic remains a top concern for voters, blunting to an extent the economic gains that Mr. Trump had hoped to run on.

Campaign officials point to suburban Milwaukee as one of the few suburbs across the country that have moved in Mr. Trump’s direction since the summer. Unlike other regions, where the issue of law and order has dropped as a top priority, they said it had remained a top priority there, ever since the shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wis.

But Mr. Franklin, who conducts Wisconsin’s most respected political survey, said his polls did not show that the president was winning over new voters with his law and order pitch. After the president’s visit to Kenosha in September, Mr. Franklin said, Republican approval of his response to the protests went up by 21 points. But independents moved up only about three points.

“It’s preaching to the choir, and he gets a strong amen, but it doesn’t add more people in the pews,” Mr. Franklin said.

On the campaign trail this week, the president has been more focused on personal feuds than on policy contrasts, and he has insisted that the country was rounding the corner on the virus while scorning public health precautions. On Friday, at his first of three rallies, Mr. Trump criticized one of his favorite foils, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, Democrat of Michigan, and the crowd chanted in response, “Lock her up.”

“Not me, not me,” Mr. Trump said of the chant, while doing nothing to dissuade it. “They blame me every time that happens.”

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Mr. Trump claimed there were “at least 25,000 people who wanted to be here tonight,” and blamed Democratic leaders like Keith Ellison, the state’s attorney general, for preventing his supporters from gathering. Mr. Trump claimed his supporters were “barred from entry by radical Democrats.”

He left the stage without his usual finishing flourishes, where he talks about “winning, winning, winning” and dances to the Village People’s “Y.M.C.A.”

Mr. Biden’s Midwestern swing on Friday included stops in Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin, an itinerary that showed both the promise and peril of the electoral map for his campaign, with the former vice president playing both offense and defense in a matter of hours.

Iowa dealt Mr. Biden a “gut punch” early this year, as he later put it after finishing fourth in the state’s caucuses, and it has not been among the battleground states that his campaign has focused on most closely. Although Iowa voted twice for Barack Obama, it swung sharply to the right in 2016, when Mr. Trump won by nine percentage points.

But polls have shown a tight race between Mr. Trump and Mr. Biden this time, and Mr. Trump is slated to travel to the state on Sunday for a rally in Dubuque. Mr. Biden’s visit also had the potential to boost a Democratic Senate candidate, Theresa Greenfield, who is challenging the incumbent, Joni Ernst, in a tight race.

On a bright fall day, Mr. Biden held a drive-in car rally at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines, where supporters decorated their cars with Biden signs and honked to show their support for him. Others stood by their cars waving American flags.

Standing outside her minivan, Linda Garlinghouse, 69, was hoping for a big win by Mr. Biden — an outcome that would be more likely if Mr. Biden wins a state like Iowa. “I’m just hoping for a landslide,” she said, so that there will not be “any doubt cast on the election.”

Iowa is in the midst of a [*surge in coronavirus cases*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/the-electoral-college.html), and Mr. Biden was introduced by an Iowa man whose 92-year-old father died of the virus, underscoring the personal pain that the pandemic has inflicted on so many families. In a heavily agricultural state, Mr. Biden also criticized Mr. Trump over trade, faulting the president’s “weak and chaotic China trade policy” for having hurt farmers and manufacturers.

During his Midwestern swing on Friday, Mr. Biden also devoted precious time to a stop in Minnesota, a state that has not voted for a Republican presidential candidate since 1972. But Mr. Trump has long fixated on Minnesota as one that got away in 2016, when he lost by only 1.5 percentage points.

Polls have shown Mr. Biden with a larger lead this year, despite Mr. Trump’s efforts to flip the state, and Mr. Biden told reporters on Friday morning that he was not worried about it. “I don’t take anything for granted,” he said before leaving Delaware. “We’re going to work for every single vote up till the last minute.”

Thomas Kaplan reported from Des Moines, and Annie Karni from Washington. Nick Corasaniti contributed reporting from Philadelphia, and Sydney Ember from Connecticut.

PHOTOS: On Friday, former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. visited Iowa for a car rally in Des Moines, left, as President Trump made a campaign stop at an airport in Waterford Township, Mich., right. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES; DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A18)

**Load-Date:** November 4, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Leftists Replacing Right-Wing Leaders Across Latin America***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64G6-X941-JBG3-613F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 6, 2022 Thursday

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**Length:** 1501 words

**Byline:** By Ernesto Londoño, Julie Turkewitz and Flávia Milhorance

**Body**

Growing inequality and sputtering economies have helped fuel a wave of leftist victories that may soon extend to Brazil and Colombia.

RIO DE JANEIRO -- In the final weeks of 2021, Chile and Honduras voted decisively for leftist presidents to replace leaders on the right, extending a significant, multiyear shift across Latin America.

This year, leftist politicians are the favorites to win presidential elections in Colombia and Brazil, taking over from right-wing incumbents, which would put the left and center-left in power in the six largest economies in the region, stretching from Tijuana to Tierra del Fuego.

Economic suffering, widening inequality, fervent anti-incumbent sentiment and mismanagement of Covid-19 have all fueled a pendulum swing away from the center-right and right-wing leaders who were dominant a few years ago.

The left has promised more equitable distribution of wealth, better public services and vastly expanded social safety nets. But the region's new leaders face serious economic constraints and legislative opposition that could restrict their ambitions, and restive voters who have been willing to punish whoever fails to deliver.

The left's gains could buoy China and undermine the United States as they compete for regional influence, analysts say, with a new crop of Latin American leaders who are desperate for economic development and more open to Beijing's global strategy of offering loans and infrastructure investment. The change could also make it harder for the United States to continue isolating authoritarian leftist regimes in Venezuela, Nicaragua and Cuba.

With rising inflation and stagnant economies, Latin America's new leaders will find it hard to deliver real change on profound problems, said Pedro Mendes Loureiro, a professor of Latin American studies at the University of Cambridge. To some extent, he said, voters are ''electing the left simply because it is the opposition at the moment.''

Poverty is at a 20-year high in a region where a short-lived commodities boom had enabled millions to ascend into the middle class after the turn of the century. Several nations now face double-digit unemployment, and more than 50 percent of workers in the region are employed in the informal sector.

Corruption scandals, dilapidated infrastructure and chronically underfunded health and education systems have eroded faith in leaders and public institutions.

Unlike the early 2000s, when leftists won critical presidencies in Latin America, the new officeholders are saddled by debt, lean budgets, scant access to credit and in many cases, vociferous opposition.

Eric Hershberg, the director of the Center for Latin American and Latino Studies at American University, said the left's winning streak is born out of widespread indignation.

''This is really about lower-middle-class and ***working-class*** sectors saying, 'Thirty years into democracy, and we still have to ride a decrepit bus for two hours to get to a bad health clinic,''' Mr. Hershberg said. He cited frustration, anger and ''a generalized sense that elites have enriched themselves, been corrupt, have not been operating in the public interest.''

Covid has ravaged Latin America and devastated economies that were already precarious, but the region's political tilt started before the pandemic.

The first milestone was the election in Mexico of Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who won the presidency by a landslide in July 2018. He declared during his election night address: ''The state will cease being a committee at the service of a minority and it will represent all Mexicans, poor and rich.''

The next year, voters in Panama elected a left-of-center government, and Argentina's Peronist movement made a stunning comeback despite its leaders' legacy of corruption and economic mismanagement. President Alberto Fernández, a university professor, celebrated his triumph over a conservative incumbent by promising ''to build the Argentina we deserve.''

In 2020, Luis Arce trounced conservative rivals to become president of Bolivia. He vowed to build on the legacy of the former leader Evo Morales, a socialist whose ouster the year before had briefly left the nation in the hands of a right-wing president.

Last April, Pedro Castillo, a provincial schoolteacher, shocked Peru's political establishment by narrowly defeating the right-wing candidate Keiko Fujimori for the presidency. Mr. Castillo, a political newcomer, railed against elites and presented his life story -- an educator who worked in a rural school without running water or a sewage system -- as an embodiment of their failings.

In Honduras, Xiomara Castro, a socialist who proposed a system of universal basic income for poor families, handily beat a conservative rival in November to become president-elect.

The most recent win for the left came last month in Chile, where Gabriel Boric, a 35-year-old former student activist, beat a far-right rival by promising to raise taxes on the rich in order to offer more generous pensions and vastly expand social services.

The trend has not been universal. In the past three years, voters in El Salvador, Uruguay and Ecuador have moved their governments rightward. And in Mexico and Argentina last year, left-of-center parties lost ground in legislative elections, undercutting their presidents.

But on the whole, Evan Ellis, a professor of Latin American studies at the U.S. Army War College, said that in his memory there had never been a Latin America ''as dominated by a combination of leftists and anti-U.S. populist leaders.''

''Across the region, leftist governments will be particularly willing to work with the Chinese on government-to-government contracts,'' he said, and possibly ''with respect to security collaboration as well as technology collaboration.''

Jennifer Pribble, a political science professor at the University of Richmond who studies Latin America, said the brutal toll of the pandemic in the region made leftist initiatives such as cash transfers and universal health care increasingly popular.

''Latin American voters now have a keener sense of what the state can do and of the importance of the state engaging in a redistributive effort and in providing public services,'' she said. ''That shapes these elections, and clearly the left can speak more directly to that than the right.''

In Colombia, where a presidential election is set for May, Gustavo Petro, a leftist former mayor of Bogotá who once belonged to an urban guerrilla group, has held a consistent lead in polls.

Sergio Guzmán, the director of Colombia Risk Analysis, a consulting firm, said Mr. Petro's presidential aspirations became viable after most fighters from the FARC, a Marxist guerrilla group, laid down their weapons as part of a peace deal struck in 2016. The conflict long dominated Colombian politics, but no more.

''The issue now is the frustration, the class system, the stratification, the haves and have-nots,'' he said.

Just before Christmas, Sonia Sierra, 50, stood outside the small coffee shop she runs in Bogotá's main urban park. Her earnings had plummeted, she said, first amid the pandemic, and then when a community displaced by violence moved into the park.

Ms. Sierra said she was deep in debt after her husband was hospitalized with Covid. Finances are so tight, she recently let go her only employee, a young woman from Venezuela who earned just $7.50 a day.

''So much work and nothing to show for it,'' Ms. Sierra she said, singing a verse from a song popular at Christmastime in Colombia. ''I'm not crying, but yes, it hurts.''

In neighboring Brazil, rising poverty, inflation and a bungled response to the pandemic have made President Jair Bolsonaro, the far-right incumbent, an underdog in the vote set for October.

Former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, a leftist firebrand who governed Brazil from 2003 to 2010, an era of remarkable prosperity, has built a 30 percentage point advantage over Mr. Bolsonaro in a head-to-head matchup, according to a recent poll.

Maurício Pimenta da Silva, 31, an assistant manager at a farming supplies store in the São Lourenço region of Rio de Janeiro state, said that he regretted voting for Mr. Bolsonaro in 2018, and that he intended to support Mr. da Silva.

''I thought Bolsonaro would improve our life in some aspects, but he didn't,'' said Mr. da Silva, a father of four who is no relation to the former president. ''Everything is so expensive in the supermarkets, especially meat,'' he added, prompting him to take a second job.

With voters facing so much upheaval, moderate candidates are gaining little traction, lamented Simone Tebet, a center-right senator in Brazil who plans to run for president.

''If you look at Brazil and Latin America, we are living in a relatively frightening cycle of extremes,'' she said. ''Radicalism and populism have taken over.''

Ernesto Londoño and Flávia Milhorance reported from Rio de Janeiro. Julie Turkewitz reported from Bogotá.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/04/world/americas/leftists-elections-latin-america.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/04/world/americas/leftists-elections-latin-america.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Protesters in Brazil in July held a banner depicting President Jair Bolsonaro as a devil. Former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, a leftist, hopes to oust him.

Homeless Brazilians lining up for food in São Paulo last summer. Rising poverty has hurt Mr. Bolsonaro's popularity. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAURICIO LIMA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Gabriel Boric, a former student activist, was elected president of Chile last month. He promised to increase pensions and expand social services. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCELO HERNANDEZ/GETTY IMAGES)

Xiomara Castro, a socialist, defeated a conservative in the presidential election in Honduras last fall. She proposed giving poor families a basic income. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIELE VOLPE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Trump and Biden Make Final Blitz In Midwest Tour***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6163-XFM1-JBG3-635G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1662 words

**Byline:** By Thomas Kaplan and Annie Karni

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Four years later, the chilly Midwest looms again as the principal battleground of the election, and on Friday Mr. Trump and former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. crisscrossed the region campaigning in states that are not only must-win for the president but also central to the identities of both parties.

For Democrats, their blue wall in the Midwest was for years their only defense against the Republican Party's stronghold in the South, a demonstration that they were still the party of labor, ***working-class*** families and predominantly Black urban centers. For Republicans, these states are a key part of their rural base, and Mr. Trump has made his pitch to farmers and white ***working-class*** voters here.

As the country reported a record number of coronavirus cases in the past week, Mr. Trump continued to insist on Friday that the disease the virus causes was not serious. At a rally in Michigan, a state that reported a 91 percent increase in new cases from the average two weeks earlier, he made the extraordinary and unfounded accusation that American doctors were profiteering from coronavirus deaths, claiming they were paid more if patients die. He also mocked the Fox News host Laura Ingraham, who attended the rally, for wearing a mask. ''I've never seen her in a mask,'' he said. ''She's being very politically correct.''

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That pressure was reflected in the Trump campaign's last dash, beginning with stops in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota on Friday. Just before Mr. Trump took the stage at his first rally in Waterford Township, Mich., dressed in a black overcoat and black leather gloves, his campaign announced that he would be back in the state for two more rallies on Monday, with additional stops in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania the same day.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/30/us/politics/trump-biden-midwest-battlegrounds.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/30/us/politics/trump-biden-midwest-battlegrounds.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: On Friday, former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. visited Iowa for a car rally in Des Moines, left, as President Trump made a campaign stop at an airport in Waterford Township, Mich., right. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES

DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A18)

**Load-Date:** October 31, 2020

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[***Indian Capital Seethes With Gang Wars During Trump Visit***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y96-RCH1-DXY4-X1GC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 26, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1240 words

**Byline:** By Jeffrey Gettleman, Suhasini Raj and Sameer Yasir

**Body**

As President Trump toured India's capital, at least 11 people were killed in mob violence that upended a ***working-class*** neighborhood.

NEW DELHI -- A mob of Hindu men, their foreheads marked by a saffron stripe, angrily patrolled the streets carrying iron bars, clubs and a bright blue aluminum baseball bat. They were itching for a fight.

The streets in the New Delhi neighborhood were littered with scraps of bricks. All shops were closed and almost no women or children were out -- except for two Hindu women brandishing sticks and threatening journalists.

Gangs of Hindus and Muslims have been clashing in the neighborhood, Maujpur, and surrounding areas since Sunday, killing at least 11 people, including a police officer bashed in the head with a rock.

While President Trump and his host, Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India, discussed geopolitics and lunched together in another part of the capital, thousands of furious residents faced off again, hurling petrol bombs, attacking vehicles, hospitalizing several journalists and drawing more and more police officers and paramilitary troops.

The violence is connected to the continuing protests against India's divisive citizenship law, but this was the first time that the protests have set off major bloodshed between Hindus and Muslims. It is an old and dangerous fault line, and any sign of communal violence raises alarm instantly.

''The situation is volatile and tense,'' said Alok Kumar, a senior police officer. ''It's a mixed neighborhood, and in seconds you can have crowds of tens of thousands. Even a small thing can lead to violence.''

In the Muslim quarters, many people felt victimized and accused Mr. Modi's government of abandoning them. This is a longstanding grievance: that Mr. Modi's governing political party, which is rooted in a Hindu-nationalist worldview, has taken sides and abetted violent religious extremists.

Mr. Modi had choreographed Mr. Trump's visit as a demonstration of India's rising stature on the world stage, seeking to turn the page on months of street protests.

But demonstrations keep breaking out against the citizenship law, which makes it easier for migrants of every significant South Asian religion except Islam to become Indian citizens. Hundreds of thousands of Indian Muslims have protested, joined by students, academics, human rights activists and those worried about the country's direction. Many of them say the new law is a grave threat to India's traditions as a secular and inclusive nation.

Since last year's election handed Mr. Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party another term in power, many Indians feared a resurgence of communal violence, sparked by Hindu triumphalism and Muslim desperation. Until now, however, most of the demonstrations remained peaceful.

Maujpur is a ***working-class*** neighborhood about a half-hour's drive from the center of Delhi. Gray two- and three-story buildings stand along its roads, housing small factories and many migrant workers.

For the past several weeks, Muslim residents, many of them women, have been protesting the citizenship law. On Saturday night, they began to block a major road.

The next day, Kapil Mishra, a local leader from Mr. Modi's political party, showed up. He threatened to mobilize a mob to clear out the protesters. He said he did not want to create trouble while Mr. Trump was visiting, but he warned the police that as soon as Mr. Trump left India on Tuesday night, his followers would clear the streets if the police did not.

Tensions shot up. As Sunday evening approached, gangs of Hindu men and Muslim men began throwing rocks at each other. This quickly degenerated into wider violence, with Hindu residents accusing Muslims of attacking Hindu statues and Muslim residents expressing fear that a Hindu mob was forming to get them.

Shoaib Ahmad, a Muslim businessman who makes a living repairing tires, said his shop was burned down Monday night by a Hindu mob as he stood on the roof of his house.

''All my dreams were destroyed in those flames,'' Mr. Ahmad said.

What made it even worse, he said, was that police officers encouraged the mobs to burn down Muslims' property.

Images circulating on social media showed a group of Hindu men beating a Muslim man with sticks, leaving him on the ground, curled up in a ball and covered in blood.Several Muslim residents in Maujpur and adjacent neighborhoods said that police officers had stood by while they were attacked. In mob lynchings of Muslims in the recent past in other parts of India, many people have made similar accusations against officials in Mr. Modi's party, saying that the police officers under their command did not intervene.

India is about 80 percent Hindu and 14 percent Muslim.

A stretch of highway between Maujpur's Hindu neighborhood and a nearby Muslim-dominated area called Jaffrabad now serves as a no-man's land. It is lined by deserted shops, the asphalt marred by burn marks. Few people dare to walk through here.

Several police officers conceded that they felt more comfortable deployed in the Hindu crowd that had gathered at one end of the buffer zone than with the Muslims massed at the other. While the Muslim crowd hoisted a big Indian flag, the Hindu crowd chanted religious slogans.

Members of a Hindu mob, armed with crude weapons, begged the police to let them attack Muslims.

''Give us permission, that's all you need to do,'' one mob leader said. ''You just stand by and watch. We will make sure you don't get hurt. We'll settle the score.'' Then he used a slur to refer to Muslims.

This kind of communal violence has left a lasting mark on Mr. Modi's legacy. In 2002, when he was the chief minister of Gujarat State, sectarian riots left more than 1,000 people dead -- almost 800 of them Muslims killed by Hindu mobs.

He and his state government were accused of quietly ordering the police to stand by as the violence raged. He has denied those accusations, and in 2012, an investigative panel for the Supreme Court found no evidence to charge him. But until he won the post of prime minister in 2014, he was banned from entering the United States because of the suspicion hanging over him.

This week, Delhi police officials, who ultimately report to Mr. Modi's home minister, Amit Shah, said they were determined to keep the Hindu and Muslim mobs apart. Mr. Kumar, the police official, said he was trying to organize a peace march between the two sides, but by nightfall that was nowhere close to happening. Mr. Shah said in a statement that the violence had been spontaneous, and he appealed for calm.

But the hatred on the streets was heavy. Several Hindu men said they felt Muslims did not belong in India.

''Why should they?'' asked Rakesh Sharma, one of the Hindu men who had taken it upon themselves to chase outsiders from their neighborhood. ''The Muslims have other countries they can go to, like Syria or Nigeria. They need to get out of India.''

Many Muslims feared that once Mr. Trump left India, the violence would get even worse.

''It's a little quiet because Trump is here,'' said Mohammed Tahir, a rickshaw driver. ''Their side is scared to give the prime minister a bad name.''

''But as soon as Trump leaves,'' he said, ''they will attack. They want to uproot us. But we won't let that happen. We were born here, we live here, this country is as much ours as theirs -- and if we need to, we will all die here, together.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/25/world/asia/new-delhi-hindu-muslim-violence.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/25/world/asia/new-delhi-hindu-muslim-violence.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Hindus attacking a Muslim man in New Delhi on Monday. At least 11 people have been killed in clashes since Sunday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DANISH SIDDIQUI/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** February 26, 2020

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[***The Thread***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60BF-G7S1-JBG3-64CD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 12, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MM; Column 0; Magazine Desk; Pg. 7

**Length:** 694 words

**Body**

Readers respond to the 6.28.20 issue.

RE: WHAT IS OWED

Nikole Hannah-Jones wrote the cover story on the debt that America owes its Black citizens.

The most powerful article on race that I have ever read! As an elder white woman raised in overwhelmingly white small towns in upstate New York, I had no idea of the ever-present and systematic discrimination going on throughout our country. As quoted in the article, ''Americans are largely unaware of the striking persistence of racial inequality in the United States,'' I admit, I am one of those who naïvely believed that ''racial oppression has been overcome ... and that racial equality has largely been achieved.'' My eyes have been opened. Although I believe I am not racist, I can see that my ignorance and acceptance of that naïve belief has contributed to racism. I will never think the same and will do whatever I can to help make the changes that are necessary so that truly all people are treated equally. Joanna Conde, Peoria, Ariz.

I applaud Nikole Hannah-Jones for thoughtfully explaining the reasons the federal government needs to make restitution to African-Americans. I learned so much from this article and thank Ms. Hannah-Jones for a cogent argument. I, for one, hope this goes beyond study and a plan is implemented into law to start the restitution process. Iris Adams, Andover, Mass.

Nikole Hannah-Jones has once again ripped off the body bandage, and it hurts like hell. After 50 years of the decline of Rust Belt America, ***working-class*** whites channeled their volcanic rage into the election. Can we imagine how much rage must boil within the souls of those dispossessed by 400 years of racism? I'm furious that this has been built on my behalf over centuries to the exclusion of others, but I'm also just as angry at myself that I've failed to see the actual extent of what has been hiding in plain sight. The enormity of setting ourselves on the right path feels overwhelming. But failure to do so feels like utter ruination. Dixie Reinhardt, New York

RE: THE QUANTUM MECHANIC

Bob Henderson wrote about the Italian physicist Angelo Bassi.

In 1988, I created a theory that will be tested by experiments reported on in this article. I named it ''Continuous Spontaneous Localization'' (C.S.L.). It provides a description of what happens in nature (as opposed to standard quantum mechanics' description of the probabilities of what might happen). Since my college days, I had been bothered by a singular fl aw in the otherwise spectacularly successful quantum theory. In the mid-1970s, I found a way to modify Schrödinger's equation, but I recognized that my theory had two problems. In 1986, Giancarlo Ghirardi, Alberto Rimini and Tullio Weber found an alternative approach they called ''Spontaneous Localization'' (S.L.). Two of their ideas helped me solve my problems, and I named my new theory C.S.L. in homage to their work. Because it is a diff erent theory than standard quantum theory, C.S.L. gives diff erent predictions. Remarkably, for 30 years it has neither been experimentally refuted nor verified. Promising experiments are what the article is about. Philip Pearle, Hamilton College, Clinton, N.Y.

I know that few people in the world actually care about this subject, which made fi nding this article in The Times Magazine so much more wonderful. After writing my dissertation in quantum fi eld theory in 1991, I quit and never looked back: It is a mathematics that is astoundingly accurate but philosophically repugnant. And half-dead cats are just the beginning. This article gives hope that people are actually looking for a more coherent model for how the universe really works. Charles Joseph Albert, San Jose, Calif.

RE: GRETCHEN WHITMER Jonathan Mahler profi led the governor of Michigan. As a lifelong Michigan resident, I want to thank you for this thorough, well-researched piece on Governor Whitmer and the situations our state (and many others) face. These governors are having to make once-in-a-lifetime decisions in the face of unprecedented times. I'd rather have Whitmer err on the side of being too cautious than not cautious enough. Erin, Plymouth, Mich.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/11/pageoneplus/12rex-mag.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/11/pageoneplus/12rex-mag.html)

**Load-Date:** July 12, 2020

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[***War of Yard Signs Erupts in Region Biden Calls Home***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60N0-06P1-JBG3-61F2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 21, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1443 words

**Byline:** By Trip Gabriel

**Body**

In a visit to Pennsylvania hours before Joe Biden's nomination speech, President Trump sought to undermine the former vice president's Scranton roots, saying he had ''abandoned'' the state.

OLD FORGE, Pa. -- In the ***working-class*** county where Joseph R. Biden Jr. spent his childhood, a river of yard signs were at war on Moosic Road: Trump vs. Biden.

''I love what he's doing,'' Mary Vender, a hair stylist, said of the president. She came to the door from her kitchen where she was baking cannoli for a picnic on Thursday in honor of President Trump, who was scheduled to speak down the street at a building supply company. ''I think he's really for the country, for our people,'' she said. ''He's getting our jobs back.''

A neighbor, Sherri Hudson, complained that lawn signs for Mr. Biden, whom she supports, were being snatched out of yards. ''Everybody is so angry,'' said Ms. Hudson. ''I think it's because of the president. He divides the country with his hostile remarks.''

To many strategists, Pennsylvania is the most crucial battleground of 2020, and Northeast Pennsylvania, with its density of white ***working-class*** voters, is especially pivotal. It is set up for a turf war between the native son who calls himself ''middle-class Joe'' and the incumbent president who appeals to the grievances of white voters over immigration, protests against police and other culture-war issues.

Mr. Trump traveled here on Thursday, which just happened to be the day Mr. Biden would later accept the presidential nomination. It was the latest stop in the don't-forget-about-me-tour of battleground states the president was conducting during the Democratic National Convention, after trips to Arizona, Wisconsin and Iowa.

Mr. Trump's attempt at political taunting was a reminder that his surprise victory in Pennsylvania in 2016 was made possible by the utter collapse of the Democratic ticket in the region where Mr. Biden was born and spent his childhood, once a party stronghold.

The president sought to undermine Mr. Biden's claim to Scranton roots and values, since his family had moved to Delaware as a boy after his father lost his job. ''The Scranton stuff,'' Mr. Trump scoffed, ''that's why I figured I'd come here and explain to you one thing, but I think you people know it better than I do: He left. He abandoned Pennsylvania.''

Both Lackawanna County, home to Scranton, and neighboring Luzerne County twice supported Barack Obama, then saw a 55,000-vote swing to Mr. Trump in 2016, larger than his entire statewide winning margin.

If Mr. Biden is to win the state, Democrats say he can't just rely on well-educated suburbanites defecting from the Republican Party and on liberals in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

''That was what people like me thought was enough in 2016 and we were wrong,'' said Senator Bob Casey Jr., a Democrat who is also a Scranton native. ''We can't afford to be wrong again.''

He and other Democrats said Mr. Biden must also make inroads into rural and small-city counties where Mr. Trump is popular, especially in Northeast Pennsylvania.

Mr. Casey said that in his view, the evidence was clear that Mr. Biden would do better than Hillary Clinton had in 2016. He cited an internal poll he conducted in June in which the former vice president was strongly outperforming Mrs. Clinton in the 16-county Scranton media market.

But Lance Stange, the chair of the Republican Party of Lackawanna County, predicted Mr. Trump would do even better here this year, citing the lack of a Biden field office in Scranton and more newly registered Republicans than Democrats in the county.

''If Joe Biden doesn't even have an office in Scranton, do I think he's going to pay any attention to the heartland of Pennsylvania?'' he said. ''There's zero enthusiasm for the Democrats or their candidates. They're hemorrhaging voters.''

A new Morning Call/Muhlenberg College poll of the state released Thursday showed Northeast Pennsylvania was Mr. Trump's strongest region, where he led Mr. Biden 61 percent to 28 percent.

Statewide, Mr. Biden has an edge of 6.4 percentage points in an average of public polls, a tightening of the race since early summer.

One reason for his growing lead, the surveys suggested, is that Mr. Biden is more well liked than Mrs. Clinton was by voters. Fifty percent of Pennsylvania voters have a favorable view of Mr. Biden, according to a New York Times/Siena College Poll in June. That is notably stronger than the 42 percent of voters with a favorable view of Mrs. Clinton in exit polls of the state four years ago.

It partly explains why Mr. Trump, who is doing little to grow support beyond his fervid base, is trying to drive up enmity for Mr. Biden through scorched-earth attacks, in order to depress turnout for him.

Old Forge, a town where Italian immigrants arrived a century ago to work in coal mines, long since closed, is best known today for a style of rectangular pizza. Mr. Trump's promise in 2016 to stop undocumented immigration, restore factory jobs and to take on China resonated deeply with the area's white voters, as it did across other industrial states.

Calling Mr. Biden ''no friend of Pennsylvania'' on Thursday, the president charged that Mr. Biden's support for trade deals as a senator had taken a disastrous toll, while he distorted Mr. Biden's climate plan to claim it would end drilling for oil and gas.

Mr. Biden visited a metalworks factory near Scranton last month to lay out a New Deal-style plan for economic recovery from the virus, promising to create five million manufacturing and innovation jobs across the country. His advisers consider Mr. Trump's advantage with voters on jobs and the economy to be Mr. Biden's greatest vulnerability.

Republicans have begun to narrow a historic gap with Democrats in registered voters in Lackawanna County. Since November of last year, Republicans added 2,469 registered voters, versus 459 new registered Democrats. The Democratic brand is so tarnished locally that Mayor Paige Gebhardt Cognetti of Scranton, a former official in the Obama administration, ran last November as an independent.

''It does surprise me that so many people have registered that way,'' said Ms. Cognetti, who endorsed Mr. Biden. Referring to the pandemic and record unemployment of 15.3 percent in Lackawanna County, she added, ''To me the Democrats are the party that is going to get us through this crisis.''

Back on Moosic Road, Anthony Spano had adorned a goose lawn ornament with a patriotic outfit to welcome Mr. Trump. ''I love him,'' he said of the president. Insisting he was not ''being a fanboy,'' he cited the pre-Covid economy, when unemployment reached its lowest in 50 years, as well as Mr. Trump's efforts to close the borders to undocumented immigrants.

''I don't dislike immigrants,'' Mr. Spano, a 63-year-old disabled truck mechanic, added. ''My parents were immigrants. My grandfather came over in 1906 from Italy and went to World War I. These Mexicans coming in here, they're not going to fight for this country. They don't even want to speak English.''

Not far away, Marygrace Vadala had a small Biden sign at the home where she had grown up, and where her mother, a Trump supporter, had lived before her death in May, at 82, from Covid-19.

A registered nurse in Lackawanna County and a Republican, Ms. Vadala said she had tried to convince her mother that the president was not a good leader.

''As a nurse, when people first started getting Covid, I turned to the president for leadership,'' she said. ''And after listening to him for two or three days, I thought, 'Oh my gosh.' His press conferences just seemed like rallies to get him re-elected. Like, this isn't about you. This is about the people that you're serving.''

She said her mother had gone to Zumba classes and walked three miles every day before contracting the virus.

''The first thing I did after she passed away and we started cleaning up the house was take the Trump sign and put it over my knee and throw it out for garbage,'' she said.

Asked what she would say to Mr. Trump if she had the chance during his visit, she choked up. While she composed herself, her husband, Joe Vadala, a high school geography teacher sitting beside her on the house's porch, jumped in.

''I know what I would say: 'Can't you put your pride aside and listen to other people?''' he said. ''That's what leaders do. They take it all in and then make a decision. That's what Joe Biden is going to do.''

Ms. Vadala's cousin, Mary Grace McHale, was listening from behind a screen door.

''Lackawanna County is going to go to the mattresses for Biden,'' she said.

**Graphic**

PHOTO: President Trump getting pizza near Scranton, Pa., during a day of courting voters in Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s hometown on Thursday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 25, 2020

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[***The Psychic Contortions of the Black Mogul-Entertainer; The Money Issue***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6556-GFH1-DXY4-X067-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 5, 2022 Tuesday 13:34 EST

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**Section:** MAGAZINE

**Length:** 1840 words

**Byline:** Blair McClendon

**Highlight:** Black billionaires are rare, and a disproportionate number of them are performers. What does that much wealth do to your art?

**Body**

To hear more audio stories from publications like The New York Times, [*download Audm for iPhone or Android*](https://www.audm.com/?utm_source=nytmag&amp;utm_medium=embed&amp;utm_campaign=empire_state_mind_mcclendon).

The story is so good it hurts to hear. In an era of stupefying inequality, one of the most famous members of the upper class is a former drug dealer from a notorious public-housing project. He switched the product and rode CD sales to a new ZIP code. He went from nobody to somebody to a fixture in public consciousness who hangs out with a former president. If you’ve been rapping along with Jay-Z since “Reasonable Doubt,” or maybe even his feature on the early Jaz-O single “Hawaiian Sophie,” you’d be forgiven for seeing that star scream across the sky and thinking his song was right: There’s nothing you can’t do.

But when the force of his flow isn’t in your ears, what he did seems impossible once again. He is not just rich; he is, [*according to Forbes, a billionaire.*](https://www.forbes.com/sites/maddieberg/2021/03/04/billionaire-rapper-entrepreneur-jay-zs-net-worth-jumps-40-with-sales-of-streaming-service-tidal-champagne-brand/?sh=27508a60cc2c) Rappers aren’t supposed to make that much money. For starters, part of the job is knowing how to spend it, and Jay-Z has done plenty of that. But also, rappers, like athletes, tend to have short careers — the genre reinvents itself too quickly for elder statesmen to hang on. And it is a cutthroat business. Get rich or die trying is the injunction for this heady mix of the mostly male, mostly Black, cocksure young musicians rehearsing punch lines in the nation’s ghettos, where making it very well might be a matter of survival. It is a dreamer’s music, by necessity. But more than four decades into the genre’s reign, there are levels now. Some artists get paid. Others acquire capital.

This is an uncomfortable situation. According to a recent survey conducted by [*the Federal Reserve, the median family wealth for Black households is $24,100.*](https://www.federalreserve.gov/econres/notes/feds-notes/disparities-in-wealth-by-race-and-ethnicity-in-the-2019-survey-of-consumer-finances-20200928.htm) (The median white household has nearly eight times that.) Somewhere in that data set are eight Black American billionaires, at least according to the Forbes list. Whether your politics lead you to believe that these eight are inspirations or a problem, the last several centuries of history might lead you to ask how it is even possible they exist. Four of them — Oprah Winfrey, Jay-Z, Tyler Perry and Kanye West — made their names as entertainers. (There’s also Rihanna, who is a resident of the U.S. but not a citizen.) Rapper, as an occupation, appears more frequently on this short list than an Ivy League education does.

It is a strange fact of this country’s economic system that the most common way for Black people to become obscenely wealthy is to first become obscenely famous. Among other things, this means that much of their net worth is tied to the value of their public personas in ways that do not hold true for other billionaires. Whatever you think of Stephen A. Schwarzman, Miriam Adelson or even Bill Gates, their wealth is untethered to their Q Scores. Of course there are outliers. Elon Musk does relish playing to the crowd as the enfant terrible of auto manufacturing, generating an insulating admiration from his fans, but Kanye and Jay-Z are truly in a bind.

For as long as it has existed, rap was, or was supposed to be, the crafted but splenetic outpouring of the dispossessed. At the same time, it has been about a life that most of its listeners cannot lead, but it held on, however tenuously, to its lower-class roots. Jay-Z always rapped as if he had the planet in his palm, even when it was really just a few blocks in Brooklyn. Over the years, he really did gain the whole world. And now a globally popular form of ***working-class*** youth music has, as its most powerful representatives, a pair of billionaires in their 40s and 50s. It has not been an easy balance to strike.

Entertainers occupy a curious position where the lines between worker and owner sometimes blur. Rappers are signed to labels and then often open their own. Some of these labels collapse, often in a wave of recriminations about shady business practices. The contracts can control artists’ entire output, leaving them almost entirely dependent on the label to actually make something of their labor. Maximize revenue, cut labor costs. That, more than all the drug dealing said to take place, is the business world that produces many of these rappers. And they have, as often as not, leaned into this ethos. When they promise you that they’re reciting what they know, it is not really a reference to some social truth ripped from the depths of poor, Black neighborhoods. What they know is capital: What it is to have none, what it is to get a taste, what it takes to try to make peace with winding up on the other side of that divide.

From the beginning, Jay-Z was a businessman. His debut album was released on the auspiciously named Roc-A-Fella Records, which he founded with two friends, Kareem Burke and Damon Dash. It made sense to have a piece of the action, because he helped popularize Mafioso rap, which took the bleak air of street-corner hustling and gave it the baroque mystique of gangster films. If there had not been a Black James Cagney or Francis Ford Coppola, there was at least a Shawn Carter. But the business world is brutal, inside and outside the law.

At its peak in the ’00s, Roc-A-Fella featured a stacked cast: Just Blaze on production; the Philadelphia icons Beanie Sigel, Peedi Crakk and Freeway; the sprawling Dipset crew in Harlem; a young producer from Chicago named Kanye West. When Cam’ron appeared on the show “Rap City” in an oversize pink T-shirt, counting off a large pile of bills while freestyling that he’d “seen all islands, Cayman to Rikers,” it seemed unfathomable that the Roc era would ever end. But in a few years, Def Jam bought out the label’s founding partners and appointed Jay as the umbrella corporation’s president. Fights over shelved albums, loyalty, blocked promotions and due credit broke up what had looked like a street family.

This led to a peculiar situation in which boardroom drama spilled out in the form of diss tracks by Def Jam artists aimed at their employer’s lead executive. Roc-A-Fella eventually folded. But still, to this day, Jay-Z owes much of his image as a business magnate to the dynastic sheen his labelmates gave “the Roc,” not to mention the marketers, graphic designers and interns that made them icons of New York street swagger.

Jay diversified his portfolio in the years after that. He has a stake in Oatly, two separate highly valued liquor companies — Armand de Brignac Champagne and D’Ussé Cognac — several homes, the streaming platform Tidal, a club near Madison Square and an expansive art collection. If on his debut he spoke a little beyond his means when he said he was “well connected,” he has made it true. It is hard to think of a door he cannot open. Even as he has outgrown what made him Jay-Z, that project remains central to his business. He is the best rapper alive, the entrepreneur who made it out of the projects, the kingpin. The albums remind you why the Cognac is worth so much money.

This situation is not unique. In the entertainment world, people must become corporations if they want to become truly wealthy. High-profile singers, athletes, actors and so on often make their real money from endorsement deals rather than their day jobs. What separates the billionaires from their peers is that they turned endorsements into equity. Michael Jordan gets a percentage of Nike’s Jordan brand revenue. Kanye, who owns the Yeezy brand outright, has major deals with Adidas and Gap. Winfrey and Perry have sprawling media concerns. Rihanna’s Fenty Beauty is a subsidiary of the LVMH luxury conglomerate.

Many of these businesses could keep running without their famed figureheads, but the sheen would dissipate somewhat. Dell does not sell its computers by trading on the fact that it and its founder share a name. But without Kanye’s imprimatur, it’s hard to imagine Yeezy’s moon-boot look becoming a default sneaker silhouette. Fenty, by contrast, seems to have capitalized on a real gap in the market by broadening the available shades for foundation and concealer. Still, the entertainer-billionaire is as much the product as the shoe or concealer up for sale. From the outside looking in, this seems like a shaky foundation for a fortune so vast. Stars lose their luster all the time. It’s part of their appeal.

On “The Story of O.J.,” from his latest album, “4:44,” Jay-Z raps about the psychic drama of successful Black Americans. In the animated video, his character tells his therapist that he failed to invest in Dumbo real estate early and missed out on a 1,250 percent return. Later he explains that art he bought for $1 million appreciated in value and is now worth 8. The song weaves back and forth between an examination of racial stereotypes and a guidebook to gaining freedom through asset ownership.

You could hear Jay-Z, over time, growing more comfortable with his newfound status. On “The Black Album,” he rapped, “I can’t help the poor if I’m one of them, so I got rich and gave back, to me that’s the win-win.” It’s a defensive sentiment. The poor do help one another; there is often no other choice. That song is called “Moment of Clarity” — but nothing seems very clear at all. All the old signifiers, the ones linking public prominence and political progress, are slipping. They have to be reasserted from the top down. “What’s better than one billionaire? Two. Especially if they from the same hue as you,” Jay-Z rhymed on “4:44.” The ghetto’s music is starting to sound like prosperity gospel. Rap is relatable because the fan embodies the rapper. The “you” is rarely the listener, rather an invitation to adopt a new “I.” That “I” might get high, duck, dive, sling, get shot at and shoot back. But who is this “I” who accumulates such an immense sum of money, he starts to see things from the other side while insisting we’re still the same? The hue tells me nothing about what you’ve become.

For once, through drive and circumstance, a few Black artists actually stand to be the main beneficiaries of the popularity of Black culture. On paper that might be progress. But two things remain clear: Black art sells, and wealth collects. Money pools in rooms that remain hard to get into. Years ago, Forbes magazine organized a meeting between Jay-Z and Warren Buffett, treating the rapper like the heir apparent. They both spoke about the role of chance. Buffett talked at length about being white, male and born in the U.S. at the right time. It was the discourse of what we would now call “privilege,” which feels like an understatement when talking about one of the wealthiest men alive. When Jay-Z spoke, he told a story about a nearly inseparable friend of his who was arrested during a sting operation. Jay-Z happened to be out of the country for an early recording date. His friend was incarcerated for over a decade. That’s luck, the vicious kind that fortunes are made of.

Blair McClendon is a writer, an editor and a filmmaker in New York. His writing has appeared in n+1, The New Republic and The New Yorker.

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY RYAN HASKINS; GETTY IMAGES, SHUTTERSTOCK) (MM29; MM31)

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[***The Brutal Truth of Boris Johnson’s Conservative Party***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64R1-N6R1-DXY4-X42T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION; international-world

**Length:** 1791 words

**Byline:** Andrew Marr

**Highlight:** This may be a British story, but the Conservatives’ decision on Johnson’s fate will resonate among many political parties across the democratic world.

**Body**

LONDON — British Conservatives, who have ruled the country for longer than any other party in recent history, are in an agonized, self-flagellating panic. Should they get rid of Boris Johnson, their populist leader, whose deceit and breaking of lockdown rules have infuriated so much of the country and embarrassed his party? Or stick with a man who, so far, has kept them in power?

This may be a British story but the Tories’ choice will resonate among many political parties across the democratic world. As American voters learned with Donald Trump in 2020, the choice of keeping or replacing Mr. Johnson — and the matter is now on a knife’s edge in London — will affect not just the future of the Conservative Party but Britain’s standing in the world. For the party, it’s about being respected again as a coherent ideological force, led with decency. Essentially, it’s about self-respect. In terms of Britain’s standing internationally, the question is whether the Conservatives are ready to get rid of a leader who has done a proud country so much damage.

The damage done to the Tories is clear enough in opinion polls. Following Mr. Johnson’s 80-seat general election victory in 2019, and the strong support he maintained afterward, even during the grimmer moments of the pandemic, recent polling now shows the Tories lagging behind the Labour Party by anything between three and 14 points. For many Conservative lawmakers, those are serious tea leaves, and represent the possible loss of their seats.

But this goes nowhere near capturing the grief and shame convulsing much of this fundamentally traditionalist party. The scandals over boozy parties during the Covid lockdown, and the lying that followed them, ripped into the Tories’ sense of themselves as essentially decent followers of “the people’s priorities.”

In defending himself, Mr. Johnson compounded the problem by trying to smear the Labour leader, Keir Starmer, by association with a notorious pedophile, Jimmy Savile. In a devastating rebuke to Mr. Johnson, his long-serving and close adviser Munira Mirza publicly resigned, telling him “there was no fair or reasonable basis” for what he said, and calling on him to make a proper apology. “It is not too late for you,” she said, “but, I’m sorry to say, it is too late for me.”

Her pain has been widely shared by senior Tories. [*Ruth Davidson*](http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/), the former and highly successful Scottish Conservative leader, broke down in tears when she was asked on television about Mr. Johnson’s behavior. [*Charles Walker*](http://channel4.com/Cathy%20Newman), one of the leaders of the Conservatives’ backbenchers in Parliament, said he would leave politics, telling a news program there was “a lot of grief and pain” in Britain, which could be assuaged only by Mr. Johnson stepping aside. A previous Tory leadership contender, the former diplomat, soldier and writer Rory Stewart, tweeted about “the sheer tawdry Trumpian shabbiness of the whole thing — it is difficult to see how much more of this the party or our political system can survive.”

But the brutal truth is that Conservatives shamefully squinted past Mr. Johnson’s very-well-known flaws as long as he was doing well at the polls. For many years, in journalism and politics, Mr. Johnson has shown a cheerful contempt for ordinary norms, expectations and rules, leaving a scattering of scrapes, denunciations, broken friendships and irate foes behind him. These range from the comparatively trivial — a blizzard of parking tickets — to the deeply serious, such as his 2019 attempt to truncate Parliament’s sittings during the bitter battle for Brexit, an act that drew the queen into political controversy and that was later ruled unlawful and void by the Supreme Court.

Alongside this, Mr. Johnson has always shown a never-surrender determination. The instinct runs through him in great issues and small ones. I chaired a big public debate between him and the classical historian Mary Beard about which was the greater civilization — ancient Greece or ancient Rome. Mr. Johnson entranced a several-thousand strong crowd with his account of Greek civilization. But he was then verbally slaughtered, sliced and diced by Ms. Beard, and he lost the debate. There was supposed to be a dinner afterward. Mr. Johnson didn’t show. One family member who did told me Mr. Johnson would be padding around central London like a wounded bear — he hated to lose.

Both of Mr. Johnson’s Tory predecessors, Prime Ministers David Cameron and Theresa May — the latter attacked him publicly in the Commons last week — seem to largely agree that Mr. Johnson’s record should have ruled him out for the top job. So why did the Boris Johnson premiership happen?

The obvious answer is because he won so many millions of votes — and, like Mr. Trump in 2016, he performed well in some places that the left usually carried. Alongside the evasiveness and clowning, Mr. Johnson has extraordinary charisma and a professional comic’s sense of timing. He is exceptionally clever, including emotionally: He projects the subtle suggestion of underlying personal pain, an appeal for understanding, even love, that so many authoritarian leaders have shared. And he understands the rhythms of political life. He exploited the fierce emotions caused by the referendum to leave the European Union, and then in 2019 he won the passionate support of voters who found conventional politicians pious, dreary and remote.

But the more he embodied a cult leader, the more the Conservatives allowed him to distort traditional norms on which Britain, like so many older democracies, has relied. Throughout the 20th century, political competition in most major democratic countries depended upon big, vaguely ideas-based political parties. They were always riven by internal splits, and they were baggy coalitions of interest, but there was essential agreement about the size of the state, taxes, liberty and economics.

In younger democracies, political parties have more often been like machines for leaders. Populism, or the cult of the angry leader, has dressed itself in conventional party clothing in countries such as Zimbabwe, Argentina and India.

Now something similar is arriving in the West. Mr. Johnson is not, and never was, “Britain’s Trump” — he is much more liberal, a believer in the virtues of some immigration and a consistent believer in the reality of man-made global warming. He is, most of the time, less menacing toward his opponents. He prefers to joke rather than to goad. But he has been like Mr. Trump in his readiness to bend rules, and bend the truth, to gain and hold power; and like Mr. Trump in his almost mystical connection with voters who had previously thought themselves shunned by the political establishment.

Democracies with leaders who possess a cult of personality have been spreading around the world, whether in India with Narendra Modi, Hungary with Viktor Orban or Brazil with Jair Bolsonaro. They depend on a more passionate identification between voters and the single leader, on whom hope, prosperity and security depend. It produces a more overheated political atmosphere — at times more the mood of an evangelical chapel than of a town-hall meeting.

The great weakness is that when the leader fails, or is exposed as fallible, everything fails. Britain is being mocked from Moscow to Washington; across the European Union, cartoonists, satirists and commentators delight in ridiculing Mr. Johnson.

Conservatives now ask themselves who they really are. Socially liberal as Mr. Johnson was when he was London’s mayor or socially conservative like many of their new ***working-class*** voters? Defenders of elite bankers and big corporations — many top Conservatives come from business — or champions of their new, poorer, post-Brexit Tory voters, angry about economic unfairness?

For decades under successive leaders, as different as Margaret Thatcher, Mrs. May or Mr. Cameron, theirs had been a self-confident party, based on support for business and the projection of a strong security identity abroad. Conservatives were hostile to high taxation and an overmighty state. But Brexit, the arrival into the fold of so many former Labour voters and the Johnson style of government have shaken all of this up.

One former minister under Mr. Johnson told me last week that he thought the Tories were becoming more like Labour under the socialist leader Harold Wilson of the 1960s and ’70s. So, are they the high-spending, pugnaciously patriotic party of Mr. Johnson and his new voters, a party of fiscal rectitude and small government … or what?

This too should feel familiar. The victory of Mr. Trump bent the Republican Party into strange shapes. His behavior, and ultimately the storming of Congress, saw America derided around the world — and diminished for a while the soft power of the West. Voters in democracies with several generations’ experience can be as susceptible, it turns out, to a cult leader as voters anywhere else.

Luckily, many democracies infected by the contagion of populism can still cure themselves. In John Kenneth Galbraith’s phrase, the countervailing powers — in this case, parliamentary accountability and a free media — can limit and even reverse the damage. The 2020 U.S. election, the congressional committee on Jan. 6 and attempts at electoral system reforms have begun the process in the United States; official inquiries and the looming pressure of the potential Conservative Party leadership contest can do the same in Britain.

If Mr. Johnson goes, most of the likely replacements are people of a very different cast of character: the impeccably polite chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, for instance, and the experienced former foreign secretary, Jeremy Hunt. A Britain under someone other than Mr. Johnson would feel, remarkably quickly, like a very different place.

Would a new prime minister be able to heal the party after the alpha male antics of Boris Johnson? Has British politics become addicted to strident, provocative rhetoric and the emotional appeal of the big leader? Or is there, perhaps, even at this late moment, a way of walking back? That’s the dilemma confronting Conservative lawmakers right now. The answer they choose will echo far beyond the Tory Party itself.

Andrew Marr is a contributing Opinion writer. He is a veteran British journalist and political analyst, and was a longtime television and radio host for the BBC.

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[***With Johnson, the Conservatives Are Facing a Brutal Truth***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64R7-YGB1-JBG3-62J3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 8, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 19

**Length:** 1794 words

**Byline:** By Andrew Marr

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**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY SIMON DAWSON/POOL/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES)

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[***The Penknife: A Thanksgiving Memory***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6458-4R51-DXY4-X2SX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 25, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1310 words

**Byline:** By Rafael Alvarez

**Body**

An engineer should always carry a penknife in his pocket, my father said. Not the marvel of a Swiss Army knife; just a small, two-blade tool for whatever might come along.

My father, Manuel Rafael Alvarez, a lifetime seafarer, held a chief engineer's license for inland waterways and deep sea. As a teenager, he sailed to South America on Bethlehem Steel ore ships and spent most of his career on tugboats along the Baltimore waterfront.

It was from my old man's drinking buddies that I fashioned some of the characters -- particularly Horseface Pakusa -- who worked the docks in Season 2 of ''The Wire.'' Had it occurred to me, I would have had the Horse tell a greenhorn, ''A man should always carry a penknife.''

But I never gave much thought to Dad's penknife (about two inches long, sided with plastic made to look like wood) until last Thanksgiving.

He often used it to remove the foil around the top of a wine bottle and at this time of year to score chestnuts -- ''castañas,'' he'd say with a smile -- before boiling them. After they'd cooled, Dad peeled them with the tiny knife and passed the meat of the fruit to one of us.

Last year, I cooked the Thursday feast, enough to feed a half-dozen or so even though the guest list was just Mom and Dad and me. Eating had become a chore for them, but I was determined to put on the dog.

The pandemic had shut down other meals I would have been invited to (tables from Pittsburgh to Brooklyn to Philadelphia), and though my parents' house was Covid-free, Dad was sick, much worse than we knew.

In the morning, my son (named for my father as my father named me for his old man) helped get Dad to my brother Danny's home about a half-mile away for a quick visit. Although it took both of us to guide him from the car to the patio, we were cheered by coffee in bright sunshine and the crisp autumn air of Maryland. And we were together. Other than trips to the hospital, this would be the last time Dad left the house.

Back home, he settled into the screened-in porch, ostensibly to watch football though he didn't seem to care if the TV was on or not. Mom, herself disabled by pulmonary disease, took a nap and I began putting the meal together.

I opened a pint of Chincoteague oysters for the stuffing. My father, a fine cook whether at home or in the galley of the harbor tug America, often fried double-breaded oysters on Sunday afternoons in winter. He also made a good oyster stew, having learned as a newlywed from his father-in-law.

I'd gotten the oysters the day before from an old-timer who sells seafood out of a truck on the highway, right near the pharmacy I'd been going to at least once a week to get prescriptions for my parents. In time, that would include liquid morphine for Dad.

Spearing a fat one from the jar, I walked it out to Dad on a fork. Houston was pummeling the Lions in Detroit but Pop wasn't paying much attention. He was mostly staring into the backyard of the brick rancher he'd purchased with a union-negotiated salary in 1966. Back then, he was half the age that I am now.

Their suburb of Linthicum is less than 10 miles from downtown Baltimore, though well across the fabled ''city line'' that promised a good life to my parents' generation in the old factory neighborhoods. On a quarter-acre along Orchard Road is the dream of a couple of ***working-class*** kids raised during the Great Depression in narrow waterfront rowhouses and married right out of high school.

Dad slurped the oyster like a champ, as though we were back at one of Baltimore's fish markets and it was sliding off the shell, a cold beer in his other hand. I think he did it more to please me than savor an old favorite.

I left him to doze in the chair, putting the turkey in the oven and heading downstairs to take a siesta. In the basement -- my four-day-a-week bedroom on caretaking shifts shared with Danny -- I sleep in the twin bed that was mine when I listened to Frank Zappa (''Hot Rats'') on an eight-track and got high on cheap pot once the folks were asleep.

These days I lie in it and -- instead of nodding off to the bite of Zappa's guitar -- make sure no one upstairs has fallen out of bed.

I'd borrowed a last-minute bay leaf from new neighbors across the backyard, their house owned long ago by a friendly dentist and his wife, good friends and dinner guests of my parents back when I was pretending to be Brooks Robinson in that same backyard. And the meal turned out pretty good.

Most of the trimmings -- mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, stuffing and sauerkraut (an old German Thanksgiving staple in Baltimore) -- were ready to serve at the same time. I'm no chef, but I'd pulled it off.

Mom and Dad were seated at the kitchen table, and I put all of the side dishes in front of them before turning to the stove to carve the turkey. As I sliced, anticipating one of my favorite meals of the year, something caught my eye and I turned to watch.

Dad was using his penknife to slice the foil around the lip of a bottle of Martinelli's Sparkling Red Grape Juice. At first, I thought of putting my hand on his shoulder and taking the knife, saying that I would do it. But that was something I'd never done, so I spared his dignity and allowed myself the pleasure of watching.

Dad always enjoyed a glass of wine with his meals, sometimes two, out of a small blue creamer that decades ago found its way into our home from a forgotten restaurant. He'd lost his taste for vino when he became ill, and so the ''refreshment,'' as he called wine and beer, was Martinelli's.

Before Mom was fitted for dentures, she'd sit before one of her favorite dishes -- sometimes crab cakes or pork chops, often coconut custard pie -- and exclaim, ''Oh boy, oh boy, oh boy!'' before digging in.

And boy, oh boy, the surprise when Dad unscrewed the cap! In his working days, my father witnessed the christening of many ships from the deck of a tugboat. But the bow upon which this bottle streamed was the kitchen.

Sparkling grape juice everywhere!

Did Dad unintentionally shake the bottle before opening? Had he mistaken it for ketchup? Did I jostle the bottle before handing it to him? Sweet and sticky, the juice rained on the food, was pooled under the table, splattered Mom and drenched Dad.

You haven't tasted oyster stuffing until you've had it with a hint of Martinelli's sparkling grape.

In the past, Dad might have cursed mildly and laughed after a moment before saying, ''Ralphie, go grab the mop.'' But he just sat there, shoulders drooping, quietly asking himself what had happened.

Mom and I shared a what-the-hell-you-gonna-do look (rare for a woman who can spot a speck of dirt on the kitchen floor from another room), and I soaked up the mess with bath towels before helping Dad into a clean shirt.

Then I took my parents' hands and we said grace, something our family does whether it's Thanksgiving or not, just enough juice left in the bottle for us to clink glasses, say ''salud'' and have a sip.

Dad died at home from lymphoma of the spleen in the early morning hours of Aug. 8 this year, my daughter's 40th birthday. Along with his wristwatch and fishing hat, the little brown penknife was among things left behind that he touched every day.

Mom asked me if I wanted the knife and I said yes, knowing I'd carry it for just a day or so. I gave it to Danny, who followed our father into the engine room. What am I going to do with a penknife? Sharpen a pencil?

I will be cooking Thanksgiving dinner again this year, a much smaller affair, just me and Mom. I'll borrow the penknife from Danny and take my time cutting away the foil from the Martinelli's bottle.

Rafael Alvarez was a staff writer for HBO's ''The Wire'' and a City Desk reporter at The Baltimore Sun for 20 years. He is the author of the forthcoming ''Don't Count Me Out: The Bruce White Story.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/25/opinion/thanksgiving-penknife.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/25/opinion/thanksgiving-penknife.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sonia Pulido FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 25, 2021

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[***Trump Shows Up in Biden’s Home Region, and a Turf War Begins***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60MT-FMD1-JBG3-6083-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Trip Gabriel

**Highlight:** In a visit to Pennsylvania hours before Joe Biden’s nomination speech, President Trump sought to undermine the former vice president’s Scranton roots, saying he had “abandoned” the state.

**Body**

In a visit to Pennsylvania hours before Joe Biden’s nomination speech, President Trump sought to undermine the former vice president’s Scranton roots, saying he had “abandoned” the state.

OLD FORGE, Pa. — In the ***working-class*** county where [*Joseph R. Biden Jr.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) spent his childhood, a river of yard signs were at war on Moosic Road: Trump vs. Biden.

“I love what he’s doing,” Mary Vender, a hair stylist, said of the president. She came to the door from her kitchen where she was baking cannoli for a picnic on Thursday in honor of [*President Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html), who was scheduled to speak down the street at a building supply company. “I think he’s really for the country, for our people,” she said. “He’s getting our jobs back.”

A neighbor, Sherri Hudson, complained that lawn signs for Mr. Biden, whom she supports, were being snatched out of yards. “Everybody is so angry,” said Ms. Hudson. “I think it’s because of the president. He divides the country with his hostile remarks.”

To many strategists, [*Pennsylvania is the most crucial battleground*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) of 2020, and Northeast Pennsylvania, with its density of white ***working-class*** voters, is especially pivotal. It is set up for a turf war between the native son who calls himself “middle-class Joe” and the incumbent president who appeals to the grievances of white voters over immigration, protests against police and other culture-war issues.

Mr. Trump traveled here on Thursday, which just happened to be the day Mr. Biden would later accept the presidential nomination. It was the latest stop in the don’t-forget-about-me-tour of battleground states the president was conducting during the Democratic National Convention, after trips to Arizona, Wisconsin and Iowa.

Mr. Trump’s attempt at political taunting was a reminder that his surprise victory in Pennsylvania in 2016 was made possible by the utter collapse of the Democratic ticket in the region where Mr. Biden was born and spent his childhood, once a party stronghold.

The president sought to undermine Mr. Biden’s claim to Scranton roots and values, since his family had moved to Delaware as a boy after his father lost his job. “The Scranton stuff,” Mr. Trump scoffed, “that’s why I figured I’d come here and explain to you one thing, but I think you people know it better than I do: He left. He abandoned Pennsylvania.”

Both Lackawanna County, home to Scranton, and neighboring Luzerne County twice supported Barack Obama, then saw a 55,000-vote swing to Mr. Trump in 2016, larger than his entire statewide winning margin.

If Mr. Biden is to win the state, Democrats say he can’t just rely on well-educated suburbanites defecting from the Republican Party and on liberals in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

“That was what people like me thought was enough in 2016 and we were wrong,” said Senator Bob Casey Jr., a Democrat who is also a Scranton native. “We can’t afford to be wrong again.”

He and other Democrats said Mr. Biden must also make inroads into rural and small-city counties where Mr. Trump is popular, especially in Northeast Pennsylvania.

Mr. Casey said that in his view, the evidence was clear that Mr. Biden would do better than Hillary Clinton had in 2016. He cited an internal poll he conducted in June in which the former vice president was strongly outperforming Mrs. Clinton in the 16-county Scranton media market.

But Lance Stange, the chair of the Republican Party of Lackawanna County, predicted Mr. Trump would do even better here this year, citing the lack of a Biden field office in Scranton and more newly registered Republicans than Democrats in the county.

“If Joe Biden doesn’t even have an office in Scranton, do I think he’s going to pay any attention to the heartland of Pennsylvania?” he said. “There’s zero enthusiasm for the Democrats or their candidates. They’re hemorrhaging voters.”

A [*new Morning Call/Muhlenberg College poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) of the state released Thursday showed Northeast Pennsylvania was Mr. Trump’s strongest region, where he led Mr. Biden 61 percent to 28 percent.

Statewide, Mr. Biden has an edge of 6.4 percentage points in [*an average of public polls*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html), a tightening of the race since early summer.

One reason for his growing lead, the surveys suggested, is that Mr. Biden is more well liked than Mrs. Clinton was by voters. Fifty percent of Pennsylvania voters have a favorable view of Mr. Biden, according to a [*New York Times/Siena College Poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) in June. That is notably stronger than the 42 percent of voters with a favorable view of Mrs. Clinton in exit polls of the state four years ago.

It partly explains why Mr. Trump, who is doing little to grow support beyond his fervid base, is trying to drive up enmity for Mr. Biden through scorched-earth attacks, in order to depress turnout for him.

Old Forge, a town where Italian immigrants arrived a century ago to work in coal mines, long since closed, is best known today for a style of rectangular pizza. Mr. Trump’s promise in 2016 to stop undocumented immigration, restore factory jobs and to take on China resonated deeply with the area’s white voters, as it did across other industrial states.

Calling Mr. Biden “no friend of Pennsylvania” on Thursday, the president charged that Mr. Biden’s support for trade deals as a senator had taken a disastrous toll, while he distorted Mr. Biden’s climate plan to claim it would end drilling for oil and gas.

Mr. Biden visited a metalworks factory near Scranton last month to lay out [*a New Deal-style plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) for economic recovery from the virus, promising to create five million manufacturing and innovation jobs across the country. His advisers consider Mr. Trump’s advantage with voters on jobs and the economy to be Mr. Biden’s greatest vulnerability.

Republicans have begun to narrow a historic gap with Democrats in [*registered voters in Lackawanna Count*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html)y. Since November of last year, Republicans added 2,469 registered voters, versus 459 new registered Democrats. The Democratic brand is so tarnished locally that Mayor Paige Gebhardt Cognetti of Scranton, a former official in the Obama administration, ran last November as an independent.

“It does surprise me that so many people have registered that way,” said Ms. Cognetti, who endorsed Mr. Biden. Referring to the pandemic and record unemployment of 15.3 percent in Lackawanna County, she added, “To me the Democrats are the party that is going to get us through this crisis.”

Back on Moosic Road, Anthony Spano had adorned a goose lawn ornament with a patriotic outfit to welcome Mr. Trump. “I love him,” he said of the president. Insisting he was not “being a fanboy,” he cited the pre-Covid economy, when unemployment reached its lowest in 50 years, as well as Mr. Trump’s efforts to close the borders to undocumented immigrants.

“I don’t dislike immigrants,” Mr. Spano, a 63-year-old disabled truck mechanic, added. “My parents were immigrants. My grandfather came over in 1906 from Italy and went to World War I. These Mexicans coming in here, they’re not going to fight for this country. They don’t even want to speak English.”

Not far away, Marygrace Vadala had a small Biden sign at the home where she had grown up, and where her mother, a Trump supporter, had lived before her death in May, at 82, from Covid-19.

A registered nurse in Lackawanna County and a Republican, Ms. Vadala said she had tried to convince her mother that the president was not a good leader.

“As a nurse, when people first started getting Covid, I turned to the president for leadership,” she said. “And after listening to him for two or three days, I thought, ‘Oh my gosh.’ His press conferences just seemed like rallies to get him re-elected. Like, this isn’t about you. This is about the people that you’re serving.”

She said her mother had gone to Zumba classes and walked three miles every day before contracting the virus.

“The first thing I did after she passed away and we started cleaning up the house was take the Trump sign and put it over my knee and throw it out for garbage,” she said.

Asked what she would say to Mr. Trump if she had the chance during his visit, she choked up. While she composed herself, her husband, Joe Vadala, a high school geography teacher sitting beside her on the house’s porch, jumped in.

“I know what I would say: ‘Can’t you put your pride aside and listen to other people?’” he said. “That’s what leaders do. They take it all in and then make a decision. That’s what Joe Biden is going to do.”

Ms. Vadala’s cousin, Mary Grace McHale, was listening from behind a screen door.

“Lackawanna County is going to go to the mattresses for Biden,” she said.

PHOTO: President Trump getting pizza near Scranton, Pa., during a day of courting voters in Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s hometown on Thursday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 21, 2020

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[***Leftists Are Ascendant in Latin America as Key Elections Loom***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64FV-34D1-JBG3-63RP-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Ernesto Londoño, Julie Turkewitz and Flávia Milhorance

**Highlight:** Growing inequality and sputtering economies have helped fuel a wave of leftist victories that may soon extend to Brazil and Colombia.

**Body**

Growing inequality and sputtering economies have helped fuel a wave of leftist victories that may soon extend to Brazil and Colombia.

RIO DE JANEIRO — In the final weeks of 2021, Chile and Honduras voted decisively for leftist presidents to replace leaders on the right, extending a significant, multiyear shift across Latin America.

This year, leftist politicians are the favorites to win presidential elections in Colombia and Brazil, taking over from right-wing incumbents, which would put the left and center-left in power in the six largest economies in the region, stretching from Tijuana to Tierra del Fuego.

Economic suffering, widening inequality, fervent anti-incumbent sentiment and mismanagement of Covid-19 have all fueled a pendulum swing away from the center-right and right-wing leaders who were dominant a few years ago.

The left has promised more equitable distribution of wealth, better public services and vastly expanded social safety nets. But the region’s new leaders face serious economic constraints and legislative opposition that could restrict their ambitions, and restive voters who have been willing to punish whoever fails to deliver.

The left’s gains could buoy China and undermine the United States as they compete for regional influence, analysts say, with a new crop of Latin American leaders who are desperate for economic development and more open to Beijing’s global strategy of offering [*loans and infrastructure investment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/13/business/china-railway-one-belt-one-road-1-trillion-plan.html). The change could also make it harder for the United States to continue isolating authoritarian leftist regimes in Venezuela, Nicaragua and Cuba.

With rising inflation and stagnant economies, Latin America’s new leaders will find it hard to deliver real change on profound problems, said Pedro Mendes Loureiro, a professor of Latin American studies at the University of Cambridge. To some extent, he said, voters are “electing the left simply because it is the opposition at the moment.”

Poverty is at a 20-year high in a region where a short-lived commodities boom had enabled millions to ascend into the middle class after the turn of the century. Several nations now face double-digit unemployment, and [*more than 50 percent*](https://www.cepal.org/en/pressreleases/latin-america-and-caribbean-time-reforms-address-long-standing-challenges-says-new) of workers in the region are employed in the informal sector.

Corruption scandals, dilapidated infrastructure and chronically underfunded health and education systems have eroded faith in leaders and public institutions.

Unlike the early 2000s, when leftists won critical presidencies in Latin America, the new officeholders are saddled by debt, lean budgets, scant access to credit and in many cases, vociferous opposition.

Eric Hershberg, the director of the Center for Latin American and Latino Studies at American University, said the left’s winning streak is born out of widespread indignation.

“This is really about lower-middle-class and ***working-class*** sectors saying, ‘Thirty years into democracy, and we still have to ride a decrepit bus for two hours to get to a bad health clinic,’” Mr. Hershberg said. He cited frustration, anger and “a generalized sense that elites have enriched themselves, been corrupt, have not been operating in the public interest.”

Covid has ravaged Latin America and devastated economies that were already precarious, but the region’s political tilt started before the pandemic.

The first milestone was the election in Mexico of Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who [*won the presidency by a landslide*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/01/world/americas/mexico-election-andres-manuel-lopez-obrador.html) in July 2018. He declared during his election night address: “The state will cease being a committee at the service of a minority and it will represent all Mexicans, poor and rich.”

The next year, voters in Panama elected a left-of-center government, and Argentina’s Peronist movement made a stunning comeback despite its leaders’ legacy of corruption and economic mismanagement. President Alberto Fernández, a university professor, [*celebrated his triumph*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/27/world/americas/argentina-election-results.html) over a conservative incumbent by promising “to build the Argentina we deserve.”

In 2020, Luis Arce trounced conservative rivals [*to become president of Bolivia.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/world/americas/boliva-election-result.html) He vowed to build on the legacy of the former leader Evo Morales, a socialist whose ouster the year before had briefly left the nation in the hands of a right-wing president.

Last April, Pedro Castillo, a provincial schoolteacher, shocked Peru’s political establishment by narrowly defeating the right-wing candidate Keiko Fujimori for the presidency. Mr. Castillo, a political newcomer, railed against elites and presented his life story — an educator who worked in a rural school without running water or a sewage system — as an embodiment of their failings.

In Honduras, Xiomara Castro, a socialist who proposed a system of universal basic income for poor families, [*handily beat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/29/world/americas/honduras-election-xiomara-castro.html) a conservative rival in November to become president-elect.

The [*most recent win*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/19/world/americas/chile-president-election.html) for the left came last month in Chile, where Gabriel Boric, a 35-year-old former student activist, beat a far-right rival by promising to raise taxes on the rich in order to offer more generous pensions and vastly expand social services.

The trend has not been universal. In the past three years, voters in El Salvador, Uruguay and Ecuador have moved their governments rightward. And in Mexico and Argentina last year, left-of-center parties lost ground in legislative elections, undercutting their presidents.

But on the whole, Evan Ellis, a professor of Latin American studies at the U.S. Army War College, said that in his memory there had never been a Latin America “as dominated by a combination of leftists and anti-U.S. populist leaders.”

“Across the region, leftist governments will be particularly willing to work with the Chinese on government-to-government contracts,” he said, and possibly “with respect to security collaboration as well as technology collaboration.”

Jennifer Pribble, a political science professor at the University of Richmond who studies Latin America, said the brutal toll of the pandemic in the region made leftist initiatives such as cash transfers and universal health care increasingly popular.

“Latin American voters now have a keener sense of what the state can do and of the importance of the state engaging in a redistributive effort and in providing public services,” she said. “That shapes these elections, and clearly the left can speak more directly to that than the right.”

In Colombia, where a presidential election is set for May, Gustavo Petro, a leftist former mayor of Bogotá who once belonged to an urban guerrilla group, has held a consistent lead in polls.

Sergio Guzmán, the director of Colombia Risk Analysis, a consulting firm, said Mr. Petro’s presidential aspirations became viable after most fighters from the FARC, a Marxist guerrilla group, laid down their weapons as part of [*a peace deal struck in 2016*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/27/world/americas/colombia-farc-peace-agreement.html). The conflict long dominated Colombian politics, but no more.

“The issue now is the frustration, the class system, the stratification, the haves and have-nots,” he said.

Just before Christmas, Sonia Sierra, 50, stood outside the small coffee shop she runs in Bogotá’s main urban park. Her earnings had plummeted, she said, first amid the pandemic, and then when a community displaced by violence moved into the park.

Ms. Sierra said she was deep in debt after her husband was hospitalized with Covid. Finances are so tight, she recently let go her only employee, a young woman from Venezuela who earned just $7.50 a day.

“So much work and nothing to show for it,” Ms. Sierra she said, singing a verse from a song popular at Christmastime in Colombia. “I’m not crying, but yes, it hurts.”

In neighboring Brazil, rising poverty, inflation and a bungled response to the pandemic have made President Jair Bolsonaro, the far-right incumbent, an underdog in the vote set for October.

Former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, a leftist firebrand who governed Brazil from 2003 to 2010, an era of remarkable prosperity, has built a [*30 percentage point advantage*](https://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2021/12/16/datafolha-lula-tem-59percent-e-bolsonaro-30percent-no-2o-turno-de-2022.ghtml) over Mr. Bolsonaro in a head-to-head matchup, according to a recent poll.

Maurício Pimenta da Silva, 31, an assistant manager at a farming supplies store in the São Lourenço region of Rio de Janeiro state, said that he regretted voting for Mr. Bolsonaro in 2018, and that he intended to support Mr. da Silva.

“I thought Bolsonaro would improve our life in some aspects, but he didn’t,” said Mr. da Silva, a father of four who is no relation to the former president. “Everything is so expensive in the supermarkets, especially meat,” he added, prompting him to take a second job.

With voters facing so much upheaval, moderate candidates are gaining little traction, lamented Simone Tebet, a center-right senator in Brazil who plans to run for president.

“If you look at Brazil and Latin America, we are living in a relatively frightening cycle of extremes,” she said. “Radicalism and populism have taken over.”

Ernesto Londoño and Flávia Milhorance reported from Rio de Janeiro. Julie Turkewitz reported from Bogotá.

PHOTOS: Protesters in Brazil in July held a banner depicting President Jair Bolsonaro as a devil. Former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, a leftist, hopes to oust him.; Homeless Brazilians lining up for food in São Paulo last summer. Rising poverty has hurt Mr. Bolsonaro’s popularity. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAURICIO LIMA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Gabriel Boric, a former student activist, was elected president of Chile last month. He promised to increase pensions and expand social services. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCELO HERNANDEZ/GETTY IMAGES); Xiomara Castro, a socialist, defeated a conservative in the presidential election in Honduras last fall. She proposed giving poor families a basic income. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIELE VOLPE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Reflections On 'The Wire' After 20 Years***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65M7-8GC1-DXY4-X0SP-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Jonathan Abrams

**Body**

David Simon concedes that it takes a special kind of [expletive] to say, ''I told you so.''

''But I can't help it, OK?'' he said recently. ''Nobody enjoys the guy who says, 'I told you so,' but it was organic. Ed and I and then the other writers, as they came on board, we had all been watching some of the same things happen in Baltimore.''

Two decades ago, Simon, a former cops reporter at The Baltimore Sun, joined Ed Burns, a retired Baltimore homicide detective and public-school teacher, to create HBO's ''The Wire.'' Fictitious but sourced from the Baltimore that Simon and Burns inhabited, ''The Wire,'' which premiered on June 2, 2002, introduced a legion of unforgettable characters like the gun-toting, code-abiding Omar Little (played by the late Michael K. Williams) and the gangster with higher aspirations, Stringer Bell (Idris Elba).

They were indelible pieces of a crime show with a higher purpose: to provide a damning indictment of the war on drugs and a broader dissection of institutional collapse, expanding in scope over five seasons to explore the decline of ***working-class*** opportunity and the public education system, among other American civic pillars.

This was not the stuff of hit TV: In real time, the show gained only a small, devoted audience and struggled to avoid cancellation. But over the years, ''The Wire'' became hailed as one of television's greatest shows, even as the systemic decay it depicted became more pronounced in the eyes of its creators.

Burns and Simon went on to collaborate on other high-minded projects for HBO, most recently ''We Own This City,'' a mini-series created by Simon and their fellow ''Wire'' alumnus George Pelecanos, based on the true story of the Baltimore Police Department's corrupt Gun Trace Task Force. In separate interviews, Burns and Simon discussed the legacy of ''The Wire'' -- Burns by phone from his Vermont home and Simon in person in HBO's Manhattan offices -- and why it couldn't be made in the same way today. They also talked about the inspirations for the show and the devastating effect of America's drug policies. These are edited excerpts from those conversations.

Could you have ever imagined ''The Wire'' would have had this kind of staying power two decades later?

ED BURNS The first thing that comes to my mind is that this show will live forever, because what it tries to portray will be around forever. It's just getting worse and worse. That's all. And it's expanding; it's not just an urban thing anymore. It's everywhere.

DAVID SIMON Ed and I in Baltimore, George in Washington, Richard Price in New York -- we'd been seeing a lot of the same dynamics. There were policies, and there were premises that we knew were not going to earn out. They were going to continue to fail. And we were fast becoming a culture that didn't even recognize its own problems, much less solve any of them. So it felt like, ''Let's make a show about this.''

I didn't anticipate the complete collapse of truth, the idea of you can just boldly lie your way to the top. I did not anticipate the political collapse of the country in terms of [Donald] Trump. [The fictitious Baltimore mayor in ''The Wire,'' Tommy Carcetti] is a professional politician. Donald Trump is sui generis. It's hard to even get your head around just how debased the political culture is now because of Trump.

The show seemed to hint at the collapse of truth with the fabricated serial killer story line in the final season, and how the media ran with it.

SIMON We very much wanted to criticize the media culture that could allow the previous four seasons to go on and never actually attend to any of the systemic problems. We were going there, but I didn't anticipate social media making the mainstream miscalculations almost irrelevant. You don't even have to answer to an inattentive, but professional press. You just have to create the foment in an unregulated environment in which lies travel faster the more outrageous they are. If truth is no longer a metric, then you can't govern yourself properly.

BURNS If you look at the map, half of the Midwest and West are drought-ridden, and we're treating it like how we used to treat a dead body on the corner or a handcuffed guy. It's like a news thing or bad automobile accident: ''Oh my, look, that tornado ripped apart this whole town.'' And that's it.

There's no energy. I've always thought about trying to do a story where the government has developed an algorithm to identify sparks, the Malcolm Xs and the Martin Luther Kings, these types of people, when they're young, and then they just either compromise them away with the carrot or they beat them away with a stick. Because you need sparks. You need those individuals who will stand up and then rally people around them, and we don't have that -- those sparks, that anger that sustains itself.

Is it a conflicting legacy that ''The Wire'' has gained a greater audience over the years, yet the institutional decay that it illuminates has seemingly worsened?

BURNS Recently, the Biden administration and the New York mayor's administration said they want to increase the number of police on the street. It amuses me that what they're doing is a definition of insanity: You try something, it doesn't work. You try it again, it doesn't work. It's about time you try something different. They're still doing the same thing.

Granted, ''defund the police'' is not the right way of presenting the argument. But rechanneling money away from the police to people who could better handle some of the aspects of it would be good. And then doing something even more dramatic, like creating an economic engine, other than drugs, to help people get up and start making something of their lives.

How should ''We Own This City'' be viewed in relation to ''The Wire''?

SIMON It's a separate narrative. We're very serious about having attended to real police careers and real activities and a real scandal that occurred. So no, it's not connected to ''The Wire'' universe in that sense. It is a coda for the drug war that we were trying to critique in ''The Wire.'' If ''The Wire'' had one political message -- I don't mean theme; if it just had a blunt political argument about policy -- it was, ''End the drug war.'' And if ''We Own This City'' has one fundamental message, it's ''END. THE. DRUG. WAR.'' In capital letters and with a period between every word. It's just an emphatic coda about where we were always headed if we didn't change the mission of policing in America.

Is a goal of ''We Own This City'' to provide a sharper critique on policing than ''The Wire'' provided?

SIMON No. I don't think there's that much difference between the two, other than the depths of the corruption of the bad cops. Police work is as necessary and plausible an endeavor as it's ever been.

In many cases, and in many places like Baltimore, the national clearance rate has been collapsing for the last 30, 40 years. That's not an accident. That's because they've trained generations of cops to fight the drug war. It doesn't take any skill to go up on the corner, throw everybody against the wall, go in their pockets, find the ground stashes, decide everybody goes, fill the wagons. That's not a skill set that can solve a murder.

That's not me saying, ''Oh, policing used to be great.'' No, I understand there were always problems with policing. But we're one of the most violent cities in America. And all the discourse about abolish the police or defund the police -- I'd be happy to defund the drug war. I'd be happy to change the mission, but I don't want to defund the police. Good police work is necessary and elemental, or my city becomes untenable. I've seen case work done right, and I've seen case work done wrong, and it matters.

BURNS I'm sorry [Baltimore] was labeled the city of ''The Wire,'' because we could've taken that show into any city, in exactly the same way. Akron, Ohio, would have suddenly become the ''Wire'' city. So it's a shame that it was pushed onto this little town.

Would ''The Wire'' be greenlighted if you pitched it today?

BURNS No, definitely not. HBO was going up the ladder at the time. They didn't understand ''The Wire'' until the fourth season. In fact, they were thinking about canceling it after three. We caught that moment where networks were thinking, ''Oh, we need a show for this group of people.''

But now, it's got to be ''Game of Thrones.'' It's got to be big. It's got to be disconnected from stepping on anybody's toes. I've watched a couple of the limited series on HBO, and they're good shows, but they're not cutting new paths. They are whodunits or these rich women bickering among themselves in a town. I don't see anybody saying, ''Hey, that's a really great show.''

SIMON No, because we didn't attend, in any real way, to the idea of diversity in the writers' room. I tried to get Dave Mills, who had been my friend since college, to work on ''The Wire.'' But that would have been organic. It was just a friend; it wasn't even about Black and white. But other than David, who did a couple scripts for us, and Kia Corthron, the playwright, did one, we were really inattentive to diversity. That wasn't forward thinking.

Why were we inattentive? Because it was so organic to what I'd covered and what Ed had policed. And then, I started bringing on novelists. The first guy was George Pelecanos, whose books about D.C. were the same stuff I was covering. And I happened to read his books, and I was like, ''This guy probably could write what we're trying to do.'' And then he said: ''Look, you're trying to make novels. Every season's a novel. We should hire novelists.'' And so we went and got Price. If I had it to do over again, I would have to look at [the diversity of the creative team] in the same way that I looked at later productions.

In retrospect, is there anything else that you wish that the show had done differently?

BURNS I wish that Season 5 took a different direction, as far as the newsroom was concerned, and didn't debase the idea of investigation. But it's fine. What we tried to get across is that the kids that we saw in [Season 4] were becoming, as they approached adulthood, the guys that we saw in [Seasons] 1, 2, 3 and 4. It was continuous. This is just the next generation.

Other than the fact that the issues it highlighted are still prevalent, why do you think ''The Wire'' has such staying power?

SIMON Nothing's in a vacuum. I would credit ''Oz'' for showing me that there was this network out there that would tell a dark story and tell an adult story. ''Homicide'' [Simon's first book] had been made into a TV show. But with ''The Corner'' [Burns and Simon's nonfiction book centered on a West Baltimore drug market], I was like: ''The rights are worth nothing. Nobody's going to put that on American television.'' And then I saw ''Oz,'' and so that was the moment where I looked at HBO and said, ''Oh, would you like to make a mini-series about a drug-saturated neighborhood and about the drug war?''

And then the other places we stole from: We stole from the Greek tragedies, the idea that the institutions were the gods and they were bigger than the people. So, thanks to the college course that made me read Greek plays. Thanks to ''Paths of Glory,'' which was a movie about institutional imperative, the [Stanley] Kubrick film -- I took stuff liberally from there. Thanks to a bunch of novelists, Pelecanos, Price, [Dennis] Lehane, who decided they were willing to write television. Obviously, the cast and crew and everyone.

But it was a show that was ready for where TV was going to end up, and that's where a lot of luck is involved. The idea that you flick on your TV screen and decide you want to watch something that was made 10 years earlier or has just been posted; or you'll wait until there are enough episodes to binge watch it; or you have insomnia, so you'll watch four hours of a mini-series and just acquire it whenever the hell you want -- boy, I didn't see that coming.

BURNS It's like a western: It's mired in legend. But the legend is actually reality. Today, 20 years ago, 20 years from now -- it's the same thing. And each generation coming up, each bunch of kids coming up, discover it and inject more life into it.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/31/arts/television/david-simon-ed-burns-the-wire-anniversary.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/31/arts/television/david-simon-ed-burns-the-wire-anniversary.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: David Simon, above, who helped create ''The Wire.'' Michael B. Jordan, far left, and Larry Gilliard Jr. in the first season of the show. Below from left: Clark Johnson, the director

Robert Colesberry, the executive producer

Simon

and Ed Burns on the set in 2002. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK SOMMERFELD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

HBO, VIA PHOTOFEST

DAVID LEE/HBO) (AR14)

Above from left, Dominic West, Benjamin Busch and Jonnie Louis Brown. At left from left, Clark Johnson, Brandon Young, Michelle Paress and Tom McCarthy in the show's final season. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL SCHIRALDI/HBO) (AR16)

**Load-Date:** June 5, 2022

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[***The Penknife: A Thanksgiving Memory***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6457-TMS1-JBG3-60XH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 25, 2021 Thursday 12:41 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1304 words

**Byline:** Rafael Alvarez

**Highlight:** Eating had become a chore for my parents, but I was determined to make a feast. I had never given much thought to Dad’s penknife until that meal.

**Body**

An engineer should always carry a penknife in his pocket, my father said. Not the marvel of a Swiss Army knife; just a small, two-blade tool for whatever might come along.

My father, Manuel Rafael Alvarez, a lifetime seafarer, held a chief engineer’s license for inland waterways and deep sea. As a teenager, he sailed to South America on Bethlehem Steel ore ships and spent most of his career on tugboats along the Baltimore waterfront.

It was from my old man’s drinking buddies that I fashioned some of the characters — particularly Horseface Pakusa — who worked the docks in Season 2 of “The Wire.” Had it occurred to me, I would have had the Horse tell a greenhorn, “A man should always carry a penknife.”

But I never gave much thought to Dad’s penknife (about two inches long, sided with plastic made to look like wood) until last Thanksgiving.

He often used it to remove the foil around the top of a wine bottle and at this time of year to score chestnuts — “castañas,” he’d say with a smile — before boiling them. After they’d cooled, Dad peeled them with the tiny knife and passed the meat of the fruit to one of us.

Last year, I cooked the Thursday feast, enough to feed a half-dozen or so even though the guest list was just Mom and Dad and me. Eating had become a chore for them, but I was determined to put on the dog.

The pandemic had shut down other meals I would have been invited to (tables from Pittsburgh to Brooklyn to Philadelphia), and though my parents’ house was Covid-free, Dad was sick, much worse than we knew.

In the morning, my son (named for my father as my father named me for his old man) helped get Dad to my brother Danny’s home about a half-mile away for a quick visit. Although it took both of us to guide him from the car to the patio, we were cheered by coffee in bright sunshine and the crisp autumn air of Maryland. And we were together. Other than trips to the hospital, this would be the last time Dad left the house.

Back home, he settled into the screened-in porch, ostensibly to watch football though he didn’t seem to care if the TV was on or not. Mom, herself disabled by pulmonary disease, took a nap and I began putting the meal together.

I opened a pint of Chincoteague oysters for the stuffing. My father, a fine cook whether at home or in the galley of the harbor tug America, often fried double-breaded oysters on Sunday afternoons in winter. He also made a good oyster stew, having learned as a newlywed from his father-in-law.

I’d gotten the oysters the day before from an old-timer who sells seafood out of a truck on the highway, right near the pharmacy I’d been going to at least once a week to get prescriptions for my parents. In time, that would include liquid morphine for Dad.

Spearing a fat one from the jar, I walked it out to Dad on a fork. Houston was pummeling the Lions in Detroit but Pop wasn’t paying much attention. He was mostly staring into the backyard of the brick rancher he’d purchased with a union-negotiated salary in 1966. Back then, he was half the age that I am now.

Their suburb of Linthicum is less than 10 miles from downtown Baltimore, though well across the fabled “city line” that promised a good life to my parents’ generation in the old factory neighborhoods. On a quarter-acre along Orchard Road is the dream of a couple of ***working-class*** kids raised during the Great Depression in narrow waterfront rowhouses and married right out of high school.

Dad slurped the oyster like a champ, as though we were back at one of Baltimore’s fish markets and it was sliding off the shell, a cold beer in his other hand. I think he did it more to please me than to savor an old favorite.

I left him to doze in the chair, putting the turkey in the oven and heading downstairs to take a siesta. In the basement — my four-day-a-week bedroom on caretaking shifts shared with Danny — I sleep in the twin bed that was mine when I listened to Frank Zappa (“Hot Rats”) on an eight-track and got high on cheap pot once the folks were asleep.

These days I lie in it and — instead of nodding off to the bite of Zappa’s guitar — make sure no one upstairs has fallen out of bed.

I’d borrowed a last-minute bay leaf from new neighbors across the backyard, their house owned long ago by a friendly dentist and his wife, good friends and dinner guests of my parents back when I was pretending to be Brooks Robinson in that same backyard. And the meal turned out pretty good.

Most of the trimmings — mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, stuffing and sauerkraut (an old German Thanksgiving staple in Baltimore) — were ready to serve at the same time. I’m no chef, but I’d pulled it off.

Mom and Dad were seated at the kitchen table, and I put all of the side dishes in front of them before turning to the stove to carve the turkey. As I sliced, anticipating one of my favorite meals of the year, something caught my eye and I turned to watch.

Dad was using his penknife to slice the foil around the lip of a bottle of Martinelli’s Sparkling Red Grape Juice. At first, I thought of putting my hand on his shoulder and taking the knife, saying that I would do it. But that was something I’d never done, so I spared his dignity and allowed myself the pleasure of watching.

Dad always enjoyed a glass of wine with his meals, sometimes two, out of a small blue creamer that decades ago found its way into our home from a forgotten restaurant. He’d lost his taste for vino when he became ill, and so the “refreshment,” as he called wine and beer, was Martinelli’s.

Before Mom was fitted for dentures, she’d sit before one of her favorite dishes — sometimes crab cakes or pork chops, often coconut custard pie — and exclaim, “Oh boy, oh boy, oh boy!” before digging in.

And boy, oh boy, the surprise when Dad unscrewed the cap! In his working days, my father witnessed the christening of many ships from the deck of a tugboat. But the bow upon which this bottle streamed was the kitchen.

Sparkling grape juice everywhere!

Did Dad unintentionally shake the bottle before opening? Had he mistaken it for ketchup? Did I jostle the bottle before handing it to him? Sweet and sticky, the juice rained on the food, was pooled under the table, splattered Mom and drenched Dad.

You haven’t tasted oyster stuffing until you’ve had it with a hint of Martinelli’s sparkling grape.

In the past, Dad might have cursed mildly and laughed after a moment before saying, “Ralphie, go grab the mop.” But he just sat there, shoulders drooping, quietly asking himself what had happened.

Mom and I shared a what-the-hell-you-gonna-do look (rare for a woman who can spot a speck of dirt on the kitchen floor from another room), and I soaked up the mess with bath towels before helping Dad into a clean shirt.

Then I took my parents’ hands and we said grace, something our family does whether it’s Thanksgiving or not, just enough juice left in the bottle for us to clink glasses, say “salud” and have a sip.

Dad died at home from lymphoma of the spleen in the early morning hours of Aug. 8 this year, my daughter’s 40th birthday. Along with his wristwatch and fishing hat, the little brown penknife was among things left behind that he touched every day.

Mom asked me if I wanted the knife and I said yes, knowing I’d carry it for just a day or so. I gave it to Danny, who followed our father into the engine room. What am I going to do with a penknife? Sharpen a pencil?

I will be cooking Thanksgiving dinner again this year, a much smaller affair, just me and Mom. I’ll borrow the penknife from Danny and take my time cutting away the foil from the Martinelli’s bottle.

Rafael Alvarez was a staff writer for HBO’s “The Wire” and a City Desk reporter at The Baltimore Sun for 20 years. He is the author of the forthcoming “Don’t Count Me Out: The Bruce White Story.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sonia Pulido FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 26, 2021

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[***New Rapport Between Albany and New York***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64FK-0NG1-DXY4-X0TS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

**Length:** 1455 words

**Byline:** By Jeffery C. Mays

**Body**

Mayor Eric Adams has a base that Gov. Kathy Hochul wants to tap into. Ms. Hochul controls the money that Mr. Adams needs to jump-start his agenda.

The first public sign that things would be different between Eric Adams, the new mayor of New York City, and Gov. Kathy Hochul came on election night, when she appeared onstage to celebrate his victory.

''We're going to need her,'' Mr. Adams said, as Ms. Hochul inched toward the microphone.

They have since appeared together a handful of times, vowing to work as a team instead of fighting over every little thing, as their Democratic predecessors, former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio, had done for nearly eight years.

''In the past, there has been this tension, a polite way of saying fighting, between the governor of New York and the mayor of the City of New York,'' Ms. Hochul said at a recent holiday fund-raiser for the Democratic Party of Brooklyn, which Mr. Adams also attended. ''The era of fighting between those two bodies, those two people, is over.''

In theory, the governor and the mayor of the nation's largest city should have each other's interests at heart; one can rarely prosper without the other. Yet that has not always been the case in New York, where conflicting political parties and personalities have often caused rifts.

Mr. de Blasio feuded constantly with Mr. Cuomo over matters great and small: how to pay for the city's expansive prekindergarten initiative, subway funding, the response to the pandemic and the homeless crisis. They even fought over whether to euthanize a deer.

Ms. Hochul and Mr. Adams, both Democrats, seem intent on trying again, and both have compelling reasons to do so.

Mr. Adams takes office as the city faces a resurgence of the coronavirus and a raft of issues that may rely on the state's assistance. Ms. Hochul needs support from Black, Latino and moderate voters in New York City, the same base that Mr. Adams cultivated to become mayor, as she faces a moderate opponent and two likely challengers to her left in a June primary.

''Every mayor, no matter who they are, is eventually confronted with the fact that New York City is a creature of the state,'' said State Senator Diane Savino, a moderate Democrat who represents Staten Island and who endorsed Mr. Adams. ''New York City is a significant part of the Democratic Party vote, and I'm sure the governor would like to have his support.''

Ms. Hochul and Mr. Adams and their staffs often speak ahead of major announcements on issues related to Covid policy. They have also been in touch about Ms. Hochul's State of the State address this Wednesday and the policy proposals under development. And they've known one another for years and share more moderate views than some of their party's left-leaning elected officials.

They have both, for example, reached out to business leaders to seek their guidance on the city's economic recovery from the pandemic.

''Frankly, neither Governor Cuomo or Mayor de Blasio had a working relationship with leaders of the business community,'' said Kathryn Wylde, the president of the Partnership for New York City. ''This is a dramatic and most welcome reversal.''

There is politicking happening behind the scenes between the two camps. With Ms. Hochul facing a contested primary, Mr. Adams is keenly aware of his political leverage: In November, Mr. Adams, who did not endorse anyone in the Democratic primaries for New York City comptroller and public advocate, said he planned to make an endorsement in the Democratic primary for governor.

Among the items on Mr. Adams's agenda are gaining long-term mayoral control of schools and a $1 billion expansion of the earned-income tax credit to help moderate and low-income families. Mr. Adams has a plan to provide universal child care and also wants federal funds to be released to the city more quickly.

Ms. Hochul has also said she will work with the mayor on revisiting the state's bail laws, with Mr. Adams suggesting that recent increases in crime are linked to changes in bail law that ended cash bail for many low-level offenses.

''Hochul has great strength in a general election but needs to solidify her position in New York City to win a Democratic primary. That gives her an incentive to want to be helpful to the new mayor,'' said Bruce Gyory, a Democratic strategist. ''The new mayor has tremendous incentive to do very well in that first budget because the perception will have an impact on the finances of the city. They have an enlightened self-interest to work well together.''

But there is also risk associated with Ms. Hochul's and Mr. Adams's potential alliance. State Senator Michael Gianaris, a sponsor of some bail reform measures, said efforts to change the bail law would ''set the stage for a less than amicable relationship right out of the box'' with the State Legislature. Mr. Adams ''also needs the Legislature,'' Mr. Gianaris said.

Mr. Adams would have had more leverage had Letitia James not dropped out of the race for governor. Ms. James, who decided to run for re-election as the state attorney general, was Ms. Hochul's strongest opponent, according to early polling.

Getting Mr. Adams's backing would have helped Ms. Hochul with ***working-class***, Black and Latino voters outside of Manhattan who might otherwise have supported Ms. James.

Even with Ms. James out of the race, Mr. Adams still has some leverage. Jumaane Williams, the public advocate of New York City who is running to the left of Ms. Hochul, also has a strong political base in Brooklyn, as does Mr. de Blasio, who is considering running for governor. When Mr. Williams ran against Ms. Hochul in the Democratic primary for lieutenant governor in 2018, he received almost 167,000 votes in Brooklyn, about 71,000 more than Ms. Hochul.

''Tish James being out of the race takes some pressure off Hochul but doesn't completely change the dynamic,'' Mr. Gyory said. ''If anything, Hochul now wants to get a larger share of the Black vote.''

Mr. Williams and Mr. Adams have a cordial relationship, according to several sources familiar with both men. Though Mr. Adams, a former police officer, is considered more of a law-and-order candidate, and Mr. Williams is to the left on police reform, both are interested in holistic approaches to addressing gun violence.

Mr. Williams and Mr. Adams spoke about setting up a meeting with progressives concerned about Mr. Adams's stance on policing in the fall. In November, Mr. Williams asked Mr. Adams for his endorsement in the governor's race.

Mr. Adams didn't say no. He told Mr. Williams to ''do well, generate momentum,'' and ''then let's have a serious conversation,'' said a person familiar with the conversation who asked not to be identified because they were not authorized to discuss it.

''Anybody would be smart to want to get the mayor of New York City's support for their campaign,'' Mr. Williams said.

Mr. Adams also has a good relationship with Representative Thomas Suozzi, a Long Island Democrat who endorsed him for mayor and campaigned on his behalf. Mr. Adams asked Mr. Suozzi to be one of his deputy mayors, but Mr. Suozzi declined and soon announced that he was running for governor.

Some saw the request from Mr. Adams as a favor to help pump up Mr. Suozzi's run for governor, but Mr. Suozzi, who said he and Mr. Adams agree about how the ''defund the police message'' and ''socialism message'' are ''killing Democrats,'' saw it differently, pointing out that Mr. Adams will need Ms. Hochul's support to govern effectively.

''I perceived it as a vote of confidence. He asked me to play a big role in helping him to accomplish his mission,'' Mr. Suozzi said in an interview. ''But I've been around a long time in politics, and I doubt he's going to be able to endorse me because he's got to get a budget done in the state of New York.''

With another moderate in the race, it's even more important for Ms. Hochul to tap into Mr. Adams's base. Both Ms. Hochul and Mr. Adams have cast themselves in the vein of moderate Democrats, similar to President Biden.

''They are both sensible Democrats,'' said the Rev. Al Sharpton. ''Nobody thought either one of them would become governor or mayor, so they've got something to prove, and they can prove it together.''

Mr. Sharpton recalled that when Ms. Hochul and Mr. Adams attended the 30th anniversary of his civil rights organization at Carnegie Hall in November, his staff did not need to jump through hoops to ensure that they didn't cross paths, as they had done for Mr. Cuomo and Mr. de Blasio at similar gatherings.

''I don't know if 'like' would be the right word, but I think they both know they need each other,'' Mr. Sharpton said

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/02/nyregion/kathy-hochul-eric-adams.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/02/nyregion/kathy-hochul-eric-adams.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Mayor Eric Adams and Gov. Kathy Hochul have appeared at several events in a sign of unity, vowing to work as a team. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIKA P. RODRIGUEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 3, 2022

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[***When It Comes to Eating Away at Democracy, Trump Is a Winner; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6678-CC01-JBG3-63NV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 3297 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. Edsall

**Highlight:** His drive to undermine faith in elections has proved strikingly successful.

**Body**

Donald Trump’s drive to undermine American democracy has proved strikingly successful.

Take the most recent analysis by [*Varieties of Democracy*](https://v-dem.net/media/publications/dr_2022.pdf), better known as V-Dem, an international organization founded in 2014 to track trends in democratization:

While the United States remains a liberal democracy, V-Dem data shows that it is only a fraction away from losing this status after substantial autocratization. The U.S. Liberal Democratic Index score dropped from 0.85 in 2015 to 0.72 in 2020, driven by weakening constraints on the executive under the Trump administration.

Of 179 countries surveyed, V-Dem found, the United States was one of 33 to have moved substantially toward autocratization. From 2016, when Donald Trump won the presidency, to 2021, when he involuntarily left office, the United States fell from 17th to 29th in the global V-Dem democracy rankings:

Liberal democracy remains significantly lower than before Trump came to power. Government misinformation declined last year but did not return to previous levels. Toxic levels of polarization continue to increase. Democracy survives in the United States, but it remains under threat. Of all the forces undermining democratic traditions in elections and policymaking — Donald Trump’s big lie, the politicization of ballot counting by Republican state legislatures, the attempt to disenfranchise segments of the population — one that has devastating potential is operating under the radar: the growing cynicism of younger voters.

[*Daron Acemoglu*](https://economics.mit.edu/faculty/acemoglu), a professor of economics at M.I.T., contends that the decline in popular support for democracy is greater in the United States than elsewhere, especially among the young. “In our data younger people are less supportive of democracy,” Acemoglu wrote in an email. “In the U.S., this age gradient is particularly visible. Moreover, in the U.S. you see a large, across-the-board decline in support for democracy between 2011 and 2017. Is that the financial crisis? The beginning of Trumpism? Not sure.”

In other respects, the adverse trends in the United States, Acemoglu pointed out, “are not unique to Trump. Look at it from an international perspective. Trumpism is no exception. You see similar dynamics in Brazil, Turkey, the Philippines, Hungary, Russia and somewhat less successfully in the U.K., France, Chile and Colombia. Trump is a particularly mendacious and noxious version, but he is not unique.”

The United States does stand out, however, among developed countries with established democracies. Acemoglu added that “other developed economies show some weakness, but the U.S., is distinctive in the degree to which its democracy has become weaker.”

Why the United States?

Acemoglu suggested that:

both center-right and center-left politicians promised huge gains from globalization and technology for everybody, and aspirations rose. And many groups were disappointed and frustrated with either slow or sometimes no economic progress. In many cases, they also felt completely unheard and ignored by technocratic-sounding politicians using globalist language and proclaiming values that did not jibe so well with their preoccupations. All of these have been lived much more strongly in the U.S., where workers without a college degree have seen their real earnings fall significantly and their communities depressed. They have also come to believe that center-left and center-right governing parties were pushing different values than theirs and not listening to their concerns. The financial crisis much amplified these worries and, of course, the economic tensions.

The widespread acceptance among Republican voters of Trump’s claim that the 2020 presidential election was stolen is, in Acemoglu’s view,

a “signal.” You are signaling to the rest of the population and especially to the media that you are highly discontented and you are distinct from the well-educated elites benefiting from the current system. If so, the more outrageous this signal sounds, the more effective it may be to some of the people who are trying to send the signal.

Acemoglu acknowledged that this

is just a hypothesis, but if it is true, it would imply that demonizing Trump supporters would make things worse for Democrats. It may not be so much that they are completely delusional but they are angry and feel outside of the mainstream. If so, finding ways of broadening the mainstream coalition may be a much more effective response.

[*Herbert Kitschelt*](https://scholars.duke.edu/person/h3738), a political scientist at Duke, noted in an email that the United States stands apart from most other developed nations in ways that may make this country especially vulnerable in the universe of democratic states to authoritarian appeals and democratic backsliding:

There are two unique American afflictions on which Trump could thrive and that are not shared by any other advanced Western O.E.C.D. country: the legacy of slavery and racism and the presence of fundamentalist evangelicalism, magnifying racial and class divisions. There is no social organization in America that is as segregated as churches.

In this context, Kitschelt wrote,

a critical element of Trumpist support is trying to establish in all of the United States a geographical generalization of what prevailed in the American South until the 1960s civil rights movement: a white evangelical oligarchy with repression — jail time, physical violence and death — inflicted on those who will not succumb to this oligarchy. It’s a form of [*clerofascism*](https://glosbe.com/en/en/clerical%20fascism). A declining minority — defined in economic and religious terms — is fighting tooth and nail to assert its supremacy.

Underlying the racial motivations, in Kitschelt’s view, are

changes in political economy and family structure, strongly related also to a decline of religion and religiosity. Religions, for the most part, are ideological codifications of traditional paternalist family kinship structures. Postindustrial libertarianism and intellectualism oppose those paternalisms. This explains why right-wing populists around the world draw on religion as their ultimate ideological defense, even if their religious doctrines are seemingly different: Trump (white Protestant evangelicalism and Catholic [*ultramontanism*](https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/ultramontanism#:~:text=Ultramontanism%20was%20a%20school%20of,Catholic%20Church%20in%20public%20life.)), Putin (Orthodoxy), Modi (Hinduism), Erdogan (Islam), Xi (Confucianism).

[*Lynn Vavreck*](https://www.lynnvavreck.com/), a political scientist at U.C.L.A., takes a different but not necessarily contradictory approach. She is an author — with [*John Sides*](https://johnsides.org/) and [*Chris Tausanovitch*](https://ctausanovitch.com/), political scientists at Vanderbilt and U.C.L.A. — of the forthcoming book “[*The Bitter End*](https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691213453/the-bitter-end): The 2020 Presidential Campaign and the Challenge to American Democracy.”

In an email, Vavreck wrote that in their book,

We describe the current state of American politics as “calcified” — calcification, like in the human body, makes politics rigid. It is born of four factors: 1) increasing distance between the parties (we are farther apart than ever ideologically), 2) increasing homogeneity across issue positions within each party (we are more like our fellow partisans than ever), 3) the displacement of the New Deal dimension of conflict (size and role of government, tax rates) with a new dimension of conflict based on identity-inflected issues and 4) partisan parity within the electorate (there is near balance between people who call themselves Ds and Rs right now).

These four things make politics feel stuck and explosive. Here’s why: The stakes of election outcomes are very high because the other side is farther away than ever and victory is always within reach for both sides (due to the balance). The balance also means that instead of going back to the drawing board to rethink how they campaigned or what they offered, when one side loses, they don’t revamp their packages or strategies (they almost won!!); instead they try to change the rules of the game to advantage their side. This is the ultimate challenge to democracy — preventing parties from changing the rules to erode democratic principles.

From a different vantage point, Vavreck observed, another “part of democracy — the representational part, so to speak — seems quite healthy at the moment.” The parties

are unique and offer two very different visions of the world to voters. Voters see and understand those differences. More voters see important differences between the parties today than have at any point since the 1950s! Nearly everyone — nine out of 10 people — say they see important differences between the two parties. That is remarkable.

For all of its faults, contemporary American democracy does perform the essential function of offering voters a choice, Vavreck said. She continued:

People know what kind of world they want to live in, and they can match that to the party offerings to figure out where they belong (and who to vote for). That there is no confusion about which party is on which side isn’t normatively bad or problematic — in fact, it makes democracy work better if it assists people in voting for candidates who align with their preferences.

But the cost can be high, in Vavreck’s view, perhaps higher than the benefits:

When parties attempt to erode democratic institutions like voting, election certification or election administration or to bully elected leaders to change legitimate outcomes, we obviously have challenges to democracy, but the clarity with which voters see these parties and understand how to choose between them should not be overlooked as a strong element of democracy in America at the moment.

If polarization is a crucial aspect of democratic atrophy, all indications are that partisan hostility is entrenched in the social order.

In their May 2022 paper, “[*Learning to Dislike Your Opponents*](https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/american-political-science-review/article/abs/learning-to-dislike-your-opponents-political-socialization-in-the-era-of-polarization/C077FF0A2DE578BF1CBEB365D277A67E): Political Socialization in the Era of Polarization,” [*Matthew Tyler*](https://www.matthewtyler.site/) and [*Shanto Iyengar*](https://politicalscience.stanford.edu/people/shanto-iyengar), political scientists at Stanford, found that polarization, including a strong dislike of members of the opposition party, has been growing rapidly among adolescents, a constituency previously more neutral in its political views:

We find that adolescents who identify as Republican or Democrat have become just as polarized as adults. The increased level of polarization in the youth sample occurs not because partisans became more positive in their evaluations of their own party but primarily because their distrust of the opposing party increased dramatically.

Today, Tyler and Iyengar wrote,

high levels of in-group favoritism and out-group distrust are in place well before early adulthood. In fact, the absence of age differences in our 2019 results suggests that the learning curve for polarization plateaus by the age of 11. This is very unlike the developmental pattern that held in the 1970s and 1980s, when early childhood was characterized by blanket positivity toward political leaders and partisanship gradually intruded into the political attitudes of adolescents before peaking in adulthood.

What are the consequences of this shift among the young?

“Fifty years ago,” Tyler and Iyengar reported, “political socialization was thought to play a stabilizing role important to the perpetuation of democratic norms and institutions. In particular, children’s adoption of uncritical attitudes toward political leaders helped to legitimize the entire democratic regime.”

“In the current era,” the two authors noted pointedly,

it seems questionable whether the early acquisition of out-party animus fosters democratic norms and civic attitudes. Extreme polarization is now associated with rampant misinformation and, as indicated by the events that occurred in the aftermath of the 2020 election, with willingness to reject the outcome of free and fair electoral procedures.

In fact, there has been a steady falloff in key measures of the vitality and strength of American democracy.

[*Nicholas Valentino*](https://lsa.umich.edu/polisci/people/faculty/nvalenti.html), a political scientist at the University of Michigan and a principal investigator on the [*American National Election Studies*](https://electionstudies.org/) 2024 project, wrote by email that

we do have some long-term trends in the A.N.E.S. data that are troubling. Principal among these is a steady decline in the public’s trust in government in general and in many specific institutions that are considered pillars of democratic legitimacy.

This development includes an increase from 48 percent in 2002 to 64 percent in 2020 of people who say the government operates “for the benefit of a few big interests” and a decline over the same period, to 16 percent from 51 percent, in the share of people who say government operates “for the benefit of all.” Over the same period, a “trust in government” measure fell to 17 percent from 43 percent.

Such downward trend lines are particularly worrisome, according to Valentino, because “the cornerstone of democratic stability lies in strong institutional legitimacy among the governed, regardless of which party is in charge.”

“We will need to see what happens in 2022 and 2024,” Valentino wrote, “but two types of events in these upcoming elections would indicate whether the U.S. has broken from mainstream democratic systems”:

First, widespread refusal among losing candidates and members of their party to accept their losses in these elections and, second, state officials in certain states refusing to certify elections where candidates of their own party lose. Note these types of threats are significantly more serious to democracy even than the myriad changes to election laws that make it harder for citizens to vote, even when those laws disproportionately affect some groups more than others. This would be voter nullification after the fact.

In their 2021 paper “[*The Majoritarian Threat to Liberal Democracy*](https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/web.sas.upenn.edu/dist/7/228/files/2021/01/the-majoritarian-threat-to-liberal-democracy.pdf),” [*Guy Grossman*](https://live-sas-www-polisci.pantheon.sas.upenn.edu/people/standing-faculty/guy-grossman), [*Dorothy Kronick*](https://pdri.upenn.edu/bio/drothy-kronick/), [*Matthew Levendusky*](https://live-sas-www-polisci.pantheon.sas.upenn.edu/people/standing-faculty/matthew-levendusky) and [*Marc Meredith*](https://live-sas-www-polisci.pantheon.sas.upenn.edu/people/standing-faculty/marc-meredith), political scientists at the University of Pennsylvania, argue that “many voters are majoritarian, in that they view popularly elected leaders’ actions as inherently democratic — even when those actions undermine liberal democracy.”

The willingness of majoritarians “to give wide latitude to elected officials is an important but understudied threat to liberal democracy in the United States,” Grossman and his co-authors write.

What liberal democrats see as backsliding, the four authors continue, “majoritarians see as consistent with democracy, which mutes the public backlash against power grabs.”

Why?

Many voters grant tremendous license to elected incumbents, perceiving incumbent behavior as consistent with democracy — even if it undermines checks and balances or other aspects of liberal democracy.

[*Jack Goldstone*](https://jackgoldstone.gmu.edu/), a professor of public policy at George Mason University, stresses economic forces in his analysis of declining support for democracy.

“The rise of authoritarian parties is rooted in rising inequality and even more in the loss of social mobility,” he wrote by email, adding that

more rigid and culturally divided inequality breeds resentment of the elites. And I would say the elites brought this on themselves, by creating meritocratic bubbles that demean those outside and access to which they increasingly control for their own families. The elites have implemented policies of globalization, meritocracy and market-driven morals, preaching that these are for the best, while ignoring the widespread harm these policies have done to many millions of their fellow citizens. A bond with an authoritarian leader who is not beholden to these elites makes ordinary people feel stronger and gives them a sense of importance and justice.

In an essay last month, “[*Trump Was a Symptom, Not the Disease — and It’s Become a Global Pandemic*](https://www.smerconish.com/exclusive-content/trump-was-a-symptom-not-the-disease-and-its-become-a-global-pandemic),” Goldstone was sharply critical of economic and political elites, especially liberal elites:

It is the actions of liberal elites — well intended but grievously misguided — that have spawned the populist wave. In a variety of ways, ruling elites promoting globalization and diversity have deprived many groups in their own societies of opportunity, hope and security.

Along similar lines but with a different emphasis, [*Elizabeth Suhay*](https://www.american.edu/spa/faculty/suhay.cfm), a political scientist at American University, wrote by email that “the rise in authoritarian parties is primarily driven by discontent among the masses.” Scholars have demonstrated this, she continued, “at the individual level (e.g., whether a person is unemployed) and the national level (e.g., the national unemployment rate).”

Suhay added a crucial caveat:

I would also say that European and U.S. elites are an indirect cause of the rise of authoritarian parties. The neoliberal policies they have championed have led to increased inequality, stagnating wages and a weaker safety net for most citizens. Economic distress, pessimism and precarity increase citizens’ interest in radical political candidates and policies on both sides of the political aisle.

Trump, Suhay argued,

deserves substantial blame for the recent challenges to democracy in the United States. It is difficult to overstate how unique he is on the American political scene with respect to his genuinely authoritarian tendencies. This said, it is important to recognize that a substantial portion of the electorate was strongly attracted to these very tendencies. In my view, it is due to a combination of factors that have generated deep anxiety about their own lives as well as the state of the nation: economic precarity and pessimism, rapidly increasing racial and ethnic diversity and declining social capital. In response to these anxieties, a powerful person who promises to turn America’s clock back several decades is very attractive.

Acemoglu, the M.I.T. economist, argues that one way to address the discontent with contemporary democracy among so many voters on the right would be to enact traditional center-left economic policies, including many supported by the Biden administration. Acemoglu makes the case that the activist wing of the Democratic Party has undermined the effectiveness of this approach:

The tragedy here is that Democrats have the plans to deliver public services and more broad-based economic growth, and this would help many Trump supporters as well. But Republicans have become very united in blocking all such policies, and Democrats themselves appear to work hard to alienate these groups, for example, by appearing more radical than they truly are or bandying around slogans such as defund the police or open borders.

There is a strong argument, Acemoglu continued,

that not just the United States but many other countries need traditional social democratic/labor party-type coalitions to support wage growth, worker protection, public service delivery, redistribution, health care and better health services, as well as antimonopoly regulations and policies. But the posturing and noneconomic language that many center-left parties have adopted make the coalition that would support this type of social-democratic party much more difficult or even impossible.

Given the intransigent, antidemocratic posture of the Republican Party and its leaders, only the Democratic Party, its shortcomings notwithstanding, is equipped to lead a drive to restore democratic norms. To become an effective force for reform, the party must first cease alienating key swing voters.

While many voters disagree with the progressive movement, especially in its more cultural and identitarian forms, many more agree with its redistributive agenda: the reduction of inequality through the transfer of income, wealth and opportunity to middle- and ***working-class*** America. The stakes in this struggle could not be higher.

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[***Why Eric Adams and Kathy Hochul Might Actually Get Along***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64FK-0YP1-DXY4-X1BR-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Mayor Eric Adams has a base that Gov. Kathy Hochul wants to reach. And she controls the money he needs to jump-start his agenda. It will be a shift for New Yorkers used to seeing their governor and mayor at odds.

**Body**

Mayor Eric Adams has a base that Gov. Kathy Hochul wants to reach. And she controls the money he needs to jump-start his agenda. It will be a shift for New Yorkers used to seeing their governor and mayor at odds.

The first public sign that things would be different between Eric Adams, the new mayor of New York City, and Gov. Kathy Hochul came on election night, when she appeared onstage to celebrate his victory.

“We’re going to need her,” Mr. Adams said, as Ms. Hochul inched toward the microphone.

They have since appeared together a handful of times, vowing to work as a team instead of fighting over every little thing, as their Democratic predecessors, former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio, had done for nearly eight years.

“In the past, there has been this tension, a polite way of saying fighting, between the governor of New York and the mayor of the City of New York,” Ms. Hochul said at a recent holiday fund-raiser for the Democratic Party of Brooklyn, which Mr. Adams also attended. “The era of fighting between those two bodies, those two people, is over.”

In theory, the governor and the mayor of the nation’s largest city should have each other’s interests at heart; one can rarely prosper without the other. Yet that has not always been the case in New York, where conflicting political parties and personalities have often caused rifts.

Mr. de Blasio [*feuded constantly*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/22/nyregion/cuomo-deblasio-feud-nyc.html) with Mr. Cuomo over matters great and small: how to pay for the city’s expansive prekindergarten initiative, subway funding, the response to the pandemic and the homeless crisis. They even fought over whether to [*euthanize a deer*](https://nypost.com/2016/12/15/deer-who-came-to-manhattan-to-find-a-mate-will-be-put-down/).

Ms. Hochul and Mr. Adams, both Democrats, seem intent on trying again, and both have compelling reasons to do so.

Mr. Adams takes office as the city faces a [*resurgence of the coronavirus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/22/nyregion/omicron-nyc-spread.html) and a raft of issues that may rely on the state’s assistance. Ms. Hochul needs support from Black, Latino and moderate voters in New York City, [*the same base that Mr. Adams cultivated*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-nyc.html) to become mayor, as she faces a moderate opponent and two likely challengers to her left in a June primary.

“Every mayor, no matter who they are, is eventually confronted with the fact that New York City is a creature of the state,” said State Senator Diane Savino, a moderate Democrat who represents Staten Island and who endorsed Mr. Adams. “New York City is a significant part of the Democratic Party vote, and I’m sure the governor would like to have his support.”

Ms. Hochul and Mr. Adams and their staffs often speak ahead of major announcements on issues related to Covid policy. They have also been in touch about Ms. Hochul’s State of the State address this Wednesday and the policy proposals under development. And they’ve known one another for years and share more moderate views than some of their party’s left-leaning elected officials.

They have both, for example, reached out to business leaders to seek their guidance on the city’s economic recovery from the pandemic.

“Frankly, neither Governor Cuomo or Mayor de Blasio had a working relationship with leaders of the business community,” said Kathryn Wylde, the president of the Partnership for New York City. “This is a dramatic and most welcome reversal.”

There is politicking happening behind the scenes between the two camps. With Ms. Hochul facing a contested primary, Mr. Adams is keenly aware of his political leverage: In November, Mr. Adams, who did not endorse anyone in the Democratic primaries for New York City comptroller and public advocate, said he [*planned to make an endorsement*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/nyc-elections-2021/ny-eric-adams-endorsement-governors-race-20211117-e4opaxqspzhfpni2zdo4ons37q-story.html) in the Democratic primary for governor.

Among the items on Mr. Adams’s agenda are gaining long-term mayoral control of schools and a $1 billion expansion of the earned-income tax credit to help moderate and low-income families. Mr. Adams has a plan to provide universal child care and also wants federal funds to be released to the city more quickly.

Ms. Hochul has also said she will work with the mayor on revisiting the state’s bail laws, with Mr. Adams suggesting that recent increases in crime are linked to changes in bail law that ended cash bail for many low-level offenses.

“Hochul has great strength in a general election but needs to solidify her position in New York City to [*win a Democratic primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/17/nyregion/governor-ny-jumaane-williams.html). That gives her an incentive to want to be helpful to the new mayor,” said Bruce Gyory, a Democratic strategist. “The new mayor has tremendous incentive to do very well in that first budget because the perception will have an impact on the finances of the city. They have an enlightened self-interest to work well together.”

But there is also risk associated with Ms. Hochul’s and Mr. Adams’s potential alliance. State Senator Michael Gianaris, a sponsor of some bail reform measures, said efforts to change the bail law would “set the stage for a less than amicable relationship right out of the box” with the State Legislature. Mr. Adams “also needs the Legislature,” Mr. Gianaris said.

Mr. Adams would have had more leverage had [*Letitia James not dropped out of the race for governor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/09/nyregion/letitia-james-drops-out-governor.html). Ms. James, who decided to run for re-election as the state attorney general, was Ms. Hochul’s strongest opponent, [*according to early polling*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/nyregion/new-york-governor-poll-hochul.html).

Getting Mr. Adams’s backing would have helped Ms. Hochul with ***working-class***, Black and Latino voters outside of Manhattan who might otherwise have supported Ms. James.

Even with Ms. James out of the race, Mr. Adams still has some leverage. Jumaane Williams, the public advocate of New York City who is running to the left of Ms. Hochul, also has a strong political base in Brooklyn, as does Mr. de Blasio, who is considering running for governor. When Mr. Williams ran against Ms. Hochul in the [*Democratic primary for lieutenant governor in 2018*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/09/13/us/elections/results-new-york-primary-elections.html), he received almost 167,000 votes in Brooklyn, about 71,000 more than Ms. Hochul.

“Tish James being out of the race takes some pressure off Hochul but doesn’t completely change the dynamic,” Mr. Gyory said. “If anything, Hochul now wants to get a larger share of the Black vote.”

Mr. Williams and Mr. Adams have a cordial relationship, according to several sources familiar with both men. Though Mr. Adams, a former police officer, is [*considered more of a law-and-order candidate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/15/nyregion/eric-adams-maya-wiley-black-voters.html), and Mr. Williams is to the left on police reform, both are interested in holistic approaches to addressing gun violence.

Mr. Williams and Mr. Adams spoke about setting up a meeting with progressives concerned about Mr. Adams’s [*stance on policing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/15/nyregion/eric-adams-maya-wiley-black-voters.html) in the fall. In November, Mr. Williams asked Mr. Adams for his endorsement in the governor’s race.

Mr. Adams didn’t say no. He told Mr. Williams to “do well, generate momentum,” and “then let’s have a serious conversation,” said a person familiar with the conversation who asked not to be identified because they were not authorized to discuss it.

“Anybody would be smart to want to get the mayor of New York City’s support for their campaign,” Mr. Williams said.

Mr. Adams also has a good relationship with Representative Thomas Suozzi, a Long Island Democrat who endorsed him for mayor and campaigned on his behalf. Mr. Adams asked Mr. Suozzi [*to be one of his deputy mayors*](https://nypost.com/2021/11/27/tom-suozzi-declines-nyc-deputy-mayor-offer-from-eric-adams/), but Mr. Suozzi declined and soon announced that he was [*running for governor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/29/nyregion/tom-suozzi-governor-ny.html).

Some saw the request from Mr. Adams as a favor to help pump up Mr. Suozzi’s run for governor, but Mr. Suozzi, who said he and Mr. Adams agree about how the [*“defund the police message”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/10/nyregion/defund-police-nyc-council.html) and [*“socialism message”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/28/nyregion/adams-aoc-ocasio-cortez.html) are “killing Democrats,” saw it differently, pointing out that Mr. Adams will need Ms. Hochul’s support to govern effectively.

“I perceived it as a vote of confidence. He asked me to play a big role in helping him to accomplish his mission,” Mr. Suozzi said in an interview. “But I’ve been around a long time in politics, and I doubt he’s going to be able to endorse me because he’s got to get a budget done in the state of New York.”

With another moderate in the race, it’s even more important for Ms. Hochul to tap into Mr. Adams’s base. Both Ms. Hochul and Mr. Adams have cast themselves in the vein of moderate Democrats, [*similar to President Biden.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/26/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-democrats.html)

“They are both sensible Democrats,” said the Rev. Al Sharpton. “Nobody thought either one of them would become governor or mayor, so they’ve got something to prove, and they can prove it together.”

Mr. Sharpton recalled that when Ms. Hochul and Mr. Adams attended the 30th anniversary of his civil rights organization at Carnegie Hall in November, his staff did not need to jump through hoops to ensure that they didn’t cross paths, as they had done for Mr. Cuomo and Mr. de Blasio at similar gatherings.

“I don’t know if ‘like’ would be the right word, but I think they both know they need each other,” Mr. Sharpton said

PHOTO: Mayor Eric Adams and Gov. Kathy Hochul have appeared at several events in a sign of unity, vowing to work as a team. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIKA P. RODRIGUEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***The New French Right***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654T-3W01-JBG3-6515-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

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With only one month to go until France's presidential election in April, the office of Marine Le Pen, the leader of the French far-right party the National Rally, sent the usual Sunday email outlining her schedule for the coming week as ''candidate for the presidency of the Republic.'' Unfortunately for Le Pen, many of its recipients were at that moment en route to a rally for her rival, where several formerly trusted members of her inner circle would fill the front row. Ever since Éric Zemmour, a far-right pundit and former newspaper columnist, declared his own candidacy for president last November, members of Le Pen's party had been departing in a steady trickle for his. And yet there was something particularly plaintive in Le Pen's notification. A final defection was expected that day -- that of her niece, Marion Maréchal, quite likely spelling the end of Le Pen and of her party's hold over the far right.

Emmanuel Macron's presidential victory as an independent five years ago shook up France's multiparty system. As parties on the right and left fractured and regrouped, the National Rally remained largely constant. Now Zemmour and Maréchal's alliance, with its ''anti-wokisme'' and its appeals to anti-immigrant sentiments, has forged a revanchist politics that captures a notable shift in the public mood. As the far right enjoys its greatest cultural primacy in France in 75 years, it is Zemmour and his followers, not the National Rally, who are defining the future of the French right wing, even if no one expects him -- or any other right-wing candidate -- to wrest the presidency from Macron.

For the last half-century, French nationalism has operated as a family business. Marine's father (Maréchal's grandfather), Jean-Marie Le Pen, helped found the party, which until recently was known as the National Front, in 1972 and led it until Marine took over in 2011. In 1992, Maréchal appeared in a campaign poster as a startled blond toddler held aloft in her grandfather's arms. Twenty years later, Maréchal was elected to the National Assembly as a representative of the party. At 22, she was the youngest member of Parliament in the history of the modern French Republic. ''The Le Pen name is a brand,'' Maréchal, now 32, told me last fall. ''It has been both my handicap and my advantage. I wouldn't have been elected without it.''

Maréchal's impending betrayal of her aunt, with its tantalizing mix of political ambition and familial wounds, had been a subject of media speculation for weeks. Le Pen alliances are famously rocky, and the family's treacheries have for decades delighted the French media. In 1984, Jean-Marie's wife left him, later sharing their private frictions in the pages of French Playboy. And in the late '90s, Jean-Marie Le Pen's deputy, who believed the boss's taste for Holocaust jokes was preventing the party from becoming a serious political force, attempted to depose him. In 2015, Marine kicked her father out of the National Front for the same reason. They didn't speak for months. (Eventually, they reconciled.)

On that early March Sunday, Maréchal chose to announce her support for Zemmour and his party, Reconquête (Reconquest), in Toulon, a small, luminous city with an important naval base on the French Riviera. I had previously attended Zemmour's rallies only in the north of France, and those were high-security affairs, where the gendarmerie marked off a wide perimeter around the venue and formed riot lines behind the barriers against potentially violent protesters. In the south, you could walk freely up to the entrance of the stadium. Cliques of young people streamed across town to the arena, joining the other well-dressed attendees -- tailored coats, red Dockers, boat shoes, in sharp contrast to a National Rally event, where black leather jackets and tattoos are the norm. Zemmour, who is 63, had no prior political experience, but as a best-selling author he was used to giving sold-out book talks and knew how to make people feel as if they were at an exclusive event.

Maréchal left the National Rally in 2017, taking time out from politics to work in the private sector. There had long been reports that she was being sidelined, partly because her popularity was seen as a threat, but also because her positions differed from the party line. Still, her retreat from the National Rally was based on a calculation shared by many: that her aunt, having lost in the two previous presidential elections, was incapable of winning. As Zemmour's candidacy evolved, it became clear that a primary goal was to end Marine Le Pen's control over far-right politics in France, by breaking through the cordon sanitaire that the mainstream political establishment had erected around the Le Pen family for decades, and ultimately to remake the French right.

Le Pen, who is 53, has positioned herself as an economic populist, seeking to attract ***working-class*** voters from across the political spectrum, caring little if they identify as right or left. Zemmour and Maréchal reject not only the tactic but also the principle behind it. Conservatism, they assert, is still an organizing social force, reflecting a timeless understanding of how we live. In a world of liberal overreach, they believe, the appeal of their hard reactionism is broader than ever. ''Despite everything, these currents continue to direct French political life,'' Maréchal told me. ''In people's minds, it's the nation, authority, family, heritage, preservation. Broadly speaking, that's our identity.'' That evening in Toulon, wearing white and six months pregnant, she blew kisses from the stage to an enthralled crowd and delivered a 20-minute declaration on the meaning of the nation. It was her first stump speech in five years, meant without any doubt to symbolize a rebirth, not only personal but also of a new nationalist movement.

In France, political identities tend to coalesce around views of the past and, on the right in particular, around the father of modern France, Charles de Gaulle. Some of the original members of the National Front collaborated during World War II with Nazi Germany, as de Gaulle fought from exile to liberate the country. And in the 1970s, one of the party's founding principles was a rejection of de Gaulle's decision as president to withdraw France from colonial Algeria. This history has always put the National Rally at odds with the urban conservative bourgeoisie, which sees itself as heir to the Gaullist tradition -- nationalist, out of an old-fashioned sense of pride and duty; republican, despite a certain nostalgia for the aristocracy -- and would never vote for a Le Pen. These are Zemmour's people, and increasingly, despite her lineage, Maréchal's.

Maréchal, who has continued to dodge precise questions about her political future as she campaigns full-time for Zemmour, is sometimes called the ''fantasy'' of the right, a double entendre that captures her political currency and symbolic importance. One meaning refers to what some regard as her unique potential to draw the bourgeois voters that have flocked to Zemmour and the ***working-class*** voters that back Marine Le Pen, both of which are needed to win. The other is usually invoked obliquely, with the word ''photogenic.'' If it's taboo to remark on the sex appeal of a female politician in 2022, it would also be disingenuous to pretend that it isn't a strategic element of Maréchal's public persona. In Toulon, every supporter I spoke to offered up some euphemism when asked what they thought of her presence there that evening, then, when pressed, said what they really meant: ''So young! So pretty!'' Maréchal plays it both ways. By all accounts she is a serious and studious person. But she was 22 when she was elected to the National Assembly in 2012, and photos of her from that time, long blond hair swept to one side or, better yet, blowing in the wind against a backdrop of pastoral France, her face fixed in an expression of concern or confident command, are still used frequently by right-wing groups.

After she left the party, Maréchal co-founded a new school based in Lyon, the Institute for Social Sciences, Economics and Politics (ISSEP), and became its director. ISSEP, an unaccredited private institution offering advanced degrees in business administration and public policy with a conservative orientation, opened its doors in 2018. (Around that time, Maréchal dropped ''Le Pen'' from her hyphenated last name.)

ISSEP operates inside a small commercial building across the street from a funky urban-renewal project near the river at the southern edge of Lyon. When I went there to meet Maréchal, I was prepared to be greeted coolly, the usual reaction of a Le Pen to a journalist from what would be regarded in France as a mainstream, center-left publication. But Maréchal met me at the door with a smile. She introduced me to the administrative staff and to a handful of students working at cafe tables in the back. She was extremely casual, in gray skinny jeans and a white cable-knit sweater, her hair in a low ponytail. I'd attended several events where she was on the program, and I never saw her ill at ease. ''Distance creates prestige,'' Maréchal said, echoing de Gaulle, when I remarked that she had been out of politics for five years but everyone was still talking about her. ''They're projecting their fantasies onto me.''

Early on, Maréchal established a reputation not only as a nationalist but also as a Catholic. The Le Pen dynasty had always been secular, a tradition that Maréchal bucked after spending two years at a Catholic school in Saint-Cloud, the upscale western suburb of Paris where Jean-Marie Le Pen owns an estate. Maréchal went on to study law at the University of Paris but was unable to complete her degree after she was elected to the National Assembly.

In 2015, she enrolled in a seminar at a private institute in the Seventh Arrondissement of Paris, a neighborhood populated by ''tradis,'' traditional Catholic bourgeois families. Two years earlier, many of the students at the institute had joined young Catholic conservatives organizing against a law that legalized same-sex marriage. More than 150,000 people mobilized in the streets of Paris in protest, in a demonstration called Manif Pour Tous, or Protest for All. Maréchal supported Manif Pour Tous right away. By contrast, Marine Le Pen did not join in. Le Pen ''always said that she wasn't on the right or the left,'' Maréchal told me. Maréchal saw things differently, and this made her welcome in conservative Parisian circles in a way that Le Pen was not. She became particularly good friends with Jacques de Guillebon, a Catholic writer with Corsican roots and a talent for skewering liberal conventions.

De Guillebon was also friendly with a cohort of young right-wing intellectuals who became prominent media figures in the aftermath of Manif Pour Tous.''At that moment, we realized that our beliefs were shared by a large number of people, and there was a need to go and defend those beliefs in the media,'' Geoffroy Lejeune, the 33-year-old editor of the far-right weekly magazine Valeurs Actuelles, told me. ''And the media, the big television networks, realized that this represented something in the country, and they needed to allow us to speak.'' Lejeune and other young conservatives staked out their positions on TV and in magazines. Maréchal, who had been in the National Assembly for about a year, became a political patron.

De Guillebon, who was enjoying the perks of success, introduced Maréchal into networks where Zemmour was also a frequent V.I.P. ''Paris is the center of everything,'' Maréchal told me. ''It's not that way in every European country, but Paris is the economic, cultural and political center of the country. And when you're politically nonexistent in Paris, it's very complicated to succeed.''

Maréchal thrived in this milieu; unlike her grandfather, who came from a small fishing village, she was not an arriviste but the scion of an entrenched dynasty. ''She knows the codes,'' Charlotte d'Ornellas, a journalist at Valeurs Actuelles, told me. Crucially, Maréchal also ''had a hunger for intellectual questions,'' says Eugénie Bastié, another young conservative journalist who worked with Zemmour. ''She cultivated that dimension of herself, a depth that her aunt doesn't have.'' Le Pen famously floundered in a debate against Emmanuel Macron in 2017, an embarrassment from which she struggled to recover. ''We have this need for our political figures to be intellectuals,'' Bastié said. ''Someone who doesn't make us ashamed.''

Yet Maréchal still possesses the Le Pen hardness. She can rally the masses with the kind of primal emotion that can only be credibly acquired from a sense of grievance, from the experience of being treated as a social pariah as the Le Pens still are in some circles. This was the elusive ideal: to be both intellectual and woman of the people. The speech that Maréchal delivered in Toulon displayed an ability to wrap the words of the nativist in elegant rhetoric. She observed that, of the three traits of the French Republican trinity, ''liberté, égalité, fraternité,'' only the last couldn't be imposed by law. ''Fraternité is a sentiment of attachment,'' she said, and concluded, ''it is fragile.''

During last fall's primaries, nearly 40 percent of French voters expressed a preference for a candidate promoting far-right ideas. Remarkably, nearly everyone I spoke with agreed, more or less, on how France had arrived at this point. ''If public opinion is at this level, it's because Zemmour has been talking about it for such a long time,'' Erik Tegnér, a 28-year-old who runs Livre Noir, a new right-wing media outlet on YouTube, told me.

Like their American counterparts, Zemmour and Maréchal like to denounce the liberalism of cultural institutions, namely the media and academia. Paradoxically, they cite Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Marxist philosopher, and his theory of ''cultural hegemony'' to explain how beliefs expressed by the ruling class trickle down to become cultural norms. They have taken up the battle of ideas within mainstream institutions with zeal. Zemmour, the son of North African Jewish immigrants, has long had a platform from which to trumpet the importance of assimilation and being French: He was formerly a columnist at France's most important conservative daily newspaper, Le Figaro, as well as a longtime TV talk-show host and a regular radio commentator. In 2019, he was given a prime-time spot on CNews, the Fox News-like channel owned by the magnate Vincent Bolloré.

Last October, CNews invited Renaud Camus, the source of the ''grand remplacement,'' or ''great replacement,'' conspiracy theory (which has been picked up across the Atlantic by commentators like Tucker Carlson), onto its Sunday evening show. Camus's argument holds that the white French population is being replaced by a nonwhite, non-French population. ''More and more these last few years, thinkers and polemicists, people with a huge impact, have contributed to an opening of what we call the Overton window,'' Tegnér said, referring to a shift in what's considered acceptable discourse. D'Ornellas, of Valeurs Actuelles, agreed, pointing out that 15 years ago, the term '' 'identity' was absolutely a dirty word. Now it's pretty much normal to talk about it.''

Some of this shift in French public life can be traced to the Islamist terror attacks that have devastated France, beginning in 2015. In January of that year, 12 people were murdered at the offices of Charlie Hebdo, which regularly published cartoons of Muhammad, by two brothers who regarded these depictions as violations of the Islamic strictures forbidding representations of the prophet. Ten months later, a group of young Muslim men, many of whom had traveled to the Middle East to join the Islamic State, staged a coordinated assault on the Bataclan concert hall and other venues in and around Paris that left 130 people dead. In the emotional aftermath, there was a public outcry about young Muslims not integrating into French society.

Many of those ''who were supposed to be on the left decided that fighting for the Republic, for laïcité, goes beyond right and left,'' says Éric Fassin, a sociologist at the University of Paris 8 and a frequent left-wing commentator. Prominent left-leaning intellectuals formed a collective to battle Islamist extremism. This was to be done, they argued, by reinforcing the principle of laïcité, commonly translated as ''secularism,'' the French legal doctrine that protects private religious practice from state interference -- and that, since the 1980s, as French Muslims became a more visible public presence, has been interpreted to mean that public life should be free from overt religious expression.

Fassin argues that in recent decades, ostensibly left-leaning governments have taken up these battles and allied themselves with the right. Last fall, Macron's education minister, Jean-Michel Blanquer, founded the Laboratory of the Republic, a government-organized think tank meant to further the ideals of laïcité, proclaiming that ''The veil itself is not desirable in French society'' and decrying ''le wokisme'' as an American import. In 2013, Manuel Valls, interior minister to the Socialist president François Hollande, called for systematically deporting Roma, who are European Union citizens, from the country. Under Valls, the state was successfully sued for racial profiling in policing, but Valls appealed the decision by arguing that the practice was justified because Black people and Arabs are more likely to be foreign and therefore in the country illegally. This is not so far from what Zemmour was saying, Fassin noted. (In 2011, Zemmour was convicted in court of incitement to racial hatred for stating on TV that the police disproportionately stop minorities because ''most dealers are Blacks and Arabs.'') Fassin went on: ''So if we want to understand why Zemmour can say what he's saying, you have to look at that.''

The left claimed upholding laïcité was necessary to oppose Islamist extremism, while the right stopped pretending that laïcité was neutral at all. Conservatives like Zemmour openly use the doctrine as a tool to delegitimize Islam. He tells his audiences that under his presidency, he would ''not want to hear the voice of the muezzin,'' the person who issues the Islamic call to prayer, while simultaneously extolling France's ''Christian heritage.'' Part of the waning enthusiasm for Marine Le Pen has been because of her insistence that ''Islam doesn't have the right to express itself in the public sphere, but neither does Christianity,'' de Guillebon, now the editor of the right-wing magazine L'Incorrect, told me.

As leftist politicians have shifted rightward, the right has become practically indistinguishable from the far right. In early November, Les Républicains, the supposedly center-right mainstream party, held its first primary debate. Opening a segment on immigration, the moderator asked the candidates if they would use the term ''grand remplacement.'' Some hesitated, but not a single candidate dismissed the idea. ''Sixty-seven percent of the French use it,'' Éric Ciotti, a member of Parliament from the south, which tends to be more conservative, said with a shrug. ''It's useless to deny reality.'' The moderator continued to press the point: Was France witnessing the replacement of one population by another population? ''I don't like that expression,'' Michel Barnier, the former Brexit negotiator for the E.U., said, but he allowed that the French sometimes had a feeling of no longer being ''at home.'' Valérie Pécresse, who went on to win the nomination of Les Républicains, said she didn't like the phrase because it ''implies that we're already screwed.''

The trauma of ongoing terror attacks has created a highly-charged environment. In October 2020, Samuel Paty, a middle-school teacher in a Paris suburb who in a class on freedom of expression showed his students Charlie Hebdo's Muhammad cartoons, was beheaded by an 18-year-old Chechen Muslim refugee who had recently been given permission to stay in France for 10 years. A few weeks later, a Tunisian man fatally stabbed three people in a church in Nice; the man entered France days earlier carrying documents that identified him as a refugee. It was an environment in which ''reasonable people decided that to be reasonable, you had to agree with unreasonable people,'' Fassin said. They were made to feel that if they weren't against the so-called Islamo-leftists, a way of branding those on the left as Islamophilic for cautioning against anti-Muslim bigotry, then they were ''complicit with terrorism,'' Fassin said. ''And, of course, that has consequences. Intimidation, basically.''

The left had failed to articulate what it meant to be on the left, Fassin said, to offer a different vision in response to real challenges. ''The ideas of humanism and solidarity have weakened in the public debate,'' Vincent Martigny, a professor of political science at the University of Nice, told me. Of the left, d'Ornellas said: ''They have refused to get into any questions of security, immigration or Islam. Every time those topics come up, they say, 'Those are right-wing topics.' So people say to themselves, 'OK, then I'm on the right.''' For the left, Fassin said, the lack of boundaries is fatal: ''If you're on the left, you have to make sure that people see that the left is different from the right. If you're on the right, you don't need that. On the contrary, it's better if it's blurred.'' As a result, the far right has been able to set the terms of debate. ''We are still far from dominant,'' d'Ornellas told me. ''But you could say at least that for the first time, we are in a position to contest the liberal cultural hegemony.''

Maréchal and Zemmour have long proselytized for what they call the union des droites, the joining of disparate right-wing factions behind a single leader. This could happen either by fusing the center-right party and far-right parties, though that is considered highly unlikely, or, more probably, by joining the most right-wing voters of the center to those on the far right.

Polling suggests that the way to appeal to all conservative voters, urban and bourgeois as well as ***working class***, is by talking about, or more precisely railing against, immigration. This is something that Zemmour has always done. He is an ideologue, and he built his career on a singular obsession. It is hard to say what is electoral strategy and what is Zemmour being Zemmour.

Most of the supporters I've spoken to at Zemmour's events since last fall have tried to convince me that he is a mainstream conservative, as if by virtue of not being a Le Pen, he couldn't possibly be on the far right. In reality, Zemmour is one of the most prominent promoters of grand remplacement. He has asked whether ''young French people will accept to live as a minority on the land of their ancestors,'' a concern Maréchal shares. Recently, she noted that it was possible that ''in 2060 the historic native people could be minorities on French territory.'' Maréchal told me that the identity question is central to the election, that ''for the French it is a vital question, they feel it in their flesh, a vital threat that gives them anxiety.'' She explained that it was ''because they have the feeling that in several years France will no longer be France, because the population will have largely changed, it will be majority-Muslim, it will no longer be France as we've known it.'' She went on: ''Often, Muslim women who wear the full-body veil or burqa are reproached: 'If you want so much to live like in Afghanistan or in Iraq, then go live in Afghanistan or Iraq.'

''This kind of provocation,'' she continued, ''gives the French the feeling that they're trying to impose a foreign culture, against the most basic traditions, the visibility of the face in public, and the equality of men and women. So, if you want to attack that on the pretext of individual liberty, it's an insult to what we are, to our way of life, to our country.''

Officially, France promotes an ''assimilationist'' model. This means that anyone can be French, so long as they adopt French cultural norms. The origins of this code date to the 19th century, when the French government, in order to form a cohesive nation-state, imposed unifying measures on different regional identities. ''French culture,'' in other words, was created. This history has made the French more willing to accept that the state should play a role in countering fragmentation and individualism. This helps explain why centrists like Macron inveigh against American ''identity politics'' even when they don't embrace far-right talking points. ''We have a need for unity,'' Bastié, the conservative journalist, told me, noting that the role of the Catholic church in public life had also been reduced in the name of these principles. In this context, the fact that Zemmour is of North African Jewish heritage works to his advantage. ''He knows what he's talking about,'' Maréchal told me. ''He has legitimacy. He is the son of immigrants, he knows what it means to assimilate, to give up part of your identity in order to become French.''

But it would be a mistake to conclude from this that the emerging French right is interested in neutral statism; on the contrary, it wants to assert the primacy of a particular notion of Frenchness -- part historical, part phantasmagorical. ''I think people on the right are exasperated by the idea that we put all the religions on the same level,'' Bastié said. ''The right has turned the page on this kind of relativism. We have a specific Judeo-Christian heritage that we must assume. Only Europe and the West refuse to assume their own heritage. A Muslim country would never say that its heritage isn't Muslim.''

The French far right, like its American counterparts, has taken an interest in the Hungarian prime minister, Viktor Orban. Orban's calls for a Europe that rejects multiculturalism and asserts its ''Christian heritage'' were always meant to attract the attention of Western European conservatives. Zemmour and Maréchal visited Budapest together last fall, and Marine Le Pen made a showy campaign stop there. But their support for Orban and his allies in the Polish government goes beyond rhetoric. On matters of immigration and asylum, E.U. law, which regulates the qualifications for asylum in member states, takes precedence over the laws of nations. The right claims that this prevents France from enacting the kinds of immigration controls it believes are necessary. As a result, many right-wing politicians support the Central European governments' refusal to abide by E.U. directives on immigration and their fight to assert their sovereignty, currently playing out in E.U. courts. Right-wing candidates have promised that, if elected, their first move would be a referendum to insert a national-sovereignty clause into the Constitution. ''We need to offer a democratic response to people on all these questions of immigration, security, crime,'' Bastié told me. ''If there's no democratic response, there could be a temptation to topple over into something else -- a refusal of democracy.''

The French electoral system is set up in such a way that Zemmour almost certainly cannot win. If no candidate gains an outright majority in the first round of voting, the two top candidates move on to a second round of voting, in which the winner must clear 50 percent. It is highly unlikely that Zemmour, or any far-right candidate, can cross that threshold. But he may accomplish his goals nonetheless. The real reason for Zemmour's candidacy, Lejeune, the editor of Valeurs Actuelles, told me, was to lay the foundation for a future movement. The defections from Le Pen's party were happening because ''they think that even if Zemmour loses, Le Pen is going to lose no matter what,'' Lejeune told me. ''So he will leave behind a base that's much more inclusive than the National Front on its own.'' Pécresse's center-right party has also been sinking in the polls and is at risk of becoming obsolete. Which makes it even more likely that Zemmour and Maréchal, whether she runs again for public office or not, and regardless of vote tallies, are setting the tone for whatever comes next.

Most French Muslims would most likely say that they are not surprised by the harsh turn in the national mood, but they are no less disturbed by it. Some have been trying to mount an organized response. Last fall, Felix Marquardt -- a half-American, half-Austrian Paris-born author, former media strategy consultant and semiprofessional networker who converted to Islam when he married a Tunisian woman -- decided to bring together prominent French writers and artists who are Muslim to counter the frenzy over immigration.

Marquardt persuaded an acquaintance to host a gathering of French Muslim intellectuals and a few other guests at his flat in the Seventh Arrondissement. The top-floor apartment sits in an immense amphitheater-shaped building across the street from Les Invalides, the palatial monument housing the tomb of Napoleon Bonaparte, whose golden dome filled the living-room window.

Marquardt had invited a young philosopher and historian named Mohamed Amer Meziane to give a presentation on his recently published book, in which he argued that Europe, and France specifically, give themselves credit for having modernized during the 19th century. But this was the period of France's imperial adventures in the Muslim world, which -- not coincidentally, he argued -- racialized the concept of ''religiosity,'' rendering it ''uncivilized.'' After Meziane finished, Marquardt opened up the discussion. Yassine Belattar, a well-known Paris comedian, observed that he thought the upcoming election would break relations among the French. ''It's a referendum for or against Muslims,'' he said.

Marquardt had also invited to his dinner some non-Muslim friends he thought would be sympathetic to this group. That turned out to be not quite right -- they weren't unsympathetic, but they were defensive. In response to Meziane and Belattar, one such guest stated that there was only one question to be answered, with a simple yes or no: Was being Muslim more important to them than being French? Everyone was citing a survey from 2020 which suggested that 57 percent of young Muslims believed that the law of God was superior to the law of the French Republic. The salon erupted. Marquardt became defensive, feeling, as he later told me, responsible for having invited his Muslim friends there only to see them treated with a standard that would never be applied to Catholics. ''If you were a believer, would it be Jesus or Macron, the decisive influence in your life?'' he shouted. ''Answer that!'' From there the evening unraveled. Another of Marquardt's invitees, a young Muslim academic, stood up and left the room.

For all that the French declare that their system, which claims to be race-blind, offers a defense against the kind of tribal identity politics they condemn in the United States, it is rare to hear Muslims spoken of as part of an ''us.'' As the French political scientist Patrick Weil wrote recently, in the aftermath of World War II, many of those residing in the French colonies came to France as workers. Some were already French citizens, but they were not treated as such. They ''discovered that their part in French history was neither known nor shared,'' Weil wrote. ''Even though they were fully French, they and their children were often discriminated against. Their citizenship was no guarantee.'' In the postcolonial era, when ideas about social hierarchy have been overturned, a generation whose ancestors were born under colonialism but who are themselves French-born and highly educated are not keen to be instructed on how to be ''French.''

Zemmour, a self-styled historian, has nonetheless continued to do so. In many of his books, pop histories whose conclusions have been vigorously contested by academic historians, he displays a famously juvenile fandom of Napoleon and promotes an imperial conception of power. In 2018, he said that he dreams of a French Vladimir Putin, a man who ''takes a country that was an empire, that could have been a great power, and tries to restore it.'' He also wrote in his 2016 book that ''Ukraine does not exist.'' At a reading of Zemmour's that I attended last fall, before he officially declared his candidacy, he gave a long, wide-ranging address, in which one of his many applause-provoking lines was that ''Russia is not our enemy.'' After Putin invaded Ukraine in late February, however, Zemmour condemned the war and even acknowledged that, in predicting it would never happen, he had been wrong.

Putin's Russia has always been the model for the kind of conservative Christian civilizational state that Zemmour and Maréchal espouse, one ruled by a strong leader who patronizes the church, enforces traditional values and unapologetically rebuffs any kind of rights-based progressivism. In 2019, Maréchal condemned European sanctions imposed on Russia after it illegally annexed Crimea in 2014 and traveled to a Moscow-organized forum there. Le Pen's party has taken loans from a Russian bank; in 2017, in an attempt to bolster her standing, she met with Putin. When Russia invaded Ukraine in February, Le Pen's campaign moved quickly to trash a trove of campaign leaflets that featured a picture of Le Pen and Putin shaking hands at the Kremlin.

There is a long antidemocratic history in France, and the extent to which it persists as a political force is underappreciated by Americans. The French Revolution of 1789 overthrew both the monarchy and the aristocratic order that preceded it; but there is a deep-rooted reactionary right that never fully accepted the new republic. It is a sentiment that still resonates in the bourgeois Parisian circles that Maréchal and Zemmour frequent. Maréchal has remarked that France and the Republic are not necessarily the same thing, that the Republic is just one regime, and ''France preceded the Republic.''

There is nothing to suggest that Maréchal or Zemmour, or Le Pen for that matter, in any way support the recent actions of the Russian government. After Russia invaded Ukraine, Maréchal said that Putin had caused the war. But French voters are clearly questioning their judgment and their loyalties. In March, the polls shifted significantly as prospective voters flocked to Macron.

Zemmour has always claimed that to be French means to own, to absorb, to love France's history. At the rally in Toulon, the speakers who introduced Zemmour and Maréchal, some of them former National Rally members, spoke of France's past ''imperial grandeur'' and the war in Algeria.

The spirit seemed to carry out into the street. After the event was over, along the palm-lined boulevard in front of the stadium, a small altercation broke out. A couple of young men who tried to get into the event had been turned away. They were jousting with an elderly woman who had attended, and somehow they all ended up taking out their identity cards. She looked white; the young man who was talking to her looked Arab. She was born in Algeria; he was born in France. Yet she told him that though she ate couscous and knew rai, a genre of North African pop music, she was still more assimilated into French culture than he was.

The woman wandered away, shaking her head. I stayed to talk to the young man, Salahedin Hamzi, who is 17. He showed me his ID, marked ''République Française.'' ''I have to prove 10 times a day that I'm French,'' he said, gesturing to his face. ''When I was little, everyone was the same, but as I got older I was made to understand that I wasn't French.'' He was excited and a little agitated from the encounter, and he launched into a long but thoughtful explanation of why Zemmour's diagnoses were wrong and dangerous and showed that he didn't understand France's problems at all.

As I stood talking with Hamzi and recording him on my phone, every few minutes someone -- a police officer or a male attendee from the event -- came over to ask me if I was OK. ''You see?'' Hamzi said to me. I did. At one point, he was telling me about how, when France was liberated from Nazi occupation in 1944, many of the soldiers that freed Toulon were from the French colonies. What people didn't understand was that colonial history was French history, he said. As he talked, another Zemmour supporter walked up to check on us. ''Did you know about the liberation of Toulon?'' Hamzi asked him. The man did not. ''It's OK, it's not your fault,'' Hamzi said. ''But you should look it up.'' The man said he would. He suggested that Hamzi come to one of Zemmour's rallies, that they weren't what he might expect. Hamzi muttered something about being familiar with Zemmour already. I wondered what would happen if they each did what the other had suggested. But I doubted that either of them would.

Elisabeth Zerofsky is a contributing writer for the magazine who has reported across Europe. Her features include articles about politics in the banlieues of France and on American conservatives' infatuation with the prime minister of Hungary.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/magazine/new-french-right.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/magazine/new-french-right.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Marion Maréchal, a Zemmour supporter and member of the family Zemmour is challenging for leadership of France's far right. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SYLVAIN LEFERVRE/GETTY IMAGES

MATTHIEU BOUREL) (MM26)

Above: Éric Zemmour, a French far-right pundit campaigning for the presidency of France. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BERTRAND GUAY/GETY IMAGES

MATTHIEU BOUREL) (MM29)

Marine Le Pen, French presidential candidate from the far-right National Rally party and Maréchal's aunt. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LIONEL BONAVENTURE/GETTY IMAGS

MATTHIEU BOUREL) (MM30)

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[***Pigeon Guys Face Tough Times: ‘Who Has the Money? Who Has the Roof?’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:621J-MJC1-DXY4-X47J-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Allie Conti

**Highlight:** As New York’s ***working-class*** neighborhoods shrink, so does the space for keeping pigeons.

**Body**

On a cold, rainy evening in December, a terrified pigeon crash-landed onto a table in the outdoor seating area of a retro-themed bar in Ocean Hill, Brooklyn.

Circling overhead was a Cooper’s hawk that had accidentally dropped the bird and certainly wanted its dinner back. The bar owners kept the scene from turning gruesome by quickly covering the bloodied pigeon with napkins until the predator flew away.

The cocktail drinkers may have been startled, but the pigeon, which had spent most of its life in a coop on a rooftop across the street, would require care before it was able to fly again. Its owner patched the wound under its wing with Krazy Glue.

New Yorkers are rarely confronted so dramatically with the fact that thousands of pigeons are owned by a dwindling fraternity of their neighbors. Though keeping pigeons was once commonplace — it was [*cinematic shorthand*](https://www.pigeonmoviedatabase.com/2012/05/on-waterfront-pigeons-for-pulling.html) for “***working-class*** loner,” like Marlon Brando’s dockworker in “On the Waterfront” — the hobby is now almost prohibitively expensive in the city.

Urban bird keeping is practically a full-time job, owing to the emergence of new avian viruses that require regular vaccinations as well as scrutiny from a Buildings Department that demands coops be kept up to code. The rooftop has also become a coveted amenity in luxury apartment buildings, better served by deck furniture than a rickety assemblage of plywood and chicken wire.

As Joey Scott, who keeps hundreds of pigeons atop a building on the border of Bed-Stuy and Bushwick, put it: “Who has the time, who has the money, and who has the roof?”

He’s one of the few who does. Mr. Scott grew up in Canarsie, where he was raised by a grandfather who kept hundreds of birds on his property. When the family needed to sell that house 20 years ago, he and his brother, Michael, suddenly had nowhere to keep the flocks they had inherited.

His brother eventually bought a rundown building on Bushwick Avenue for about $160,000, largely so they could store the birds on top of it; the pair also opened a store nearby called Pigeons on Broadway. The neighborhood’s real estate values increased steadily — and then drastically — over the following two decades. That first apartment building is now worth close to $1 million, and the pigeons have become a potential liability. They make a mess, and their food attracts mice. Who would want to live under all that?

The brothers also slowly started calibrating their pet store’s stock to cater to people who care for more than pigeons. Mr. Scott thinks that items pertaining to cats and dogs probably constitute the majority of their sales these days. They still sell pigeons, but increasingly the people who buy them don’t intend to keep them for long: a woman who buys them for religious rituals, a hunting club in Connecticut that uses them to train its dogs, still others who would rather not say what they’re using them for. The Scotts can’t be emotional about the transactions if they want to keep the lights on. “When we opened the store, we said keeping pigeons was an old man’s game,” Joey Scott said, “but we’re still here.”

There have been other adjustments in the ensuing years. Now in their 50s and both separated from their wives, the brothers live above the store in a sparse three-room apartment where they sleep on adjacent cots. The fact that they own the building outright means they don’t have to deal with landlords asking intrusive questions about the nearly 300 birds on the roof, though they still put in a ton of effort to make sure neighbors have no reason to complain to the Sanitation Department.

One early winter morning, Mr. Scott spent about two hours feeding the birds and hosing down their cages. If a hawk hadn’t been posted up nearby, he would have spent about the same amount of time letting them fly around. There are hundreds of varieties of pigeons, and the Scotts are partial to ones that have gold-flecked wingtips and that can soar so high they turn into barely perceptible specks in the sky. “These days kids need everything to be constantly exciting, like a video game,” he said. “But having them fly and come back to you? Forget it. I was sold.”

For Brooklynites like Mr. Scott, keeping pigeons is an intense daily physical routine of hauling water and bird feed up a ladder. And the birds generate a tremendous amount of waste, which has to be collected and disposed of. “It’s a lot of work,” said Mr. Scott, who paused for a smoke on the roof before heading to his day job in construction.

Though they may be part of a dying breed, the Scott brothers are not the only pigeon keepers in the neighborhood. They have a colleague — “nemesis” might be a better word — who has his coops just a few blocks away, though he is perhaps a world apart in terms of personality. This is the swaggering Dave Malone, who keeps several hundred birds on a rooftop he rents across the street from the retro bar where his injured pigeon landed.

Since Mr. Malone fell two stories off his roof last year and broke his back (as well as both legs), he mostly outsources the cleaning and feeding of his flock. He grew up nearby in Brownsville, he said, where his father let him keep 80 birds in the window cage of the one-bedroom apartment that he shared with 12 siblings. When his pets outgrew that space, it wasn’t a problem because he had access to whatever nearby abandoned structure he pleased. He remembers the free real estate as the sole benefit of living in such a bleak place, and credits it for keeping him from ever touching alcohol or drugs. “You could go in a hole in one building, keep walking and come out a block away,” he said of Brownsville in the 1970s. “But we could also build whatever we wanted, wherever we wanted.”

Those days ended in 2001, when a developer bought the building Mr. Malone had long used as a home base. But the former high school football player, who is in near-constant contact with the boxer Mike Tyson, his best friend and a noted pigeon enthusiast, has done extremely well for himself, operating a bodyguard company that caters to celebrities. He pays a man in Ocean Hill $300 a month in return for access to his roof. Mr. Malone and Mr. Tyson — they share the pigeons — also employ a team of people to take care of the birds when they can’t get around to it themselves. They’re mostly into rollers, which are pigeons bred to do cartwheels in the air.

Mr. Malone first got interested in pigeons as a child because his neighbors would use them as part of a war game that involved trying to coerce birds from different flocks to defect to their faction. He became hooked on both the strategy of the sport as well as the companionship of both the birds and the people who fly them. It’s challenging for him to comprehend that none of his 10 children feel similarly compelled.

Hoping to inspire someone to follow in his footsteps, Mr. Malone said that he had placed $5 million in an escrow account and was ready to pull the trigger on any structure large enough to accommodate a 32-foot-long coop and tall enough to give him a strategic vantage point over longstanding rivals like the Scott brothers and a guy down on Eastern Parkway who goes by the nickname Panama. But his options are somewhat limited. Not many people want to live next to — or underneath — hundreds of birds.

Because rooftops are the only space most city-dwellers have to keep their birds, it’s typical for die-hards to end up retiring on Long Island, where they can build coops in their yards. Suffolk County is now the nexus of an aging subculture’s social world and where its remaining members go to buy and sell pigeons.

On a recent Sunday, about 40 or so pigeon keepers were waiting for the auctioneer, a man they all call Paul Newman. Trash talk and cigarette smoke were free-flowing at this parking lot next to a cemetery in North Babylon, where they have gathered most weekends since 2002.

On the way out to Long Island, Mr. Malone passed Mr. Scott on the expressway, and he started swerving his S.U.V. in an attempt to startle him. He stuck his middle finger out the window as he passed his rival, muttering insults under his breath. It was unclear how much this was a joke.

Neither party acknowledged the other after everyone arrived safely. Instead they mingled with the dozens of others who wouldn’t consider spending their Sunday mornings anywhere else. While the venue may not be much to look at, everyone in the pigeon-keeping world seemed to be there.

All attention turned to Paul Newman — a small septuagenarian with Hollywood good looks, actually named George Ruotolo — when he finally jumped out of his antique red hot rod and onto the crate he uses as an auction block. “I got 15 dollars,” he yelled as two white pigeons slammed around in their cage. “Who’s going to give me 20?”

He moved on to other lots when no one bought those specific birds, but it was a beautiful day, and a woman was selling cups of coffee with powdered creamer out of her car for only a buck a pop. Other homemade wares were available for discerning shoppers, like face masks that declared, “It’s a pigeon thing!” After the event ended, Mr. Malone hopped in his S.U.V. and began the hourlong trek back to Brooklyn.

“I only want to stay in this area because pigeons are accepted here,” he said. “I don’t want to go to Park Slope, where people are going to be complaining and I’m going to have to be fighting and spending money to keep my pigeons.”

Later, brewing a cup of coffee in the clubhouse he keeps next to his coops, he added, “There was a time in New York where people actually minded their business.”

Mr. Malone is nursing his injured pigeon back to health and is grateful for the intervention of the bar’s staff. He recognizes that gentrification poses an existential threat to his way of life but takes their willingness to help as an indication that he’ll win over his new neighbors in the end. He already has his eye on a different building on the same block in Ocean Hill.

“Sitting outside and seeing the birds flying and how pretty their colors are and how smart the pigeons are and the tricks they can do?” said Mr. Malone as he stood on his roof, taking in the wonder of it all. “Everyone loves something beautiful.”

PHOTOS: Above, Joey Scott tending the 300 pigeons he keeps on his roof in Brooklyn. “It’s a lot of work,” he said. At left are a pair of Mr. Scott’s rollers. (MB1); Top, Dave Malone, a pigeon enthusiast, in Ocean Hill, Brooklyn. Center from left: a fan wearing his love; pigeons from Michael and Joey Scott’s coop. Above from left: a set of blue bar homers at auction on Long Island; Michael Scott and a cockatiel at Pigeons on Broadway, his pet store in Bushwick, Brooklyn. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY OK MCCAUSLAND FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB6)

**Load-Date:** February 21, 2021

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[***A Love Triangle and a Variety Show in Seaside England; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60WS-TRC1-JBG3-64YG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 22, 2020 Tuesday 17:44 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 676 words

**Byline:** Kathryn Hughes

**Highlight:** “Here We Are,” by Graham Swift, is a nostalgic look at the world of magicians and song-and-dance acts facing changes in taste and technology.

**Body**

HERE WE ARE

By Graham Swift

It is August 1959 and we are at the end of the pier in Brighton, England, watching the kind of seaside variety show that is already slipping into history. The stars of the show are Jack, the M.C., and a handsome young magician called Pablo who, together with his shimmering assistant, Eve, has taken the summer season by storm. Further down the bill is the usual job lot of jugglers and plate spinners (and a talking teddy bear). While Jack goes through his jaunty schtick — “you’re in Brighton, folks, so bloody well brighten up!” — he simultaneously fights the panicky realization that this whole performance is taking place “on a flimsy structure built over swirling water.”

This is classic Graham Swift territory, a place where the present always feels caught between a richer past and a featureless future. Swift’s central characters are constantly assailed by the suspicion that they have been set down in the wrong time, obliged to live out a life that might have been theirs if they were two decades older. Jack, in particular, has spotted that the world of ***working-class*** conviviality at which he excels as a 28-year-old will be swept away by television, not to mention the Beatles. “The future’s elsewhere, don’t you think?” he urgently asks Eve, who at this point is simply relieved that she and Pablo are such a hit with this week’s audience.

Just how right Jack’s prediction turns out to be is one of the main threads of this very short novel. In flashbacks narrated by an elderly Eve in 2009, we learn how Jack managed to ride those changes in taste and technology to become a much-loved television star and producer — not bad for “an old song-and-dance man.” Eve knows this story well because she has been married to Jack for nearly 50 years; she’s his “managing director” and the minder of “the all-important little key in the small of his back” that she winds up to get him going.

But it is neither charismatic Jack nor steely Eve whose back story sits at the heart of this novel. That space belongs to the third member of the Brighton trio, the suave magician Pablo, who is actually Ronnie Deane from the East End of London. Swift is in his element describing Ronnie’s social transformation, which begins when he is evacuated as a child during the war to genteel Oxford, where he lodges with a childless couple, the Lawrences. From Eric Lawrence, who dabbles in stage magic, Ronnie picks up the spectacular sleights of hand that will enable him to make white rabbits appear from nowhere and build an act that involves running Eve through with a sword twice nightly.

“Here we are!” is the anxiously bright phrase adopted by Ronnie’s foster mother, a relieved response to the fact that everyone she is fond of, including her cockney foster son, is gathered safely under her roof. It also acts as an unwitting reproach to young Ronnie, who feels guiltily relieved that his real mother, a house cleaner, is not here to disturb his newly sophisticated life, but remains instead at a safe distance in bomb-spattered London.

Just at the point when some of this might begin to feel too familiar — there are structural and tonal elements that sharply recall

“Mothering Sunday,” Swift’s most recent and much-praised novel — we are propelled into something extraordinary. Back now in Brighton in 1959, Eve tells Ronnie that she can’t marry him, but wants to be with Jack instead. In response Ronnie pulls off one last, and quite staggering, illusion. Swift’s closing account of a mundane world momentarily pierced by a shaft of numinous mystery is magnificent. It is what he did so brilliantly in “Waterland” (1983), his breakthrough magic realist novel, and what he has rigorously steered clear from since. How delightful it is, then, to see a glimpse of that other Graham Swift — flamboyant, luxurious, outrageous even — back before our very eyes.

Kathryn Hughes’s most recent book is “Victorians Undone.” HERE WE ARE By Graham Swift 195 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. $22.95.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sophie Lécuyer FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 22, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Sanders Gains in Post-New Hampshire Polling***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y7S-RVF1-DXY4-X06J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 19, 2020 Wednesday 16:05 EST

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 1270 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** His moderate opposition is divided, and he seems in position to secure a large delegate lead on Super Tuesday.

**Body**

His moderate opposition is divided, and he seems in position to secure a large delegate lead on Super Tuesday.

[*Senator Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) has improved his standing in national polls since his victory in the New Hampshire primary, raising the possibility that he could amass a commanding or even insurmountable delegate lead on Super Tuesday in two weeks.

Mr. Sanders held 30 percent of the vote, nearly double his nearest rivals for the Democratic presidential nomination, in an average of three post-New Hampshire live-interview national surveys sponsored by ABC/Washington Post, NBC/WSJ and NPR/PBS/Marist College. The polls also had good news for President Trump, whose approval ratings have hit the highest point since the early days of his term.

The results suggest that Iowa and New Hampshire not only helped Mr. Sanders, but also left his [*moderate opposition in disarray*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) heading into Wednesday night’s debate in Nevada, with five candidates between 8 percent and 16 percent of the vote.

Joe Biden, the former front-runner who finished fourth and fifth in the two early states, has lost half of his support since the ABC/Washington Post poll conducted just before the Iowa caucuses. On average, he held just 15 percent of the vote, leaving him essentially tied with the former New York mayor Michael Bloomberg for second place. Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts was not much further behind at 13 percent in an average of the three polls.

Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., and Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota improved to only 10 percent and 8 percent of the vote across the three polls, despite their strong showings in Iowa and New Hampshire. This left them behind Mr. Biden and Mr. Bloomberg and even further away from consolidating moderate voters before Super Tuesday on March 3.

Mr. Bloomberg, whose [*huge advertising campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) could help him emerge as Mr. Sanders’s leading rival, has gradually gained in national polls since entering the race in November. But Mr. Bloomberg held an average of just 16 percent across the three surveys, suggesting that he has made relatively few gains over the last 10 days, when national polls first showed him rising into the midteens. It raises the possibility that his momentum has been blunted over the last week, perhaps by attacks on his record.

At least for now, the polls leave Mr. Bloomberg well short of enough support to block a decisive win for Mr. Sanders on Super Tuesday. The divided field even raises the possibility that Mr. Sanders might win a near majority of delegates with less than one-third of the vote, potentially giving him an all but insurmountable pledged delegate lead and making him a favorite to win an outright majority of pledged delegates as well.

The Democratic Party awards delegates proportionally among candidates who earn at least 15 percent of the vote in a state or congressional district. At the moment, Mr. Sanders is the only one who would be expected to clear the 15 percent threshold in nearly all states or districts. He would be positioned to earn an outright majority in many cases, including when he might be the only candidate to breach 15 percent and win all of the delegates at stake in a jurisdiction.

A Public Policy Institute of California survey on Tuesday showed Mr. Sanders with a lead of 32 percent to 14 percent against Mr. Biden, putting him in position to claim a clear majority of delegates from the nation’s largest delegate prize.

Mr. Bloomberg has shown more strength in recent state polls in the South, where he has been tied or ahead in recent polls of North Carolina, Virginia, Oklahoma and Arkansas. But Mr. Sanders has been highly competitive in these states and would still amass a meaningful number of delegates there.

The recent polls results also undermine the argument that Mr. Sanders has a hard ceiling on his support. He claimed a lead over Mr. Bloomberg, 57 percent to 37 percent, in a hypothetical one-on-one race in the NBC/WSJ poll, suggesting that his opposition might not inevitably coalesce around a single candidate, if one ever emerged.

Instead, the growth in Mr. Sanders’s support makes it easy to imagine how he could run away with the nomination over a divided field. Many of his opponents have an incentive to attack one another, rather than Mr. Sanders. And Mr. Bloomberg has been a focal point of attack this week, leaving Mr. Sanders relatively unscathed. Mr. Bloomberg might also be the focal point of the debate tonight.

The primary calendar offers Mr. Sanders’s rivals few natural opportunities to consolidate their support. Instead, he is heavily favored in Nevada, a state full of ***working-class***, urban and Hispanic voters — the type who have generally preferred Mr. Sanders in the early states and national polls. And while South Carolina, with a large proportion of African-American voters, is less favorable to Mr. Sanders, the state could wind up further fracturing the field by propping up a faltering Mr. Biden or elevating an additional candidate, Tom Steyer, who held a mere 2 percent in the recent national polls.

For many candidates, the debates represent their only realistic opportunity to fundamentally improve their position. If anything, the effect of Mr. Bloomberg’s colossal ad spending — including the possibility that it could be turned to attack Mr. Sanders — looms as the single likeliest factor to reshape the trajectory of the race in the final two weeks ahead of Super Tuesday.

Yet at the same time, the polls suggest that the Democratic path to the presidency may be tougher than ever against President Trump, whose approval ratings have improved to well within striking distance of re-election. They have reached 45.8 percent among registered voters [*in the FiveThirtyEight tracker*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html), while his disapproval has fallen to 50.1 percent.

The president’s improved standing is consistent with a long-term tendency for incumbent presidents’ approval ratings to increase ahead of Election Day, whether because of a strong economy or a helpful contrast with their rivals. There may also be factors specific to this president at play, like his recent acquittal in his Senate impeachment trial.

In a hypothetical head-to-head general election matchup, Mr. Sanders led Mr. Trump by an average of four points among registered voters in the new polls. Mr. Biden led by an average of seven points, and Mr. Bloomberg by five.

[*The NBC/WSJ poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) found that a combined 67 percent of voters said they either had reservations or were “very uncomfortable” with a socialist candidate, while 57 percent answered similarly about a candidate who had a heart attack in the last year. (Mr. Sanders calls himself a democratic socialist and had a heart attack last fall.) Forty-one percent had similar reservations about a self-funding billionaire.

Mr. Buttigieg and Ms. Klobuchar led the president by somewhat weaker three- and two-point margins. The better-known Ms. Warren led Mr. Trump by just one point, the weakest of the Democratic candidates tested.

The president might be better positioned against all of his possible rivals than these surveys might imply. These polls represent registered voters nationwide, rather than likely voters in the battleground states likeliest to decide the presidency.

It is far from obvious that a four-point lead for Democrats among registered voters nationwide would translate to victory among actual voters in the relatively white, ***working-class*** Midwestern battlegrounds.

PHOTO: Bernie Sanders campaigning in Las Vegas on Tuesday. The Nevada caucuses are Saturday.  (PHOTOGRAPH BY Patrick Semansky/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 19, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Staten Island House Where Black History Lives***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y1-GPV1-JBG3-608B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 7, 2022 Monday 17:38 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1756 words

**Byline:** Corey Kilgannon

**Highlight:** A 90-year-old former schoolteacher’s collection includes Muhammad Ali’s boxing shoes and Tuskegee Airmen headgear — but it also features Ku Klux Klan toys.

**Body**

In Elizabeth Meaders’s dining room, the horrors of slavery are displayed on the table: reward posters for the capture of people fleeing enslavement and the tools — a branding iron, wooden hobbles and a bullwhip — for punishing them.

In the room by her front door, an exhibit of military items used by Black soldiers includes headgear worn by Tuskegee Airmen in World War II and a parade helmet used by the famed buffalo soldiers in the 1800s.

In the living room, the couch is flanked by a life-size wax figure of the baseball slugger Hank Aaron and shelves of items honoring Black athletes, including a pair of Muhammad Ali’s tall white boxing shoes.

From the outside, Ms. Meaders’s home on Staten Island is unremarkable — a narrow, three-story box in the ***working-class*** neighborhood of Mariners Harbor. But to step inside, with her as your guide, is to journey through the Black American experience, from the horrors of slavery and the dream of the civil rights movement to the glory of stars like James Brown and Cab Calloway.

The collection of roughly 20,000 items that Ms. Meaders, a retired New York City schoolteacher, has been building for more than six decades is one of the largest collections of African American historical artifacts in the country.

Hundreds of items are arranged thematically throughout the house, turning it into something of a museum, if one that few people have ever seen in person.

“This is just the tip of the iceberg,” Ms. Meaders said recently while walking through the exhibits. Most of the collection, she added, is kept in storage crates in closets, the basement and the garage.

Ms. Meaders, a retired New York City schoolteacher, said she began collecting in her youth with mementos of Jackie Robinson and other Black athletes, then widened her collecting to “surround myself with things that lifted my spirits.”

But she is now 90, and with limited years and storage space left, she is finally [*selling her collection*](http://www.guernseys.com/v2/meaders_collection.html) in one bulk offering on March 15 at Guernsey’s auction house in Manhattan.

“I can’t go any further — the collection is outgrowing the house and pushing me out,” said Ms. Meaders, whose two daughters are not interested in taking it over. “I’m used up and the space is used up, so it has to be transferred into competent hands that can take it to the next level.”

Ms. Meaders said she was hoping to attract a buyer who would make the collection accessible to the public and to scholars, at a museum or university, for example.

“I hope the sale will give it a better life because it doesn’t belong in anybody’s house any longer — each piece needs a chance to sing its own song,” said Ms. Meaders, whose real wish is that the items become the basis of an African American museum in New York.

Many objects lack documented details on their provenance, authenticity and historical significance, leaving Ms. Meaders herself as the sole authority. She has made long video segments detailing the collection.

Arlan Ettinger, president of Guernsey’s, said he knew of “no other collection of this size focusing on Black history ever coming up for sale at auction before.”

“Crammed into this simple home is a collection that tells the whole saga of African American history, from the scourge of slavery to the struggle of civil rights, to Black soldiers in all of our wars from the Revolution through Vietnam,” said Mr. Ettinger, whose auction house has handled the estate sales of Duke Ellington, John Coltrane, Rosa Parks and Joe Frazier, as well as some Apollo Theater material.

[*Diane DeBlois*](https://www.ephemerasociety.org/tag/diane-deblois/), a co-owner of aGatherin’ ephemera sellers in West Sand Lake, N.Y., who appraised the collection at $10 million, said it was enhanced by the back story of a plucky schoolteacher who was resourceful enough to acquire items on a shoestring budget.

“She had to go toe-to-toe with some pretty impressive collectors to outbid them,” Ms. DeBlois said. “She raised money through bake sales and school raffles, all sorts of ways.”

Ms. Meaders said she funded her acquisitions by working several jobs at a time, as well as buying items on installment plans and borrowing against the value of her house.

“I’ve never been wealthy, but I refinanced my house a few times and ran up quite a bit of debt,” she said.

Randy F. Weinstein, founder of the [*W.E.B. Du Bois Center*](http://duboiscentergb.org/) in Great Barrington, Mass., appraised the collection at $7.5 million in 2009.

“I’ve seen great collections, but this was something in my wildest dreams I could never imagine, the vastness and depth of it,” he said.

Mr. Ettinger said he had already been in discussions with potential buyers, including several universities, and that it was possible a deal could be struck before the auction.

Often, he said, a philanthropist might buy such a collection to donate for the public good; that happened with the Rosa Parks estate, which was bought through Guernsey’s by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation in 2014 for a reported $4.5 million and donated to the Library of Congress.

Ms. Meaders, a history buff, said her collecting began with fan material related to her teenage idol, Jackie Robinson, who broke professional baseball’s color barrier when he joined the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947.

She began visiting sports memorabilia shows and then buying items honoring other Black athletes, like the boxer Joe Louis. An image of Crispus Attucks, believed to be the first American killed in the American Revolution, sparked an interest in Black military items, “and little by little I just expanded, and it became a labor of love,” she said.

Ms. Meaders’s ancestors, she said, include servants in abolitionists’ households in the 1700s and the last slave freed on Staten Island, in the mid-1800s.

Her grandfather, William A. Morris, owned an auction house on Staten Island and [*founded*](https://www.silive.com/specialreports/2011/03/civic_leader_william_a_morris.html) the island’s N.A.A.C.P. branch, she said. He later had a middle school named after him where Ms. Meaders taught history.

“I’ve struggled to tell a history that’s been either ignored or not told correctly, and it’s a history that’s directly related to me,” she said. “The more I found, the more I wanted because the whole thing became a huge puzzle and I began obsessively trying to fill in the missing pieces.”

A main goal was to educate people on forgotten Black stories.

“This is a motherlode of information, with so many stories that have never been told,” she said. “That’s the purpose of my collection: to educate, heal, inspire and empower.”

[*Wyatt Houston Day,*](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/swann-galleries-african-americana-_n_1311880) an historian and appraiser who has visited Ms. Meaders’s home, agrees.

“The thing that makes her collection so unique,” said Mr. Day, who is also a former specialist in African-Americana sales at Swann Auction Galleries in Manhattan, “is that she has a lot of the connective tissue that fill in the gaps in other accounts, small things you won’t find in other collections but that add the important details.”

For example, he said, “people talk about African Americans in the military, but she has an actual musket that would have been carried from a Black Civil War soldier.”

Ms. Meaders said she did very little buying online since the specialized items she was seeking were best found by looking through sale catalogs at auctions and constantly calling dealers.

She was also a regular at shows for antique vendors and sellers of historical, military, sports and other memorabilia.

At many sales, she said, “I was often the only Black woman there, and I was considered an oddball.”

Ms. Meaders has devoted her life to the collection, Mr. Day said: “When she started, no one knew who she was, and now she’s legendary in collecting circles — everybody knows Elizabeth.”

There were some items that her limited budget made out of reach. For example, when bidding by phone on one of the pens used to sign the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Ms. Meaders reluctantly withdrew when the bid went up to $8,000 with no installment plan available.

She still regrets it. “That would have been the highlight of my civil rights collection,” she said.

Down a narrow, creaky stairway to her basement is an exhibit that she calls “Civil Rights and Civil Wrongs.”

There is a Ku Klux Klan grand dragon robe and a K.K.K. brand water pistol for children. Next to the boiler are posters from Harlem’s famous Apollo Theater and a rocking chair that belonged to [*the pitcher Satchel Paige*](https://baseballhall.org/hall-of-famers/paige-satchel). Nearby is a golf bag that belonged to the [*pioneer Black golfer Charlie Sifford*](https://www.pgatour.com/players/player.02091.charles-sifford.html).

A treasured piece is an [*Army of the James Medal*](https://nmaahc.si.edu/object/nmaahc_2012.37ab#:~:text=After%20the%20battle%20of%20New,specifically%20for%20African%20American%20troops.) given by the white Civil War general Benjamin Butler to one of his Black soldiers.

Asked about the possibility of fire or burglars, she shrugged. “I hate to tell you,” she added, “but there aren’t too many people who would even know what they were looking at.”

Many items are one-of-a-kind, such as the hand-carved wooden mantelpiece depicting the [*abolitionist John Brown*](https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Brown-American-abolitionist). One item Ms. Meaders holds dear is a medal honoring Crispus Attucks that she said she acquired from a “top dealer who’s well known as a crank.”

“I had to go through hell to get it, but it was worth it,” she said.

Selling her collection will finally get Ms. Meaders some living space, but she admitted that it might not completely halt her collecting.

When a desired item came up at auction recently — a Ku Klux Klan robe made for a child — she resisted and instead implored a fellow collector to buy it.

“I think that even when I’m in my coffin and something comes up for auction,” she said, “I’ll probably toss a bid out.”

Audio produced by Adrienne Hurst.

Audio produced by Adrienne Hurst.

PHOTOS: A Jim Crow-era sign; A slave brand; An Army of the James Medal; A statue of Ida B. Wells; A John Brown candle holder; A Nazi flag captured by Black American troops in World War II; Muhammad Ali’s boxing boots; An event poster for a Ku Klux Klan “Kolossal Karnival”; A poster from the civil rights era; A bust of Paul Robeson; A 25th United States Colored Infantry Regiment hat (A22); “I hope the sale will give it a better life because it doesn’t belong in anybody’s house any longer — each piece needs a chance to sing its own song,” said Elizabeth Meaders, 90. (A22-A23); A civil-rights-era N.A.A.C.P. cap; A “store closed” sign after Martin Luther King Jr.’s assassination; A pamphlet from Henry Wallace’s 1948 presidential campaign; A Ku Klux Klan-branded toy water gun; A Vietnam-era antiwar hat; A Jim Crow-era bus sign; A whip used during slavery; A Ku Klux Klan quilt; A poster offering a reward for a runaway slave; A Molineaux vs. Cribb heavyweight bout commemorative pitcher; A buffalo soldier parade helmet (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DESEAN McCLINTON-HOLLAND FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A23)

**Load-Date:** June 28, 2023

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[***Lose Yourself, in Mom's Spaghetti***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64FC-XPK1-DXY4-X4PN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 2, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1476 words

**Byline:** By Luke Winkie

**Body**

Eminem opened a restaurant in Detroit. We checked it out.

DETROIT -- On Sept. 27, a strange 30-second film appeared on Eminem's YouTube channel: not a music video teaser, or the first few verses of a new rap single, but a quick-moving advertisement.

In the video, cartons brimming with marinara sauce spin hypnotically on checkered tablecloths. A voice-over rattles off vaguely Italian dishes: spaghetti, spaghetti and meatballs, and a '''sghetti sandwich'' -- a scoop of pasta squeezed between two pieces of buttery white bread. Eminem, dressed in a thin gold chain and an eggplant-colored flight jacket, holds up what the viewer can only assume are two middle fingers, their message censored by twin takeout containers bearing the phrase ''Mom's Spaghetti.''

Marshall Mathers, the man who brought white ***working-class*** angst to the top of the charts, was opening a restaurant.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Two days later, the rapper surprised fans at the grand opening in downtown Detroit, where he served heaping ladlefuls of pasta to a queue of customers that snaked around the block. A photo of the rapper standing behind the order window -- flipping the bird, of course -- quickly shot to the top of Reddit's front page.

Mom's Spaghetti is named for the famed first verse of ''Lose Yourself,'' a single written for the movie ''8 Mile'' that sold more than 10 million copies and earned Eminem a pair of Grammys in 2004. The lyrics are imbued with nauseating, do-or-die dread: Our protagonist is locked in a bathroom, drenched with sweat, washing off a regurgitated wad of pasta clinging to his hoodie. ''Knees weak, arms are heavy, there's vomit on his sweater already, mom's spaghetti.'' It was only a matter of time before the lyric became a meme.

Nearly two decades later, the restaurant appears to be Eminem's way of embracing -- or one-upping -- the joke.

On a visit to Mom's Spaghetti in December, three months after the initial fanfare, the place did not immediately register as a shrine to a rapper's career. Instead, I found myself at a small counter-service restaurant, tucked in an alley next to the Little Caesars World Headquarters. (Yes, the pizza chain.) I perused the abbreviated menu and placed my order at an outdoor cashier. Almost as soon as my credit card cleared, a steaming, carb-laden paper bag was handed to me through the window.

Afterward, I was escorted inside a gastropub called Union Assembly, where all of the food served at Mom's Spaghetti is prepared, to a tiny suite of tables and bar stools where customers can eat.

Here is where the Slim Shady aesthetic becomes apparent: Most of the ''E's'' on the menu and packaging have been turned backward, and the kitchen is made to look like a street corner bodega. I tucked into a booth, already overwhelmed, preparing for a long night in the afterlife of Eminem's cultural empire.

Curt Catallo, 54, is the owner, with Ann Stevenson, of Union Joints, which operates several restaurants around Detroit, including this one. He described Mom's Spaghetti as a ''true joint venture'' between his business and Eminem. The restaurant first appeared as a pop-up shop in 2017 and has been a fixture at the rapper's various festival performances since. (During the pandemic, Union Joints and Eminem's Shady Records delivered the pasta to frontline medical workers.)

Mr. Catallo said the restaurant's busiest periods occur ''postgame and pregame,'' where the staff harvests customers from the foot traffic pouring through Detroit's pro sports district. Spaghetti is not typically deployed as a takeout food -- noodles take a while to cook -- but Mr. Catallo's staff makes all the pasta a day ahead, then reheats the product in a pair of woks. He believes that method blesses the spaghetti with a delectable down-home texture.

''Today's spaghetti is better tomorrow,'' Mr. Catallo said.

I'd ordered the spaghetti and meatballs, which was served in an oyster pail and covered with a snowy dusting of Parmesan, as well as a 'sghetti sandwich. This is not Italian cooking, nor does it try to be. Instead, it might be best described as ... well, downright motherly. The greasy slop of the pasta, the sugary tang of the red sauce; it's the spaghetti that emerges from your pantry on the last night before a grocery trip. Mr. Catallo said the noodles possess an inscrutable leftover chemistry. He means that as an endorsement, and he should.

Eminem is not here, nor should he be expected anytime soon. Ian McManus, 22, who manages the Trailer -- a merchandise shop above the dining area -- told me the rapper has dropped by the restaurant a ''handful'' of times since it opened. ''He only lets a few of us know when he's coming,'' Mr. McManus said. ''And he only lets us know day-of. If he's coming through, I'll find out when I'm on my way downtown.''

A smattering of Eminem-themed pint glasses, T-shirts and sneakers filled the room, but the real pièce de résistance was at the back: the Robin costume from the music video for ''Without Me,'' encased in glass. The sound was the soundtrack to the year I turned 10; seeing a relic of it up close felt like being in the Louvre.

Eminem has been famous, and will remain famous, for a long time, but it has also been eight years since his last No. 1 hit. Perhaps that's why he's preserved himself in a mini-museum. The rapper is entering that vexing post-prime era that inevitably hunts down every enormously successful person. How should Eminem structure his third and fourth acts? Ideally with some humor and some grace. If Paul Newman could sell salad dressing and enjoy his golden years, maybe Marshall Mathers can do the same with spaghetti.

After all, the Eminem brand is still strong, even now. Misty Jesse, 49, and her 15-year-old son, Romeo Jesse, who were dining at Mom's Spaghetti that December night, told me they grew up with Eminem, which sounds confusing but is honestly quite plausible if you do the math. ''I saw him live at the old Detroit Tigers stadium,'' said Ms. Jesse, who made the trip to the restaurant from the Dearborn Heights suburbs so that Romeo could shop for some Eminem gear. ''It's crazy how it all circles back around.''

''She was surprised that he was one of the first people I started listening to,'' Romeo said. ''She's happy that we could bond over his music and sing along to it in the car.''

The Jesses are locals, which makes them outliers here. Almost everyone else inside the restaurant, save for the employees, was visiting Detroit for business, pleasure, or a combination of both. A trio of auditors from Atlanta crowded around a table glazed with spaghetti sauce; they were only in town for a few days, and they'd arrived at Mom's Spaghetti out of passive curiosity -- the same gravitational force that pulls New York City sightseers into the Times Square Madame Tussauds.

Morgan Martin, 28, said that Eminem's 2010 album ''Recovery'' got stuck in her car's CD player when she was in high school. For 10 years, she exclusively listened to that record as she drove around Georgia. Her friends claim that the experience endowed her with the ability to rap with a near-perfect Eminem cadence.

''I've since gotten a new car that connects to Bluetooth,'' Ms. Martin said, ''so now I'm learning more of his work.''

For her, Mom's Spaghetti was a destination. ''When I learned we were coming to Detroit, I knew where we were eating,'' she said.

Her friend and dinner date, Caylen Hemme, 27, was not apprised of that plan. ''I didn't know this was Eminem's restaurant,'' she said from across the table. ''I just saw that they had vegan meatballs.''

John Farran, a 32-year-old service engineer from Orlando, had dined at a high-end Italian restaurant the previous night. The experience, he said, paled in comparison what Mom's Spaghetti had to offer. ''Their sauce was like a soup,'' Mr. Farran said, ''plus they didn't give you bread.'' He then gestured toward the caramelized chunk of starch half-submerged in the noodles. ''It made the whole trip for us, pretty much,'' he said. ''Otherwise I wouldn't have had anything to look forward to.''

''No offense to Detroit,'' Mr. Farran said. ''Great city.''

Mr. Catallo, the restaurant operator, said Mom's Spaghetti is planning on expanding its menu. Soon there will be Bolognese sauce, from a recipe Mr. Mathers has taste tested. I imagined the rapper, whose career was once defined by rage and controversy, letting a meat sauce linger on his palate for a moment before giving it his stamp of approval. Could Eminem become a latter-day Jimmy Buffett, bringing Mom's Spaghetti to tourist districts around the country? He declined to be interviewed for this article, so I can't say for sure.

But I can tell you with certainty that on a cold night in Detroit, after scarfing down a pound of pasta, I felt changed. Knees weak, arms heavy.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/30/style/moms-spaghetti-eminem-detroit.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/30/style/moms-spaghetti-eminem-detroit.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Mom's Spaghetti is named after the first verse of Eminem's ''Lose Yourself.'' (ST1)

Top, Morgan Martin, left, Christopher O'Neal and Caylen Hemme at Mom's Spaghetti while in Detroit for a business trip. Above, Emily Davenport preparing an order. Left, concert passes displayed at the Trailer, a shop above Mom's. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELAINE CROMIE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (ST2)

**Load-Date:** January 2, 2022

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[***Map of Donors Reveals a Split On Class Lines***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6152-12T1-JBG3-63H3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 26, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1747 words

**Byline:** By Shane Goldmacher, Ella Koeze and Rachel Shorey

**Body**

Joe Biden has outraised President Trump on the strength of some of the wealthiest and most educated ZIP codes in the United States, running up the fund-raising score in cities and suburbs so resoundingly that he collected more money than Mr. Trump on all but two days in the last two months, according to a New York Times analysis of $1.8 billion donated by 7.6 million people since April.

The data reveals, for the first time, not only when Mr. Biden decisively overtook Mr. Trump in the money race -- it happened the day Senator Kamala Harris joined the ticket -- but also what corners of the country, geographically and demographically, powered his remarkable surge.

The findings paint a portrait of two candidates who are, in many ways, financing their campaigns from two different Americas.

It is not just that much of Mr. Biden's strongest support comes overwhelmingly from the two coasts, which it does. Or that Mr. Trump's financial base is in Texas, which it is. It is that across the country, down to the ZIP code level, some of the same cleavages that are driving the 2020 election -- along class and education lines -- are also fundamentally reshaping how the two parties pay for their campaigns.

For years, affluent and college-educated voters, mostly white, had been the base of the Republican Party. Exit polls showed Republicans winning college graduates nationally from 1988 to 2004, and again in 2012. Voters who earned at least $100,000 have historically sided with most Republican presidential candidates by comfortable margins, too.

But under Mr. Trump, Republicans have hemorrhaged support from white voters with college degrees, who polls show have been repelled by his embrace of a politics of cultural division and racial grievance.

The fund-raising data suggests that erosion is not only harming the party's electoral prospects but also its economic bottom line.

Mr. Trump lost the money race in 2016, too, but he mobilized a base of white ***working-class*** voters then that offset his losses among college-educated voters. Now he is trying to leverage the powers of incumbency to do that to an even greater degree. But win or lose, Mr. Trump has accelerated a political realignment.

In ZIP codes with a median household income of at least $100,000, Mr. Biden smashed Mr. Trump in fund-raising, $486 million to only $167 million -- accounting for almost his entire financial edge. In the rest of the country, the two were knotted closely together.

It was a similar story in the most educated pockets of the country, only even more pronounced.

Of the ZIP codes where at least 65 percent of people had graduated from college -- just over 1,000 out of nearly 32,000 populated ZIP codes that reported donations -- Mr. Biden outraised Mr. Trump $478 million to $104 million. Below that education level, Mr. Trump was ahead by nearly $40 million.

''Alienating white college-educated voters means more than just losing their votes; it's also literally costing them money,'' said Amy Walter, the national editor of the nonpartisan Cook Political Report. ''These are the kinds of places that, not that long ago, hosted high-dollar fund-raisers exclusively for G.O.P. candidates. Now, those donors are sitting in their living rooms, tapping out donations to Democrats around the country via their smartphones.''

The analysis looked at more than 25 million donations from April 1 to Oct. 14, merging Federal Election Commission filings from the campaigns of Mr. Trump and Mr. Biden, their joint operations with the Republican National Committee and Democratic National Committee, and data from the donation-processing sites WinRed and ActBlue.

The analysis does not include direct donations to the parties themselves, but it covers more than 90 percent of contributions to Mr. Trump, Mr. Biden and the committees directly linked to them, from $1 gifts to checks of more than $700,000. The average donation to those committees was $71 for Mr. Trump and $76 for Mr. Biden.

Over all, Mr. Biden raised $1.07 billion and Mr. Trump $734 million over the last six months in the 32,000 populated ZIP codes, the analysis shows.

The period analyzed is not a perfect snapshot. Mr. Trump was seeking money from donors, including in wealthy enclaves, in the months before Mr. Biden first emerged as the presumptive Democratic nominee. But during the six months in which the choice was between these two men, the disparity was yawning.

'Disposable income and deep antipathy'

Whit Ayres, a Republican pollster who studies demographic trends, said ''the donations mirror voting patterns,'' as white voters with college degrees have swung sharply toward the Democrats in the last decade, with the trend expected to accelerate further in 2020 with Mr. Trump on the ticket.

''It makes perfect sense,'' Mr. Ayres said of the donation data. ''Basically, Republicans have traded larger, more upscale, fast-growing suburban counties for smaller, down-scale, slower-growing rural counties. That's not a promising trend for future victories.''

In Georgia, the data shows that many of the suburban ZIP codes surrounding Atlanta, which are helping turn the state into a true presidential battleground for the first time in decades, are solidly Democratic when it comes to the number of donors, all the way deep into Gwinnett County, a swing county trending Democratic.

In Pennsylvania, the vote-rich counties outside Philadelphia are overwhelmingly blue, with virtually every ZIP code counting more Biden donors than Trump ones, including in Bucks County, where Mr. Biden campaigned on Saturday and where Mrs. Clinton won by less than one percentage point four years ago.

And in Virginia, the demographic march of the suburbs and exurbs outside Washington, D.C., that have turned the state reliably Democratic is apparent in the Biden-leaning ZIP codes for donors that stretch nearly to the West Virginia border.

These political and fund-raising trends underscore the jeopardy that Mr. Trump has created for himself and his party: Rather than enjoying the usual advantages of incumbency, the president is struggling to stanch the bleeding for the G.O.P. in the suburbs. His conduct, rhetoric and record are imperiling some traditionally red Senate and House seats because of the realignment of college-educated voters toward moderate Democrats emphasizing issues like health care and economic growth.

''These voters with lots of disposable income and deep antipathy to Trump can channel their frustration into Biden's campaign coffers,'' said Ms. Walter of the Cook Political Report.

The median household in the United States was $68,703 in 2019. In ZIP codes above that level, Mr. Biden outraised Mr. Trump by $389.1 million. Below that level, Mr. Trump was actually ahead by $53.4 million.

Anna Greenberg, a Democratic pollster, said the shift of more educated voters toward her party was a boost ''in the short term,'' especially financially.

''To have people with more resources to be able to give -- and not just once, but over and over again in lots of different places -- it creates an advantage for Democrats,'' Ms. Greenberg said, citing the online culture of donating to multiple candidates that has lifted once-obscure Senate Democratic candidates.

Of course, neither party wants to be seen chiefly as the champion of the well-to-do. Mr. Biden has emphasized his blue-collar roots and upbringing in Scranton, Pa. Mr. Trump, after falling behind in the money chase, has attacked Mr. Biden as beholden to the donor class. ''Joe, you have raised a lot of money, tremendous amounts of money,'' Mr. Trump said in last week's debate. ''And every time you raise money, deals are made, Joe.''

Ms. Greenberg said there were risks if her party fell out of touch with the values of the ***working class***, both white and nonwhite. ''About 60 percent of this country is still without a college degree,'' she noted.

A pivotal turning point

For months, after Mr. Biden had emerged as the presumptive Democratic nominee, he and Mr. Trump competed closely for donations, despite the president's three-year head start. But that all changed on Aug. 11, when Mr. Biden named Ms. Harris as his running mate.

That day, Mr. Biden raised five times as much as Mr. Trump and nearly repeated that margin the day after. In the 65 days from the formation of the Biden-Harris team until Oct. 14, that Democratic team outraised Mr. Trump on 63 of them, according to the data.

The only two exceptions were the night of Mr. Trump's convention speech, when Republican giving surged, and the day after his hospitalization with the coronavirus, when Democratic giving waned.

In those 65 days, Mr. Biden built a financial advantage of more than $300 million.

All told, the 2020 donation data shows that 28 states donated more to Mr. Trump, compared to 22 supporting Mr. Biden in the last six months. But the national map of donation data still appears red because Democratic dollars -- like Democratic votes -- are far more concentrated in denser and wealthier parts of the country.

The most lopsided state in Mr. Biden's favor is Massachusetts, with more than five times as much money, $55.7 million, going to the Democrats than the Republicans. The most Republican-leaning state for donations was Mississippi, with nearly four times as much money, $4.9 million, going to Mr. Trump.

In terms of dollars, Mr. Trump's greatest edge came from Texas (he netted $48.3 million more there than Mr. Biden), while Mr. Biden's came from California ($167.3 million more than Mr. Trump).

In fact, Mr. Biden's entire financial edge can be accounted for through just four states: California, New York, Massachusetts and Washington.

And within those and other blue states, Mr. Biden's hauls are particularly concentrated in big cities and suburbs. One Upper West Side ZIP code -- 10024 -- accounted for more than $8 million for Mr. Biden, and New York City in total delivered $85.6 million for him -- more than he raised in every state other than California.

One of the most closely divided states in terms of cash given also happens to be one of the most heavily contested battlegrounds, North Carolina, that could determine both the presidency and control of the Senate. There, Mr. Biden's $18.9 million narrowly edged out Mr. Trump's $17.9 million.Additional reporting by Lazaro Gamio.Note: Information about donors giving $200 or less by check or through the campaigns' online stores is not available.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/25/us/politics/the-two-americas-financing-the-trump-and-biden-campaigns.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/25/us/politics/the-two-americas-financing-the-trump-and-biden-campaigns.html)

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[***Transforming a Nashville Enclave Leveled by Tragedy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64FC-XPK1-DXY4-X4KX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 2, 2022 Sunday

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**Length:** 1567 words

**Byline:** By Rick Rojas and Jamie McGee

**Body**

Since the explosion last Christmas, the city has grappled with how rebuilding will fit into its larger ambitions of transforming downtown. The hope is to draw more than just tourists.

NASHVILLE -- Lower Broadway is a never-ending party, the teeming heart of the Nashville that tourists come looking for: bright lights and bars overflowing with music and crowds that can rival those in Times Square. But just around the corner, some in the city see an urgent need -- and an unexpected opportunity -- to create something different.

A year ago, on Christmas morning, a man enmeshed in a web of bizarre conspiracy theories detonated a recreational vehicle packed with explosives. No one other than the perpetrator was killed, but a stretch of Second Avenue -- a tree-lined row of restaurants, bars, shops and lofts in some of the city's oldest buildings -- was wiped out. A gaping void suddenly emerged in the center of Nashville.

It was a painful addition to the roster of recent setbacks the city has endured, including a devastating tornado in 2020 and deadly flooding in March. But the challenge of rebuilding Second Avenue has also led civic leaders to confront the side effects of years of extraordinary growth.

''Seize the moment to make something happen,'' John Cooper, Nashville's mayor, said in an interview, describing an expanded vision for downtown, more focused on improving the quality of life for city residents. He noted that there had been talk for years about overhauling Second Avenue, yet it had never materialized before the bombing.

Nashville has, in many ways, enjoyed the fruits of its ascendance. Major companies, including automakers and technology firms, have been lured by an accommodating business climate. Shiny glass office towers have popped up all over the city, as have massive upscale apartment complexes promising amenities like quartz countertops, resort-style pools and -- this being Nashville -- community recording studios.

Still, as in Austin, Texas, and other midsize cities that have seen similar influxes, that expansion has also brought snarled traffic, staggering housing prices and deep concerns about who has paid the price for Nashville's prosperity.

City officials and developers have ambitions of turning downtown into more of a neighborhood, a hub of commerce but also a place where a community can flourish. Yet that vision has sometimes been stymied by a more complicated reality: The raucous hordes of revelers and daily parade of party vehicles might be a sign of one way downtown is thriving. But they are also a source of exasperation for people who live and work in the city.

Second Avenue, they hope, could be a solution.

''Something that is more family friendly, more Nashvillian friendly,'' said Ron Gobbell, the project manager for the revitalization effort, describing plans for a gathering place for people looking to dine or socialize in a setting that is ''a little less intense.''

The rebuilt Second Avenue, according to plans rolled out in recent weeks, will be friendlier to pedestrians, with a lush canopy of trees, sidewalk dining and a spacious walkway that opens the avenue up to the Cumberland River a block away.

It fits into a broader effort to transform the river and make sure that downtown is powered by more than tourism, with plans for mixed-use retail and residential developments and for Oracle, the giant software company, to construct a sprawling new campus.

Nashville is grappling with challenges familiar to cities that have been remolded by growth: Economic disparities widen. The limits of infrastructure are tested. The character at the root of its appeal becomes strained by the demands of development, a tension evident in persisting worries over the condition of Nashville's soul.

''I think every city that is growing at the pace that we are has to struggle with making sure it keeps its identity,'' said Bert Mathews, a developer who once owned a building on Second Avenue that he sold years before the blast. ''We are really struggling to hold on to what is critical and what's important.''

For years, downtown has been one of the clearest signs of Nashville's upward trajectory. Decades ago, music venues shared blighted streets with dingy pool halls and sex shops. But as the number of tourists multiplied -- rising to more than 15 million a year just before the pandemic, compared to two million in 1998 -- Lower Broadway was transformed.

Alongside old honky tonks, country music stars opened bars where patrons spread out over three stories or more, and downtown is filled with new restaurants and luxury hotels.

A prevailing concern has been an unevenness in reaping the benefits of growth. The Nashville Scene, the city's alternative newspaper, started selling a T-shirt declaring ''RIP Old Nashville'' with a lengthy lineup of music venues and beloved haunts that have not survived.

Second Avenue has not been immune: One fixture, B.B. King's Blues Club, is not returning. Old Spaghetti Factory, a restaurant that opened there in 1979, had its lease terminated by its landlord. ''I'm not totally sure we can afford to be downtown,'' said Dean Griffith, the president of the company. ''It's really expensive right now.''

Mayor Cooper said that affordable housing has been a priority. Tens of millions of dollars have been allocated to build or improve affordable housing developments, much of it located in the city's core.

Activists have been advocating for more, as rampant gentrification and a soaring cost of living has had a disproportionate impact on ***working class*** and minority communities. Even as Nashville's population has climbed, surpassing Memphis as Tennessee's most populous city as it reached about 700,000 residents, the African American population has spiraled downward by 20 percentage points or more in some historically Black neighborhoods.

''Black people are not sharing in the prosperity,'' said Jessica Williams, the communications director for the Equity Alliance, an organization advocating for more opportunity and a better quality of life.

In North Nashville, her neighborhood and a cultural hub for Black life in the city, she has seen new houses cropping up that are too expensive for most residents already in the neighborhood. Many of the newcomers she sees are white.

Nashville has undoubtedly become more diverse. In the southeastern corner of the city, Nolensville Pike has become a delectable corridor where fast-food chains and one of Nashville's original purveyors of hot chicken are wedged into shopping centers with Peruvian chicken spots, Salvadoran pupuserias and markets serving Kurdish and Indian communities.

But downtown, Ms. Williams said, can feel homogeneous. ''When you go there, it's white,'' she said. ''These are white spaces.''

Officials and developers have been laying the groundwork to broaden the appeal of downtown and to make it the sort of urban environment where residents could live and work. The plan is meant to reduce the load on area roadways and bring even more vigor to the city's core.

One of the most ambitious development projects -- a $450 million complex with major brands and outposts of popular local restaurants, office space, housing and a museum of African American music -- opened this year. (Monthly rent for the apartments range from just over $2,000 for a studio to more than $14,000 for a three-bedroom penthouse.)

There are plans to add thousands of apartments and condominiums. The City Council has also adopted measures to rein in the proliferation of party vehicles, which have been popular with tourists but annoying to many residents.

Revamping Second Avenue had not figured into their designs. But then the bombing forced officials to recalibrate.

Around dawn on Christmas morning last year, police officers were called to the area and found a recreational vehicle parked outside of an AT&T communications hub. A speaker blared the Petula Clark song ''Downtown'' interspersed with a countdown and warning that the vehicle would soon explode. The officers rushed to roust nearby residents out of their homes and clear the avenue.

The concussion unleashed a wave of destruction through downtown. Telecommunications were disrupted across the region for days. Dozens of buildings were destroyed or damaged, including warehouses and storefronts from the Victorian era built in the years after the Civil War, dealing an agonizing blow to historic preservationists.

''It felt like almost a continuation of the nightmare of Covid, tornado -- all those different sort of things,'' Mr. Mathews said of the litany of hardship Nashville had weathered in the months before the bombing. ''How many unnatural things can happen to our community? And how do we recover?''

Amanda Topping, one of the police officers who was there when the bomb went off, is eager to see the area rebuilt.

''I live here, I have family here, nieces and nephews,'' she said. ''I want to be able to bring them downtown to a new park, restaurants, the outdoor dining.''

There is a fear that something gets lost when an area becomes dominated by crowds who are there for a good time but are ultimately just passing through, with little interest in sustaining a community.

''You end up with just Bourbon Street or Times Square,'' said Ray Hensler, a developer. ''I just don't think most Nashvillians want to see that happen.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/01/us/nashville-bombing-recovery.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/01/us/nashville-bombing-recovery.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A performance at Cerveza Jack's on Second Avenue. Developers envision a street friendlier to pedestrians, with a spacious walkway that opens the avenue up to the Cumberland River a block away. (PHOTOGRAPH BY WILLIAM DESHAZER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Second Avenue after an explosion in 2020, above left, and this month. The street wasn't included in plans to revitalize downtown, but the bombing changed that. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK HUMPHREY/ASSOCIATED PRESS

WILLIAM DESHAZER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Nashville Finds Opportunity in the Hole a Bomber Left in the Heart of the City***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64F5-CTN1-JBG3-624N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Highlight:** Since the explosion last Christmas, the city has grappled with how rebuilding will fit into its larger ambitions of transforming downtown. The hope is to draw more than just tourists.

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It was a painful addition to the roster of [*recent setbacks the city has endured*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/28/us/nashville-bombing-tornado-pandemic.html), including a [*devastating tornado*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/03/us/nashville-tornado-live.html) in 2020 and [*deadly flooding*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/28/us/nashville-flooding.html) in March. But the challenge of rebuilding Second Avenue has also led civic leaders to confront the side effects of years of extraordinary growth.

“Seize the moment to make something happen,” John Cooper, Nashville’s mayor, said in an interview, describing an expanded vision for downtown, more focused on improving the quality of life for city residents. He noted that there had been talk for years about overhauling Second Avenue, yet it had never materialized before the bombing.

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But downtown, Ms. Williams said, can feel homogeneous. “When you go there, it’s white,” she said. “These are white spaces.”

Officials and developers have been laying the groundwork to broaden the appeal of downtown and to make it the sort of urban environment where residents could live and work. The plan is meant to reduce the load on area roadways and bring even more vigor to the city’s core.

One of the most ambitious development projects — [*a $450 million complex*](https://www.wsmv.com/news/fifth-broadway-opens-after-years-in-the-making/article_cd227bee-7d54-11eb-81a0-c33ba8ccb07a.html) with major brands and outposts of popular local restaurants, office space, housing and a museum of African American music — opened this year. (Monthly rent for the apartments range from just over $2,000 for a studio to more than $14,000 for a three-bedroom penthouse.)

There are plans to add thousands of apartments and condominiums. The City Council has also adopted measures to rein in the proliferation of party vehicles, which have been popular with tourists but annoying to many residents.

Revamping Second Avenue had not figured into their designs. But then the bombing forced officials to recalibrate.

Around dawn on Christmas morning last year, police officers were called to the area and found a recreational vehicle parked outside of an AT&amp;T communications hub. A speaker blared the Petula Clark song “Downtown” interspersed with a countdown and warning that the vehicle would soon explode. The officers rushed to roust nearby residents out of their homes and clear the avenue.

The concussion unleashed a wave of destruction through downtown. Telecommunications were disrupted across the region for days. Dozens of buildings were destroyed or damaged, including [*warehouses and storefronts from the Victorian era*](https://nashvilledowntown.com/go/second-avenue) built in the years after the Civil War, dealing an agonizing blow to historic preservationists.

“It felt like almost a continuation of the nightmare of Covid, tornado — all those different sort of things,” Mr. Mathews said of the litany of hardship Nashville had weathered in the months before the bombing. “How many unnatural things can happen to our community? And how do we recover?”

Amanda Topping, one of the police officers who was there when the bomb went off, is eager to see the area rebuilt.

“I live here, I have family here, nieces and nephews,” she said. “I want to be able to bring them downtown to a new park, restaurants, the outdoor dining.”

There is a fear that something gets lost when an area becomes dominated by crowds who are there for a good time but are ultimately just passing through, with little interest in sustaining a community.

“You end up with just Bourbon Street or Times Square,” said Ray Hensler, a developer. “I just don’t think most Nashvillians want to see that happen.”

PHOTOS: A performance at Cerveza Jack’s on Second Avenue. Developers envision a street friendlier to pedestrians, with a spacious walkway that opens the avenue up to the Cumberland River a block away. (PHOTOGRAPH BY WILLIAM DESHAZER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Second Avenue after an explosion in 2020, above left, and this month. The street wasn’t included in plans to revitalize downtown, but the bombing changed that. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK HUMPHREY/ASSOCIATED PRESS; WILLIAM DESHAZER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The Cities Reinventing Public Transit; Climate Fwd:***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63SN-1XJ1-DXY4-X2DS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** CLIMATE

**Length:** 1244 words

**Highlight:** Greener transportation is one of the keys to slowing climate change, and that means more than electric cars. Here’s how several cities are starting to electrify mass transit.

**Body**

Greener transportation is one of the keys to slowing climate change, and that means more than electric cars. Here’s how several cities are starting to electrify mass transit.

We’re also covering the California oil spill, a major report on the state of the world’s coral reefs, and the very complicated preparations for a U.N climate summit in Scotland.

We’ve been reading a lot about electric cars lately, for good reason. But that made me wonder: What does the future look like for billions of people around the world who can’t afford to buy an electric car — or a car period?

I started making calls. I learned that cities on every continent are wrestling with this question. Some of them are even wrestling with the tough political question of whether so much of their public space should be devoted to cars at all.

This is important now because cities, where more than half of humanity lives, produce more than two-thirds of the world’s greenhouse gases. Transportation accounts for a very large share of that, sometimes the largest share. So, to slow [*climate change*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/07/technology/google-youtube-ads-climate-change-misinformation.html), cities have to quickly shift away from fossil fuels.

I also learned that many cities, rich and not-so-rich, big and small, are turning to a relatively simple solution: They’re plugging in their public transit.

Berlin is reviving electric tram lines that were ripped out when the Berlin Wall went up. Bogotá, the Colombian capital, is building cable cars that cut through the clouds to connect ***working-class*** communities perched on faraway hills. Bergen, a city by the fjords in western Norway, is moving its public ferries away from diesel and onto batteries.

On the menu of things that can address climate change, this is a low hanging fruit. It’s a way to cut a big share of emissions. And it has the added benefit of making even cities cleaner and quieter.

You can [*read the full article here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/03/climate/cities-public-transit-electric-tram-ferry-bus-cable-car.html).

A physics Nobel for climate research

Three scientists shared the Nobel Prize in Physics this week for work studying [*humanity’s role in climate change*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/05/science/nobel-prize-physics-manabe-klaus-parisi.html). Their discoveries “demonstrate that our knowledge about the climate rests on a solid scientific foundation,” the committee said.

From the Opinion section: Don’t blame the greens

An energy crunch and a harsh winter could produce a [*populist backlash against climate policies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/05/opinion/energy-climate-iran-nuclear.html?campaign_id=9&amp;emc=edit_nn_20211006&amp;instance_id=42118&amp;nl=the-morning&amp;regi_id=6570719&amp;segment_id=70758&amp;te=1&amp;user_id=8fe5e6f6566b61b5690ff7684ae54e11), the Times columnist Thomas Friedman writes.

Mapping the California oil spill

Satellites have emerged in the past few years as a valuable tool in climate: They can spot large leaks of methane, a potent greenhouse gas, from oil and gas sites. They can also track [*deforestation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/01/climate/cop26-deforestation.html). And, since 2018, NOAA has issued reports on oil slicks in United States waters based on satellite images.

We used those reports to map the recent oil spill off California’s coast, caused by a pipeline failure that released at least 126,000 gallons of oil into the Pacific Ocean. We also mapped California’s offshore oil and gas infrastructure, all of it installed decades ago.

If you[*take a look at our article*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/10/05/climate/california-oil-spill-map.html), you can see where the old platforms and pipelines are, and how tides carried the slick closer to the coastline.

Quotable: “When you’re talking about platforms that have been in place for 30 or 40 years, there’s going to be wear and tear,” said John B. Smith, a former official in the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. “Over time, the risk of spills goes up.”

Related: The spill has renewed [*calls for a drilling ban*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/04/us/california-oil-spill-beach.html) in California.

Climate change is devastating coral reefs

Anyone who has snorkeled over a coral reef knows their otherworldly allure. They are like underwater fish cities, teeming with life. Reefs support a whopping 25 percent of all marine species. In doing so, they support hundreds of millions of humans, too.

But coral reefs are one of the ecosystems most at risk from climate change. Too much heat can stress corals, causing them to expel the symbiotic algae that live in their tissues. This is called bleaching, because the algae give corals their color. Corals can recover over time if circumstances improve, but climate change is making conditions worse.

Every so often, an international coalition of scientists have analyzed the state of the world’s coral. Their latest report, released Monday, was the first in 13 years. The main takeaway: The world [*lost about 14 percent of its coral reefs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/04/climate/coral-reefs-climate-change.html) in the decade after 2009.

Quotable: “Coral reefs are the canary in the coal mine telling us how quickly it can go wrong,” said David Obura, one of the report’s editors.

Also important this week:

* The oil and gas industry is using paid posts on Facebook as part of a broad effort to [*undermine climate legislation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/30/climate/api-exxon-biden-climate-bill.html) in Congress.

1. The Biden administration has restored protections for migratory birds that were [*weakened under President Donald Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/29/climate/biden-birds-protection.html).
2. The Senate has confirmed Tracy Stone-Manning, President Biden’s pick to lead the [*Bureau of Land Management*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/30/climate/tracy-stone-manning-blm.html).
3. Native Americans have survived in the arid mesas of the Southwest for centuries. Now, a [*megadrought in the region*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/02/us/arizona-megadrought.html)is testing their resilience.
4. Climate change helped energize young voters in [*Germany’s recent election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/03/world/europe/germany-elections-young-voters-greens.html), polls suggest.
5. A drone vessel has captured stunning video from the center of a [*Category 4 hurricane*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/03/us/saildrone-boat-hurricane-video.html) in the Atlantic.

And finally:

How to hold a climate summit in a pandemic? Carefully.

Organizing a huge international climate summit is always difficult. Holding one in the midst of a global pandemic is an even bigger challenge.

As [*I reported this week with my colleague Somini Sengupta*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/05/climate/cop26-glasgow-climate-covid.html), that’s exactly what’s happening in less than a month. Starting on Oct. 31, about 20,000 people from all over the world are expected to gather in Glasgow for United Nations climate talks.

But as the coronavirus pandemic drags on with new variants, people from some of the most vulnerable countries in the world still don’t have access to vaccines. That means U.N. officials and the British government are still struggling to ensure a safe two-week conference.

Here are some key points about safety measures for the meeting, the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties, or COP26.

* Delegates are not required to be vaccinated. The United Nations does not require it and British officials have said there is no surefire way to verify proof of vaccination.

1. The British government has promised to help get a vaccine for any delegate who wants one.
2. Anyone attending COP26 will be required to show a daily negative Covid-19 test. The tests will be provided, but organizers are not yet sure how they will be distributed.
3. Those coming from countries that Britain has placed on its [*“red list”*](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-to-england-from-another-country-during-coronavirus-covid-19) because of high infection rates must quarantine upon arrival for either five or 10 days, depending on vaccination status.

The difficulties have caused some to question whether huge in-person conferences are worthwhile. Richard J.T. Klein, a senior research fellow at the Stockholm Environment Institute, said it’s a question worth considering, even after the pandemic ends.

“Even if we all can meet again in person,” he said, “I think a question that we should ask ourselves is, ‘Do we want to meet again with 30,000 people in one place?’”

If you’re not getting Climate Fwd: in your inbox, you [*can sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/climate-change)

We’d love your feedback on the newsletter. We read every message, and reply to many! Please email thoughts and suggestions to [*climateteam@nytimes.com*](mailto:climateteam@nytimes.com?subject=Newsletter%20Feedback).

PHOTO: Cable cars now serve neighborhoods in Bogotá, Colombia, that previously relied on dirty, slow diesel buses. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Federico Rios for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 1, 2021

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[***Another Caucus Nears, But Nevada Has Little In Common With Iowa***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y6W-N3Y1-JBG3-610H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 15, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 20

**Length:** 1351 words

**Byline:** By Isabella Grullón Paz

**Body**

Nevada is more diverse than Iowa and in many ways more reflective of the Democratic Party. And it has a different take on how caucuses should work.

After the chaos in Iowa, Nevada Democrats want to show the country what a caucus should look like.

Nevada holds the next Democratic nominating contest, on Feb. 22, and the differences with Iowa will go far beyond how the results are tabulated. Nevada's caucuses will be the first to offer early voting, which begins Saturday. Many caucus sites will be on the Las Vegas Strip to cater to the state's large urban population. And this year's caucuses will be trilingual.

Perhaps most significant, the caucuses will simply look different: Iowa is more than 90 percent white, but Nevada's population is nearly 30 percent Latino and 10 percent black. Asian-Americans are the fastest-growing ethnic group in Clark County, which includes Las Vegas. Caucus cards will be printed in Tagalog to serve a large Filipino-American population.

Nevada became one of the Democrats' four early-voting states in 2008, a relative newcomer compared with Iowa, which has held the first-in-the-nation caucuses since the 1970s. The move was championed by former Senator Harry Reid, who argued that Nevada was a better model of what America looks like. ''I don't think it matters what happens in Iowa or New Hampshire because those states are not representative of the country anymore,'' he said last year.

Now, with critics noting that Iowa bears little resemblance to a diverse Democratic Party -- and with many party leaders contemplating a calendar change after the botched caucuses there -- Nevada is branding itself as the more accessible, representative caucus state.

The caucuses next week will pose a test for former Mayor Pete Buttigieg and Senator Amy Klobuchar, who are coming out of Iowa and New Hampshire, also largely white, with political momentum but who have yet to make inroads with nonwhite voters. Senator Bernie Sanders, the winner in New Hampshire, could benefit; he has led among Latino voters in many polls.

''Nevada is arguably the first true indicator of the electability of these Democratic candidates,'' said Dan Lee, an assistant professor of political science at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. ''If a candidate like Buttigieg wins Iowa, what does that say? That he has the support of a lot of white voters. That doesn't mean he's going to do well in Nevada.''

Iowa and New Hampshire have set expectations for decades, Professor Lee said. But Nevada opens a sequence of far more diverse contests, including South Carolina, where African-American voters are expected to make up a majority of the Democratic electorate, and the 15 Super Tuesday states and territories.

''I think that Nevada has a really unique story to tell for any candidate that wins here,'' said Shelby Wiltz, the caucus director for the Nevada Democratic Party. ''The states that follow Nevada are just as diverse, so we can offer a unique perspective for candidates and how they'll fare in the rest of the primary calendar and on Election Day.''

Beyond the differences in racial makeup between Nevada and Iowa, there are economic and geographical differences as well. Nevada, anchored by Las Vegas, is a service-industry state, with much of its labor force working in areas like food preparation, sales, transportation and maintenance. That reflects an American ***working class*** that is increasingly based in the service sector. Iowa has a much larger manufacturing sector, an industry more associated with what the ***working class*** used to look like.

Roughly 19 percent of Nevada's population was born outside the United States, the fifth largest share in the country; in Iowa, the share is about 5 percent, according to the Census Bureau.

Organized labor is a huge political force in Nevada: In 2019, union members accounted for 14.6 percent of workers in the state. The Culinary Workers Local 226, which represents tens of thousands of workers in Las Vegas, has helped set up early-voting sites for casino and hotel employees.

That union's endorsement helped Barack Obama win the Nevada caucuses in 2008. But on Thursday, the union announced it would not endorse a candidate in this year's contest.

Alana Mounce, the executive director of the Nevada Democratic Party, said it was working closely with organizations like the culinary workers' union to ''reach voters we may miss otherwise or that campaigns miss in their outreach.''

About 60 percent of Nevada voters cast their ballots early in general elections, Ms. Mounce said. It made sense, she said, to add early voting to the caucus process.

''We are finding opportunities to ensure that every community has options for participation and that we are really finding ways to engage people who traditionally haven't had their voices heard in this process,'' she said.

From Saturday through Tuesday, Nevada Democrats can vote early in more than 80 locations. They can go to any early-voting location in their county; many of them are on the Las Vegas Strip, and a 24-hour voting site behind the Bellagio Hotel caters to casino and hotel workers. The party also set up an early-voting site at a Cardenas Market in East Las Vegas, a predominantly Latino area.

Voters will be able to ask for preference cards in English, Spanish or Tagalog and rank up to five candidates. The state party will then transmit those results to precinct captains on caucus day.

''I think campaigns need to understand that in order to be successful here in Nevada, not only do you need to engage with every single community, but you need to hire staff that can work and engage in those communities in English or Spanish,'' Ms. Wiltz, the caucus director, said.

Ms. Mounce said the party had been working with community groups, unions and other organizations to train campaigns, voters and volunteers to work with a multi-language caucus.

''If you're a candidate that does well in Nevada, you can tell voters that you're a candidate that can beat Donald Trump because of our diversity and because of our electorate looking like the rest of the country,'' she added.

Seeking to avoid Iowa's fate, the Nevada party has abandoned its plans to use the app technology that caused so many problems in the caucuses last week. Officials announced Thursday that they planned to provide precinct chairs with iPads and would rely on a calculator and Google forms for tabulations, but the plan has done little to soothe anxious campaigns.

Creating a political culture around caucuses in Nevada is hard, to say the least.

''Nevadans aren't as politically engaged as they are in Iowa and New Hampshire. Both of those states have been early states for decades,'' Professor Lee said. ''It's part of their culture to get that political attention and to be engaged, especially in Iowa.''

Professor Lee said Nevada was a transient state, with people moving in and out frequently. That usually leads to a lack of engagement among voters and low turnout, he added.

''Running a campaign is a lot harder in a state like Nevada versus Iowa or New Hampshire, because you've got to run a bilingual campaign and you have to work harder to reach voters, and even harder to actually convince those voters to caucus,'' he said.

But the campaigns can make a difference. ''Looking at the 2018 midterms, turnout in Nevada was actually quite high because candidates were running really robust campaigns in Nevada to get people engaged,'' Professor Lee said. In 2018, 63 percent of eligible voters cast ballots, a 17 percentage point increase from four years earlier.

Among the 2020 Democratic candidates, Senator Elizabeth Warren and Mr. Sanders have campaigned in the state frequently since the summer. Some past contenders, like Senators Kamala Harris and Cory Booker and the former housing secretary Julián Castro, put significant resources into Nevada, hoping that the state could cushion a potential blow from Iowa and New Hampshire. But those three, who were some of the most prominent candidates of color in the race, dropped out before the Iowa caucuses.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/14/us/politics/nevada-caucus-diversity.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/14/us/politics/nevada-caucus-diversity.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Supporters of Senator Bernie Sanders in Nevada lined up to be counted while caucusing in 2016. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MAX WHITTAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 15, 2020

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[***Challenge for Democrats: How to Reclaim Blue-Collar Counties***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61KD-8S81-DXY4-X3B5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 23, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

**Length:** 1640 words

**Byline:** By Trip Gabriel

**Body**

More than 200 counties flipped from Barack Obama to Donald J. Trump in 2016. Joe Biden won only 25 of them back.

Lawn signs, everyone agrees, don't vote. But they proved to be an accurate omen in Winona County, Minn. -- more reliable than the haywire polling of 2020 or the big crowds for President Trump.

''This year, we couldn't keep up, we constantly had to get more Biden yard signs,'' said Caitlin Nicholson, the Democratic chair in the county, which is in southeastern Minnesota, bordering Wisconsin.

Winona County was one of 206 ''pivot counties'' that mesmerized campaign analysts and reporters after the 2016 election by voting for Mr. Trump after having twice voted for President Barack Obama. Election obsessives sought to know: Who were these voters who had flip-flopped so dramatically?

This year, Winona County pivoted again, to President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. It was one of 25 Obama-Trump counties nationwide that returned to the Democratic fold, according to Ballotpedia, a site that analyzes election data.

But Winona County turns out to be an exception. At the same time that Mr. Biden eked out a victory there by less than one percentage point, Mr. Trump retained the support of the 181 other pivot counties. Many of those -- rural or dominated by white blue-collar voters, and concentrated in the northern Midwest -- voted for the president by even larger margins than four years ago.

Although Mr. Biden won the popular vote by a resounding seven million ballots, earning more votes than any presidential candidate ever, his inability to flip more than a handful of swing counties that were carried by a Democratic nominee as recently as 2012 may be a yellow warning light for his party about the narrowness of his victory on the electoral map.

While pivot counties are spread among 33 states, and all have their own idiosyncrasies, there are similarities that link many of them. Here is an overview of where Mr. Biden did well and where he struggled, as well as the places that Mr. Trump succeeded.

The Northern Midwest: Pivot counties that stuck with Trump

Most pivot counties are stretched across a northern tier from Minnesota to Maine, a map of white ***working-class*** enclaves where Democrats once held appeal but are now waning.

Although Mr. Biden's narrow victories in Arizona and Georgia suggest a path for future Democratic nominees through the more diverse Sun Belt, the party cannot afford to ignore the Great Lakes states that have proved a more reliable part of its coalition.

Mr. Biden flipped all three industrial ''blue wall'' states from Mr. Trump, but his winning margins in two of them -- 0.6 percent in Wisconsin and 1.2 percent in Pennsylvania -- were close enough to give Democrats heartburn. (His more decisive win in Michigan was thanks to a surge in urban and suburban areas.)

''I don't know if Trump runs in 2024, but I'll tell you one thing: If someone comes along who has enough intelligence to understand what Trump did, they're going to be an extremely tough person to beat,'' said Dan Smicker, the chair of the Republican Party of Clinton County, Iowa.

Democrats had won Clinton County, which is north of Davenport, in the seven presidential elections before 2016, when Mr. Trump flipped it. This year, the president more than doubled his winning margin there, to 10.3 percentage points. Just eight years ago, Mr. Obama carried the county by nearly 23 points. In fact, Mr. Biden did not win back a single one of Iowa's 31 pivot counties, the most of any state.

Mr. Smicker, a former high school agriculture teacher, said Mr. Trump had increased his support in rural towns where farmers embraced his trade wars -- and even more so in the ***working-class*** county seat of Clinton. ''If you've seen a drain of manufacturing jobs and all of a sudden you have someone who shows a lot of interest in redeveloping that, people will vote their interests,'' he said.

The greatest concentration of pivot counties hug the Mississippi River in Iowa and three other states: Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

It is a region of small, postindustrial cities that have suffered manufacturing losses, where largely white voters, after years of voting for Democrats, embraced Mr. Trump's nationalism and culturally backward-gazing message.

''You can look at the part of the country where I live and where I serve, there is a feeling they have been left behind and we haven't delivered,'' said Representative Cheri Bustos, a Democrat whose northwest Illinois district includes nine Obama-Trump counties. All of them stayed with Mr. Trump this year.

Ms. Bustos, who was chair of the Democrats' House campaign committee, barely won re-election herself. She said Democrats needed to bring concrete benefits to farmers in the same way Franklin D. Roosevelt delivered rural electrification.

Despite expectations that Mr. Biden, with his Everyday Joe persona, would win back many blue-collar voters, he appears to have done worse with them than Hillary Clinton or Mr. Obama in both of his elections.

Suburbia and beyond: Pivot counties that flipped to Biden

Some of the 25 pivot counties that Mr. Biden did flip back reflect gains he made in suburbs across the country -- the key to his election -- or are in states like Pennsylvania, where his campaign poured in resources for advertising and voter outreach.

Four of these ''boomerang'' counties, to use the term favored by Ballotpedia, were in Minnesota. Each has a small or medium-size city that is an island of blue voters in a sea of red ones. Unlike in 2016, when complacency, lack of enthusiasm for the Democratic nominee and third-party candidates all cut into votes for Mrs. Clinton, this year there was a surge of Democratic turnout in the state, which Mr. Biden won by 7.1 points, compared with Mrs. Clinton's 1.5-point margin in 2016.

In Clay County, one of the four pivot counties in Minnesota that Mr. Biden wrangled back from Mr. Trump, Mr. Biden won 3,500 more votes than Mrs. Clinton did in 2016. Mr. Trump increased his total by a more modest 1,500.

''I think Hillary Clinton did not inspire a lot of Democrats to vote and there was an assumption that she would win,'' said Athena Gracyk, the Clay County chair of the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party. This time around, she said, a lot of Democratic voters recognized the consequences of inaction. ''You can't assume your candidate will win,'' she said. ''You have to work as hard as you can until the polls close.''

Nationwide, turnout was significantly higher this year for both Mr. Biden and for Mr. Trump. It suggests that the outcome of pivot counties turned less on Obama-Trump-Biden voters than on infrequent voters for both parties coming off the sidelines after sitting out 2016.

Pennsylvania's three pivot counties are all declining industrial hubs. This year, two of them -- Erie County on Lake Erie and Northampton County in the Lehigh Valley -- flipped back to Mr. Biden. But Luzerne County, just south of Scranton, stuck by Mr. Trump.

''I've never condemned anyone for voting for Donald Trump, because I know why they did,'' said Representative Matt Cartwright, a Democrat who represents much of Luzerne County and was re-elected last month. ''The answer is that our area is hurting.''

Unemployment in Mr. Cartwright's district is higher than the state average. Working people there, as in many districts across the country, sometimes must hold two minimum-wage jobs.

''There's one time-honored truth in American politics: When life isn't working out, you vote for the change candidate every time,'' Mr. Cartwright said. ''President Obama won my district twice by double digits. What was his slogan? 'Change we can believe in.'''

This year Mr. Trump again carried the district. In 2022, Mr. Cartwright said, a Trump-style Republican in Pennsylvania's elections for governor and Senate could win statewide. ''Much of it depends on how life is going in two years,'' he said.

Another region that reflected the shifts of recent elections, Saratoga County in upstate New York, was home to one of Mr. Biden's most decisive performances in a pivot county. Mr. Trump won there by 3.2 points four years ago. Mr. Biden won by 5.4 points last month, for a total swing of 8.6 points.

Todd Kerner, the chair of the county Democrats, attributed the about-face to misgivings about the president by college-educated voters in the affluent suburbs of Albany, in the southern end of the county.

Jim Esterly, a retiree in Clifton Park, N.Y., was one of them. Four years ago, he said, he was taken by Mr. Trump's TV persona from ''The Apprentice.''

''I said, 'Here's a guy who's a businessman,''' Mr. Esterly said. ''He's had businesses that failed, but he's come back. I don't know how he righted the ship, but I said running the country is like running a big business.''

Disillusion set in early for Mr. Esterly, 68, who had managed a municipal wastewater treatment plant. ''He didn't believe in climate change,'' he said, citing the president's withdrawal from the Paris accord. ''When Covid hit, he was more than stupid, not believing his experts early enough, then saying, 'Maybe we need to do something,' then ignoring it.''

Mr. Esterly voted for Mr. Biden this year, and he had plenty of company in suburban Clifton Park. Mr. Biden won nearly 3,000 more votes in the town than Mrs. Clinton did in 2016. Mr. Trump increased his support there by only about 500 more votes.

Once again, yard signs told the tale. ''We couldn't keep Biden signs in stock from the summer on,'' said Mr. Kerner, the Democratic chair.

''I've done this for a while. I've never had anybody ask for signs in such numbers,'' he added. ''A lot of Republicans put out signs for their congressional candidate -- but they didn't put Trump signs out.''

Jane Gottlieb contributed reporting from Albany.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/22/us/politics/trump-voters-swing-counties.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/22/us/politics/trump-voters-swing-counties.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: St. Charles, Minn., is in Winona County, which flipped from Democratic to Republican four years ago and flipped back this November. Left, farming in Winona County. Many so-called pivot counties are home to small, postindustrial cities where manufacturing jobs have vanished. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENN ACKERMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Support for Joseph R. Biden Jr. in Winona County, left, and the Republican Party of Luzerne County, Pa., in October. Luzerne was the only one of the three pivot counties in Pennsylvania that again voted for President Trump in 2020. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENN ACKERMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

MARK MAKELA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 23, 2020

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[***Why ‘Pivot Counties’ That Stuck With Trump May Be a Warning for Democrats***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61K6-B2G1-DXY4-X00X-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Trip Gabriel

**Highlight:** More than 200 counties flipped from Barack Obama to Donald J. Trump in 2016. Joe Biden won only 25 of them back.

**Body**

More than 200 counties flipped from Barack Obama to Donald J. Trump in 2016. Joe Biden won only 25 of them back.

Lawn signs, everyone agrees, don’t vote. But they proved to be an accurate omen in Winona County, Minn. — more reliable than the haywire polling of 2020 or the big crowds for President Trump.

“This year, we couldn’t keep up, we constantly had to get more Biden yard signs,” said Caitlin Nicholson, the Democratic chair in the county, which is in southeastern Minnesota, bordering Wisconsin.

Winona County was one of 206 “pivot counties” that mesmerized campaign analysts and reporters after the 2016 election by voting for Mr. Trump after having twice voted for President Barack Obama. Election obsessives sought to know: [*Who were these voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/15/upshot/the-obama-trump-voters-are-real-heres-what-they-think.html) who had flip-flopped so dramatically?

This year, Winona County pivoted again, to President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. It was one of 25 Obama-Trump counties nationwide that returned to the Democratic fold, according to [*Ballotpedia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/15/upshot/the-obama-trump-voters-are-real-heres-what-they-think.html), a site that analyzes election data.

But Winona County turns out to be an exception. At the same time that Mr. Biden eked out a victory there by less than one percentage point, Mr. Trump retained the support of the 181 other pivot counties. Many of those — rural or dominated by white blue-collar voters, and concentrated in the northern Midwest — voted for the president by even larger margins than four years ago.

Although Mr. Biden won the popular vote by a resounding seven million ballots, earning more votes than any presidential candidate ever, his inability to flip more than a handful of swing counties that were carried by a Democratic nominee as recently as 2012 may be a yellow warning light for his party about the narrowness of his victory on the electoral map.

While pivot counties are spread among 33 states, and all have their own idiosyncrasies, there are similarities that link many of them. Here is an overview of where Mr. Biden did well and where he struggled, as well as the places that Mr. Trump succeeded.

The Northern Midwest: Pivot counties that stuck with Trump

Most pivot counties are stretched across a northern tier from Minnesota to Maine, a map of white ***working-class*** enclaves where Democrats once held appeal but are now waning.

Although Mr. Biden’s narrow victories in Arizona and Georgia suggest a path for future Democratic nominees through the more diverse Sun Belt, the party cannot afford to ignore the Great Lakes states that have proved a more reliable part of its coalition.

Mr. Biden flipped [*all three industrial “blue wall” states*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/15/upshot/the-obama-trump-voters-are-real-heres-what-they-think.html) from Mr. Trump, but his winning margins in two of them — 0.6 percent in Wisconsin and 1.2 percent in Pennsylvania — were close enough to give Democrats heartburn. (His more decisive win in Michigan was thanks to a surge in urban and suburban areas.)

“I don’t know if Trump runs in 2024, but I’ll tell you one thing: If someone comes along who has enough intelligence to understand what Trump did, they’re going to be an extremely tough person to beat,” said Dan Smicker, the chair of the Republican Party of Clinton County, Iowa.

Democrats had won Clinton County, which is north of Davenport, in the seven presidential elections before 2016, when Mr. Trump flipped it. This year, the president more than doubled his winning margin there, to 10.3 percentage points. Just eight years ago, Mr. Obama carried the county by nearly 23 points. In fact, Mr. Biden did not win back a single one of Iowa’s 31 pivot counties, the most of any state.

Mr. Smicker, a former high school agriculture teacher, said Mr. Trump had increased his support in rural towns where farmers embraced his trade wars — and even more so in the ***working-class*** county seat of Clinton. “If you’ve seen a drain of manufacturing jobs and all of a sudden you have someone who shows a lot of interest in redeveloping that, people will vote their interests,” he said.

The greatest concentration of pivot counties hug the Mississippi River in Iowa and three other states: Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

It is a region of small, postindustrial cities that have suffered manufacturing losses, where largely white voters, after years of voting for Democrats, embraced Mr. Trump’s nationalism and culturally backward-gazing message.

“You can look at the part of the country where I live and where I serve, there is a feeling they have been left behind and we haven’t delivered,” said Representative Cheri Bustos, a Democrat whose northwest Illinois district includes nine Obama-Trump counties. All of them stayed with Mr. Trump this year.

Ms. Bustos, who was chair of the Democrats’ House campaign committee, barely won re-election herself. She said Democrats needed to bring concrete benefits to farmers in the same way Franklin D. Roosevelt delivered rural electrification.

Despite expectations that Mr. Biden, with his Everyday Joe persona, would win back many blue-collar voters, [*he appears to have done worse*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/15/upshot/the-obama-trump-voters-are-real-heres-what-they-think.html) with them than Hillary Clinton or Mr. Obama in both of his elections.

Suburbia and beyond: Pivot counties that flipped to Biden

Some of the 25 pivot counties that Mr. Biden did flip back reflect gains he made in suburbs across the country — the key to his election — or are in states like Pennsylvania, where his campaign poured in resources for advertising and voter outreach.

Four of these “boomerang” counties, to use the term favored by Ballotpedia, were in Minnesota. Each has a small or medium-size city that is an island of blue voters in a sea of red ones. Unlike in 2016, when complacency, lack of enthusiasm for the Democratic nominee and third-party candidates all cut into votes for Mrs. Clinton, this year there was a surge of Democratic turnout in the state, which Mr. Biden won by 7.1 points, compared with Mrs. Clinton’s 1.5-point margin in 2016.

In Clay County, one of the four pivot counties in Minnesota that Mr. Biden wrangled back from Mr. Trump, Mr. Biden won 3,500 more votes than Mrs. Clinton did in 2016. Mr. Trump increased his total by a more modest 1,500.

“I think Hillary Clinton did not inspire a lot of Democrats to vote and there was an assumption that she would win,” said Athena Gracyk, the Clay County chair of the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party. This time around, she said, a lot of Democratic voters recognized the consequences of inaction. “You can’t assume your candidate will win,” she said. “You have to work as hard as you can until the polls close.”

Nationwide, turnout was significantly higher this year for both Mr. Biden and for Mr. Trump. It suggests that the outcome of pivot counties turned less on Obama-Trump-Biden voters than on infrequent voters for both parties coming off the sidelines after sitting out 2016.

Pennsylvania’s three pivot counties are all declining industrial hubs. This year, two of them — Erie County on Lake Erie and Northampton County in the Lehigh Valley — flipped back to Mr. Biden. But Luzerne County, just south of Scranton, stuck by Mr. Trump.

“I’ve never condemned anyone for voting for Donald Trump, because I know why they did,” said Representative Matt Cartwright, a Democrat who represents much of Luzerne County and was re-elected last month. “The answer is that our area is hurting.”

Unemployment in Mr. Cartwright’s district is higher than the state average. Working people there, as in many districts across the country, sometimes must hold two minimum-wage jobs.

“There’s one time-honored truth in American politics: When life isn’t working out, you vote for the change candidate every time,” Mr. Cartwright said. “President Obama won my district twice by double digits. What was his slogan? ‘Change we can believe in.’”

This year Mr. Trump again carried the district. In 2022, Mr. Cartwright said, a Trump-style Republican in Pennsylvania’s elections for governor and Senate could win statewide. “Much of it depends on how life is going in two years,” he said.

Another region that reflected the shifts of recent elections, Saratoga County in upstate New York, was home to one of Mr. Biden’s most decisive performances in a pivot county. Mr. Trump won there by 3.2 points four years ago. Mr. Biden won by 5.4 points last month, for a total swing of 8.6 points.

Todd Kerner, the chair of the county Democrats, attributed the about-face to misgivings about the president by college-educated voters in the affluent suburbs of Albany, in the southern end of the county.

Jim Esterly, a retiree in Clifton Park, N.Y., was one of them. Four years ago, he said, he was taken by Mr. Trump’s TV persona from “The Apprentice.”

“I said, ‘Here’s a guy who’s a businessman,’” Mr. Esterly said. “He’s had businesses that failed, but he’s come back. I don’t know how he righted the ship, but I said running the country is like running a big business.”

Disillusion set in early for Mr. Esterly, 68, who had managed a municipal wastewater treatment plant. “He didn’t believe in climate change,” he said, citing the president’s withdrawal from the Paris accord. “When Covid hit, he was more than stupid, not believing his experts early enough, then saying, ‘Maybe we need to do something,’ then ignoring it.”

Mr. Esterly voted for Mr. Biden this year, and he had plenty of company in suburban Clifton Park. Mr. Biden won nearly 3,000 more votes in the town than Mrs. Clinton did in 2016. Mr. Trump increased his support there by only about 500 more votes.

Once again, yard signs told the tale. “We couldn’t keep Biden signs in stock from the summer on,” said Mr. Kerner, the Democratic chair.

“I’ve done this for a while. I’ve never had anybody ask for signs in such numbers,” he added. “A lot of Republicans put out signs for their congressional candidate — but they didn’t put Trump signs out.”

Jane Gottlieb contributed reporting from Albany.

PHOTOS: St. Charles, Minn., is in Winona County, which flipped from Democratic to Republican four years ago and flipped back this November. Left, farming in Winona County. Many so-called pivot counties are home to small, postindustrial cities where manufacturing jobs have vanished. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENN ACKERMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Support for Joseph R. Biden Jr. in Winona County, left, and the Republican Party of Luzerne County, Pa., in October. Luzerne was the only one of the three pivot counties in Pennsylvania that again voted for President Trump in 2020. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENN ACKERMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; MARK MAKELA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***More Children? No Way, Families in China Say***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62TR-BKN1-JBG3-62MR-00000-00&context=1519360)

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June 2, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1086 words

**Byline:** By Vivian Wang

**Body**

Intense workplace competition, inadequate child care and widespread job discrimination against pregnant women have made childbearing an unappealing prospect for many.

After China said it would allow couples to have three children, the state news media trumpeted the move as a major change that would help stimulate growth. But across much of the country, the announcement was met with indignation.

Women worried that the move would only exacerbate discrimination from employers reluctant to pay maternity leave. Young people fumed that they were already hard-pressed to find jobs and take care of themselves, let alone a child (or three). ***Working-class*** parents said the financial burden of more children would be unbearable.

''I definitely will not have another child,'' said Hu Daifang, a former migrant worker in Sichuan Province. Mr. Hu, 35, said he was already struggling, especially after his mother fell ill and could no longer help care for his two children. ''It feels like we are just surviving, not living.''

For many ordinary Chinese, the news about the policy change on Monday was only a reminder of a problem they'd long recognized: the drastic inadequacy of China's social safety net and legal protections that would enable them to have more children.

On Weibo, users complained of mounting education expenses, sky-high housing prices and unforgiving work hours. They pointed out China's shortage of child care services, which forces many young parents to rely on their own parents to watch their children.

''I recommend you first fix the most basic problems with maternity rights and the discrimination women will inevitably face in the workplace, and then encourage them to have children,'' read the most popular comment under an article about the policy change by Xinhua, the state news agency.

Another commenter was more direct: ''Get out of here! Will you help us take care of the kids? Will you give us a house?''

In response to a poll by Xinhua that was titled: ''Are you ready for the three-child policy?'' just a tiny fraction of respondents chose ''I'm ready, I can't wait.'' Of roughly 22,000 people who had responded to the poll at one point, 20,000 chose ''I won't consider it at all.'' The poll was quickly deleted.

In its announcement, the government promised to help families with education costs and child care, but gave little detail.

China has long promised to overhaul policies that affected families, but changes had been slow. The only real shift in the last five years, said Lu Hongping, a professor of population studies at Hebei University, had been a lengthening of statutory maternity leave to around 160 days in most areas. But even then, he said, it was too short.

''They haven't done it well. Essentially, they haven't done it,'' Professor Lu said of the reforms. ''And if it's not done, then the costs are too high, and many people will feel that they can't afford too big of a family.''

For Mr. Hu and his wife, one child had already been enough. But his parents exhorted them to have a second to help support the couple in their old age. They reluctantly agreed, knowing that rural pensions paid only a pittance.

Mr. Hu's mother had initially helped watch his two children, ages 4 and 9, while he traveled to factories in southern China for better work, but that was no longer possible after her health faltered. Mr. Hu and his wife recently moved back to their hometown in a small county in Sichuan and opened a street food shop to get by.

He was now straining to pay for his mother's medical expenses -- her insurance had covered little of it -- and to give his children good educations.

''I don't want my children to have the same path I did, always working. I don't want my children to work in a factory,'' he said. ''So the pressure is still pretty high.''

For the more affluent, the pressures may weigh differently, but no less heavily.

On the same day that the government announced it would relax birth limits, Li Li, a middle-level manager at a technology company in Beijing, was approached by her boss. He anxiously asked Ms. Li, 35, who is pregnant with her second child, how long exactly she would be away on maternity leave.

She quickly reassured him that she would be gone only three or four months and that she could work during the tail end of her leave, if necessary.

Pregnancy discrimination is widespread in China, with women reporting being fired or demoted after telling their bosses they were expecting a child. Some women have even reported being forced to sign contracts promising not to get pregnant within a certain period at new jobs.

''As a woman, you're inherently at a disadvantage in the workplace,'' Ms. Li said.

Ms. Li said she was sympathetic to her boss's concerns. She did believe that as a manager, her absence would be inconvenient for the company. She acknowledged that she herself, when interviewing candidates, would sometimes wonder whether a new hire would soon leave to give birth.

It was nonetheless unfair to women, Ms. Li said. She said the government should reimburse employers for maternity pay, as some other countries do, and mandate paternity leave, so women would not be singled out for being parents.

In an acknowledgment of the problem, the government said on Monday that it would ''protect the legitimate rights and interests of women in employment.''

Some women pointed out that the government had already barred employers from asking women about their marital or childbearing status in 2019, and the problem was weak enforcement. The government has often encouraged women to retreat to more traditional gender roles, in an effort to increase the birthrate.

''Our government is very good at empty talk,'' said Lu Pin, a Chinese feminist activist. ''It's meaningless to just look at a few things they said.''

Ms. Lu expected workplace discrimination against women to get worse. Employers might fear that women would want to have a third child -- even if, she added, that was unlikely to be the case, given broader trends.

The lack of social support may discourage those who would otherwise want more children, but a more fundamental issue may be a lack of interest among younger, better educated women who have declared a preference for small families. Even if the government did offer more benefits, Ms. Li said, she would not want to have a third child.

''Two is pretty good,'' she said. ''There's no point to having too many.''

Joy Dong contributed research.Joy Dong contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/world/asia/china-three-child.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/world/asia/china-three-child.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A park in Beijing on Tuesday. Many mothers in China complain about a lack of social support. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GILLES SABRIÉ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Bring Back the Tomboys***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y73-XSG1-JBG3-62GW-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Lisa Selin Davis

**Body**

Once they were all over pop culture. When they retreated, an expanded view of what girlhood could look like was obscured, too.

Everybody loved Jo. With her mane of brown hair and disdain for convention, the tomboy who spoke her mind and had no need for high society, she was adored by little girls across America.

You might think I speak of Jo March from ''Little Women,'' Louisa May Alcott's 1868 novel (recently adapted for the screen by Greta Gerwig), which has never been out of print. It rocked the literary landscape and elevated tomboys to the top of the heroine heap, as Jo March inspired generations of early feminists to be forthright and assertive, and to reject traditional, passive femininity.

But I'm not -- the tomboy I refer to is Jo Polniaczek, from the 1980s sitcom ''The Facts of Life.'' That Jo was a ***working-class*** kid on scholarship at a fancy girls' boarding school. Her signature hairstyle was two little ponytails that connected to a big one in the back. Her signature outfit was a leather jacket -- once she even dressed up as Peter Fonda in ''Easy Rider'' for Halloween -- and jeans. Her signature ride was a motorcycle -- which she fixed herself. Like most fictional tomboys until then, Jo was a white, ***working-class*** brunette with a blond, rich girly-girl nemesis, Blair.

When Jo joined ''The Facts of Life'' in 1980 for its second season, she was among many tomboys on the big and small screen in that era. There was Addie Loggins in ''Paper Moon'' (1973) and Amanda Whurlitzer in ''The Bad News Bears'' (1976), both played by Tatum O'Neal. Laura Ingalls in ''Little House on the Prairie'' and the short-haired drummer Watts in the 1987 romantic comedy ''Some Kind of Wonderful.'' Jodie Foster and Kristy McNichol tomboyed it up in almost any role they played.

They were outspoken, confident and indifferent to the silent or explicit rules of gender around them, often dressing and acting ''like boys.'' They stood in stark contrast to the ingénues and highly feminine characters girls and women were often restricted to. For me and many Gen X girls (and boys), the tomboys of the 1970s and '80s expanded the possibilities of what girlhood could look like. I have met only one woman who liked Blair better than Jo.

These were often my favorite characters, living examples of the feminist zeitgeist that told me I did not have to be feminine to be female: I could, and maybe should, dress and act like boys and have access to their domains. In her book ''Pink and Blue: Telling the Boys From the Girls in America,'' the historian Jo B. Paoletti points to Sears catalogs in the 1970s that displayed size conversion charts so girls could shop more easily in the boys' section. During that same period, Title IX mandated that girls have parity with boys in all aspects of federally funded education.

But this kind of tomboy began to recede in the mid-1980s. Hostility to feminism emerged in that decade, with the rise of the New Right. This was followed by the pink-hued ''Girl Power'' of the 1990s, which moved away from the more masculine-presenting tomboy toward an image that seemed to comfort the male gaze. Jo gave way to Sporty Spice, Xena, Buffy -- coifed, petal-lipped and sometimes baring midriff -- with the message that one didn't need to sacrifice femininity to have power.

It was an understandable counter to the somewhat limiting message of the earlier tomboy era, which implied that while masculinity was good for boys and girls, femininity was bad for both. But it also edged out a certain kind of acceptable masculinity in young girls, and came with its own confinements -- namely the idea that girls could be strong, so long as they were also pretty.

Their inherent flaws aside, ideally, both identities should be able to coexist. But having spent the last year writing a book about the history, science and psychology of tomboys, I'm acutely aware of how modern girls who resemble the tomboys of my youth are now underrepresented.

In the years that followed the tomboy heyday, gender polarization effectively swallowed childhood. The combination of declining birthrates, prenatal sex testing, the phenomenon of gender-reveal parties and other cultural shifts helped cultivate the pink and blue divide that now colors most toys, games and clothes: pink and blue pens, bikes, snacks, toothbrushes! There has been a return to the pre-tomboy idea that femininity and females are conjoined, likely because companies found they could sell more of the same items if they came in pink and blue versions.

This extreme division has perpetuated gender stereotypes in children's media. When I bought a kids' edition of the Kindle Fire in 2017, it forced me to select a gender for my child, and then edited out almost anything ''masculine'' (apps, videos and books about sports or adventure) if I chose ''girl,'' and anything ''feminine'' (princesses, fairy tales, flowers) if I selected ''boy.'' A report revealed that females made up only 38 percent of main characters on American kids' TV shows in 2017. While boys use physical power and STEM skills to solve problems on these shows, girls tend to use magic. Another study found that higher TV exposure for 4-year-olds contributed to a higher likelihood that they'll believe men and boys are better than women and girls.

We do have laudable, modern young female characters. Nella the Princess Knight, Moana and Katniss Everdeen, among others, represent a certain kind of intra-feminine diversity, and far more racial diversity than we got with 1970s and 1980s tomboys. The Canadian kids' TV creator J.J. Johnson has many STEM-minded, less stereotypically feminine female characters on his shows, including ''Annedroids'' and ''Dino Dana.''

We also have more diverse representations of gender identity, including the nonbinary actor Ellie Desautels playing the transgender student Michael Hallowell on NBC's ''Rise,'' to the nonbinary character Syd on Netflix's ''One Day at a Time'' reboot. GLAAD found that in 2017 and 2018, there were more representations of L.G.B.T.Q. characters than at any time before. These important additions to the cultural landscape are to be celebrated, and continued.

But we shouldn't let the old-school tomboys in pop culture fade away in the process. The pop star Billie Eilish offers a refreshing twist: Through her affinity for oversize hoodies and pants and her confident, offbeat swagger, she provides girls an alternative to the overtly sexualized pop singer. I'd like to see even more of this -- the return of Jo and her descendants, alongside the representations of strong, feminine girls and nonbinary and trans people. Girls who claim all the traditional traits of masculinity they want, girls who fix motorcycles or play drums or wear short hair.

I loved ''The Facts of Life,'' but I know it wasn't a great show. While it tried to deal with class and race and gender, often, especially by today's standards, it failed. (In the pilot episode, the housemother Mrs. Garrett has to assuage a different tomboy character's insecurities by assuring her she's not gay.) But Jo was an important character, even if, like many tomboys, including Jo March, she was often ''tamed'' -- feminized and paired up with a man.

Let's bring the tomboy back, without taming her. Let's have feminine boys and masculine girls amid the varied depictions of gender identities and presentations. In today's world of exponentially expanding media, and exponentially expanding understanding of the complexity of gender, we have room for all of them.

Lisa Selin Davis (@LisaSelinDavis) is the author of the forthcoming book ''Tomboy: The Surprising History and Future of Girls Who Dare to Be Different.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/11/opinion/tomboys-culture.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/11/opinion/tomboys-culture.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Nancy McKeon as Jo Polniaczek in ''The Facts of Life,'' 1982. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HERB BALL/NBCU PHOTO BANK, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** February 16, 2020

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[***Orgies and Drugs? The G.O.P. Is Finally Drawing a Line at a Lawmaker's Tales.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6544-93M1-DXY4-X4FS-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

For Mr. Cawthorn, a pro-Trump North Carolina congressman, youthful brashness that helped him win his seat now strikes some voters as recklessness.

HENDERSONVILLE, N.C. -- In the era of Donald Trump's takeover of the Republican Party -- when making falsehoods about an election isn't disqualifying, when heckling a president at the State of the Union is no big deal, when attending an event tied to white supremacists doesn't lead to exile -- it may still be possible for a hard-right member of Congress to go too far.

That is the object lesson of Representative Madison Cawthorn of North Carolina, the House's youngest member, whose bid for a second term is in jeopardy after a series of incendiary statements and personal foibles have soured many former supporters.

''I voted for Madison, but I think I'll pass now because of integrity issues,'' said John Harper, a retired furniture finisher in Franklin, N.C., at a Republican event in Mr. Cawthorn's district last week. ''I was fooled last time. I won't be fooled again.''

Mr. Cawthorn, 26, called President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine ''a thug'' and his country ''incredibly evil'' as Russian tanks rolled in. The congressman has made headlines for bringing a knife to a school board meeting and bringing a gun through airport security. Mr. Cawthorn, who has used a wheelchair since being injured in an automobile accident when he was 18, was charged this month with driving with a revoked license. He has a May court date on the misdemeanor count that carries jail time.

Unlike some other far-right members of Congress -- including Representatives Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia and Lauren Boebert of Colorado, both of whom booed President Biden during his State of the Union speech -- Mr. Cawthorn is also saddled with a yearslong series of hyperbolic claims about his personal life, raising questions about his honesty.

One of those claims finally set off his fellow House Republicans this week: a bizarre assertion he made on a conservative YouTube channel that people he ''looked up to'' in Washington -- presumably Republican lawmakers -- invited him to orgies and used cocaine. On Tuesday, upset House Republicans at a closed-door meeting questioned the remarks, and Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, the House minority leader, told colleagues that he would speak to Mr. Cawthorn.

On Wednesday, he did so. Afterward, Mr. McCarthy told reporters that Mr. Cawthorn admitted the allegations were untrue. The minority leader said that he told the freshman congressman that he had lost trust in him and that he needed to turn his life around.

Mr. McCarthy, who aspires to be House speaker, acted only after declining to discipline other members for norm-shattering behavior and accusations. They include Representatives Paul Gosar of Arizona, who posted an animated video showing him killing a Democratic congresswoman, and Matt Gaetz of Florida, who is under federal investigation for allegations of sex trafficking. Although Mr. McCarthy recently condemned Ms. Taylor Greene for an appearance at a conference organized by a white supremacist, he refused last year to back her removal from committees for endorsing violent behavior and spreading bigoted conspiracy theories.

Well before Mr. Cawthorn's latest episode, his youthful brashness -- which once appealed to the conservative older voters of far-west North Carolina -- struck some as reckless and immature. Interviews last week with Republican voters and party leaders in his district -- a largely ***working-class*** region set amid the beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains -- suggested that his impetuousness is working against him.

''People of western North Carolina are tired of the antics,'' said Michele Woodhouse, the elected Republican chair of Mr. Cawthorn's district and a former staunch supporter. Now she is running against him in the primary in May.

Mr. Cawthorn faces a total of seven Republican challengers, a field that includes other former supporters, who accuse him of neglecting constituents while chasing Instagram followers with fiery rhetoric and pursuing donors with expensive travel outside the state.

In the past, North Carolina's Republican officials largely held their tongues about Mr. Cawthorn. His comments about Ukraine ushered in more open criticism, including from Senator Thom Tillis and the State House speaker, Tim Moore, who called him ''reckless'' in The News & Observer.

The congressman, who declined repeated requests for an interview, seemed to acknowledge some of the doubts about him at a debate in Henderson County on Saturday. ''I'll be the first to admit, 26 years old, I don't have all the wisdom in the world,'' he told the crowd. ''Obviously when it comes to driving, I've got some work to do.''

The audience, largely voters with gray hair, laughed, and some applauded.

Luke Ball, a spokesman for Mr. Cawthorn, predicted that Mr. Cawthorn would easily win the primary and suggested that voters at the district gatherings were unrepresentative. ''Some attending local G.O.P. events are affiliated with Congressman Cawthorn's primary opponents and have welcomed the opportunity to slight Mr. Cawthorn's service and candidacy,'' Mr. Ball said.

Jennifer Cook, a nurse in Macon County, attended one such gathering to support her husband, who is running for sheriff. She said she voted for Mr. Cawthorn in 2020 but has no plans to do it again. ''Madison has disappointed me in his actions on many things since he was elected,'' Ms. Cook said. ''I think driving without a license is saying, 'I can do what I want, the law doesn't pertain to me.' That's not the kind of person I want representing me.''

Mr. Cawthorn has the advantage of broad name recognition in a field of challengers who, with a couple of exceptions, have raised little money needed to become better known. He also has the endorsement of Mr. Trump, whom Mr. Cawthorn identified on Saturday as ''a man who mentors me.''

An internal poll of likely Republican voters this month for a Cawthorn rival showed the congressman leading the field with 52 percent and 17 percent undecided. ''Cawthorn is right on the bubble of the 50 percent mark; incumbents who slip below that during the campaign are in danger,'' wrote Glen Bolger, a top Republican pollster who conducted the poll.

Mr. Cawthorn did himself no favors last year when he announced he would run in a new district near Charlotte, the state's largest city. Political insiders speculated that he sought a higher profile in a major media market ahead of an eventual statewide run. But then legal challenges led to a redrawn state congressional map, and Mr. Cawthorn's planned new district tilted Democratic. So he returned home to his old district, where viable contenders had joined the race in his absence.

''Had he not flirted with another district, he wouldn't be in this situation, where there's a question of whether he'll win this primary,'' said Christopher Cooper, a political scientist at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, N.C. ''It's the thing that opened the door for the field to expand.''

It's unclear if Mr. Cawthorn's temporary desertion has penetrated to average voters, even if it angers party officials. ''I believe he probably has lost most of the local-level Republican movers and shakers,'' said David Baker, a voter who attended a recent Republican convention in Jackson County.

But Mr. Baker, an employee benefits expert, said rank-and-file Republicans like himself still support Mr. Cawthorn because of his ''clarity on those issues that were so important to Trump.''

Mr. Cawthorn was raised in Hendersonville, N.C., a small community where he was home-schooled. His meteoric rise began with his defeat of a primary candidate handpicked to fill the seat held by former Representative Mark Meadows, who was appointed Mr. Trump's White House chief of staff.

During the 2020 campaign, a group of alumni of Patrick Henry College, which Mr. Cawthorn briefly attended, accused him of ''sexually predatory behavior,'' which he denied. He suggested during the campaign that his 2014 auto accident had ''derailed'' his plans to attend the Naval Academy. Reporting showed that his Annapolis application had already been rejected before the crash.

Days after being sworn in, Mr. Cawthorn addressed the rally behind the White House on Jan. 6 that preceded the violent siege of the Capitol. He amplified false conspiracies of fraud in the presidential election. Days earlier, he had tweeted, ''It's time to fight.'' In the aftermath of the riot, he denounced the violence, writing in a tweet that ''it wasn't patriotism it was thuggery.''

This year, a group of North Carolina voters sought to have Mr. Cawthorn disqualified from re-election because of his participation in an ''insurrection.'' A judge blocked the effort.

George Erwin, a retired county sheriff who organized a group of law enforcement officials to endorse Mr. Cawthorn in 2020, said he no longer backed him, in part because of his actions around Jan. 6.

''The words that come out of his mouth incite people,'' said Mr. Erwin, who is now supporting a Cawthorn challenger, Rod Honeycutt, a retired Army colonel. ''He says he backs the blue, but what he does is, he backs them in a corner with his antics. If you really want to back the blue, obey the law.''

The biggest primary threat to Mr. Cawthorn may come from a state senator, Chuck Edwards, who has the endorsements of most members of the state legislature in the district.

Mr. Edwards, the owner of several McDonald's franchises, had more than $300,000 in his campaign account at the end of last year, more than Mr. Cawthorn reported. Mr. Cawthorn has been one of the House's top fund-raisers, pulling in $2.8 million in 2021 thanks to a national donor base, but he has also spent prodigiously, with more than half going toward fund-raising. He spent $28,000 on campaign air travel and $11,000 at a Waldorf Astoria hotel in Orlando, according to an analysis by The Asheville Citizen Times.

At the debate, Mr. Edwards confined his attacks to a resolution Mr. Cawthorn introduced in Washington: a 52-point plan calling for a one-third reduction in federal spending, as well as reforming Social Security by ''incentivizing people to work and get off entitlement programs.''

''I would not cut Social Security benefits by a third, as is suggested in our congressman's garbled 52-point plan for America,'' Mr. Edwards said. ''Go read it,'' he told the audience. ''It would require you to go back to work to collect your Social Security.''

Mr. Cawthorn responded that he wants to cut ''wasteful'' spending but not Social Security.

To prevail in the primary on May 17, a candidate must win with more than 30 percent of the vote; if not, the top two finishers will face a runoff. There is broad speculation over whether Mr. Cawthorn, even as the front-runner, can surpass 30 percent. Still, whether his rivals can pull down his support to such a threshold remains to be seen.

The leading Democrat in the race, Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, is considered a long shot in a district that Mr. Trump won by 10 percentage points.

Chelsea Walsh, a life insurance agent who volunteered for Mr. Cawthorn in 2020 but said she is open to other candidates now, predicted a runoff between Mr. Cawthorn and Mr. Edwards.

''If I had to pick, I would say Madison is still the front-runner,'' she said. ''But he has his work cut out for him.''

Annie Karni contributed reporting.Annie Karni contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/us/politics/madison-cawthorn-congress.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/us/politics/madison-cawthorn-congress.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Representative Madison Cawthorn, to the right of the moderators, at a debate in North Carolina. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE BELLEME FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***France’s Far Right Turn***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6544-MK61-DXY4-X524-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

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With only one month to go until France’s presidential election in April, the office of Marine Le Pen, the leader of the French far-right party the National Rally, sent the usual Sunday email outlining her schedule for the coming week as “candidate for the presidency of the Republic.” Unfortunately for Le Pen, many of its recipients were at that moment en route to a rally for her rival, where several formerly trusted members of her inner circle would fill the front row. Ever since [*Éric Zemmour, a far-right pundit and former newspaper columnist,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/06/magazine/eric-zemmour-france-far-right.html) declared his own [*candidacy for president*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/30/world/europe/eric-zemmour-france-president.html) last November, members of Le Pen’s party had been departing in a steady trickle for his. And yet there was something particularly plaintive in Le Pen’s notification. A final defection was expected that day — that of her niece, Marion Maréchal, quite likely spelling the end of Le Pen and of her party’s hold over the far right.

[*Emmanuel Macron’s presidential victory*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/07/world/europe/emmanuel-macron-france-election-marine-le-pen.html) as an independent five years ago shook up France’s multiparty system. As parties on the right and left fractured and regrouped, the National Rally remained largely constant. Now Zemmour and Maréchal’s alliance, with its “anti-wokisme” and its appeals to anti-immigrant sentiments, has forged a revanchist politics that captures a notable shift in the public mood. As the far right enjoys its greatest cultural primacy in France in 75 years, it is Zemmour and his followers, not the National Rally, who are defining the future of the French right wing, even if no one expects him — or any other right-wing candidate — to wrest the presidency from Macron.

For the last half-century, French nationalism has operated as a family business. Marine’s father (Maréchal’s grandfather), Jean-Marie Le Pen, helped found the party, which until recently was known as the National Front, in 1972 and led it until [*Marine took over in 2011*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/01/magazine/mag-01LePen-t.html). In 1992, Maréchal appeared in a campaign poster as a startled blond toddler held aloft in her grandfather’s arms. Twenty years later, Maréchal was elected to the National Assembly as a representative of the party. At 22, she was the youngest member of Parliament in the history of the modern French Republic. “The Le Pen name is a brand,” Maréchal, now 32, told me last fall. “It has been both my handicap and my advantage. I wouldn’t have been elected without it.”

Maréchal’s impending betrayal of her aunt, with its tantalizing mix of political ambition and familial wounds, had been a subject of media speculation for weeks. Le Pen alliances are famously rocky, and the family’s treacheries have for decades delighted the French media. In 1984, Jean-Marie’s wife left him, later sharing their private frictions in the pages of French Playboy. And in the late ’90s, Jean-Marie Le Pen’s deputy, who believed the boss’s taste for Holocaust jokes was preventing the party from becoming a serious political force, attempted to depose him. In 2015, Marine kicked her father out of the National Front for the same reason. They didn’t speak for months. (Eventually, they reconciled.)

On that early March Sunday, Maréchal chose to announce her support for Zemmour and his party, Reconquête (Reconquest), in Toulon, a small, luminous city with an important naval base on the French Riviera. I had previously attended Zemmour’s rallies only in the north of France, and those were high-security affairs, where the gendarmerie marked off a wide perimeter around the venue and formed riot lines behind the barriers against potentially violent protesters. In the south, you could walk freely up to the entrance of the stadium. Cliques of young people streamed across town to the arena, joining the other well-dressed attendees — tailored coats, red Dockers, boat shoes, in sharp contrast to a National Rally event, where black leather jackets and tattoos are the norm. Zemmour, who is 63, had no prior political experience, but as a best-selling author he was used to giving sold-out book talks and knew how to make people feel as if they were at an exclusive event.

Maréchal left the National Rally in 2017, taking time out from politics to work in the private sector. There had long been reports that she was being sidelined, partly because her popularity was seen as a threat, but also because her positions differed from the party line. Still, her retreat from the National Rally was based on a calculation shared by many: that her aunt, having lost in the two previous presidential elections, was incapable of winning. As Zemmour’s candidacy evolved, it became clear that a primary goal was to end Marine Le Pen’s control over far-right politics in France, by breaking through the cordon sanitaire that the mainstream political establishment had erected around the Le Pen family for decades, and ultimately to remake the French right.

Le Pen, who is 53, has positioned herself as an economic populist, seeking to attract ***working-class*** voters from across the political spectrum, caring little if they identify as right or left. Zemmour and Maréchal reject not only the tactic but also the principle behind it. Conservatism, they assert, is still an organizing social force, reflecting a timeless understanding of how we live. In a world of liberal overreach, they believe, the appeal of their hard reactionism is broader than ever. “Despite everything, these currents continue to direct French political life,” Maréchal told me. “In people’s minds, it’s the nation, authority, family, heritage, preservation. Broadly speaking, that’s our identity.” That evening in Toulon, wearing white and six months pregnant, she blew kisses from the stage to an enthralled crowd and delivered a 20-minute declaration on the meaning of the nation. It was her first stump speech in five years, meant without any doubt to symbolize a rebirth, not only personal but also of a new nationalist movement.

In France, political identities tend to coalesce around views of the past and, on the right in particular, around the father of modern France, Charles de Gaulle. Some of the original members of the National Front collaborated during World War II with Nazi Germany, as de Gaulle fought from exile to liberate the country. And in the 1970s, one of the party’s founding principles was a rejection of de Gaulle’s decision as president to withdraw France from colonial Algeria. This history has always put the National Rally at odds with the urban conservative bourgeoisie, which sees itself as heir to the Gaullist tradition — nationalist, out of an old-fashioned sense of pride and duty; republican, despite a certain nostalgia for the aristocracy — and would never vote for a Le Pen. These are Zemmour’s people, and increasingly, despite her lineage, Maréchal’s.

Maréchal, who has continued to dodge precise questions about her political future as she campaigns full-time for Zemmour, is sometimes called the “fantasy” of the right, a double entendre that captures her political currency and symbolic importance. One meaning refers to what some regard as her unique potential to draw the bourgeois voters that have flocked to Zemmour and the ***working-class*** voters that back Marine Le Pen, both of which are needed to win. The other is usually invoked obliquely, with the word “photogenic.” If it’s taboo to remark on the sex appeal of a female politician in 2022, it would also be disingenuous to pretend that it isn’t a strategic element of Maréchal’s public persona. In Toulon, every supporter I spoke to offered up some euphemism when asked what they thought of her presence there that evening, then, when pressed, said what they really meant: “So young! So pretty!” Maréchal plays it both ways. By all accounts she is a serious and studious person. But she was 22 when she was elected to the National Assembly in 2012, and photos of her from that time, long blond hair swept to one side or, better yet, blowing in the wind against a backdrop of pastoral France, her face fixed in an expression of concern or confident command, are still used frequently by right-wing groups.

After she left the party, Maréchal co-founded a new school based in Lyon, the Institute for Social Sciences, Economics and Politics (ISSEP), and became its director. ISSEP, an unaccredited private institution offering advanced degrees in business administration and public policy with a conservative orientation, opened its doors in 2018. (Around that time, Maréchal dropped “Le Pen” from her hyphenated last name.)

ISSEP operates inside a small commercial building across the street from a funky urban-renewal project near the river at the southern edge of Lyon. When I went there to meet Maréchal, I was prepared to be greeted coolly, the usual reaction of a Le Pen to a journalist from what would be regarded in France as a mainstream, center-left publication. But Maréchal met me at the door with a smile. She introduced me to the administrative staff and to a handful of students working at cafe tables in the back. She was extremely casual, in gray skinny jeans and a white cable-knit sweater, her hair in a low ponytail. I’d attended several events where she was on the program, and I never saw her ill at ease. “Distance creates prestige,” Maréchal said, echoing de Gaulle, when I remarked that she had been out of politics for five years but everyone was still talking about her. “They’re projecting their fantasies onto me.”

Early on, Maréchal established a reputation not only as a nationalist but also as a Catholic. The Le Pen dynasty had always been secular, a tradition that Maréchal bucked after spending two years at a Catholic school in Saint-Cloud, the upscale western suburb of Paris where Jean-Marie Le Pen owns an estate. Maréchal went on to study law at the University of Paris but was unable to complete her degree after she was elected to the National Assembly.

In 2015, she enrolled in a seminar at a private institute in the Seventh Arrondissement of Paris, a neighborhood populated by “tradis,” traditional Catholic bourgeois families. Two years earlier, many of the students at the institute had joined young Catholic conservatives organizing against a law that legalized same-sex marriage. More than 150,000 people mobilized in the streets of Paris in protest, in a demonstration called Manif Pour Tous, or Protest for All. Maréchal supported Manif Pour Tous right away. By contrast, Marine Le Pen did not join in. Le Pen “always said that she wasn’t on the right or the left,” Maréchal told me. Maréchal saw things differently, and this made her welcome in conservative Parisian circles in a way that Le Pen was not. She became particularly good friends with Jacques de Guillebon, a Catholic writer with Corsican roots and a talent for skewering liberal conventions.

De Guillebon was also friendly with a cohort of young right-wing intellectuals who became prominent media figures in the aftermath of Manif Pour Tous.“At that moment, we realized that our beliefs were shared by a large number of people, and there was a need to go and defend those beliefs in the media,” Geoffroy Lejeune, the 33-year-old editor of the far-right weekly magazine Valeurs Actuelles, told me. “And the media, the big television networks, realized that this represented something in the country, and they needed to allow us to speak.” Lejeune and other young conservatives staked out their positions on TV and in magazines. Maréchal, who had been in the National Assembly for about a year, became a political patron.

De Guillebon, who was enjoying the perks of success, introduced Maréchal into networks where Zemmour was also a frequent V.I.P. “Paris is the center of everything,” Maréchal told me. “It’s not that way in every European country, but Paris is the economic, cultural and political center of the country. And when you’re politically nonexistent in Paris, it’s very complicated to succeed.”

Maréchal thrived in this milieu; unlike her grandfather, who came from a small fishing village, she was not an arriviste but the scion of an entrenched dynasty. “She knows the codes,” Charlotte d’Ornellas, a journalist at Valeurs Actuelles, told me. Crucially, Maréchal also “had a hunger for intellectual questions,” says Eugénie Bastié, another young conservative journalist who worked with Zemmour. “She cultivated that dimension of herself, a depth that her aunt doesn’t have.” Le Pen famously floundered in a debate against Emmanuel Macron in 2017, an embarrassment from which she struggled to recover. “We have this need for our political figures to be intellectuals,” Bastié said. “Someone who doesn’t make us ashamed.”

Yet Maréchal still possesses the Le Pen hardness. She can rally the masses with the kind of primal emotion that can only be credibly acquired from a sense of grievance, from the experience of being treated as a social pariah as the Le Pens still are in some circles. This was the elusive ideal: to be both intellectual and woman of the people. The speech that Maréchal delivered in Toulon displayed an ability to wrap the words of the nativist in elegant rhetoric. She observed that, of the three traits of the French Republican trinity, “liberté, égalité, fraternité,” only the last couldn’t be imposed by law. “Fraternité is a sentiment of attachment,” she said, and concluded, “it is fragile.”

During last fall’s primaries, nearly 40 percent of French voters expressed a preference for a candidate promoting far-right ideas. Remarkably, nearly everyone I spoke with agreed, more or less, on how France had arrived at this point. “If public opinion is at this level, it’s because Zemmour has been talking about it for such a long time,” Erik Tegnér, a 28-year-old who runs Livre Noir, a new right-wing media outlet on YouTube, told me.

Like their American counterparts, Zemmour and Maréchal like to denounce the liberalism of cultural institutions, namely the media and academia. Paradoxically, they cite Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Marxist philosopher, and his theory of “cultural hegemony” to explain how beliefs expressed by the ruling class trickle down to become cultural norms. They have taken up the battle of ideas within mainstream institutions with zeal. Zemmour, the son of North African Jewish immigrants, has long had a platform from which to trumpet the importance of assimilation and being French: He was formerly a columnist at France’s most important conservative daily newspaper, Le Figaro, as well as a longtime TV talk-show host and a regular radio commentator. In 2019, he was given a prime-time spot on CNews, the Fox News-like channel owned by the magnate Vincent Bolloré.

Last October, CNews invited Renaud Camus, the source of the “grand remplacement,” or “great replacement,” conspiracy theory (which has been picked up across the Atlantic by commentators like Tucker Carlson), onto its Sunday evening show. Camus’s argument holds that the white French population is being replaced by a nonwhite, non-French population. “More and more these last few years, thinkers and polemicists, people with a huge impact, have contributed to an opening of what we call the Overton window,” Tegnér said, referring to a shift in what’s considered acceptable discourse. D’Ornellas, of Valeurs Actuelles, agreed, pointing out that 15 years ago, the term “ ‘identity’ was absolutely a dirty word. Now it’s pretty much normal to talk about it.”

Some of this shift in French public life can be traced to the Islamist terror attacks that have devastated France, beginning in 2015. In January of that year, 12 people were murdered at the offices of Charlie Hebdo, which regularly published cartoons of Muhammad, by two brothers who regarded these depictions as violations of the Islamic strictures forbidding representations of the prophet. Ten months later, a group of young Muslim men, many of whom had traveled to the Middle East to join the Islamic State, staged a coordinated assault on the Bataclan concert hall and other venues in and around Paris that left 130 people dead. In the emotional aftermath, there was a public outcry about young Muslims not integrating into French society.

Many of those “who were supposed to be on the left decided that fighting for the Republic, for laïcité, goes beyond right and left,” says Éric Fassin, a sociologist at the University of Paris 8 and a frequent left-wing commentator. Prominent left-leaning intellectuals formed a collective to battle Islamist extremism. This was to be done, they argued, by reinforcing the principle of laïcité, commonly translated as “secularism,” the French legal doctrine that protects private religious practice from state interference — and that, since the 1980s, as French Muslims became a more visible public presence, has been interpreted to mean that public life should be free from overt religious expression.

Fassin argues that in recent decades, ostensibly left-leaning governments have taken up these battles and allied themselves with the right. Last fall, Macron’s education minister, Jean-Michel Blanquer, founded the Laboratory of the Republic, a government-organized think tank meant to further the ideals of laïcité, proclaiming that “The veil itself is not desirable in French society” and decrying “le wokisme” as an American import. In 2013, Manuel Valls, interior minister to the Socialist president François Hollande, called for systematically deporting Roma, who are European Union citizens, from the country. Under Valls, the state was successfully sued for racial profiling in policing, but Valls appealed the decision by arguing that the practice was justified because Black people and Arabs are more likely to be foreign and therefore in the country illegally. This is not so far from what Zemmour was saying, Fassin noted. (In 2011, Zemmour was convicted in court of incitement to racial hatred for stating on TV that the police disproportionately stop minorities because “most dealers are Blacks and Arabs.”) Fassin went on: “So if we want to understand why Zemmour can say what he’s saying, you have to look at that.”

The left claimed upholding laïcité was necessary to oppose Islamist extremism, while the right stopped pretending that laïcité was neutral at all. Conservatives like Zemmour openly use the doctrine as a tool to delegitimize Islam. He tells his audiences that under his presidency, he would “not want to hear the voice of the muezzin,” the person who issues the Islamic call to prayer, while simultaneously extolling France’s “Christian heritage.” Part of the waning enthusiasm for Marine Le Pen has been because of her insistence that “Islam doesn’t have the right to express itself in the public sphere, but neither does Christianity,” de Guillebon, now the editor of the right-wing magazine L’Incorrect, told me.

As leftist politicians have shifted rightward, the right has become practically indistinguishable from the far right. In early November, Les Républicains, the supposedly center-right mainstream party, held its first primary debate. Opening a segment on immigration, the moderator asked the candidates if they would use the term “grand remplacement.” Some hesitated, but not a single candidate dismissed the idea. “Sixty-seven percent of the French use it,” Éric Ciotti, a member of Parliament from the south, which tends to be more conservative, said with a shrug. “It’s useless to deny reality.” The moderator continued to press the point: Was France witnessing the replacement of one population by another population? “I don’t like that expression,” Michel Barnier, the former Brexit negotiator for the E.U., said, but he allowed that the French sometimes had a feeling of no longer being “at home.” Valérie Pécresse, who went on to win the nomination of Les Républicains, said she didn’t like the phrase because it “implies that we’re already screwed.”

The trauma of ongoing terror attacks has created a highly-charged environment. In October 2020, Samuel Paty, a middle-school teacher in a Paris suburb who in a class on freedom of expression showed his students Charlie Hebdo’s Muhammad cartoons, was beheaded by an 18-year-old Chechen Muslim refugee who had recently been given permission to stay in France for 10 years. A few weeks later, a Tunisian man fatally stabbed three people in a church in Nice; the man entered France days earlier carrying documents that identified him as a refugee. It was an environment in which “reasonable people decided that to be reasonable, you had to agree with unreasonable people,” Fassin said. They were made to feel that if they weren’t against the so-called Islamo-leftists, a way of branding those on the left as Islamophilic for cautioning against anti-Muslim bigotry, then they were “complicit with terrorism,” Fassin said. “And, of course, that has consequences. Intimidation, basically.”

The left had failed to articulate what it meant to be on the left, Fassin said, to offer a different vision in response to real challenges. “The ideas of humanism and solidarity have weakened in the public debate,” Vincent Martigny, a professor of political science at the University of Nice, told me. Of the left, d’Ornellas said: “They have refused to get into any questions of security, immigration or Islam. Every time those topics come up, they say, ‘Those are right-wing topics.’ So people say to themselves, ‘OK, then I’m on the right.’” For the left, Fassin said, the lack of boundaries is fatal: “If you’re on the left, you have to make sure that people see that the left is different from the right. If you’re on the right, you don’t need that. On the contrary, it’s better if it’s blurred.” As a result, the far right has been able to set the terms of debate. “We are still far from dominant,” d’Ornellas told me. “But you could say at least that for the first time, we are in a position to contest the liberal cultural hegemony.”

Maréchal and Zemmour have long proselytized for what they call the union des droites, the joining of disparate right-wing factions behind a single leader. This could happen either by fusing the center-right party and far-right parties, though that is considered highly unlikely, or, more probably, by joining the most right-wing voters of the center to those on the far right.

Polling suggests that the way to appeal to all conservative voters, urban and bourgeois as well as ***working class***, is by talking about, or more precisely railing against, immigration. This is something that Zemmour has always done. He is an ideologue, and he built his career on a singular obsession. It is hard to say what is electoral strategy and what is Zemmour being Zemmour.

Most of the supporters I’ve spoken to at Zemmour’s events since last fall have tried to convince me that he is a mainstream conservative, as if by virtue of not being a Le Pen, he couldn’t possibly be on the far right. In reality, Zemmour is one of the most prominent promoters of grand remplacement. He has asked whether “young French people will accept to live as a minority on the land of their ancestors,” a concern Maréchal shares. Recently, she noted that it was possible that “in 2060 the historic native people could be minorities on French territory.” Maréchal told me that the identity question is central to the election, that “for the French it is a vital question, they feel it in their flesh, a vital threat that gives them anxiety.” She explained that it was “because they have the feeling that in several years France will no longer be France, because the population will have largely changed, it will be majority-Muslim, it will no longer be France as we’ve known it.” She went on: “Often, Muslim women who wear the full-body veil or burqa are reproached: ‘If you want so much to live like in Afghanistan or in Iraq, then go live in Afghanistan or Iraq.’

“This kind of provocation,” she continued, “gives the French the feeling that they’re trying to impose a foreign culture, against the most basic traditions, the visibility of the face in public, and the equality of men and women. So, if you want to attack that on the pretext of individual liberty, it’s an insult to what we are, to our way of life, to our country.”

Officially, France promotes an “assimilationist” model. This means that anyone can be French, so long as they adopt French cultural norms. The origins of this code date to the 19th century, when the French government, in order to form a cohesive nation-state, imposed unifying measures on different regional identities. “French culture,” in other words, was created. This history has made the French more willing to accept that the state should play a role in countering fragmentation and individualism. This helps explain why centrists like Macron inveigh against American “identity politics” even when they don’t embrace far-right talking points. “We have a need for unity,” Bastié, the conservative journalist, told me, noting that the role of the Catholic church in public life had also been reduced in the name of these principles. In this context, the fact that Zemmour is of North African Jewish heritage works to his advantage. “He knows what he’s talking about,” Maréchal told me. “He has legitimacy. He is the son of immigrants, he knows what it means to assimilate, to give up part of your identity in order to become French.”

But it would be a mistake to conclude from this that the emerging French right is interested in neutral statism; on the contrary, it wants to assert the primacy of a particular notion of Frenchness — part historical, part phantasmagorical. “I think people on the right are exasperated by the idea that we put all the religions on the same level,” Bastié said. “The right has turned the page on this kind of relativism. We have a specific Judeo-Christian heritage that we must assume. Only Europe and the West refuse to assume their own heritage. A Muslim country would never say that its heritage isn’t Muslim.”

The French far right, like its American counterparts, has taken an interest in the Hungarian prime minister, Viktor Orban. Orban’s calls for a Europe that rejects multiculturalism and asserts its “Christian heritage” were always meant to attract the attention of Western European conservatives. Zemmour and Maréchal visited Budapest together last fall, and Marine Le Pen made a showy campaign stop there. But their support for Orban and his allies in the Polish government goes beyond rhetoric. On matters of immigration and asylum, E.U. law, which regulates the qualifications for asylum in member states, takes precedence over the laws of nations. The right claims that this prevents France from enacting the kinds of immigration controls it believes are necessary. As a result, many right-wing politicians support the Central European governments’ refusal to abide by E.U. directives on immigration and their fight to assert their sovereignty, currently playing out in E.U. courts. Right-wing candidates have promised that, if elected, their first move would be a referendum to insert a national-sovereignty clause into the Constitution. “We need to offer a democratic response to people on all these questions of immigration, security, crime,” Bastié told me. “If there’s no democratic response, there could be a temptation to topple over into something else — a refusal of democracy.”

The French electoral system is set up in such a way that Zemmour almost certainly cannot win. If no candidate gains an outright majority in the first round of voting, the two top candidates move on to a second round of voting, in which the winner must clear 50 percent. It is highly unlikely that Zemmour, or any far-right candidate, can cross that threshold. But he may accomplish his goals nonetheless. The real reason for Zemmour’s candidacy, Lejeune, the editor of Valeurs Actuelles, told me, was to lay the foundation for a future movement. The defections from Le Pen’s party were happening because “they think that even if Zemmour loses, Le Pen is going to lose no matter what,” Lejeune told me. “So he will leave behind a base that’s much more inclusive than the National Front on its own.” Pécresse’s center-right party has also been sinking in the polls and is at risk of becoming obsolete. Which makes it even more likely that Zemmour and Maréchal, whether she runs again for public office or not, and regardless of vote tallies, are setting the tone for whatever comes next.

Most French Muslims would most likely say that they are not surprised by the harsh turn in the national mood, but they are no less disturbed by it. Some have been trying to mount an organized response. Last fall, Felix Marquardt — a half-American, half-Austrian Paris-born author, former media strategy consultant and semiprofessional networker who converted to Islam when he married a Tunisian woman — decided to bring together prominent French writers and artists who are Muslim to counter the frenzy over immigration.

Marquardt persuaded an acquaintance to host a gathering of French Muslim intellectuals and a few other guests at his flat in the Seventh Arrondissement. The top-floor apartment sits in an immense amphitheater-shaped building across the street from Les Invalides, the palatial monument housing the tomb of Napoleon Bonaparte, whose golden dome filled the living-room window.

Marquardt had invited a young philosopher and historian named Mohamed Amer Meziane to give a presentation on his recently published book, in which he argued that Europe, and France specifically, give themselves credit for having modernized during the 19th century. But this was the period of France’s imperial adventures in the Muslim world, which — not coincidentally, he argued — racialized the concept of “religiosity,” rendering it “uncivilized.” After Meziane finished, Marquardt opened up the discussion. Yassine Belattar, a well-known Paris comedian, observed that he thought the upcoming election would break relations among the French. “It’s a referendum for or against Muslims,” he said.

Marquardt had also invited to his dinner some non-Muslim friends he thought would be sympathetic to this group. That turned out to be not quite right — they weren’t unsympathetic, but they were defensive. In response to Meziane and Belattar, one such guest stated that there was only one question to be answered, with a simple yes or no: Was being Muslim more important to them than being French? Everyone was citing a survey from 2020 which suggested that 57 percent of young Muslims believed that the law of God was superior to the law of the French Republic. The salon erupted. Marquardt became defensive, feeling, as he later told me, responsible for having invited his Muslim friends there only to see them treated with a standard that would never be applied to Catholics. “If you were a believer, would it be Jesus or Macron, the decisive influence in your life?” he shouted. “Answer that!” From there the evening unraveled. Another of Marquardt’s invitees, a young Muslim academic, stood up and left the room.

For all that the French declare that their system, which claims to be race-blind, offers a defense against the kind of tribal identity politics they condemn in the United States, it is rare to hear Muslims spoken of as part of an “us.” As the French political scientist Patrick Weil wrote recently, in the aftermath of World War II, many of those residing in the French colonies came to France as workers. Some were already French citizens, but they were not treated as such. They “discovered that their part in French history was neither known nor shared,” Weil wrote. “Even though they were fully French, they and their children were often discriminated against. Their citizenship was no guarantee.” In the postcolonial era, when ideas about social hierarchy have been overturned, a generation whose ancestors were born under colonialism but who are themselves French-born and highly educated are not keen to be instructed on how to be “French.”

Zemmour, a self-styled historian, has nonetheless continued to do so. In many of his books, pop histories whose conclusions have been vigorously contested by academic historians, he displays a famously juvenile fandom of Napoleon and promotes an imperial conception of power. In 2018, he said that he dreams of a French Vladimir Putin, a man who “takes a country that was an empire, that could have been a great power, and tries to restore it.” He also wrote in his 2016 book that “Ukraine does not exist.” At a reading of Zemmour’s that I attended last fall, before he officially declared his candidacy, he gave a long, wide-ranging address, in which one of his many applause-provoking lines was that “Russia is not our enemy.” After [*Putin invaded Ukraine in late February,*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/24/world/russia-ukraine-putin) however, Zemmour condemned the war and even acknowledged that, in predicting it would never happen, he had been wrong.

Putin’s Russia has always been the model for the kind of conservative Christian civilizational state that Zemmour and Maréchal espouse, one ruled by a strong leader who patronizes the church, enforces traditional values and unapologetically rebuffs any kind of rights-based progressivism. In 2019, Maréchal condemned European sanctions imposed on Russia after it illegally annexed Crimea in 2014 and traveled to a Moscow-organized forum there. Le Pen’s party has taken loans from a Russian bank; in 2017, in an attempt to bolster her standing, she met with Putin. When Russia invaded Ukraine in February, Le Pen’s campaign moved quickly to trash a trove of campaign leaflets that featured a picture of Le Pen and Putin shaking hands at the Kremlin.

There is a long antidemocratic history in France, and the extent to which it persists as a political force is underappreciated by Americans. The French Revolution of 1789 overthrew both the monarchy and the aristocratic order that preceded it; but there is a deep-rooted reactionary right that never fully accepted the new republic. It is a sentiment that still resonates in the bourgeois Parisian circles that Maréchal and Zemmour frequent. Maréchal has remarked that France and the Republic are not necessarily the same thing, that the Republic is just one regime, and “France preceded the Republic.”

There is nothing to suggest that Maréchal or Zemmour, or Le Pen for that matter, in any way support the recent actions of the Russian government. After Russia invaded Ukraine, Maréchal said that Putin had caused the war. But French voters are clearly questioning their judgment and their loyalties. In March, the polls shifted significantly as prospective voters flocked to Macron.

Zemmour has always claimed that to be French means to own, to absorb, to love France’s history. At the rally in Toulon, the speakers who introduced Zemmour and Maréchal, some of them former National Rally members, spoke of France’s past “imperial grandeur” and the war in Algeria.

The spirit seemed to carry out into the street. After the event was over, along the palm-lined boulevard in front of the stadium, a small altercation broke out. A couple of young men who tried to get into the event had been turned away. They were jousting with an elderly woman who had attended, and somehow they all ended up taking out their identity cards. She looked white; the young man who was talking to her looked Arab. She was born in Algeria; he was born in France. Yet she told him that though she ate couscous and knew rai, a genre of North African pop music, she was still more assimilated into French culture than he was.

The woman wandered away, shaking her head. I stayed to talk to the young man, Salahedin Hamzi, who is 17. He showed me his ID, marked “République Française.” “I have to prove 10 times a day that I’m French,” he said, gesturing to his face. “When I was little, everyone was the same, but as I got older I was made to understand that I wasn’t French.” He was excited and a little agitated from the encounter, and he launched into a long but thoughtful explanation of why Zemmour’s diagnoses were wrong and dangerous and showed that he didn’t understand France’s problems at all.

As I stood talking with Hamzi and recording him on my phone, every few minutes someone — a police officer or a male attendee from the event — came over to ask me if I was OK. “You see?” Hamzi said to me. I did. At one point, he was telling me about how, when France was liberated from Nazi occupation in 1944, many of the soldiers that freed Toulon were from the French colonies. What people didn’t understand was that colonial history was French history, he said. As he talked, another Zemmour supporter walked up to check on us. “Did you know about the liberation of Toulon?” Hamzi asked him. The man did not. “It’s OK, it’s not your fault,” Hamzi said. “But you should look it up.” The man said he would. He suggested that Hamzi come to one of Zemmour’s rallies, that they weren’t what he might expect. Hamzi muttered something about being familiar with Zemmour already. I wondered what would happen if they each did what the other had suggested. But I doubted that either of them would.

Elisabeth Zerofsky is a contributing writer for the magazine who has reported across Europe. Her features include articles about [*politics in the*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/07/magazine/can-a-new-generation-in-the-banlieues-change-french-politics.html) [*banlieues*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/07/magazine/can-a-new-generation-in-the-banlieues-change-french-politics.html) [*of France*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/07/magazine/can-a-new-generation-in-the-banlieues-change-french-politics.html) and on [*American conservatives’ infatuation with the prime minister of Hungary.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/19/magazine/viktor-orban-rod-dreher.html)

Source photographs: Bertrand Guay/Getty Images; Sylvain Lefevre/Getty Images; Lionel Bonaventure/Getty Images.

PHOTOS: Marion Maréchal, a Zemmour supporter and member of the family Zemmour is challenging for leadership of France’s far right. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SYLVAIN LEFERVRE/GETTY IMAGES; MATTHIEU BOUREL) (MM26); Above: Éric Zemmour, a French far-right pundit campaigning for the presidency of France. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BERTRAND GUAY/GETY IMAGES; MATTHIEU BOUREL) (MM29); Marine Le Pen, French presidential candidate from the far-right National Rally party and Maréchal’s aunt. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LIONEL BONAVENTURE/GETTY IMAGS; MATTHIEU BOUREL) (MM30)

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[***The Sanders Coalition Is Not Quite What We Thought It Was***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YD6-GSF1-JBG3-60ND-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Phantom white ***working class*** voters and the persistence of ‘hostile sexism’ both played a crucial role in shaping the race.

Four years ago, in Grant County, Oklahoma, Bernie Sanders [*crushed*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf) Hillary Clinton, 57.1 percent to 31.9 percent.

This year, Sanders didn’t just lose Grant County — [*87.5 percent*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf) white, 76.9 percent without college degrees — to Joe Biden, his percentage of the   [*vote fell by 41 points*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf), to 16.1 percent.

Grant County reflects what has become a nationwide pattern in the Democratic primaries, including those held Tuesday night: Sanders’s support among white ***working class*** voters has begun to evaporate.

What happened?

A crucial bloc of Sanders’s 2016 voters is no longer a part of the Democratic primary electorate. The remnant of the conservative wing of the Democratic Party that in 2016 voiced its hostility to Clinton by voting for Sanders has now turned to President Trump. Many of these former Democrats — particularly men who hold right-of-center views on race, gender and immigration — cast far fewer of their ballots for Sanders and his progressive policies this time around, compared with four years ago, when they shied away from Clinton’s perceived elitism, her ties to Wall Street, her social liberalism and the fact that she is a woman.

The erosion of Sanders’s white ***working class*** support this year raises a related question: Why did Elizabeth Warren’s campaign fail?

One source of the frustration felt by many Warren supporters lies in the fact that the Democratic Party is not as free of sexism as these voters hoped. Support for Warren in Democratic primaries fell in direct proportion to rising levels of what political scientists call “[*hostile sexism*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf).”

One of the first papers to explore this phenomenon, “[*Understanding White Polarization in the 2016 Vote for President: The Sobering Role of Racism and Sexism*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf),” by   [*Brian Schaffner*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf), a political scientist at Tufts, and   [*Matthew MacWilliams*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf) and   [*Tatishe Nteta*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf), political scientists at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, was published in 2018 in the Political Science Quarterly.

Trump, according to the authors, deliberately put racism and sexism at the center of the campaign in order to make these issues salient and advantageous to his candidacy:

Trump’s rhetoric went far beyond targeting racial and ethnic groups; he also invoked language that was explicitly hostile toward women. These remarks were often focused directly at opponents, such as Carly Fiorina and Hillary Clinton, or news reporters, such as Megyn Kelly.

In doing so, Trump capitalized on what political scientists call “role incongruity theory,” which contends that women running for executive office face a conflict: on the one hand, “people tend to think that women should behave” but at the same time they believe “that political leaders ought to be assertive and independent.” As a consequence, the authors write, “when a campaign highlights the way in which a female candidate is behaving incongruously, attitudes on sexism may become a stronger predictor of vote choice.”

The authors specifically noted that

when Trump referred to Clinton as a “nasty woman” during a debate, the reaction from voters may have been conditioned by their underlying views about how women should behave. For those with more sexist views, Trump’s remark may have drawn attention to the fact that Clinton was not acting in the stereotypical way that they expect of a woman.

In December 2015, Trump [*described with relish*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf) Clinton’s bathroom break during a Democratic debate as “disgusting, I don’t want to talk about it. No, it’s too disgusting. Don’t say it, it’s disgusting,” and proclaimed that in her 2008 bid for the Democratic nomination, “she got schlonged” by Barack Obama.

Adverse reaction to Clinton among socially conservative voters was compounded, Schaffner and his co-authors wrote, by her “attempt to mobilize racial minorities such as African- Americans and Latinos” when she consistently cited “a number of issues of importance to these groups, such as her progressive positions on criminal justice reform, immigration reform and gender inequality.” Appeals to racial minorities, according to Schaffner, MacWilliams and Nteta, “have historically been viewed in a negative light by white voters, most notably by racially conservative whites.”

Trump’s tactics worked to greatly widen the gap between whites with college degrees and whites without degrees:

The rhetoric of the campaign and Clinton’s attempt to be the first‐ever female president may have combined to prime racial and gender attitudes in the minds of voters. If these factors were associated with support for Trump in 2016, and if non‐college‐educated whites are more likely to hold racist and sexist views, then the explicit role of racism and sexism in the 2016 campaign may account for the uniquely large education gap among whites.

Schaffner elaborated by email on the subject of the decline in support for Sanders as he no longer faces Clinton:

Overall Sanders is running well below his 2016 vote share everywhere. A lot of people underestimated just how much of his support in 2016 was an anti-Clinton vote, and now that he’s not running against Clinton, those voters aren’t backing him anymore.

Sanders describes his campaign as a revolution, but in 2016 he had in fact tapped not just left revolutionaries, but also a faction of old-guard white Democrats, in the North in particular, who had not yet followed their southern counterparts into the Republican Party.

For these men and women, a vote for Sanders was a declaration of their animosity to the liberal establishment as it was embodied by Hillary Clinton.

About 10 to 12 percent of Sanders’s 2016 primary voters cast ballots for Trump in the general election, and another 12 percent either voted for third-party candidates or sat the election out.

[*John Sides*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf), a political scientist at Vanderbilt, wrote me that interviews with Sanders-Trump voters over the years showed that “only 35 percent of them had voted for Obama” in 2008 or 2012, which in turn “suggests that most Sanders-Trump voters were not loyal Democrats even before Clinton ran.”

Using data compiled by the [*Cooperative Congressional Election Study*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf) and the   [*Voter Study Group*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf), Sides   [*wrote*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf) in the Washington Post in 2017 that “many Sanders voters did not readily identify with the Democratic Party as of 2016” and that Sanders-Trump voters “were even less likely to identify as Democrats.”

The key factor separating Sanders-Trump voters from Sanders-Clinton voters was “their attitudes about race,” Sides wrote:

When asked how they felt about whites and blacks on a 0-100 scale, Sanders-Trump voters rated blacks 9 points less favorably than Sanders-Clinton voters. But Sanders-Trump voters rated whites 8 points more favorably.

Those conservative views on African-Americans extended to other groups, Sides found:

Compared with Sanders-Clinton voters, Sanders-Trump voters rated Latinos 11 points less favorably, Muslims 20 points less favorably, and gays and lesbians 31 points less favorably.

Trump is fully aware of the fragile Democratic loyalties of many Sanders supporters. In a [*February interview*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf) with the local FOX television station in Phoenix, Trump was asked: “If Sanders doesn’t win, do you think you can take some of his supporters?”

Trump replied:

I think we will. The last time we had a lot of Bernie Sanders supporters. I think if they take it away from him like they did the last time, I really believe you’re going to have — you’re gonna have a very riotous time in the Democrat Party, because they really — they did a lot of numbers on him.

In the 2020 primaries, as [*Sarah Longwell*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf), director of   [*Defending Democracy Together*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf), showed   [*in the Times*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf) a few days ago, Joe Biden is adding voters to the Democratic coalition who are likely to stick with the party in the general election, reversing the pattern of the elusive Sanders voters who switched to Trump.

Biden, Longwell wrote, is winning over millions of suburban voters who often cast Republican ballots in the past but who “are now firmly anti-Trump.” These voters, she continued, flexed their muscles “on Super Tuesday in the Virginia and Texas suburbs, which saw 74 percent and 87 percent higher voter turnout, respectively, than four years ago.” These de facto Never Trumpers also showed up in large quantities in the suburbs of Charleston, S.C., where 58 percent more people voted in the Democratic primary last Tuesday compared with 2016. They were in evidence all over the map this Tuesday night as well.

The big difference between these voters and the conservative white voters who backed Sanders in 2016 is that these suburbanites will not vote for Trump this year and, if 2018 is any guide, they will support a centrist Democratic nominee.

[*Nate Silver*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf), editor in chief of FiveThirtyEight, cited data from the Cooperative Congressional Research Study to illustrate Sanders’s current difficulties maintaining his 2016 supporters. In February 2019 Silver   [*wrote*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf):

Roughly one-quarter of Sanders’s support in Democratic primaries and caucuses in 2016 came from #NeverHillary voters: people who didn’t vote for Clinton in the 2016 general election and who had no intention of doing so.

Silver pointed out that Sanders in 2016 won 43 percent of the vote in his primary competition against Clinton, but if “24 percent of that 43 percent were #NeverHillary voters, that means Sanders’s real base was more like 33 percent of the overall Democratic electorate.”

Without Clinton in the race, #NeverHillary voters have no motive to cast a ballot for Sanders:

These voters were disproportionately likely to describe themselves as moderate or conservative. Among the 31 percent of self-described conservatives who voted for Sanders in the Democratic primaries, more than half were #NeverHillary voters, for example.

Equally significant, on two key questions highly predictive of Republican leanings — “Do white people benefit from their race?” and “Should the Affordable Care Act be repealed” — Sanders’s #NeverHillary voters tended to fit the Republican profile, rejecting the view that whites benefit from their race and supporting repeal of the A.C.A., according to Silver. Demographically, the #NeverHillary voters were disproportionately rural, born-again Christians and military veterans, all groups leaning Republican.

A [*new Pew Research*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf) report shows that Sanders is now decisively viewed as the liberal candidate in the race and Biden as the moderate. From Feb. 18 to March 2 Pew interviewed 10,300 American adults, including 5,771 Democrats and Democratic leaners.

Seven out of ten Democratic voters and those who lean Democratic see Sanders as a liberal, 6 percent see him as a moderate, 8 percent see him as a conservative and the rest did not answer. In contrast, 31 percent see Biden as a liberal, 31 percent see him as a moderate and 20 percent see him as a conservative. Sanders’s current profile with voters is much less likely to draw conservative white support.

The departure from the Democratic electorate of conservatives deeply opposed to Clinton reduced the share of voters adverse to the nomination of a woman in the 2020 contests, but even without these voters, about a third of Democrats fit the category of “hostile sexism.” Schaffner, along with other political scientists, uses a “hostile sexism battery” of questions from the [*Ambivalent Sexism Inventory*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf).

In an article published last week, “[*Sexism is probably one reason why Elizabeth Warren didn’t do better*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf),” Schaffner and   [*Jon Green*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf), a political scientist at Ohio State wrote, “Warren received little-to-no support from the roughly one third of the Democratic primary electorate that does not reject these sentiments.” In contrast, support for Biden and Sanders rose in proportion to rising levels of agreement with those sentiments.

The pattern, especially the sharp drop in support for Warren, is shown in the accompanying chart:

The role of sexism, or the lack of it, can work to the advantage or disadvantage of both parties.

In a separate paper, “[*The Emergent Role of Hostile Sexism in the 2018 Midterm*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf),” Schaffner found that in that election cycle, the “sexism-based divide appeared to cost Republicans more votes than it gained them.”

His analysis of vote switching from supporting congressional candidates of one party in 2016 to the other party in 2018 “showed that lower level of sexism were strongly related to switching from voting Republican to Democratic in 2018, whereas increasing levels of sexism produced much smaller swings in the opposite direction.”

[*Mark Setzler*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf), a political scientist at High Point University in North Carolina, used a different technique to measure sexism as reported in his paper “   [*Measuring Bias against Female Political Leadership*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf).”

“Some of most striking data are for nonwhites and Democrats,” Setzler writes. “Individuals who belong to groups that are historical advocates for social equality are more likely than other individuals to mask sexist beliefs if they have them.”

Many individuals, but most especially those on the liberal side of the aisle, Setzler writes,

will admit their hostility toward women leaders only when they do not realize that they are doing so or when their concerns can be communicated in a way that does not run counter to social norms.

The traditional approach, which asks “respondents whether men, women, or both equally make better political leaders” fails to capture this latent sexism, in Setzler’s view. Instead, Setzler tested asking a similar question carefully in “a face-saving frame that reminds respondents that relatively few women hold high-level elected office.” The goal is to “reduce social desirability effects and lead to more accurate responses, especially for respondents who are unusually disinclined to admit bias openly.”

Setzler said his approach “permits individuals to acknowledge their bias without directly stating that they prefer male leaders or that they ‘agree’ that men are better.” It does so by asking “whether a person thinks that one of the ‘reasons’ that women are underrepresented in government is because ‘generally speaking, males make better leaders’. ”

In another key step, “the alternative measure is presented as one item in a block of questions exploring potential causes of female underrepresentation, thus cognitively masking its purpose”

When asked the conventional question directly, Setzler found, “minority respondents are slightly less likely than whites to say that male political leaders are superior when responding, but they are 10 points more likely than whites to exhibit pro-male bias on the masked measure.” In the case of partisanship, “Republicans are nearly three times as likely as Democrats (34 percent versus 13 percent) to admit to having a pro-male bias when responding to the conventional item.” But, he continued, “Democrats are nearly indistinguishable from Republicans in their answers to the masked question”:

While previous research indicates that Democrats are disproportionately supportive of female politicians, the findings here show that Democrats are three times more likely to express pro-male bias when they are responding to a modestly masked measure of the same prejudice.

What can be inferred from voters who have abandoned not only Bernie Sanders but Elizabeth Warren, Amy Klobuchar, Kirsten Gillibrand and Kamala Harris? Primarily that voters, including Democrats, are not as liberal as [*some polls suggest*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf) and as   [*many on the left assert*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf). The share of Democrats who identify as liberal or very liberal has grown steadily from 27 percent in 2000 to 47 percent in 2019, according to Pew, but self-identified moderates and conservatives stood at 49 percent in 2019

After looking at polling [*conducted throughout 2019*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf),   [*Lydia Saad*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf), a senior editor at Gallup, found, that

The ideological balance of the country remained center-right, with 37 percent of Americans, on average, identifying as conservative during the year, 35 percent as moderate and 24 percent as liberal.

Since the Super Tuesday contests last week and similar primary results this week, the outcomes suggest that Democratic voters are coming to terms with that assessment by pushing Joe Biden, the de facto candidate of moderation, into the lead spot.

Republicans remained committed to profiting from sexism and racism.

Schaffner, MacWilliams and Nteta put the case well:

There is reason to think that Trump’s strategy of using explicitly racist and sexist appeals to win over white voters may be followed by candidates in future elections,” they write. “There is no longer a price to be paid by politicians who make such explicit appeals. Explicit racist and sexist appeals appeared to cost Trump some votes from more educated whites, but it may have won him even more support among whites with less education.

Republicans, they argue,

have two choices — moderate their appeals in order to restore their advantage among more educated white voters (even if it costs them some votes among less educated whites) or repeat the Trump strategy to maximize their support among less educated whites (even at the expense of winning large margins among college‐educated whites). As the norms governing political rhetoric appear to have largely been shattered in 2016, the latter strategy is at least as plausible as the former, and that may have significant consequences for the stability of American democracy.

There isn’t much doubt which strategy Trump will choose.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some   [*tips*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf). And here&#39;s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.ok.gov/elections/support/20160301_cnty.pdf).

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PHOTO: Sanders supporters at a rally in Detroit last week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Hilary Swift for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***House Republicans Tire of Madison Cawthorn’s Antics. Some in His District Have, Too.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6540-YS61-JBG3-64SR-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

For Mr. Cawthorn, a pro-Trump North Carolina congressman, youthful brashness that helped him win his seat now strikes some voters as recklessness.

HENDERSONVILLE, N.C. — In the era of Donald Trump’s takeover of the Republican Party — when making falsehoods about an election isn’t disqualifying, when heckling a president at the State of the Union is no big deal, when attending an event tied to white supremacists doesn’t lead to exile — it may still be possible for a hard-right member of [*Congress*](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/organization/us-congress) to go too far.

That is the object lesson of Representative Madison Cawthorn of North Carolina, the House’s youngest member, whose bid for a second term is in jeopardy after a series of incendiary statements and personal foibles have soured many former supporters.

“I voted for Madison, but I think I’ll pass now because of integrity issues,’’ said John Harper, a retired furniture finisher in Franklin, N.C., at a Republican event in Mr. Cawthorn’s district last week. “I was fooled last time. I won’t be fooled again.”

Mr. Cawthorn, 26, called President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine “a thug” and his country “incredibly evil” as Russian tanks rolled in. The congressman has made headlines for [*bringing a knife*](https://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/2021/09/14/jay-carey-says-madison-cawthorn-brought-weapon-school-board-meeting/8340156002/) to a school board meeting and bringing [*a gun*](https://spectrumlocalnews.com/nc/charlotte/politics/2021/07/30/n-c--rep--madison-cawthorn-found-with-gun-passing-through-airport-security) through airport security. Mr. Cawthorn, who has used a wheelchair since being injured in an automobile accident when he was 18, was [*charged this month*](https://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/2022/03/09/nc-rep-madison-cawthorn-charged-driving-revoked-license-court/9439056002/) with driving with a revoked license. He has a May court date on the misdemeanor count that carries jail time.

Unlike some other far-right members of Congress — including Representatives Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia and Lauren Boebert of Colorado, both of whom booed President Biden during his State of the Union speech — Mr. Cawthorn is also saddled with a yearslong series of hyperbolic claims about his personal life, raising questions about his honesty.

One of those claims finally set off his fellow House Republicans this week: a bizarre assertion he made [*on a conservative YouTube channel*](https://twitter.com/patriottakes/status/1508127124498141187) that people he “looked up to” in Washington — presumably Republican lawmakers — invited him to orgies and used cocaine. On Tuesday, upset House Republicans at a closed-door meeting questioned the remarks, and Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, the House minority leader, told colleagues that he would speak to Mr. Cawthorn.

On Wednesday, [*he did so*](https://twitter.com/Olivia_Beavers/status/1509179454903439368?s=20&amp;t=RsosV-f0IJwnX84w3bGqpg). Afterward, Mr. McCarthy told reporters that Mr. Cawthorn admitted the allegations were untrue. The minority leader said that he told the freshman congressman that he had lost trust in him and that he needed to turn his life around.

Mr. McCarthy, who aspires to be House speaker, acted only after declining to discipline other members for norm-shattering behavior and accusations. They include Representatives Paul Gosar of Arizona, who posted an animated video showing him killing a Democratic congresswoman, and Matt Gaetz of Florida, who is [*under federal investigation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/30/us/politics/matt-gaetz-sex-trafficking-investigation.html) for allegations of sex trafficking. Although Mr. McCarthy recently condemned Ms. Taylor Greene for [*an appearance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/28/us/politics/republicans-extremism-marjorie-taylor-greene.html)at a conference organized by a white supremacist, he [*refused last year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/04/us/marjorie-taylor-greene-committee-assignments.html) to back her removal from committees for endorsing violent behavior and spreading bigoted conspiracy theories.

Well before Mr. Cawthorn’s latest episode, his youthful brashness — which once appealed to the conservative older voters of far-west North Carolina — struck some as reckless and immature. Interviews last week with Republican voters and party leaders in his district — a largely ***working-class*** region set amid the beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains — suggested that his impetuousness is working against him.

“People of western North Carolina are tired of the antics,’’ said Michele Woodhouse, the elected Republican chair of Mr. Cawthorn’s district and a former staunch supporter. Now she is running against him in the primary in May.

Mr. Cawthorn faces a total of [*seven Republican challengers*](https://ballotpedia.org/North_Carolina%27s_11th_Congressional_District_election,_2022), a field that includes other former supporters, who accuse him of neglecting constituents while chasing Instagram followers with fiery rhetoric and pursuing donors with expensive travel outside the state.

In the past, North Carolina’s Republican officials largely held their tongues about Mr. Cawthorn. His comments about Ukraine ushered in more open criticism, including from [*Senator Thom Tillis*](https://twitter.com/SenThomTillis/status/1504504376223846402?s=20&amp;t=89z8hC-MIASOuYN0diK9GQ) and the State House speaker, [*Tim Moore*](https://www.newsobserver.com/news/politics-government/article259393744.html), who called him “reckless” in The News &amp; Observer.

The congressman, who declined repeated requests for an interview, seemed to acknowledge some of the doubts about him at a debate in Henderson County on Saturday. “I’ll be the first to admit, 26 years old, I don’t have all the wisdom in the world,’’ he told the crowd. “Obviously when it comes to driving, I’ve got some work to do.’’

The audience, largely voters with gray hair, laughed, and some applauded.

Luke Ball, a spokesman for Mr. Cawthorn, predicted that Mr. Cawthorn would easily win the primary and suggested that voters at the district gatherings were unrepresentative. “Some attending local G.O.P. events are affiliated with Congressman Cawthorn’s primary opponents and have welcomed the opportunity to slight Mr. Cawthorn’s service and candidacy,’’ Mr. Ball said.

Jennifer Cook, a nurse in Macon County, attended one such gathering to support her husband, who is running for sheriff. She said she voted for Mr. Cawthorn in 2020 but has no plans to do it again. “Madison has disappointed me in his actions on many things since he was elected,’’ Ms. Cook said. “I think driving without a license is saying, ‘I can do what I want, the law doesn’t pertain to me.’ That’s not the kind of person I want representing me.’’

Mr. Cawthorn has the advantage of broad name recognition in a field of challengers who, with a couple of exceptions, have raised little money needed to become better known. He also has the endorsement of Mr. Trump, whom Mr. Cawthorn identified on Saturday as “a man who mentors me.”

An internal poll of likely Republican voters this month for a Cawthorn rival showed the congressman leading the field with 52 percent and 17 percent undecided. “Cawthorn is right on the bubble of the 50 percent mark; incumbents who slip below that during the campaign are in danger,’’ wrote Glen Bolger, a top Republican pollster who conducted the poll.

Mr. Cawthorn did himself no favors last year when he announced he would run in a new district near Charlotte, the state’s largest city. Political insiders speculated that he sought a higher profile in a major media market ahead of an eventual statewide run. But then legal challenges led to [*a redrawn state congressional map*](https://www.newsobserver.com/news/politics-government/election/article258550123.html), and Mr. Cawthorn’s planned new district tilted Democratic. So he returned home to his old district, where viable contenders had joined the race in his absence.

“Had he not flirted with another district, he wouldn’t be in this situation, where there’s a question of whether he’ll win this primary,’’ said Christopher Cooper, a political scientist at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, N.C. “It’s the thing that opened the door for the field to expand.”

It’s unclear if Mr. Cawthorn’s temporary desertion has penetrated to average voters, even if it angers party officials. “I believe he probably has lost most of the local-level Republican movers and shakers,’’ said David Baker, a voter who attended a recent Republican convention in Jackson County.

But Mr. Baker, an employee benefits expert, said rank-and-file Republicans like himself still support Mr. Cawthorn because of his “clarity on those issues that were so important to Trump.”

Mr. Cawthorn was raised in Hendersonville, N.C., a small community where he was home-schooled. His meteoric rise began with his defeat of a primary candidate handpicked to fill the seat held by former Representative Mark Meadows, who was appointed Mr. Trump’s White House chief of staff.

During the 2020 campaign, a group of alumni of Patrick Henry College, which Mr. Cawthorn briefly attended, [*accused him*](https://www.bpr.org/news/2020-10-23/nc11-attack-by-madison-cawthorns-schoolmates-goes-viral) of “sexually predatory behavior,’’ which he denied. He [*suggested during the campaign*](https://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2020/08/12/madison-cawthorns-claim-naval-academy-creates-false-impression/3350634001/) that his 2014 auto accident had “derailed” his plans to attend the Naval Academy. Reporting showed that his Annapolis application had already been rejected before the crash.

Days after being sworn in, Mr. Cawthorn addressed the rally behind the White House on Jan. 6 that preceded the violent siege of the Capitol. He amplified false conspiracies of fraud in the presidential election. Days earlier, he had tweeted, “It’s time to fight.’’ In the aftermath of the riot, he denounced the violence, writing in a tweet that “it wasn’t patriotism it was thuggery.”

This year, a group of North Carolina voters sought to have Mr. Cawthorn disqualified from re-election because of his participation in an “insurrection.” [*A judge blocked the effort*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/04/us/politics/madison-cawthorn-north-carolina-insurrectionist.html).

George Erwin, a retired county sheriff who organized a group of law enforcement officials to endorse Mr. Cawthorn in 2020, said he no longer backed him, in part because of his actions around Jan. 6.

“The words that come out of his mouth incite people,’’ said Mr. Erwin, who is now supporting a Cawthorn challenger, Rod Honeycutt, a retired Army colonel. “He says he backs the blue, but what he does is, he backs them in a corner with his antics. If you really want to back the blue, obey the law.”

The biggest primary threat to Mr. Cawthorn may come from a state senator, [*Chuck Edwards*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_pQFsTwCzU), who has the endorsements of most members of the state legislature in the district.

Mr. Edwards, the owner of several McDonald’s franchises, had more than $300,000 in his campaign account at the end of last year, more than Mr. Cawthorn reported. Mr. Cawthorn has been one of the House’s top fund-raisers, pulling in [*$2.8 million in 2021*](https://www.fec.gov/data/committee/C00732958/) thanks to a national donor base, but he has also spent prodigiously, with more than half going toward fund-raising. He spent $28,000 on campaign air travel and $11,000 at a Waldorf Astoria hotel in Orlando, according to [*an analysis*](https://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/2021/07/26/karl-rove-madison-cawthorn-north-carolina-out-of-district-campaign-spending-waldorf-hotel-bill/8068637002/) by The Asheville Citizen Times.

At the debate, Mr. Edwards confined his attacks to a resolution Mr. Cawthorn introduced in Washington: [*a 52-point plan*](https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-resolution/937?s=2&amp;r=1) calling for a one-third reduction in federal spending, as well as reforming Social Security by “incentivizing people to work and get off entitlement programs.’’

“I would not cut Social Security benefits by a third, as is suggested in our congressman’s garbled 52-point plan for America,’’ Mr. Edwards said. “Go read it,’’ he told the audience. “It would require you to go back to work to collect your Social Security.”

Mr. Cawthorn responded that he wants to cut “wasteful” spending but not Social Security.

To prevail in the primary on May 17, a candidate must win with more than 30 percent of the vote; if not, the top two finishers will face a runoff. There is broad speculation over whether Mr. Cawthorn, even as the front-runner, can surpass 30 percent. Still, whether his rivals can pull down his support to such a threshold remains to be seen.

The leading Democrat in the race, Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, is considered a long shot in a district that Mr. Trump won by 10 percentage points.

Chelsea Walsh, a life insurance agent who volunteered for Mr. Cawthorn in 2020 but said she is open to other candidates now, predicted a runoff between Mr. Cawthorn and Mr. Edwards.

“If I had to pick, I would say Madison is still the front-runner,’’ she said. “But he has his work cut out for him.”

Annie Karni contributed reporting.

Annie Karni contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Representative Madison Cawthorn, to the right of the moderators, at a debate in North Carolina. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE BELLEME FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 31, 2022

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[***One Night at Mom’s Spaghetti***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64DR-FH01-DXY4-X15R-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** STYLE

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**Byline:** Luke Winkie

**Highlight:** Eminem opened a restaurant in Detroit. We checked it out.

**Body**

Eminem opened a restaurant in Detroit. We checked it out.

DETROIT — On Sept. 27, a strange 30-second film appeared on Eminem’s YouTube channel: not a music video teaser, or the first few verses of a new rap single, but a quick-moving advertisement.

In the video, cartons brimming with marinara sauce spin hypnotically on checkered tablecloths. A voice-over rattles off vaguely Italian dishes: spaghetti, spaghetti and meatballs, and a “‘sghetti sandwich” — a scoop of pasta squeezed between two pieces of buttery white bread. Eminem, dressed in a thin gold chain and an eggplant-colored flight jacket, holds up what the viewer can only assume are two middle fingers, their message censored by twin takeout containers bearing the phrase “Mom’s Spaghetti.”

Marshall Mathers, the man who brought white ***working-class*** angst to the top of the charts, was opening a restaurant.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/Q4JCbKDQsks)]

Two days later, the rapper [*surprised fans at the grand opening*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/arts-entertainment/2021/09/30/eminem-moms-spaghetti-restaurant-detroit/) in downtown Detroit, where he served heaping ladlefuls of pasta to a queue of customers that snaked around the block. A photo of the rapper standing behind the order window — flipping the bird, of course — [*quickly shot to the top of Reddit’s front page*](https://www.reddit.com/r/pics/comments/pywcns/eminem_just_opened_moms_spaghetti_in_detroit_they/).

Mom’s Spaghetti is named for the famed first verse of “Lose Yourself,” a single written for the movie “8 Mile” that sold more than 10 million copies and earned Eminem a pair of Grammys in 2004. The lyrics are imbued with nauseating, do-or-die dread: Our protagonist is locked in a bathroom, drenched with sweat, washing off a regurgitated wad of pasta clinging to his hoodie. “Knees weak, arms are heavy, there’s vomit on his sweater already, mom’s spaghetti.” It was only a matter of time before the lyric became a [*meme*](https://knowyourmeme.com/memes/moms-spaghetti).

Nearly two decades later, the restaurant appears to be Eminem’s way of embracing — or one-upping — the joke.

On a visit to Mom’s Spaghetti in December, three months after the initial fanfare, the place did not immediately register as a shrine to a rapper’s career. Instead, I found myself at a small counter-service restaurant, tucked in an alley next to the Little Caesars World Headquarters. (Yes, the pizza chain.) I perused the abbreviated menu and placed my order at an outdoor cashier. Almost as soon as my credit card cleared, a steaming, carb-laden paper bag was handed to me through the window.

Afterward, I was escorted inside a gastropub called Union Assembly, where all of the food served at Mom’s Spaghetti is prepared, to a tiny suite of tables and bar stools where customers can eat.

Here is where the Slim Shady aesthetic becomes apparent: Most of the “E’s” on the menu and packaging have been turned backward, and the kitchen is made to look like a street corner bodega. I tucked into a booth, already overwhelmed, preparing for a long night in the afterlife of Eminem’s cultural empire.

Curt Catallo, 54, is the owner, with Ann Stevenson, of Union Joints, which operates several restaurants around Detroit, including this one. He described Mom’s Spaghetti as a “true joint venture” between his business and Eminem. The restaurant first appeared as a pop-up shop in 2017 and has been a fixture at the rapper’s various festival performances since. (During the pandemic, Union Joints and Eminem’s Shady Records delivered the pasta to frontline medical workers.)

Mr. Catallo said the restaurant’s busiest periods occur “postgame and pregame,” where the staff harvests customers from the foot traffic pouring through Detroit’s pro sports district. Spaghetti is not typically deployed as a takeout food — noodles take a while to cook — but Mr. Catallo’s staff makes all the pasta a day ahead, then reheats the product in a pair of woks. He believes that method blesses the spaghetti with a delectable down-home texture.

“Today’s spaghetti is better tomorrow,” Mr. Catallo said.

I’d ordered the spaghetti and meatballs, which was served in an oyster pail and covered with a snowy dusting of Parmesan, as well as a ‘sghetti sandwich. This is not Italian cooking, nor does it try to be. Instead, it might be best described as … well, downright motherly. The greasy slop of the pasta, the sugary tang of the red sauce; it’s the spaghetti that emerges from your pantry on the last night before a grocery trip. Mr. Catallo said the noodles possess an inscrutable leftover chemistry. He means that as an endorsement, and he should.

Eminem is not here, nor should he be expected anytime soon. Ian McManus, 22, who manages the Trailer — a merchandise shop above the dining area — told me the rapper has dropped by the restaurant a “handful” of times since it opened. “He only lets a few of us know when he’s coming,” Mr. McManus said. “And he only lets us know day-of. If he’s coming through, I’ll find out when I’m on my way downtown.”

A smattering of Eminem-themed pint glasses, T-shirts and sneakers filled the room, but the real pièce de résistance was at the back: the Robin costume from the music video for “Without Me,” encased in glass. The sound was the soundtrack to the year I turned 10; seeing a relic of it up close felt like being in the Louvre.

Eminem has been famous, and will remain famous, for a long time, but it has also been eight years since his last No. 1 hit. Perhaps that’s why he’s preserved himself in a mini-museum. The rapper is entering that vexing post-prime era that inevitably hunts down every enormously successful person. How should Eminem structure his third and fourth acts? Ideally with some humor and some grace. If Paul Newman could sell salad dressing and enjoy his golden years, maybe Marshall Mathers can do the same with spaghetti.

After all, the Eminem brand is still strong, even now. Misty Jesse, 49, and her 15-year-old son, Romeo Jesse, who were dining at Mom’s Spaghetti that December night, told me they grew up with Eminem, which sounds confusing but is honestly quite plausible if you do the math. “I saw him live at the old Detroit Tigers stadium,” said Ms. Jesse, who made the trip to the restaurant from the Dearborn Heights suburbs so that Romeo could shop for some Eminem gear. “It’s crazy how it all circles back around.”

“She was surprised that he was one of the first people I started listening to,” Romeo said. “She’s happy that we could bond over his music and sing along to it in the car.”

The Jesses are locals, which makes them outliers here. Almost everyone else inside the restaurant, save for the employees, was visiting Detroit for business, pleasure, or a combination of both. A trio of auditors from Atlanta crowded around a table glazed with spaghetti sauce; they were only in town for a few days, and they’d arrived at Mom’s Spaghetti out of passive curiosity — the same gravitational force that pulls New York City sightseers into the Times Square Madame Tussauds.

Morgan Martin, 28, said that Eminem’s 2010 album “Recovery” got stuck in her car’s CD player when she was in high school. For 10 years, she exclusively listened to that record as she drove around Georgia. Her friends claim that the experience endowed her with the ability to rap with a near-perfect Eminem cadence.

“I’ve since gotten a new car that connects to Bluetooth,” Ms. Martin said, “so now I’m learning more of his work.”

For her, Mom’s Spaghetti was a destination. “When I learned we were coming to Detroit, I knew where we were eating,” she said.

Her friend and dinner date, Caylen Hemme, 27, was not apprised of that plan. “I didn’t know this was Eminem’s restaurant,” she said from across the table. “I just saw that they had vegan meatballs.”

John Farran, a 32-year-old service engineer from Orlando, had dined at a high-end Italian restaurant the previous night. The experience, he said, paled in comparison what Mom’s Spaghetti had to offer. “Their sauce was like a soup,” Mr. Farran said, “plus they didn’t give you bread.” He then gestured toward the caramelized chunk of starch half-submerged in the noodles. “It made the whole trip for us, pretty much,” he said. “Otherwise I wouldn’t have had anything to look forward to.”

“No offense to Detroit,” Mr. Farran said. “Great city.”

Mr. Catallo, the restaurant operator, said Mom’s Spaghetti is planning on expanding its menu. Soon there will be Bolognese sauce, from a recipe Mr. Mathers has taste tested. I imagined the rapper, whose career was once defined by rage and controversy, letting a meat sauce linger on his palate for a moment before giving it his stamp of approval. Could Eminem become a latter-day Jimmy Buffett, bringing Mom’s Spaghetti to tourist districts around the country? He declined to be interviewed for this article, so I can’t say for sure.

But I can tell you with certainty that on a cold night in Detroit, after scarfing down a pound of pasta, I felt changed. Knees weak, arms heavy.

PHOTOS: Mom’s Spaghetti is named after the first verse of Eminem’s “Lose Yourself.” (ST1); Top, Morgan Martin, left, Christopher O’Neal and Caylen Hemme at Mom’s Spaghetti while in Detroit for a business trip. Above, Emily Davenport preparing an order. Left, concert passes displayed at the Trailer, a shop above Mom’s. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELAINE CROMIE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (ST2)

**Load-Date:** December 31, 2021

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[***Haiti Assassination Spotlights Colombia's Growing Mercenary Industry***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63B2-26Y1-JBG3-609F-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Julie Turkewitz and Anatoly Kurmanaev

**Body**

Exporting soldiers has become a vast industry in Colombia, fueled by the country's long U.S.-backed war, limited opportunity at home and growing demand abroad.

BOGOTÁ, Colombia -- In Haiti, investigators continue to search for the mastermind behind the hiring of more than 20 former Colombian soldiers for a mission that ended in the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, plunging the already troubled island nation into crisis.

But 1,000 miles away, in Colombia, the arrest of 18 of those veterans in Port-au-Prince has torn open a debate over the way the nation treats its ex-soldiers, who are the products of a civil conflict that has lasted 73 years and created the second largest military in Latin America.

Each year, 10,000 servicemen retire from that war, according to Colombia's defense ministry, but most are rank-and-file soldiers who leave with small pensions, little education -- a few are illiterate -- and limited experience navigating the civilian world. With few opportunities at home, thousands have sought work abroad, and over the last decade, former Colombian soldiers have become crucial participants in a growing and little-regulated global mercenary industry in which companies and governments hire them to do their bidding.

Their sheer numbers, their experience and their willingness to work for relatively little pay, experts say, has made them singularly valuable to recruiters around the world.

''We are the machines of war, that's what we've been trained for,'' said Isaías Suache, 44, a former commando and head of a Colombian veterans' association. ''We don't know what to be apart from that.''

About two dozen retired Colombian commandos traveled to Haiti earlier this year after a fellow serviceman promised them security jobs paying $2,700 a month, nearly seven times their $400 pensions.

In interviews, their families have asserted that most of them believed they would be doing legal work protecting an important person.

What actually happened in Haiti is still hazy. President Moïse's wife, who was injured during the July 7 assassination, has told The New York Times that her husband's killers spoke Spanish. But it's still unclear how many former soldiers participated in the murder. The investigation in Haiti has been plagued by irregularities and violations of due process, leaving many people there and in Colombia concerned that the truth will never be known.

Colombian officials have portrayed the soldiers' decisions to travel to Haiti as individual choices with tragic consequences. In an interview, Defense Minister Diego Molano said that lack of opportunity at home ''in no way can be an excuse to commit criminal activity.''

But in the weeks since the assassination, Colombian veterans have urged the country to reconsider how it treats its soldiers and examine why so many have chosen to go abroad following their service. The soldiers' discontent, some veterans and security experts say, opens a window for shady actors who want to hire them, potentially threatening global security.

Despite a 2016 peace deal between the Colombian government and the country's largest rebel group, the conflict shows no signs of ending -- and today the military is training and deploying a new generation of soldiers to fight both old and new factions in the country's war.

If opportunities at home don't improve, some veterans warn, those men will be funneled right into an increasingly voracious global mercenary industry that has the potential to unleash more destabilizing operations around the world.

''Support us,'' said Raúl Musse, 50, the head of another Colombian veterans' association. ''Help us so that people care about our futures.''

Colombia's modern civil conflict was ignited by the assassination of a left-wing presidential candidate in 1948. Over time, the conflict grew into a complex war between the government, left-wing insurgents, right-wing paramilitaries and drug-trafficking organizations, all while Colombia received billions of dollars in military support from the United States, its staunch ally.

The bulk of the war has been fought by the country's rank-and-file servicemen, who often come from rural and ***working-class*** backgrounds. But upon retirement, typically around age 40 and after 20 years of service, many have said that they were given few tools to succeed in civilian life.

The $400 monthly retirement pension offers little more than subsistence living in cities like Bogotá. The signature education component of the military's reintegration program is a year of technical training in industries like cooking and construction. But after losing those military benefits, many soldiers are forced deep into debt to pay for homes for their families.

A 2019 veterans' law, supported by President Iván Duque, was intended to address some of those issues. It created a fund that grants credits to soldiers who seek higher education, among other benefits.

Mr. Molano, the defense minister, defended the program.

''Of course more can always be done,'' he said. ''But compared to other Colombians,'' he added, the veterans' treatment is ''adequate.''

Many former soldiers, though, said they needed more, now. Some leave the military without knowing how to read or write. Others lack basic computer skills.

Over the last decade, the veterans' desperation has collided with a ballooning global demand for private security, particularly in the Middle East, said Sean McFate, an expert on the mercenary industry and a professor at Georgetown University.

In recent years, Colombian soldiers have gone to Iraq and Afghanistan to work for U.S. contractors, and to the United Arab Emirates, where many became hired guns for the country in its intervention in Yemen. Some Colombians have killed and others have been killed during these missions, said Mr. McFate.

Some soldiers make as much as $5,000 a month.

''It totally changed my life,'' said William Amaya, 47, a former soldier who worked for the United Arab Emirates for two years. He said he used the money to get a university education and open a business.

The Haiti operation and the focus on the involvement of former Colombian soldiers has come at a particularly complex time for Colombia's veterans.

Public support for the military, once high, has declined as the armed forces have come under scrutiny for human rights abuses, including allegations that officials ordered the killing of thousands of civilians in the 2000s. That scandal is being investigated by the country's war court.

At the same time, veterans are facing an increasingly difficult work environment, with Colombia's economy hobbled by the pandemic -- just as the United Arab Emirates' involvement in Yemen has wound down, cutting the country's demand for hired guns.

Many men who went to Haiti had applied repeatedly for jobs in the U.A.E., their families said, but were never called up.

So when the opportunity in Haiti became available, the men jumped. Many went without knowing what country they would be working in, whom they were working for, how long they would be gone or exactly what the mission was.

''We have three children,'' said Lorena Córdoba, the wife of Mario Antonio Palacios, who left for Haiti in early June. ''There was no money.''

Sofía Villamil and Edinson Bolaños contributed reporting from Bogotá, Colombia.Sofía Villamil and Edinson Bolaños contributed reporting from Bogotá, Colombia.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/07/world/americas/haiti-assassination-colombia-mercenaries.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/07/world/americas/haiti-assassination-colombia-mercenaries.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: William Amaya, above, is one of thousands of former Colombian soldiers who have sought work abroad. ''We are the machines of war, that's what we've been trained for,'' said Isaías Suache, left, a former commando who leads a Colombian veterans' association. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY FEDERICO RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 8, 2021

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[***Behind the Haiti Assassination, Colombia’s Growing Mercenary Industry***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:639V-6P81-JBG3-647M-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Julie Turkewitz and Anatoly Kurmanaev

**Highlight:** Exporting soldiers has become a vast industry in Colombia, fueled by the country’s long U.S.-backed war, limited opportunity at home and growing demand abroad.

**Body**

Exporting soldiers has become a vast industry in Colombia, fueled by the country’s long U.S.-backed war, limited opportunity at home and growing demand abroad.

BOGOTÁ, Colombia — In [*Haiti*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/08/14/world/haiti-earthquake), investigators continue to search for the mastermind behind the hiring of more than 20 former Colombian soldiers for a mission that ended in the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, plunging the already troubled island nation into crisis.

But 1,000 miles away, in Colombia, the arrest of 18 of those veterans in Port-au-Prince has [*torn open a debate*](https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/soldados-voluntarios-denuncian-abandono-por-parte-del-ministerio-de-defensa/202146/) over [*the way the nation treats its ex-soldiers*](https://www.eltiempo.com/justicia/servicios/cara-a-cara-con-maria-isabel-diego-molano-mindefensa-604176), who are the products of a civil conflict that has lasted 73 years and created the second largest military in Latin America.

Each year, 10,000 servicemen retire from that war, according to Colombia’s defense ministry, but most are rank-and-file soldiers who leave with small pensions, little education — a few are illiterate — and limited experience navigating the civilian world. With few opportunities at home, thousands have sought work abroad, and over the last decade, former Colombian soldiers have become crucial participants in a growing and little-regulated global mercenary industry in which companies and governments hire them to do their bidding.

Their sheer numbers, their experience and their willingness to work for relatively little pay, experts say, has made them singularly valuable to recruiters around the world.

“We are the machines of war, that’s what we’ve been trained for,” said Isaías Suache, 44, a former commando and head of a Colombian veterans’ association. “We don’t know what to be apart from that.”

About two dozen retired Colombian commandos traveled to [*Haiti*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/14/world/americas/haiti-president-killed-moise-henry.html) earlier this year after a fellow serviceman [*promised them security jobs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/13/world/americas/haiti-colombia-military-veterans.html) paying $2,700 a month, nearly seven times their $400 pensions.

In interviews, their families have asserted that most of them believed they would be doing legal work protecting an important person.

What actually happened in Haiti is still hazy. President Moïse’s wife, who was injured during the July 7 assassination, has [*told The New York Times that her husband’s killers spoke Spanish.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/30/world/americas/haiti-assassination-martine-moise-interview.html) But it’s still unclear how many former soldiers participated in the murder. The investigation in Haiti has been [*plagued by irregularities*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/02/world/americas/haiti-jovenel-moise-killing.html) and violations of due process, leaving many people there and in Colombia concerned that the truth will never be known.

Colombian officials have portrayed the soldiers’ decisions to travel to Haiti as individual choices with tragic consequences. In an interview, Defense Minister Diego Molano said that lack of opportunity at home “in no way can be an excuse to commit criminal activity.”

But in the weeks since the assassination, Colombian veterans have urged the country to reconsider how it treats its soldiers and examine why so many have chosen to go abroad following their service. The soldiers’ discontent, some veterans and security experts say, opens a window for shady actors who want to hire them, potentially threatening global security.

Despite a [*2016 peace deal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/27/world/americas/colombia-farc-peace-agreement.html) between the Colombian government and the country’s largest rebel group, the conflict shows no signs of ending — and today the military is training and deploying a new generation of soldiers to fight both old and new factions in the country’s war.

If opportunities at home don’t improve, some veterans warn, those men will be funneled right into an increasingly voracious global mercenary industry that has the potential to unleash more destabilizing operations around the world.

“Support us,” said Raúl Musse, 50, the head of another Colombian veterans’ association. “Help us so that people care about our futures.”

Colombia’s modern civil conflict was ignited by the assassination of a left-wing presidential candidate in 1948. Over time, the conflict grew into a complex war between the government, left-wing insurgents, right-wing paramilitaries and drug-trafficking organizations, all while Colombia received billions of dollars in military support from the United States, its staunch ally.

The bulk of the war has been fought by the country’s rank-and-file servicemen, who often come from rural and ***working-class*** backgrounds. But upon retirement, typically around age 40 and after 20 years of service, many have said that they were given few tools to succeed in civilian life.

The $400 monthly retirement pension offers little more than subsistence living in cities like Bogotá. The signature education component of the military’s reintegration program is a year of technical training in industries like cooking and construction. But after losing those military benefits, many soldiers are forced deep into debt to pay for homes for their families.

A [*2019 veterans’ law,*](https://www.casur.gov.co/documents/20181/10518672/ABC_LeyVeteranos.pdf/94b5acee-abc9-4455-ae64-9f0dc94f1dff) supported by President Iván Duque, was intended to address some of those issues. It created a fund that grants credits to soldiers who seek higher education, among other benefits.

Mr. Molano, the defense minister, defended the program.

“Of course more can always be done,” he said. “But compared to other Colombians,” he added, the veterans’ treatment is “adequate.”

Many former soldiers, though, said they needed more, now. Some leave the military without knowing how to read or write. Others lack basic computer skills.

Over the last decade, the veterans’ desperation has collided with a ballooning global demand for private security, particularly in the Middle East, said Sean McFate, an expert on the mercenary industry and a professor at Georgetown University.

In recent years, Colombian soldiers have gone to Iraq and Afghanistan to work for U.S. contractors, and to the United Arab Emirates, where many [*became hired guns for the country*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/26/world/middleeast/emirates-secretly-sends-colombian-mercenaries-to-fight-in-yemen.html) in its intervention in Yemen. Some Colombians have killed and others have been killed during these missions, said Mr. McFate.

Some soldiers make as much as $5,000 a month.

“It totally changed my life,” said William Amaya, 47, a former soldier who worked for the United Arab Emirates for two years. He said he used the money to get a university education and open a business.

The Haiti operation and the focus on the involvement of former Colombian soldiers has come at a particularly complex time for Colombia’s veterans.

Public support for the military, once high, has declined as the armed forces have come under scrutiny for human rights abuses, including allegations that officials ordered the killing of thousands of civilians in the 2000s. That scandal [*is being investigated*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/06/world/americas/colombia-false-positives.html) by the country’s war court.

At the same time, veterans are facing an increasingly difficult work environment, with Colombia’s economy hobbled by the pandemic — just as the United Arab Emirates’ involvement in Yemen has wound down, cutting the country’s demand for hired guns.

Many men who went to Haiti had applied repeatedly for jobs in the U.A.E., their families said, but were never called up.

So when the opportunity in Haiti became available, the men jumped. Many went without knowing what country they would be working in, whom they were working for, how long they would be gone or exactly what the mission was.

“We have three children,” said Lorena Córdoba, the wife of Mario Antonio Palacios, who left for Haiti in early June. “There was no money.”

Sofía Villamil and Edinson Bolaños contributed reporting from Bogotá, Colombia.

Sofía Villamil and Edinson Bolaños contributed reporting from Bogotá, Colombia.

PHOTOS: William Amaya, above, is one of thousands of former Colombian soldiers who have sought work abroad. “We are the machines of war, that’s what we’ve been trained for,” said Isaías Suache, left, a former commando who leads a Colombian veterans’ association. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY FEDERICO RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 14, 2021

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[***President Bernie Sanders?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YV5-D401-JBG3-63X9-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

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**Byline:** Spencer Bokat-Lindell

**Highlight:** He was always going to be a contender. But his strength in the primaries has some Democrats excited — and others worried.

**Body**

He was always going to be a contender. But his strength in the primaries has some Democrats excited — and others worried.

This article is part of the Debatable newsletter. You can [*sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) to receive it Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Senator Bernie Sanders — the septuagenarian Jewish democratic socialist who wants to remake the American health care system, end public college tuition and give workers partial ownership stakes in the companies they work for — has [*officially emerged*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable), at least for now, as the Democratic Party’s front-runner in the race for president.

Anyone who remembered Mr. Sanders’s improbable insurgency in the 2016 Democratic primary and [*the breadth of his support*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) knew better than to write him off entirely. But four months after a heart attack seemed to endanger his candidacy, his continued momentum is spurring a more serious reckoning with the possibility of his nomination.

Would he be savaged as a [*“mouth-frothing, business-destroying commie,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) or would his firebrand populism actually stand the best chance against the rich   [*“crook”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable)   [*“who doesn’t care if you live or you die so long as your boss gets paid”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable)? Here’s what people are saying.

‘How Trump wins again’

Mr. Sanders’s version of populism can’t win against President Trump’s, [*writes Timothy Egan*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable), a contributor to The Times. Mr. Egan gives the senator credit for mainstreaming progressive ideas like higher taxes on the rich and a more aggressive climate policy, but stresses that socialism is popular only among young people. “The United States has never been a socialist country, even when it most likely should have been one, during the robber baron tyranny of the Gilded Age or the desperation of the Great Depression,” he says, “and it never will be.”

Mr. Sanders’s electoral strategy remains unproven, [*writes the Times columnist Michelle Goldberg*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). Mr. Sanders’s supporters have argued that he can expand the electorate to include enough of the country’s tens of millions of nonvoters to more than make up for any suburban moderates he might lose. But while the senator won the popular vote in Iowa, the much-anticipated surge in turnout was nowhere in evidence. Mr. Sanders himself expressed disappointment with the voting numbers,   [*as The Times reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). What’s more, those disaffected suburban moderates would be a significant loss, since they were responsible for many of the gains Democrats made in the 2018 midterms.

Mr. Sanders also faces liabilities from his past, [*Ms. Goldberg adds*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). She concedes that polls show him defeating the president   [*in some swing states*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) by greater margins than other candidates, but worries that his lead wouldn’t survive sustained Republican attacks.

* “There will most likely be spots showing the 1985 Sandinista rally Sanders attended in Nicaragua, with the crowd chanting, ‘Here, There and Everywhere/ The Yankee Will Die.’ The country will see Sanders, speaking after a trip to the Soviet Union, [*effusively praising*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) its state-sponsored culture,” she writes.

1. “When they’re done,” Mr. Egan contends, “you will not recognize the aging, mouth-frothing, business-destroying commie from Ben and Jerry’s dystopian dairy. Demagogy is what Republicans do best. And Sanders is ripe for caricature.”

The upshot is a double bind for the Democratic Party, [*writes the Times columnist David Brooks*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). In his estimation, Mr. Sanders would struggle to win over its moderate wing. But at the same time, only 53 percent of Mr. Sanders’s supporters say they will certainly vote for whoever is the Democratic nominee,   [*according to one poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). “Democrats may wind up in a position in which they can’t nominate Bernie Sanders because he’s too far left, and they can’t not nominate him because his followers would bolt from a Biden/Bloomberg/Buttigieg-led party,” Mr. Brooks writes.

‘The unity candidate’

That Mr. Sanders inspires a unique fervor among his supporters only bolsters the case for his candidacy, the Times writer [*Elizabeth Bruenig argues*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable), since fiscally conservative Democrats may be more likely to support the general election candidate no matter what. But Ms. Bruenig views the panic over Mr. Sanders’s rise as proceeding less from average Democratic voters, who   [*view him more favorably*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) than any other candidate, than from centrist party insiders, who fear losing control. “If he won the nomination, I think obviously he would take over the party,” a professor of history at Georgetown University told Ms. Bruenig.

The political class and mainstream media underestimate Mr. Sanders because they don’t understand his campaign, [*writes Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable), a professor of African-American studies at Princeton. That is why, for example, the “Bernie Bro” narrative of his candidacy persists even though   [*a majority of his supporters are women and people of color*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). “Under normal circumstances, the multiracial ***working class*** is invisible,” Ms. Taylor writes, but Mr. Sanders “has tapped into the anger and bitterness coursing through the lives of regular people who have found it increasingly impossible to make ends meet in this grossly unequal society.”

[*[Related: “Bernie Sanders’s real base is diverse — and very young”]*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable)

His appeals to a multiracial ***working-class*** coalition could pose the best challenge to Mr. Trump in swing states, [*argue Matt Karp and Meagan Day*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). “The truth is that many   [*people in swing states*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) — including many otherwise loyal Democratic voters — were not   [*sufficiently excited*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) by Hillary Clinton, who they rightly associated with business-as-usual politics,” they write. By contrast, they say, a contest between Mr. Sanders and Mr. Trump would present a starker choice: “the populist who wants to win you health care and cancel your debt” versus the rich jerk “who doesn’t care if you live or you die so long as your boss gets paid.”

In the end, Mr. Sanders could be just what the party needs to keep from fracturing, [*writes Matt Yglesias*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). Despite his revolutionary brand, Mr. Sanders is less radical than people think.

* While he’s taken some positions as a legislator that were unpopular at the time, such as opposing the Iraq war and the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy on gays in the military, he also has a dependable record of compromising when it counts.

1. Congress will hamstring any Democrat’s agenda, but that’s a reality Mr. Sanders’s supporters will tolerate better if he’s at the helm.

A Sanders presidency, Mr. Yglesias says, would simply mean “an emphasis on full employment, a tendency to shy away from launching wars, an executive branch that actually tries to enforce environmental protection and civil rights laws, and a situation in which bills that both progressives and moderates can agree on get to become law,” he writes. “That’s a pretty good deal, and you don’t need to be a socialist to see it.”

Do you have a point of view we missed? Email us at [*debatable@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). Please note your name, age and location in your response, which may be included in the next newsletter.

THE BERN: TO FEEL OR NOT TO FEEL?

[*“Bernie can’t win.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) [The Atlantic]

[*“Too Close for Comfort”:*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) Why do so many of Mr. Sanders’s fellow travelers — older Jewish leftists — balk at supporting him? [Jewish Currents]

[*“I helped coin the term ‘identity politics’. I’m endorsing Bernie Sanders.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) [The Guardian]

[*“Is It Bernie’s Party Now?”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) [Politico]

[*“Coverage of Bernie Sanders suffers from a lack of imagination.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) [The Columbia Journalism Review]

[*The senator responds to the president’s jabs about socialism*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). [Fox News]

WHAT YOU’RE SAYING

Here’s what readers had to say about the last edition: [*Four more years of Trump?*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable)

[*Glenn from Queens*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable): “People on both sides vote with their guts far more often than with their heads, and right now many guts have Trump indigestion, but one senses not enough to regurgitate.”

[*Anthony from New Zealand:*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) “Three years of corruption, mismanagement and gross incompetence on a scale never before seen from this administration, yet one problem with the Iowa caucus tally and suddenly it’s Democrats who are seen as unfit to govern.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by The New York Times; photographs by Chang W. Lee/The New York Times, Todd Heisler/The New York Times and Tamir Kalifa for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***‘The Wire’ at 20: ‘This Show Will Live Forever’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65K6-Y9C1-JBG3-63WX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 2122 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Abrams

**Highlight:** David Simon and Ed Burns discuss the legacy of their seminal crime drama, and why the systemic decay it depicted has become only more profound.

**Body**

David Simon concedes that it takes a special kind of [expletive] to say, “I told you so.”

“But I can’t help it, OK?” he said recently. “Nobody enjoys the guy who says, ‘I told you so,’ but it was organic. Ed and I and then the other writers, as they came on board, we had all been watching some of the same things happen in Baltimore.”

Two decades ago, Simon, a former cops reporter at The Baltimore Sun, joined Ed Burns, a retired Baltimore homicide detective and public-school teacher, to create HBO’s “The Wire.” Fictitious but sourced from the Baltimore that Simon and Burns inhabited, “The Wire,” which premiered on June 2, 2002, introduced a legion of unforgettable characters like the gun-toting, code-abiding Omar Little (played by the late [*Michael K. Williams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/06/arts/michael-k-williams-dead.html)) and the gangster with higher aspirations, Stringer Bell (Idris Elba).

They were indelible pieces of a crime show with a higher purpose: to provide a damning indictment of the war on drugs and a broader dissection of institutional collapse, expanding in scope over five seasons to explore the decline of ***working-class*** opportunity and the public education system, among other American civic pillars.

This was not the stuff of hit TV: In real time, the show gained only a small, devoted audience and struggled to avoid cancellation. But over the years, “The Wire” became hailed as one of television’s greatest shows, even as the systemic decay it depicted became more pronounced in the eyes of its creators.

Burns and Simon went on to collaborate on other high-minded projects for HBO, most recently [*“We Own This City,”*](https://www.hbo.com/we-own-this-city) a mini-series created by Simon and their fellow “Wire” alumnus [*George Pelecanos*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/arts/television/george-pelecanos-we-own-this-city.html), based on the true story of the Baltimore Police Department’s corrupt Gun Trace Task Force. In separate interviews, Burns and Simon discussed the legacy of “The Wire” — Burns by phone from his Vermont home and Simon in person in HBO’s Manhattan offices — and why it couldn’t be made in the same way today. They also talked about the inspirations for the show and the devastating effect of America’s drug policies. These are edited excerpts from those conversations.

Could you have ever imagined “The Wire” would have had this kind of staying power two decades later?

ED BURNS The first thing that comes to my mind is that this show will live forever, because what it tries to portray will be around forever. It’s just getting worse and worse. That’s all. And it’s expanding; it’s not just an urban thing anymore. It’s everywhere.

DAVID SIMON Ed and I in Baltimore, George in Washington, Richard Price in New York — we’d been seeing a lot of the same dynamics. There were policies, and there were premises that we knew were not going to earn out. They were going to continue to fail. And we were fast becoming a culture that didn’t even recognize its own problems, much less solve any of them. So it felt like, “Let’s make a show about this.”

I didn’t anticipate the complete collapse of truth, the idea of you can just boldly lie your way to the top. I did not anticipate the political collapse of the country in terms of [Donald] Trump. [The fictitious Baltimore mayor in “The Wire,” Tommy Carcetti] is a professional politician. Donald Trump is sui generis. It’s hard to even get your head around just how debased the political culture is now because of Trump.

The show seemed to hint at the collapse of truth with the fabricated serial killer story line in the final season, and how the media ran with it.

SIMON We very much wanted to criticize the media culture that could allow the previous four seasons to go on and never actually attend to any of the systemic problems. We were going there, but I didn’t anticipate social media making the mainstream miscalculations almost irrelevant. You don’t even have to answer to an inattentive, but professional press. You just have to create the foment in an unregulated environment in which lies travel faster the more outrageous they are. If truth is no longer a metric, then you can’t govern yourself properly.

BURNS If you look at the map, half of the Midwest and West are drought-ridden, and we’re treating it like how we used to treat a dead body on the corner or a handcuffed guy. It’s like a news thing or bad automobile accident: “Oh my, look, that tornado ripped apart this whole town.” And that’s it.

There’s no energy. I’ve always thought about trying to do a story where the government has developed an algorithm to identify sparks, the Malcolm Xs and the Martin Luther Kings, these types of people, when they’re young, and then they just either compromise them away with the carrot or they beat them away with a stick. Because you need sparks. You need those individuals who will stand up and then rally people around them, and we don’t have that — those sparks, that anger that sustains itself.

Is it a conflicting legacy that “The Wire” has gained a greater audience over the years, yet the institutional decay that it illuminates has seemingly worsened?

BURNS Recently, the Biden administration and the New York mayor’s administration said they want to increase the number of police on the street. It amuses me that what they’re doing is a definition of insanity: You try something, it doesn’t work. You try it again, it doesn’t work. It’s about time you try something different. They’re still doing the same thing.

Granted, “defund the police” is not the right way of presenting the argument. But rechanneling money away from the police to people who could better handle some of the aspects of it would be good. And then doing something even more dramatic, like creating an economic engine, other than drugs, to help people get up and start making something of their lives.

How should [*“We Own This City”*](https://www.hbo.com/we-own-this-city) be viewed in relation to “The Wire”?

SIMON It’s a separate narrative. We’re very serious about having attended to real police careers and real activities and a real scandal that occurred. So no, it’s not connected to “The Wire” universe in that sense. It is a coda for the drug war that we were trying to critique in “The Wire.” If “The Wire” had one political message — I don’t mean theme; if it just had a blunt political argument about policy — it was, “End the drug war.” And if “We Own This City” has one fundamental message, it’s “END. THE. DRUG. WAR.” In capital letters and with a period between every word. It’s just an emphatic coda about where we were always headed if we didn’t change the mission of policing in America.

Is a goal of “We Own This City” to provide a sharper critique on policing than “The Wire” provided?

SIMON No. I don’t think there’s that much difference between the two, other than the depths of the corruption of the bad cops. Police work is as necessary and plausible an endeavor as it’s ever been.

In many cases, and in many places like Baltimore, the national clearance rate [*has been collapsing*](https://www.murderdata.org/2021/10/homicide-clearance-in-united-states.html) for the last 30, 40 years. That’s not an accident. That’s because they’ve trained generations of cops to fight the drug war. It doesn’t take any skill to go up on the corner, throw everybody against the wall, go in their pockets, find the ground stashes, decide everybody goes, fill the wagons. That’s not a skill set that can solve a murder.

That’s not me saying, “Oh, policing used to be great.” No, I understand there were always problems with policing. But we’re one of the most violent cities in America. And all the discourse about abolish the police or defund the police — I’d be happy to defund the drug war. I’d be happy to change the mission, but I don’t want to defund the police. Good police work is necessary and elemental, or my city becomes untenable. I’ve seen case work done right, and I’ve seen case work done wrong, and it matters.

BURNS I’m sorry [Baltimore] was labeled the city of “The Wire,” because we could’ve taken that show into any city, in exactly the same way. Akron, Ohio, would have suddenly become the “Wire” city. So it’s a shame that it was pushed onto this little town.

Would “The Wire” be greenlighted if you pitched it today?

BURNS No, definitely not. HBO was going up the ladder at the time. They didn’t understand “The Wire” until the fourth season. In fact, they were thinking about canceling it after three. We caught that moment where networks were thinking, “Oh, we need a show for this group of people.”

But now, it’s got to be “Game of Thrones.” It’s got to be big. It’s got to be disconnected from stepping on anybody’s toes. I’ve watched a couple of the limited series on HBO, and they’re good shows, but they’re not cutting new paths. They are whodunits or these rich women bickering among themselves in a town. I don’t see anybody saying, “Hey, that’s a really great show.”

SIMON No, because we didn’t attend, in any real way, to the idea of diversity in the writers’ room. I tried to get [*Dave Mills*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/01/arts/television/01mills.html), who had been my friend since college, to work on “The Wire.” But that would have been organic. It was just a friend; it wasn’t even about Black and white. But other than David, who did a couple scripts for us, and Kia Corthron, the playwright, did one, we were really inattentive to diversity. That wasn’t forward thinking.

Why were we inattentive? Because it was so organic to what I’d covered and what Ed had policed. And then, I started bringing on novelists. The first guy was George Pelecanos, whose books about D.C. were the same stuff I was covering. And I happened to read his books, and I was like, “This guy probably could write what we’re trying to do.” And then he said: “Look, you’re trying to make novels. Every season’s a novel. We should hire novelists.” And so we went and got Price. If I had it to do over again, I would have to look at [the diversity of the creative team] in the same way that I looked at later productions.

In retrospect, is there anything else that you wish that the show had done differently?

BURNS I wish that Season 5 took a different direction, as far as the newsroom was concerned, and didn’t debase the idea of investigation. But it’s fine. What we tried to get across is that the kids that we saw in [Season 4] were becoming, as they approached adulthood, the guys that we saw in [Seasons] 1, 2, 3 and 4. It was continuous. This is just the next generation.

Other than the fact that the issues it highlighted are still prevalent, why do you think “The Wire” has such staying power?

SIMON Nothing’s in a vacuum. I would credit “Oz” for showing me that there was this network out there that would tell a dark story and tell an adult story. “Homicide” [Simon’s first book] had been made into a TV show. But with “The Corner” [Burns and Simon’s nonfiction book centered on a West Baltimore drug market], I was like: “The rights are worth nothing. Nobody’s going to put that on American television.” And then I saw “Oz,” and so that was the moment where I looked at HBO and said, “Oh, would you like to make a mini-series about a drug-saturated neighborhood and about the drug war?”

And then the other places we stole from: We stole from the Greek tragedies, the idea that the institutions were the gods and they were bigger than the people. So, thanks to the college course that made me read Greek plays. Thanks to “Paths of Glory,” which was a movie about institutional imperative, the [Stanley] Kubrick film — I took stuff liberally from there. Thanks to a bunch of novelists, Pelecanos, Price, [Dennis] Lehane, who decided they were willing to write television. Obviously, the cast and crew and everyone.

But it was a show that was ready for where TV was going to end up, and that’s where a lot of luck is involved. The idea that you flick on your TV screen and decide you want to watch something that was made 10 years earlier or has just been posted; or you’ll wait until there are enough episodes to binge watch it; or you have insomnia, so you’ll watch four hours of a mini-series and just acquire it whenever the hell you want — boy, I didn’t see that coming.

BURNS It’s like a western: It’s mired in legend. But the legend is actually reality. Today, 20 years ago, 20 years from now — it’s the same thing. And each generation coming up, each bunch of kids coming up, discover it and inject more life into it.

PHOTOS: David Simon, above, who helped create “The Wire.” Michael B. Jordan, far left, and Larry Gilliard Jr. in the first season of the show. Below from left: Clark Johnson, the director; Robert Colesberry, the executive producer; Simon; and Ed Burns on the set in 2002. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK SOMMERFELD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; HBO, VIA PHOTOFEST; DAVID LEE/HBO) (AR14); Above from left, Dominic West, Benjamin Busch and Jonnie Louis Brown. At left from left, Clark Johnson, Brandon Young, Michelle Paress and Tom McCarthy in the show’s final season. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL SCHIRALDI/HBO) (AR16)

**Load-Date:** June 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[***When the Only Way to Get to Work Is This Slow Bus***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65K4-VV21-JBG3-63JG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 2095 words

**Byline:** Ana Ley and Jose A. Alvarado Jr.

**Highlight:** The Q23 is one of the slowest buses in Queens, where many residents live beyond the subway’s reach and more people ride buses than anywhere else in New York City.

**Body**

Just beyond the reach of New York City’s frenetic, round-the-clock subway, people in a slice of western Queens wait — and wait — to board one of the borough’s slowest buses.

Many of [*the 2.3 million New Yorkers*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/queenscountynewyork/PST045221) who live and work in Queens aren’t served directly by the vast network of trains that keeps the nation’s biggest metropolis moving. The borough, the city’s second most populous, has less subway service relative to its size and population than the other four.

So [*hundreds of thousands of people*](https://new.mta.info/agency/new-york-city-transit/subway-bus-facts-2019?auHash=5VJGjGxafvrHsjkqBLNbf3MLbEW3Ztdz4r-A5puBnM8) here plan their lives around the only mass transit choice they have: the buses that lumber along traffic-choked streets.

One of those buses, [*the Q23*](https://bustime.mta.info/#q23), is among the slowest in the city. For the past four years, it has [*consistently traveled more slowly than the citywide average*](http://busdashboard.mta.info/) of about 8 miles per hour — about the speed some people can run — bogged down by an awkward path and riders who swarm two stops that connect to the subway.

It was slower than nearly all of the 76 other buses in Queens in April, and it ranked dead last in the borough in January, when it traveled at 6.5 miles per hour.

The Q23’s route curls around the Tudor-style houses and lush yards of Forest Hills, then cuts through the bustling heart of multicultural Corona before turning west toward the edge of Queens to head to its last stop, near La Guardia Airport.

“Each section has its own little demon,” John Breeden, who has driven city buses for 11 years and counts the Q23 among his routes, said as he sat behind the wheel on a spring afternoon. “You need patience.”

More New Yorkers ride buses in this borough than in any other. On a given weekday before the pandemic, 680,000 people took a bus in Queens, making up about 32 percent of the city’s overall weekday ridership of 2.2 million.

Many blue-collar workers rely on the Q23 to reach their jobs, and its frequent delays can derail their commutes and make them late to work. Some riders set out hours early to compensate.

When buses are slow, people put off basic needs such as medical care, according to [*a May 2020 study published in the American Journal of Public Health*](https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2020.305579). They spend longer in harsh weather, and their quality of life suffers because of lost time.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which operates the city’s public buses, wants to speed them up in Queens, in part by getting rid of stops and adapting to modern traffic patterns, making routes straighter and more direct.

“Most of the subway system was built when Queens still had farmlands,” said Janno Lieber, the M.T.A.’s chairman and chief executive.

“Now we have to make the bus system do a lot of the work in Queens that the subway system does for so many other parts of the city that got more heavy rail, because of when they were developed,” he said.

The authority [*released a draft plan*](https://new.mta.info/project/queens-bus-network-redesign) to redesign the borough’s bus network in March, and it is soliciting community input through June.

But when it sought to try an overhaul in 2019, just before the onset of the pandemic, Queens riders and elected officials protested. The agency received more than 11,000 public comments, many saying that the plan was too drastic and would eliminate or alter crucial bus lines.

Ultimately, the proposal was shelved. The authority says it considered the complaints when drafting the new version.

The pains that Q23 riders take to accommodate its delays illustrate the consequences of a broken bus system that is used primarily by low-income people who do not have cars and live far from the subway.

Their journeys begin hours before sunrise and run late into the night, at all times snarled by obstructions.

In the darkness, slowdowns build

A little before 5 a.m. on a recent weekday, Amada Sandoval, who lives in East Elmhurst, was ready to board the bus to reach her cleaning job at La Guardia Airport.

Her shift doesn’t start until 7 a.m., and the airport’s front doors are only about a mile away, but she doesn’t take any chances.

“The 23 is the tortoise,” Ms. Sandoval said in Spanish. “It stops too many times. It makes too many turns. My god!”

The Q23 serves a mix of Queens residents, including many Latino and Asian immigrants in [*Elmhurst and Corona*](https://censusreporter.org/profiles/79500US3604107-nyc-queens-community-district-4-elmhurst-south-corona-puma-ny/). Riders from [*Rego Park and Forest Hills*](https://censusreporter.org/profiles/79500US3604108-nyc-queens-community-district-6-forest-hills-rego-park-puma-ny/) tend to be whiter and wealthier.

In Elmhurst and Corona, 64 percent of residents depend on public transit to get to work — 16 percentage points higher than the overall rate in Queens, where people who can afford a car tend to drive, and 11 percentage points higher than the citywide rate.

That morning, Ms. Sandoval, 72, made the trek from the home she shares with her son to La Guardia’s outskirts on foot.

She cursed the bus under her breath as she walked past her neighbor’s lawn, onto the pedestrian bridge suspended above a roaring highway and through the tangle of a construction site.

By 5:30 a.m., she finally passed through the shadows of airplanes parked at Delta’s terminal.

Ms. Sandoval is in poor health — she has a bad leg, and after her grandson died abruptly in Peru in March, her blood pressure has spiked.

But like many blue collar workers, she cannot afford not to work. And the Q23 can take as long as 25 minutes to arrive, doubling the length of her trip.

So when the bus is late and the weather is good, she walks. When there is heavy rain or snow or wind, she must wait and hope for the best.

The Q23 begins its weekday schedule at about 4 a.m. with buses spaced about a half-hour apart. The path along Forest Hills and Rego Park is mostly empty compared to the route’s northern section, where ***working-class*** Corona springs to life.

People form polite lines as they wait to board, making small talk about the weather and life in their native countries.

Delivery vans and cars start squeezing onto narrow roads, building choke points along key intersections where the bus links riders to the subway at Queens Boulevard and Roosevelt Avenue.

The Q23 has typically already fallen behind schedule by the time it approaches Ms. Sandoval at the northern end of the line. The further along its route it travels, the less reliable it gets, according to an analysis of rider data by the mobility app Moovit.

A workhorse slogs down its crowded path

As the day progresses, Q23 delays get worse, especially near the two stops where it meets subway lines.

It slows down along Forest Hill’s Austin Street — a shopping district lined with synagogues, schools, chain stores and dining sheds — and along Corona Plaza’s stretch of eloteros, fruterías, panaderías and taquerías.

Sometimes buses are so stuffed they leave passengers behind.

Efrain Bonet spends 4 hours per day commuting to his minimum-wage job as a security guard in Forest Hills. He begins at 1 p.m. in Union City, N.J., where he takes a New Jersey Transit bus into the Port Authority Bus Terminal in Midtown Manhattan.

There, he connects to a subway line — usually the E or the F — before getting off at the Forest Hills stop to board the Q23.

“It’s always late,” Mr. Bonet said. “Sometimes you wait 12, 15, 20 minutes.”

New York City’s buses are slow and unreliable because a crush of cars, delivery trucks, pedestrians and traffic lights impede their path and dedicated bus lanes remain scarce.

It is a common trend in heavily populated places. A [*November 2017 analysis*](https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/the-other-transit-crisis-how-to-improve-the-nyc-bus-system/) by the city’s comptroller found that the four U.S. cities where average bus speeds are lower than 10 miles per hour — San Francisco, Chicago, Philadelphia and New York — are among the densest in the country.

Other global cities like London and Beijing have sped up their fleets [*by giving more street space to buses*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/12/nyregion/nyc-bus-lanes.html) and making more room for cyclists and pedestrians.

“The bus is used worldwide and it needs to get respect,” said Andrew Bata, who oversees North America for the Brussels-based International Association of Public Transport. “It needs better enforcement of the people who are blocking it.”

Mr. Bonet deals with the tough commute because he likes his job. He guards a construction site nestled between apartment towers at Colonial Avenue and the Long Island Expressway.

“It’s comfortable,” Mr. Bonet, 61, said in Spanish. Before taking the gig two years ago, he pumped gas and did other manual labor, but an injury on his right hand has made that kind of work too difficult.

He has learned how to shave precious minutes from his commute by buying New Jersey Transit passes in bulk and figuring out which staircases tend to be less crowded to avoid bottlenecks.

By now, he knows the whims of all three transit modes. For instance, he avoids the No. 7 subway because it stops too frequently and it is often down when he needs it. And he ignores the unreliable countdown clock meant to tell him when the Q23 will arrive at Queens Boulevard and 71st Avenue.

Beyond being hampered by traffic, other factors can trip up a route’s flow, like bad weather and passengers who quibble with drivers over everything from the M.T.A.’s mask policy to paying the fare.

“This rule is not law. It’s your rule,” a man said after Mr. Breeden told him to mask up before boarding.

But the rule is law. Mr. Breeden didn’t budge, and the man eventually pulled his mask on.

Some riders, Mr. Breeden said, are “just like little kids. They look for excuses not to do something. But it’s a daily adventure. I like it.”

New York winds down, but obstacles linger

As the day nears its end, the traffic may wane, but other obstacles can prevent the Q23 from being on time.

Angélica Mora, 42, works the overnight shift as a server at a 24-hour restaurant and bakery off Junction Boulevard. She nearly missed the bus during a recent commute because road work blocked its usual path.

“Are you waiting for the bus?” a woman standing outside a nearby bodega asked. “It didn’t stop here.”

Ms. Mora moved to New York about a year ago after fleeing gang violence in Colombia, where she was an economist.

Her commute is only about a mile long, but she doesn’t feel safe walking. People on the street are often drunk and unruly, she said, especially as nearby bars and underground strip clubs empty out.

“Sometimes it’s faster to walk, but at night, I get scared,” Ms. Mora said in Spanish.

But she can feel unsafe waiting for the bus too, she said, especially since it can be delayed up to 40 minutes: “It’s too much time standing.”

She lives alone, and relatives back home worry about her working a late shift in a foreign city.

To put them at ease, Ms. Mora calls every time she leaves home and sends trip updates along the way.

Buses have gotten slower and less reliable citywide, prompting changes in other boroughs. The M.T.A. [*overhauled Staten Island’s Express Bus network*](https://new.mta.info/project/bus-network-redesign) in 2018, and approved a redesign of the bus network in the Bronx last year.

Queens’s [*explosive population growth*](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/data-maps/nyc-population/historical-population/nyc_total_pop_1900-2010.pdf) has transformed the borough’s demographics and travel patterns, but the transportation network has not adapted.

The M.T.A.’s proposal to redesign the Q23’s route would eliminate twisted sections at either end of its path, replacing them with other bus routes.

Critics of the plan say it would not solve problems like drivers who don’t follow the rules, dining sheds that make narrow streets even tighter, and construction jobs like the one that blocked Ms. Mora’s route.

“Realistically, there’s not much you can do,” Mr. Breeden said. “It’s very populated over there. And then you add in the churches, then you add in the deliveries, and the people’s entrepreneurship out there — it’s always going to be crowded.”

Ms. Mora struggles to understand the M.T.A.’s English-language announcements. So when the woman near the bodega flagged the problem with the bus, she pulled out her phone and toggled between navigation and translation applications to figure out where to catch it.

“I’m glad she told me,” Ms. Mora said in Spanish. “If not, it would have left me behind.”

PHOTOS: Queens’s explosive population growth has transformed the borough’s demographics and travel patterns, but the transportation network has not adapted.; Amada Sandoval, 72, lives about a mile from La Guardia Airport, but leaves home before 5 a.m. for a 7 a.m. shift.; “Each section has its own little demon,” Mr. Breeden said of the Q23. “You need patience.” A proposal would eliminate twisted portions at both ends. (A18); John Breeden, an 11-year veteran of the M.T.A., navigating the streets near a Q23 stop in Corona, Queens, in April. (A18-A19); New York City’s buses are slow and unreliable because cars, trucks, pedestrians and traffic lights impede their paths.; Angélica Mora fled gang violence in Colombia and works an overnight shift. She said her commute is about a mile, but she doesn’t feel safe walking. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSE A. ALVARADO JR.) (A19)

**Load-Date:** June 2, 2022

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[***From a Burger King to a Concert Hall***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64D9-5VM1-DXY4-X2K7-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1

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**Byline:** By Adam Nagourney

**Body**

The Los Angeles Philharmonic's ambitious new home for its youth orchestra is the latest sign of the changing fortunes of Inglewood.

INGLEWOOD, Calif. -- Noemi Guzman, a 17-year-old high school senior, usually has to find a corner someplace to practice violin -- the instrument she calls ''quite literally, the love of my life.'' But the other Saturday morning, Guzman joined a string ensemble practicing on a stage here that is nearly as grand and acoustically tuned as the place she dreams of performing one day: Walt Disney Concert Hall, the home of the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

''This is beautiful,'' Guzman said during a break from a practice session at the Judith and Thomas L. Beckmen YOLA Center, her voice muffled by a mask. ''To have a space you can call your own. It is our space. It is created for us.''

Inglewood, a ***working-class*** city three miles from Los Angeles Airport that was once plagued by crime and poverty, is in the midst of a high-profile, largely sports-driven economic transformation: The 70,000-seat SoFi Stadium, which opened here last year, now the home of the Rams and the Chargers, will be the site of the Super Bowl in February and will be used in the 2028 Summer Olympics. Construction is underway on an 18,000-seat arena for the Los Angeles Clippers, the basketball team.

But the transformation of Inglewood, historically one of this region's largest Black communities, is also showcased by the 25,000-square foot building where Guzman was practicing the other morning. The building, which opened in October, is the first permanent home for the Youth Orchestra Los Angeles, and is the product of a collaboration involving two of the most prominent cultural figures in Los Angeles: Gustavo Dudamel, the artistic director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, which oversees YOLA, and Frank Gehry, the architect who designed Walt Disney Concert Hall.

''This was an old bank,'' said Dudamel, who has long been friends with Gehry, a classical music lover who can often be spotted in the seats of the hall he designed. ''Then it was a Burger King -- yes, a Burger King! Frank saw the potential. What we have there is a stage of the same dimensions as Disney Hall.''

The $23.5 million project is a high-water mark for YOLA, the youth music education program that was founded here 15 years ago under Dudamel and that he calls the signature achievement of his tenure. It serves 1,500 students, from ages 5 to 18, who come to study, practice and perform music on instruments provided by the Los Angeles Philharmonic. It was patterned after El Sistema, the youth music education program in Venezuela where Dudamel studied violin as a boy.

And it is one of the most vivid examples of efforts by major arts organizations across the country to bring youth education programs out into communities, rather than concentrating them in city centers or urban arts districts. ''You can't just do it downtown,'' said Karen Mack, the executive director of LA Commons, a community arts organization. ''If you really want it to have the impact that's possible with that program you have to bring it out to the community. It has to be accessible.''

Gehry called that idea the ''whole game.''

''It becomes not the community having to go to Disney Hall,'' he said, ''but the Disney Hall coming to the community.''

For Inglewood, the new YOLA Center is a notable addition to what has been a transformative wave of stadium and arena construction, which has spurred a wave of commercial and housing development (and with that, concerns about the gentrification that often follows this kind of development). Until 2016, Inglewood was known mainly as the home of the Forum, the 45-year-old arena where the Lakers and Kings once played before moving to what was known as the Staples Center in downtown Los Angeles, and Hollywood Park Racetrack, which closed to make way for SoFi stadium.

''We've never been known for cultural enrichment,'' said James T. Butts Jr., the mayor of Inglewood. ''That is why this is so important to us. What's happening now is a rounding out of society and culture: we will no longer be known for just sports and entertainment.''

Even before Beckmen Center opened, YOLA could be a heady experience for a school-age student contemplating a career in music. Guzman, who joined the youth orchestra seven years ago, has played bow to bow with members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, under the baton of Dudamel. YOLA musicians have joined the Philharmonic at Disney Hall, the Hollywood Bowl and on tours to places including Tokyo, Seoul and Mexico City.

Christine Kiva, 15, who started playing cello when she was 7, is now studying with cellists from the Philharmonic. ''It's helped me develop my sound as a cellist, and work on a repertoire for cello,'' she said.

Inglewood is the fifth economically stressedneighborhood where the youth organization has set up an outpost. But in the first four locations, it shares space with other organizations, forced to fit in without a full-fledged performing space or practice rooms. ''We were making the project work in spaces that weren't specifically designed for music,'' said Chad Smith, the chief executive of the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Now, the words ''Judith and Thomas L. Beckmen YOLA Center,'' named after the philanthropists and vineyard owners who made the largest donation to the project, stretch out across the front of the renovated building overlooking South La Brea Avenue and the old downtown. Dudamel has an office there. Members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic regularly show up to observe practice and work with students.

This building has plenty of rooms for students to practice. There are 272 seats on benches in the main hall, which can be retracted into a wall, allowing the room to be divided in half so two orchestras can practice at once. The acoustics were designed by Nagata Acoustics, which also designed the acoustics at Disney Hall.

The building had been owned by Inglewood, which sold it to the Los Angeles Philharmonic. ''When we first walked into it, it still had the greasy smell of a Burger King,'' said Elsje Kibler-Vermaas, the vice president for learning for the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Gehry, who had worked with Dudamel on projects before -- including designs for the opera ''Don Giovanni'' in 2012­ -- agreed to take a look at the building, a former bank that opened in 1965.

He said that when they brought him there, he was struck by the low ceilings from its days as a bank.

''I said, 'is it possible to make an intervention?''' recalled Gehry who, even at 92, is involved in a series of design projects across Los Angeles.

By cutting a hole in its ceiling and putting in a skylight, and cutting a hole in the floor to make the hall deeper, he was able to create a performance space with a 45-foot-high ceiling, close to what Disney Hall has. ''The kids will have a real experience of playing in that kind of hall,'' he said.

That turned out to be a $2 million conversation; the total price, including buying the building and renovating it, jumped from $21 million to $23.5 million to cover the additional cost of raising the roof, installing a skylight and lowering the floor.

The building was bustling the other day. Students had come for afternoon music instruction from elementary schools, most in Inglewood, and after snacks -- bananas, apples, granola bars -- they raced to their lessons in reading music, percussion and how to follow a conductor.

''Pay attention!'' said Mario Raven, leading his students in a singing and music reading class. ''Here we go -- one, two, three!''

The brass players were outdoors because of Covid-19 concerns (it's hard to play a French horn while wearing a mask). As planes flew overhead, they performed ''High Hopes'' by Panic! at the Disco, suggesting that a youth orchestra need not live by Brahms and Beethoven alone.

Students typically sit through 12 to 18 hours a week of instruction for 44 weeks a year. About a quarter of them end up majoring in music. Smith said that was reflected in the broader aspirations for the program. ''Our goal wasn't we were going to train the greatest musicians in the world,'' he said. ''Our goal was we were going to provide music education to develop students' self-esteem through music.''

Dudamel said his experience as a boy in Venezuela had been formative in bringing the program to Los Angeles. ''I grew up in an orchestra where they called us, in the press, the 'orchestra without a ceiling,''' he said in a Zoom interview from France, where he is now also the music director of the Paris Opera. ''Because we didn't have a place where to rehearse. We have materialized a dream where young people have the best things they can have. A good hall. Great teachers.''

''Look, this is not a regular music school,'' he added. ''We don't pretend be a conservatory. Maybe they will not be musicians in the future. But our goal is that they have music as part of their life, because it brings beauty, it brings discipline through art.''

**Graphic**

PPHOTOS: Mario Raven, right, leading students in a class at the Judith and Thomas L. Beckmen YOLA Center in Inglewood, Calif. (C1)

Top, the Youth Orchestra Los Angeles, a music education program, serves 1,500 students. The architect Frank Gehry reconfigured a former bank and Burger King, above, into the program's first permanent home. ''Frank saw the potential,'' said Gustavo Dudamel, the artistic director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROZETTE RAGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C4)

**Load-Date:** December 29, 2021

**End of Document**



[***From a Burger King to a Concert Hall, With Help From Frank Gehry***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64D4-67X1-JBG3-61D6-00000-00&context=1519360)

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But the transformation of Inglewood, historically one of this region’s largest Black communities, is also showcased by the [*25,000-square foot building*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/story/2021-08-12/frank-gehry-designed-concert-hall-gustavo-dudamel-yola-inglewood) where Guzman was practicing the other morning. The building, which opened in October, is the first permanent home for the Youth Orchestra Los Angeles, and is the product of a collaboration involving two of the most prominent cultural figures in Los Angeles: Gustavo Dudamel, the artistic director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, which oversees YOLA, and Frank Gehry, the architect who designed Walt Disney Concert Hall.

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Christine Kiva, 15, who started playing cello when she was 7, is now studying with cellists from the Philharmonic. “It’s helped me develop my sound as a cellist, and work on a repertoire for cello,” she said.

Inglewood is the fifth economically stressedneighborhood where the youth organization has set up an outpost. But in the first four locations, it shares space with other organizations, forced to fit in without a full-fledged performing space or practice rooms. “We were making the project work in spaces that weren’t specifically designed for music,” said Chad Smith, the chief executive of the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Now, the words “Judith and Thomas L. Beckmen YOLA Center,” named after the philanthropists and vineyard owners who made the largest donation to the project, stretch out across the front of the renovated building overlooking South La Brea Avenue and the old downtown. Dudamel has an office there. Members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic regularly show up to observe practice and work with students.

This building has plenty of rooms for students to practice. There are 272 seats on benches in the main hall, which can be retracted into a wall, allowing the room to be divided in half so two orchestras can practice at once. The acoustics were designed by Nagata Acoustics, which also designed the acoustics at Disney Hall.

The building had been owned by Inglewood, which sold it to the Los Angeles Philharmonic. “When we first walked into it, it still had the greasy smell of a Burger King,” said Elsje Kibler-Vermaas, the vice president for learning for the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Gehry, who had worked with Dudamel on projects before — including [*designs for the opera*](https://www.archdaily.com/253238/don-giovanni-gehry-rodarte) “Don Giovanni” in 2012­ — agreed to take a look at the building, a former bank that opened in 1965.

He said that when they brought him there, he was struck by the low ceilings from its days as a bank.

“I said, ‘is it possible to make an intervention?’” recalled Gehry who, even at 92, is [*involved in a series of design projects*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/13/arts/design/frank-gehry.html) across Los Angeles.

By cutting a hole in its ceiling and putting in a skylight, and cutting a hole in the floor to make the hall deeper, he was able to create a performance space with a 45-foot-high ceiling, close to what Disney Hall has. “The kids will have a real experience of playing in that kind of hall,” he said.

That turned out to be a $2 million conversation; the total price, including buying the building and renovating it, jumped from $21 million to $23.5 million to cover the additional cost of raising the roof, installing a skylight and lowering the floor.

The building was bustling the other day. Students had come for afternoon music instruction from elementary schools, most in Inglewood, and after snacks — bananas, apples, granola bars — they raced to their lessons in reading music, percussion and how to follow a conductor.

“Pay attention!” said Mario Raven, leading his students in a singing and music reading class. “Here we go — one, two, three!”

The brass players were outdoors because of Covid-19 concerns (it’s hard to play a French horn while wearing a mask). As planes flew overhead, they performed “[*High Hopes*](https://youtu.be/IPXIgEAGe4U)” by Panic! at the Disco, suggesting that a youth orchestra need not live by Brahms and Beethoven alone.

Students typically sit through 12 to 18 hours a week of instruction for 44 weeks a year. About a quarter of them end up majoring in music. Smith said that was reflected in the broader aspirations for the program. “Our goal wasn’t we were going to train the greatest musicians in the world,” he said. “Our goal was we were going to provide music education to develop students’ self-esteem through music.”

Dudamel said his experience as a boy in Venezuela had been formative in bringing the program to Los Angeles. “I grew up in an orchestra where they called us, in the press, the ‘orchestra without a ceiling,’” he said in a Zoom interview from France, where he is now also the music director of the Paris Opera. “Because we didn’t have a place where to rehearse. We have materialized a dream where young people have the best things they can have. A good hall. Great teachers.”

“Look, this is not a regular music school,” he added. “We don’t pretend be a conservatory. Maybe they will not be musicians in the future. But our goal is that they have music as part of their life, because it brings beauty, it brings discipline through art.”

PHOTOS: Mario Raven, right, leading students in a class at the Judith and Thomas L. Beckmen YOLA Center in Inglewood, Calif. (C1); Top, the Youth Orchestra Los Angeles, a music education program, serves 1,500 students. The architect Frank Gehry reconfigured a former bank and Burger King, above, into the program’s first permanent home. “Frank saw the potential,” said Gustavo Dudamel, the artistic director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROZETTE RAGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C4)

**Load-Date:** December 28, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Young Women Set the Tone for a Paris Theater Season; Theater Review***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63RB-0HF1-JBG3-62RV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 30, 2021 Thursday 08:10 EST

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**Section:** THEATER

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**Byline:** Laura Cappelle

**Highlight:** The directors staging the most ambitious premieres are all female millennials.

**Body**

The directors staging the most ambitious premieres are all female millennials.

PARIS — In March last year, Pauline Bayle’s “Lost Illusions” closed after just two performances, the day before France’s first coronavirus lockdown came into force. Eighteen months later, the Théâtre de la Bastille was chock-full once more for the production’s return to the stage — and the mood in Paris appeared to have finally lifted.

Sure, proof of full vaccination or a recent negative test is required at the door, and masks remain mandatory in theaters. But the fear of shutdowns has receded along with the infection rate in the country, now that [*75 percent of the population*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/world/covid-vaccinations-tracker.html) has received at least one dose of vaccine. Nearly all the country’s playhouses have reopened, with hopes now high for a “normal” season.

And the directors setting the tone with ambitious premieres this September have all been millennial women. Like Bayle, Pauline Bureau, currently at the Théâtre de la Colline with “Surrogate” (“Pour Autrui”), and Maëlle Poésy, who is returning to the Comédie-Française, were on the cusp of national prominence when the pandemic hit.

It is a relief to see them back. For emerging artists, the risk of running down funding or losing key opportunities has been especially acute over the past 18 months. The odds for women are arguably even tougher: Earlier this year, a [*World Economic Forum report*](https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-women-int-idUSKBN2BM38Q) suggested that the pandemic would delay gender equality by a generation. In France, an [*open letter published in the newspaper Libération*](https://www.liberation.fr/idees-et-debats/tribunes/a-la-tete-des-theatres-des-hommes-succedent-aux-hommes-20210327_GXZLCPHCMVGHNFZ2AMIOAQALJU/) last March pointed out the continued dearth of female leaders in the country’s arts world.

The talent is there to change the narrative, and these millennial directors are maturing. While Bayle, Bureau and Poésy are far from alike, they all shun the highly conceptual approach that is often confused in France for a strong directorial voice. Instead, “Lost Illusions,” “Surrogate” and Poésy’s “7 Minutes” are all examples of confident, clear storytelling, complete with a few twists.

“Lost Illusions” is in many ways a follow-up to [*Bayle’s Homer-inspired “Iliad” and “Odyssey,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/18/theater/women-french-theater.html) two shows that toured widely in France from 2017 to 2020. Once again, Bayle has adapted an epic, character-heavy tale — Honoré de Balzac’s novel of the same name, published in installments between 1837 and 1843 — with just five actors on a bare stage. Four of them play multiple characters, men and women; the fifth, Jenna Thiam, takes the gender-swapped role of Lucien, an ambitious young writer from Angoulême who strives to make it in Parisian society.

Significant cuts have been required to keep “Lost Illusions” under the two-and-a-half-hour mark. Still, Bayle and her cast manage to clearly delineate no fewer than 17 characters, sometimes with seconds to change costumes and transition from one to the next.

While Bayle relies on the audience’s imagination to fill in some gaps, Bureau’s instincts are closer to documentary theater. In 2019, she tackled the legalization of abortion in France in the 1970s for the Comédie-Française, in [*a play that drew on real-life events*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/27/theater/putting-hiroshima-mon-amour-onstage.html); “Surrogate,” at La Colline, returns to the theme of women’s reproductive rights through fiction.

While legal in many countries and in some U.S. states, surrogacy remains forbidden by French law, regardless of the parents’ circumstances. “Surrogate,” which Bureau wrote and directed, openly acts as an advocate for change by telling the story of a heterosexual couple who can’t conceive after the prospective mother was treated for cancer.

It’s a tricky proposition for a play, because creating characters in service of a clear cause can leave them feeling one-dimensional. When we meet Liz (Marie Nicolle), a construction manager, and Alexandre (Nicolas Chupin), a puppeteer, it soon becomes obvious — if only because of the play’s title — that they will fall in love and struggle to have a child. Yet in a neat, fast-paced series of vignettes, Bureau manages to introduce them both and stage a believable meet-cute at an airport. Their budding love story is told through intimate text messages flashed over the elaborate two-tier set.

Some shortcuts are more frustrating. After Liz undergoes a hysterectomy, the play nudges them quickly toward surrogacy. Liz’s sister just happens to work at an American maternity hospital, and to have a colleague who dreams of becoming a surrogate. The staggering cost — over $100,000 — is mentioned only in passing, along with the vague prospect of a loan.

Yet Bureau is brilliantly imaginative when it comes to revealing character in small, concise touches. As the American surrogate Rose, who seems too perfect on paper, she cast Maria Mc Clurg, a trained dancer who luxuriates in languid, expansive steps while heavily pregnant, as Liz watches, still — an eloquent metaphor for the relish Rose says she experiences when carrying a child, as well as Liz’s frustration with her own body.

As Liz’s mother, Martine Chevallier is another highlight, insensitively deadpan, even as her daughter struggles. The only major mishap in “Surrogate” is the final scene, which sees Liz and Alexandre’s daughter appear as a teenager. Her studied weirdness, as well as repeated allusions to her high intellectual potential, undermine the rest of the play: Wouldn’t an average child be a gift, too, after infertility?

Notably, both Bayle and Bureau benefited from commissions from the venerable Comédie-Française in 2019. Under its current director, Éric Ruf, the storied company has implemented a roughly equal split between female and male directors every season. This year, the two productions that opened the season were staged by women.

After directing a Chekhov double bill for the troupe in 2016, Poésy returned with “7 Minutes,” a play by the Italian author Stefano Massini. It is set in a French textile factory, whose workers fear for their jobs after a change of ownership. Instead, the new management makes them a surprising offer: Eleven women elected to represent their peers are asked to voluntarily give up seven minutes out of the workforce’s daily 15-minute breaks.

“7 Minutes” works like a courtroom drama. The characters have 80 minutes to decide whether or not to accept the proposal, and never leave the stage. While it initially seems like a no-brainer — seven minutes, they reason, is nothing compared with layoffs in a declining sector — one dissenting voice, that of Véronique Vella, raises the possibility that it is the first step in a rollback of hard-earned rights. As blue-collar jobs disappear, she asks with understated defiance, should those who remain accept worse working conditions just to remain employed?

The play makes a superb addition to the Comédie-Française repertoire, which isn’t exactly replete with ***working-class*** stories, and brings every generation of the company together, from the company’s doyenne, Claude Mathieu, to Ruf’s latest hire, Séphora Pondi, 29.

And there are already new names in the wings. “Hansel and Gretel,” a family-friendly production on the Comédie-Française’s smallest stage, the Studio-Théâtre, introduces Rose Martine, a 27-year-old director born in Haiti and raised in the overseas department of French Guiana.

“Hansel and Gretel” lacks a little finesse in the acting choices, yet it’s a joy to see Martine bring elements of Black culture to the Comédie-Française stage, including call-and-response interactions with the audience borrowed from Haitian folk tales. Hansel, Gretel and the narrator are all played by young Black members of the company, with Birane Ba especially convincing as Hansel. Postpandemic, the future looks bright.

Lost Illusions. Directed by Pauline Bayle. Théâtre de la Bastille, through Oct. 16.

Surrogate. Directed by Pauline Bureau. Théâtre de la Colline, through Oct. 17.

7 Minutes. Directed by Maëlle Poésy. Comédie-Française, through Oct. 17.

Hansel &amp; Gretel. Directed by Rose Martine. Comédie-Française, through Oct. 24.

PHOTO: Jenna Thiam, right, and Charlotte Van Bervesselès in “Lost Illusions,” directed by Pauline Bayle, at the Théâtre de la Bastille. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Simon Gosselin FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***German Vote May Hint At a European Left Turn***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63R9-KR11-JBG3-6255-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 30, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1292 words

**Byline:** By Marc Santora and Melissa Eddy

**Body**

It is too early to tell, but the results certainly illustrate a fragmentation in politics and the growing influence of personalities.

Sunday's election in Germany ended in victory for the country's Social Democratic Party and its candidate, Olaf Scholz. It was a remarkable comeback for a center-left party, which like many of its counterparts across Europe has been bleeding support at the ballot box for the past decade or more.

So the question immediately arises whether Mr. Scholz's victory in Germany may be a harbinger of revival more broadly for the center-left parties that were once mainstays of the continent's politics.

Inside Germany, Mr. Scholz is preparing for negotiations to form a left-leaning coalition government with the Greens and the libertarian Free Democrats. After his centrist campaign, just how left-leaning remains an open question. And nothing is guaranteed: His conservative rival, who lost by just 1.6 percentage points, has not conceded and also wants to try to form a coalition.

Though the results have thrown Mr. Scholz's conservative opponents into disarray, the landscape for the center left also remains challenging. Elsewhere in Europe, many center-left parties have watched their share of votes erode as their traditional base among unionized, industrial workers disappears and as political blocs splinter into an array of smaller parties.

But after a surge among right-wing populists in recent years, there are some signs that the political pendulum may be poised to swing back. Here is a look at the factors that will influence whether a center-left revival is possible.

Big-tent parties on both sides have shrunk.

The German elections have cast in sharp relief the continuation of a trend that was already visible across the continent: fragmentation and volatility in political support.

Only three decades ago, Germany's two leading parties garnered over 80 percent of the vote in a national election. On Sunday, the Social Democrats received just 25.7 percent, while the Christian Democrats, together with their Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union, received 24.1 percent -- calling into question their legitimacy as ''Volkspartei'' or big-tent parties that represent all elements of society.

The votes being lost by the once-dominant parties are going to parties with more narrowly defined positions -- whether the Greens, animated by environmental issues, or the libertarian Free Democratic Party. If the German vote were broken down by traditional notions of ''right'' and ''left,'' it would be nearly evenly divided, with some 45 percent on each side.

On the eve of the coronavirus pandemic, a survey of 14 European Union countries in 2019 by the Pew Research Center found that few voters expressed positive views of political parties. Only six out of nearly 60 were seen favorably by more than 50 percent of the populations in their countries. Populist parties across Europe also received largely poor reviews.

The left has a lot of recovering to do.

It remains to be seen whether the Social Democrats in Germany will be able to lead a governing coalition. But if they do, they will join a relatively small club.

Of the 27 member states in the European Union, only Portugal, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Malta have distinctly center-left governments.

The old voting coalitions that empowered the center-left across the continent after 1945 included industrial workers, public sector employees and urban professionals. But those groups, driven primarily by class and economic needs, have fragmented.

Two decades ago, Tony Blair's Labour Party cruised to re-election in Britain, promoting center-left policies similar to those of President Bill Clinton. Now, Labour has been out of power for more than a decade, and in recent elections it has suffered stinging losses in ***working-class*** parts of England where its support once ran deep.

In France, the center-left Socialist Party has never recovered from the unpopular presidency of François Hollande and its disastrous performance in the subsequent elections. Since then, France has moved increasingly to the right, with support for the Socialists and other left-leaning parties shrinking.

With an eye toward presidential elections next April, President Emmanuel Macron, who ran as a centrist in 2017, has been courting voters on the right. Polls show that he and Marine Le Pen, the leader of the far-right National Rally, are the two favorites to make it out of the first round and meet in a runoff.

Anne Hidalgo, the Paris mayor and Socialist presidential hopeful, has been losing support since declaring her candidacy early this month. According to a poll released last Thursday, only 4 percent of potential voters said they would support her in the first round next April.

And 'left' is not what it used to be.

In the aftermath of World War II, as money flooded into Europe through the Marshall Plan and industry boomed, those who opposed Communism but were worried that capitalism could stoke instability and inequality came together under a broad umbrella of center-left parties.

They favored strong trade unions and welfare states with generous education and health care systems.

In Germany, as in other countries, the lines between the center left and the center right began to fade some time ago.

But if there is one animating issue for many voters on the left and the right, it is the role that the European Union should play in the governance of nations.

Many far-right parties have won support by casting Brussels as a regulatory overlord stripping sovereignty from the union's member states. Ms. Merkel's conservatives, by contrast, are very pro-European Union -- yet have been wary of deepening some fiscal ties inside the bloc. Many Social Democrats argue, however, that the European Union must be strengthened through deeper integration.

Europe's bonds were tested in the pandemic, and that process may have ultimately helped the Social Democrats as Germany set aside its traditional abhorrence of shared E.U. debt to unleash emergency spending.

It was a plan that Mr. Scholz, who is Germany's finance minister, drew up with his French counterpart. Ms. Merkel, who approved the deal, has since repeatedly pointed out was a one-off.

Mr. Scholz's central role in crafting the deal put him squarely on the side of Germans in favor of ever-tighter connections with their European neighbors.

Personality counts for more than ever.

Another common denominator in the fragmented European political landscape is that personalities seem to be far more important to voters than traditional parties and the issues they represent.

There have always been outsized personalities on the European political stage. But whether it was Margaret Thatcher, François Mitterrand, Helmut Kohl or Willy Brandt, they were more often than not guided by a set of ideological principles.

The failure of the leading political parties to address the problems confronting voters has led to a new generation of leaders who position themselves as iconoclasts. Mr. Macron in France and Boris Johnson in Britain could hardly be more different. But both are opportunistic, flout convention and have crafted larger-than-life personas to command public attention. So far, voters have rewarded them.

Angela Merkel was their polar opposite, a study in staid reticence who transcended ideological differences by exuding stability. Her party's candidate, Armin Laschet, couldn't convince voters that he was her natural heir, which opened the door to Mr. Scholz, who managed to cast himself as the most Merkel-like candidate -- despite being in another party.

Norimitsu Onishi contributed reporting.Norimitsu Onishi contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/29/world/europe/politics-germany-election-left.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/29/world/europe/politics-germany-election-left.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A polling station in Berlin on Sunday as Germans gave Olaf Scholz's center-left party a slim win. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LENA MUCHA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 30, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Do Germany’s Election Results Signal a Left Turn for Europe?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63R4-83W1-DXY4-X25Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 29, 2021 Wednesday 22:37 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

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**Byline:** Marc Santora and Melissa Eddy

**Highlight:** It is too early to tell, but the results certainly illustrate a fragmentation in politics and the growing influence of personalities.

**Body**

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PHOTO: A polling station in Berlin on Sunday as Germans gave Olaf Scholz’s center-left party a slim win. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LENA MUCHA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 29, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Katie Couric***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64CX-4GF1-DXY4-X1M9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 26, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1553 words

**Body**

''Sometimes I read my iPad in the bathtub, which is probably not a great idea,'' says the broadcast journalist Katie Couric, whose new memoir is ''Going There.''

What books are on your night stand?

Sally Rooney's ''Beautiful World, Where Are You'' and Jean Hanff Korelitz's ''The Plot'' are both on my night stand. ''The Vanishing Half'' is nearby; I still haven't had a chance to read it, but I've heard Brit Bennett is brilliant. I also bought ''Oh, William!'' I have read every book Elizabeth Strout has written, so I'm excited when I can stop thinking and talking about my own book and start reading others.

What's the last great book you read?

I recently read ''Becoming Duchess Goldblatt'' for the second time -- it's a memoir, written by anonymous, about a working woman in the throes of motherhood and divorce who takes on an online persona named ''Duchess Goldblatt'' and develops a special relationship with ... Lyle Lovett. The book is quirky and moving and Duchess has become a wise, comforting voice on Twitter that provides an excellent counterbalance to all the vitriol.

Are there any classic novels that you only recently read for the first time?

''Things Fall Apart,'' by Chinua Achebe. My daughters both read it in high school and I finally caught up. I loved the lilting lyricism of the prose.

Describe your ideal reading experience (when, where, what, how).

I love reading newsletters and articles in the morning when I wake up. I spend about an hour reading the news and saving pieces that are too long and would keep me from ever getting out of bed. At night, I dig into them on my iPad. I love The Atlantic, The New Yorker, The New York Times Magazine, Time, Medium and so many other great publications. These pieces always restore my faith in journalism and thoughtful, nuanced writing. Sometimes I read my iPad in the bathtub, which is probably not a great idea.

But I still love the feel of holding an actual book in my hands. My favorite place to read is at the beach in the late afternoon. That's where I read ''Fleishman Is in Trouble'' (I love Taffy Brodesser-Akner) and reread ''Maybe You Should Talk to Someone,'' by Lori Gottlieb, because she and I are developing the book into a scripted series.

Which writers -- novelists, playwrights, critics, journalists, poets -- working today do you admire most?

Amor Towles, Lisa Taddeo, Isabel Wilkerson, Jia Tolentino, Joan Didion, Colson Whitehead, Bob Woodward, Cheryl Strayed, Michael Lewis, Ibram X. Kendi, Curtis Sittenfeld.

Do you have any comfort reads?

My mom's copy of ''The Best Loved Poems of the American People.'' My mom loved poetry and when I read ''In Flanders Fields'' it always makes me think of her.

Has a book ever brought you closer to another person, or come between you?

My sister Clara (Kiki) is a voracious reader. A few years ago, she told me what an impact ''The Warmth of Other Suns'' had on her. She said it was the most important book she ever read. I read it and thought it was a masterpiece. It prompted several rich and memorable conversations between us. Then, when my husband and I were planning to visit Auschwitz a few years ago, my mother-in-law, Paula, suggested I read Primo Levi's ''If This Is a Man.'' The memoir made the experience even more meaningful and made me appreciate Paula even more.

What's the most interesting thing you learned from a book recently?

Sheera Frenkel's and Cecilia Kang's brilliant exposé of Facebook, ''An Ugly Truth,'' revealed the nefarious actions by company executives months before Frances Haugen blew the lid off the whole enterprise. These two should win a Pulitzer Prize.

Even before the pandemic, I'd been interested in exploring the epidemic of loneliness. ''Together,'' by Vivek Murthy, underscored how loneliness and social isolation damage our emotional and physical health. It's the equivalent of smoking two packs of cigarettes a day.

Sanjay Gupta's book ''Keep Sharp'' says that occasionally holding your fork with your less dominant hand helps with brain health. Who knew?

Which subjects do you wish more authors would write about?

There have been so many excellent books written lately about the environment and I'd welcome even more. Recently on my podcast I featured Christiana Figueres and Tom Rivett-Carnac, the authors of ''The Future We Choose: Surviving the Climate Crisis.'' My friends Laurie David and Heather Reisman also wrote a book called ''Imagine It!'' Both books explain in an accessible way our current environmental challenges, but more important, they help us understand what we can do collectively and individually.

Meanwhile, more and more authors are writing honestly about loss and grief, which is something I tried to do in my memoir. ''When Breath Becomes Air,'' by Paul Kalanithi, ''The Light of the World,'' by Elizabeth Alexander, and ''Notes on Grief,'' by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, helped me metabolize my own experience.

What moves you most in a work of literature?

Beautiful, descriptive sentences that play with language in original, unexpected ways. I know I love a book when I read a passage and it stops me in my tracks and makes me read it again. I did this repeatedly when I read Lisa Taddeo's book ''Three Women'' as well as her novel, ''Animal.''

Have you ever changed your opinion of a book based on information about the author, or anything else?

Katharine Graham was a mythic, almost unknowable figure for me growing up outside Washington, D.C. Her memoir, ''Personal History,'' was fascinating. It not only helped me understand some of the issues she wrestled with and the challenges she faced running The Washington Post, but it allowed me to connect with her on a deeply personal level, because she was so forthcoming about every aspect of her life.

How do you organize your books?

Easy answer: I don't. My daughter Ellie color-coded one of our bookshelves and it looks great, but organizing doesn't exactly fall within my skill set. Besides, there's something fun about perusing the spines, not knowing what you'll stumble upon next.

What book might people be surprised to find on your shelves?

''Golf Courses of the U.S. Open,'' by David Barrett (obviously, my husband's), and ''Ya Wanna Go?,'' by Paul Stewart, an N.H.L. referee.

What's the best book you've ever received as a gift?

A dictionary from my father, inscribed, ''To my favorite wordsmith.''

Who is your favorite fictional hero or heroine? Your favorite antihero or villain?

Elizabeth Bennet in ''Pride and Prejudice'' and Esther in ''The Bell Jar.'' Antihero: Holden Caulfield, of course.

What kind of reader were you as a child? Which childhood books and authors stick with you most?

When I was little and complained that I was bored, my mom would say, ''Go read a book.'' I remember sitting in the den, reading our World Books on the lowest shelf of the library. I recently found the paperback copy of ''A Patch of Blue'' in a box of books from my childhood. I was totally entranced with that book as an adolescent. I loved another book called ''Light a Single Candle.'' Both were about young blind women. I worked at a camp for blind kids while I was in high school. So that was an interesting theme that ran through my childhood. I also loved anything written by James Thurber. Another favorite was ''The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter.'' I thought about naming our first daughter Carson, after Carson McCullers. But we decided to name her Elinor instead. I also loved ''The Human Comedy,'' by William Saroyan and remember being so moved by ''Death Be Not Proud,'' by John Gunther. Oh, and ''In Cold Blood.'' That gave me nightmares for weeks.

Have your reading tastes changed over time?

Lately, I'm gravitating to books that help me understand the state of the world. I'm drawn to anything that attempts to explain what's happening to our country, like ''White ***Working Class***,'' by Joan Williams, and ''Strangers in Their Own Land,'' by Arlie Russell Hochschild. I try to use history as my guide as well, which is why I devoured ''Eleanor,'' by my friend David Michaelis. It's a stunning character study of someone I deeply admire. It also explains how someone can survive a miserable childhood and go on to do great things.

What book would you recommend for America's current political moment?

''Peril,'' by Bob Woodward and Robert Costa -- a meticulously reported deconstruction of the insane final days of the Trump administration.

You're organizing a literary dinner party. Which three writers, dead or alive, do you invite?

I have to cheat just a bit, and invite four: Edith Wharton, Mary Shelley, Bryan Stevenson and Herman Wouk. Bryan Stevenson is my personal hero, and I'd like to show Edith Wharton how much the world has changed. Mary Shelley would be fascinating to talk to, as her life story is like something out of a novel (whirlwind romance with Percy Bysshe Shelley and all). And Herman Wouk was the most charming, spirited and fun writer I've ever met.

What books are you embarrassed not to have read yet?

''One Hundred Years of Solitude'' (my daughter Carrie's favorite book).

What do you plan to read next?

''Both/And,'' by Huma Abedin. ''The Lyrics,'' by Paul McCartney. ''The Stranger in the Lifeboat,'' by Mitch Albom. I'm treating myself to all three, the minute I come up for air!

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/23/books/review/katie-couric-by-the-book-interview.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/23/books/review/katie-couric-by-the-book-interview.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Rebecca Clarke FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 26, 2021

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[***Is New York Still a 'Tale of Two Cities'?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64CX-4GF1-DXY4-X1J2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 26, 2021 Sunday

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**Length:** 1483 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons and Jeffery C. Mays

**Body**

In his final weeks in office, Mayor Bill de Blasio has sought to cement his legacy, arguing that he has accomplished what he set out to do when he first ran for mayor in 2013: reduce inequality in New York City.

There is some evidence to support this. His signature accomplishment, creating a prekindergarten-for-all program, set the stage for a ''3K-for-all'' expansion in 2017. Currently, about 96,000 children are enrolled in both programs. The mayor has also pointed to the city's poverty rate, which fell before the pandemic to roughly 18 percent in 2019, from 20.5 percent in 2013.

''We know there was a huge transfer of wealth,'' Mr. de Blasio recently told reporters. ''I'm a believer in redistribution of wealth. It happened to the tune of tens of billions of dollars.''

Experts say his legacy is more complicated. Mr. de Blasio ran for mayor vowing to fix the inequality that had created a ''tale of two cities,'' and his policies often did not live up to that rhetoric.

Mr. de Blasio, who is considering running for governor in 2022 and declined a request for an interview, made progress on key issues like bringing down the poverty level and building affordable housing, but the pandemic was catastrophic for poor New Yorkers.

When the virus was at its worst in New York, Black and Latino people were dying from it at twice the rate as white people -- a disparity that the mayor acknowledged was a reflection of long-held inequities in access to health care. The unemployment rate soared to 20 percent, and the poverty level likely rose again.

The mayor also failed to address longstanding inequities facing the transit system and segregated schools, and said that his greatest failure was his response to the homelessness crisis.

There were certainly wins that improved the lives of ***working-class*** New Yorkers -- many of them outlined in a new 12-page report by the city called ''The de Blasio Years: The Tale of a More Equal City,'' including pushing for a $15 minimum wage, paid sick leave, rent freezes and municipal IDs for undocumented immigrants. The city delivered more than 200 million meals to New Yorkers during the height of the pandemic.

Mr. de Blasio's most lasting accomplishment may be his creation of universal prekindergarten, a popular program that could serve as a national model for the Biden administration.

Porshia Rogers, who lives in public housing in Queens and works at a nonprofit, recalled how relieved she was when her daughter Paije secured a free 3-K spot this year. She said that it was difficult to afford $800 per month on child care.

''I knew that once she turned three, I would at least have some type of break,'' she said. ''When the mayor announced 3-K for all, I was like, thank you, God.''

Mr. de Blasio's ascension to mayor was viewed by Democrats as a chance to reset the city's trajectory to the left, after 20 years of being led by Rudolph W. Giuliani, a Republican, and Michael R. Bloomberg, who was first elected as a Republican and later changed parties.

In the 2013 Democratic mayoral primary, Mr. de Blasio drew a sharp contrast to Mr. Bloomberg, vowing to undo the policies that he said had led New York to become a ''tale of two cities.'' He then followed through on his pledge to end discriminatory police stops against Black and Latino men, and created universal prekindergarten to help close educational gaps.

But the mayor had to be pushed by city leaders when it came to other initiatives, including closing the Rikers Island jail complex, offering half-price MetroCards to poor New Yorkers, and providing deeper levels of affordability in his housing plan.

Wealthy New Yorkers certainly continued to prosper during the de Blasio years -- the number of billionaires in the city jumped to 99, second in the world to Beijing, according to Forbes -- and Mr. de Blasio's attempt to secure a tax on millionaires or their second homes failed in Albany, where the mayor lacked strong allies.

By 2019, the city's poverty rate had dropped, but the Gini index -- the primary U.S. census figure that measures income inequality -- had not budged. It has remained flat since 2013 at a rate that is worse than other major American cities like Los Angeles and Chicago.

''There has been an explosion of wealth in New York City, but it hasn't trickled down,'' said David R. Jones, president of the Community Service Society of New York, an antipoverty nonprofit.

The next mayor, Eric Adams, will have to navigate a series of complex issues left unresolved by Mr. de Blasio. Mr. Adams grew up in poverty in southeast Queens and says that addressing inequality is a priority. But he also promised a closer relationship with the city's elites.

Mr. Adams might be better served by improving on Mr. de Blasio's relationship with state lawmakers and the governor. Mr. de Blasio fought constantly with former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo -- over subway funding, the response to the pandemic, public housing, the homeless crisis and even whether to euthanize a deer.

Even with Mr. de Blasio's first-year success in getting prekindergarten approved, he was forced to accept state funding instead of a tax on the wealthy. Mr. Cuomo often had the upper hand in their confrontations, and the city suffered.

Some former allies grew disillusioned. Mr. de Blasio waited until late in his second term to phase out the gifted and talented program for elementary schools, and to open supervised drug injection sites. A plan to create 100,000 jobs that paid $50,000 or more faced criticism for not doing enough to include New Yorkers in the city's poorest neighborhoods.

Bertha Lewis, president of the Black Institute, who helped Mr. de Blasio win over progressives during the 2013 Democratic primary for mayor, said it became difficult to defend Mr. de Blasio because he failed to act on key issues. His allies wanted the all-hands on deck approach that the mayor had used to win prekindergarten to confront other issues like public housing but Mr. de Blasio often seemed unwilling to risk the political capital to do so.

Ms. Lewis called universal prekindergarten ''an incredible accomplishment,'' but said that the program alone was not enough to declare victory against inequality.

''How long are you going to ride that surfboard?'' she said.

James Parrott, an economist with the Center for New York City Affairs at the New School, said Mr. de Blasio does not get enough credit for ''actively using policy to actually reduce poverty,'' including instituting other labor protections like settling union contracts.

Workers in the bottom half of the economy saw a 15 percent increase in wage share from 2013 to 2019, while the rest of the country held steady, according to Mr. Parrott's analysis of data from the Independent Budget Office.

The discount MetroCard proposal seemed to fit squarely within Mr. de Blasio's left-wing rhetoric. Mr. Jones pitched the idea to the mayor, and Mr. de Blasio liked it so much that he called Mr. Jones and said he was going to appoint him to the board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to help see it through.

''Almost immediately after that, he began moon-walking away from it,'' Mr. Jones said.

Mr. de Blasio unsuccessfully argued that Mr. Cuomo should pay for the program since he ran the subway. At the same time, the mayor announced significant city funding for a heavily subsidized ferry system that is used mostly by affluent, white New Yorkers.

''If you're able to provided a subsidized ferry system for middle and upper class people, very few of whom are people of color, what's so difficult about providing almost the same amount of money to the very poor?'' Mr. Jones said.

The City Council speaker, Corey Johnson, convinced the mayor to add it to the city budget in 2018; more than 260,000 New Yorkers have since enrolled. ''It's been incredibly popular, and it's putting hundreds of dollars in poor people's pockets,'' Mr. Johnson said.

On the homelessness crisis, Mr. de Blasio has said that it took him too long to fully understand the problem. The number of single adults living in shelters has risen, and Mr. de Blasio received criticism for moving thousands of homeless people out of hotel rooms and back into barrackslike dorm shelters during the pandemic.

''This is an area where we didn't see all the solutions in the beginning -- I'm very honest about that,'' the mayor told reporters recently.

Shams DaBaron, one of the homeless men living at the Lucerne hotel on Manhattan's Upper West Side last year, said that the city's shelters were inhumane and Mr. de Blasio did not focus enough on creating permanent housing.

''Those places are warehouses -- they have no services on site and they're havens for drugs and other activities that are not healthy for human beings,'' he said. ''That is part of the mayor's legacy -- not having compassion for homeless populations.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/22/nyregion/de-blasio-legacy-inequality.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/22/nyregion/de-blasio-legacy-inequality.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Mayor Bill de Blasio, a Democrat, is considering a run for governor. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNIE TRITT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***A Former Moderate Embraces Trump and Embodies a Changed G.O.P.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6539-9M61-DXY4-X060-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Byline:** By Annie Karni

**Body**

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PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla. -- On the second floor of an upscale golf resort near Jacksonville this past week, House Republicans gathered for drinks as they kicked off a three-day retreat to plot their path to winning the majority in this year's midterm elections.

Representative Jim Jordan of Ohio, dressed down in a fleece vest, stood in one corner while Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia hustled in and out of the reception area. But it was Representative Elise Stefanik of New York, the No. 3 Republican and an architect of the party's message, who was running the show, working the room with her 7-month-old son on her hip.

A year ago, the same House Republican retreat was fraught with drama as Representative Liz Cheney of Wyoming, who then held the third-ranking leadership post, publicly denounced former President Donald J. Trump's election lies. That prompted a backlash from other Republican leaders, who swiftly moved to oust her and install Ms. Stefanik in her place.

This year, with Ms. Stefanik acting as the event's organizer and M.C., there was little dissent on display. Inflation, immigration and President Biden's failures were played up, while Mr. Trump's false claims of fraud in the 2020 election and his denial of any responsibility for the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol did not even merit a mention -- a mark of how thoroughly the party has rallied around the former president.

That Ms. Stefanik, 37, would be hosting this particular party seemed fitting. A once-moderate Republican who worked in President George W. Bush's White House and was a protégé of former Speaker Paul D. Ryan, she is the embodiment of the rapid shift in the Republican Party. In just a few short years, she has morphed from the conservative mainstream into an unlikely star of the MAGA universe and a die-hard Trump loyalist.

In an interview on the sidelines of the party retreat, her reinvention was on vivid display. Ms. Stefanik repeated Mr. Trump's lies about the 2020 election being stolen and refused to acknowledge Mr. Biden as the legitimately elected president.

''Joe Biden is in the White House right now -- the American people understand that -- but they do have questions,'' she said in between a lunch with former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and a dinner with the author of a book called ''Woke, Inc.''

''In my district, I still get questions about it,'' Ms. Stefanik said, adding, ''I think there are constitutional questions on the unconstitutional overreach of unelected individuals in states like Pennsylvania.''

And as her party veers toward extremism, Ms. Stefanik refused to condemn the Republicans who speak most loudly to the fringe. Asked about Ms. Greene, who recently spoke at a white nationalist event, and Representative Madison Cawthorn of North Carolina, who has called President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine a ''thug,'' she said the two were merely reflecting the views of the voters in their districts.

''They represent their constituents, and they are held accountable for the statements they make,'' Ms. Stefanik said, noting the House Republican conference as a whole did not share their views.

It has been a rapid transformation. Ms. Stefanik, who graduated from Harvard, was once seen by Democrats as a bright spot in the Republican Party, someone who was going to dig into policy issues on the House Intelligence Committee, which she joined in 2017.

In private conversations, Ms. Stefanik sometimes conceded to former colleagues and confidants that Mr. Trump was a disaster for the party, though she said she did not see an upside to publicly criticizing him. She vented to confidants that the administration made ''dumb'' decisions that left Republicans in Congress shouldering the blame -- frustrated, for example, at Mr. Trump's on-again, off-again backing of sweeping immigration legislation to grant legal status to unauthorized immigrants brought to the United States as children, often known as Dreamers.

(A senior adviser to Ms. Stefanik, Alex deGrasse, said she never made those comments about Mr. Trump and his administration.)

But these days, Ms. Stefanik is a loud and unapologetic Trump acolyte, even defending his praise of President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia. (''I think that President Trump was saying that Vladimir Putin assessed the weakness of Joe Biden, and unfortunately took advantage of it,'' she said, noting that Mr. Putin was a war criminal.)

While some Republicans have tried to walk a careful tightrope, supporting Mr. Trump's policies while distancing themselves from his false claims about the stolen election, Ms. Stefanik makes no such qualifications.

''I speak to President Trump frequently,'' she said. ''He's an incredibly important voice in terms of growing the party among the ***working class***.'' Asked whether Mr. Trump's influence on her party was on the wane, she flatly rejected the notion.

''No, it's on the rise,'' she said. ''Especially now that voters have regrets about voting for Joe Biden.''

Ms. Stefanik, who previously said she would serve only one term in leadership, is on the rise herself within her party's ranks. She could lead a powerful House committee or throw her hat in the ring in what is expected to be a competitive race for whip. Part of her success in leadership, aides said, is based on her effort to help elect more Republican women to Congress through her political action committee, which has also helped her build a network of support in her conference.

She has worked hard to win over detractors who question her conservative bona fides and is now broadly popular among Republicans, including right-wing members who were once suspicious of her mainstream background. The biggest help in that effort has been the support of Mr. Trump, who does not care about her more centrist past when she has shown him total fealty.

Mr. Trump, people close to him said, would be more than happy to see Ms. Stefanik make history as the Republicans' first female speaker, although he does not plan to get involved in the race for the post and would be unlikely to stand in the way of Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, the minority leader, if Republicans succeed in winning back the House majority. But his constant praise of Ms. Stefanik serves as a reminder that she has passed a loyalty test with Mr. Trump that Mr. McCarthy has not.

Mr. Trump speaks with Ms. Stefanik multiple times a week and describes her as ''one of my killers,'' thanks to her key role as his chief defender on the House Intelligence Committee during his first impeachment trial.

Her opportunism is criticized by her detractors, but celebrated by some on the hard right, who think she has revealed herself as someone willing to go to any length to rise.

At a recent fund-raiser in Palm Beach, Mr. Trump even floated her name as a potential presidential candidate in 2028.

''I'm not going to even engage in that,'' she said when asked about her future in House leadership. ''I'm supporting Kevin McCarthy for speaker. I don't measure the drapes. It's a long time between now and the November election.''

(Seeking to downplay any hint of rivalry, Ms. Stefanik's aides noted that Mr. McCarthy not only attended her wedding in 2017, but also campaigned for her at a biker bar in upstate New York during her first race. )

Her political metamorphosis has come with heady rewards for an ambitious politician: a prime-time speaking slot at the Republican National Convention in 2020 and a jet-fueled rise in the ranks of her party.

''Congress has gotten tougher and rougher,'' said Representative Tom Cole, Republican of Oklahoma. ''She didn't start that. She's proven she knows how to mix it up, and that's one of the qualities we look for in a conference.''

But Ms. Stefanik's political calculation stunned the networks she had spent her life cultivating. She lost many of her college friends from Harvard and was asked to step aside from her role on the senior advisory committee of the university's Institute of Politics because of her false assertions of voter fraud in the 2020 election.

Her onetime mentor Mr. Ryan declined to comment about her for this article, although aides to both said they were still in touch regularly.

Many friends and former colleagues think she made a cynical, short-term political gamble in her full-bore turn to Trumpism. Some have tried to warn her at various points along the road, but received a stony response.

Melissa DeRosa, a childhood friend of Ms. Stefanik's who served as a secretary to former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York, said she had reached out in 2019 after seeing Ms. Stefanik's performance during the impeachment hearings.

''I'm really concerned you're doing these things that will damage your credibility in the long term,'' she recalled texting Ms. Stefanik.

Ms. DeRosa said the reply was polite but curt. ''She wrote back saying, basically: 'You should always feel like you can tell me what you think. I appreciate your input.''' It was the end of the conversation.

Other former friends and mentors said they found her shape-shifting depressing. Bill Kristol, a prominent Never Trump conservative, said he once viewed her as a rising star in the party.

''I introduced her to donors and contributed to her campaign in 2014,'' Mr. Kristol said, noting that at a meeting in her office in 2018 she privately agreed with him that Mr. Trump was a liability. ''She seemed like a responsible elected official. Wrong.''

To explain her own transformation, Ms. Stefanik points to the rightward lurch of her onetime swing district, which voted for Barack Obama and was represented by a Democrat before she flipped the seat in 2014 and the district became Trump country.

''I believe that my record and my time in Congress is reflective of my constituents,'' she said.

Privately, she has told people she was ''radicalized by Adam Schiff,'' the Democratic chairman of the Intelligence Committee who led the first impeachment effort against Mr. Trump.

Other members of the panel say that as Ms. Stefanik grew more partisan about the impeachment, her attendance at committee events and briefings dropped to almost zero.

Back home, in a district that has become redder in the redistricting process, Ms. Stefanik has only grown safer politically. ''When you live in an area like this, it's a little bit of a quiet area,'' said Jeff Graham, a conservative radio host and the former mayor of Watertown. ''If you see your member of Congress on the news, you feel good about it.''

Still, there are awkward moments.

Last fall, when Ms. Stefanik was at an apple orchard in Saratoga County with her husband and her newborn son, a woman who grew up in the North Country region approached her and told her bluntly how she thought the congresswoman had compromised her values for power.

Ms. Stefanik bristled, telling the constituent that she was considered one of the most bipartisan congresswomen in the country, a record that she was proud of. (A report by the Lugar Center, which seeks to enhance bipartisanship, ranked her as one of the most bipartisan members of the previous Congress, according to its index.)

In an interview, Ms. Stefanik said she recalled the incident but refused to believe the woman was from her district.

''Not a voter,'' she said firmly. ''Not a constituent.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/27/us/politics/elise-stefanik.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/27/us/politics/elise-stefanik.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: In the few years since her election, Representative Elise Stefanik, Republican of New York, has morphed from the conservative mainstream into an unlikely star of the MAGA universe. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEFANI REYNOLDS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

SCOTT MCINTYRE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Elise Stefanik, Reinvented in Trump’s Image, Embodies a Changed G.O.P.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6539-8VB1-DXY4-X35G-00000-00&context=1519360)

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(A senior adviser to Ms. Stefanik, Alex deGrasse, said she never made those comments about Mr. Trump and his administration.)

But these days, Ms. Stefanik is a loud and unapologetic Trump acolyte, even defending his praise of President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia. (“I think that President Trump was saying that Vladimir Putin assessed the weakness of Joe Biden, and unfortunately took advantage of it,” she said, noting that Mr. Putin was a war criminal.)

While some Republicans have tried to walk a careful tightrope, supporting Mr. Trump’s policies while distancing themselves from his false claims about the stolen election, Ms. Stefanik makes no such qualifications.

“I speak to President Trump frequently,” she said. “He’s an incredibly important voice in terms of growing the party among the ***working class***.” Asked whether Mr. Trump’s influence on her party was on the wane, she flatly rejected the notion.

“No, it’s on the rise,” she said. “Especially now that voters have regrets about voting for Joe Biden.”

Ms. Stefanik, who previously said [*she would serve only one term in leadership*](https://www.politico.com/news/2021/05/07/stefanik-2022-gop-leadership-485844), is on the rise herself within her party’s ranks. She could lead a powerful House committee or throw her hat in the ring in what is expected to be a competitive race for whip. Part of her success in leadership, aides said, is based on her effort to help elect more Republican women to Congress through her political action committee, which has also helped her build a network of support in her conference.

She has worked hard to win over detractors who question her conservative bona fides and is now broadly popular among Republicans, including right-wing members who were once suspicious of her mainstream background. The biggest help in that effort has been the support of Mr. Trump, who does not care about her more centrist past when she has shown him total fealty.

Mr. Trump, people close to him said, would be more than happy to see Ms. Stefanik make history as the Republicans’ first female speaker, although he does not plan to get involved in the race for the post and would be unlikely to stand in the way of Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, the minority leader, if Republicans succeed in winning back the House majority. But his constant praise of Ms. Stefanik serves as a reminder that she has passed a loyalty test with Mr. Trump that Mr. McCarthy has not.

Mr. Trump speaks with Ms. Stefanik multiple times a week and describes her as “one of my killers,” thanks to her key role as his chief defender on the House Intelligence Committee during his first impeachment trial.

Her opportunism is criticized by her detractors, but celebrated by some on the hard right, who think she has revealed herself as someone willing to go to any length to rise.

At a recent fund-raiser in Palm Beach, Mr. Trump even [*floated her name as a potential presidential candidate in 2028*](https://nypost.com/2022/01/12/trump-says-rep-elise-stefanik-could-be-president-in-2028-at-palm-beach-fundraiser/).

“I’m not going to even engage in that,” she said when asked about her future in House leadership. “I’m supporting Kevin McCarthy for speaker. I don’t measure the drapes. It’s a long time between now and the November election.”

(Seeking to downplay any hint of rivalry, Ms. Stefanik’s aides noted that Mr. McCarthy not only attended her wedding in 2017, but also campaigned for her at a biker bar in upstate New York during her first race. )

Her political metamorphosis has come with heady rewards for an ambitious politician: a prime-time speaking slot at the Republican National Convention in 2020 and a jet-fueled rise in the ranks of her party.

“Congress has gotten tougher and rougher,” said Representative Tom Cole, Republican of Oklahoma. “She didn’t start that. She’s proven she knows how to mix it up, and that’s one of the qualities we look for in a conference.”

But Ms. Stefanik’s political calculation stunned the networks she had spent her life cultivating. She lost many of her college friends from Harvard and was asked to step aside from her role on the senior advisory committee of the university’s Institute of Politics because of her false assertions of voter fraud in the 2020 election.

Her onetime mentor Mr. Ryan declined to comment about her for this article, although aides to both said they were still in touch regularly.

Many friends and former colleagues think she made a cynical, short-term political gamble in her full-bore turn to Trumpism. Some have tried to warn her at various points along the road, but received a stony response.

Melissa DeRosa, a childhood friend of Ms. Stefanik’s who served as a secretary to former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York, said she had reached out in 2019 after seeing Ms. Stefanik’s performance during the impeachment hearings.

“I’m really concerned you’re doing these things that will damage your credibility in the long term,” she recalled texting Ms. Stefanik.

Ms. DeRosa said the reply was polite but curt. “She wrote back saying, basically: ‘You should always feel like you can tell me what you think. I appreciate your input.’” It was the end of the conversation.

Other former friends and mentors said they found her shape-shifting depressing. Bill Kristol, a prominent Never Trump conservative, said he once viewed her as a rising star in the party.

“I introduced her to donors and contributed to her campaign in 2014,” Mr. Kristol said, noting that at a meeting in her office in 2018 she privately agreed with him that Mr. Trump was a liability. “She seemed like a responsible elected official. Wrong.”

To explain her own transformation, Ms. Stefanik points to the rightward lurch of her onetime swing district, which voted for Barack Obama and was represented by a Democrat before she flipped the seat in 2014 and the district became Trump country.

“I believe that my record and my time in Congress is reflective of my constituents,” she said.

Privately, she has told people she was “radicalized by Adam Schiff,” the Democratic chairman of the Intelligence Committee who led the first impeachment effort against Mr. Trump.

Other members of the panel say that as Ms. Stefanik grew more partisan about the impeachment, her attendance at committee events and briefings dropped to almost zero.

Back home, in a district that has become redder in the redistricting process, Ms. Stefanik has only grown safer politically. “When you live in an area like this, it’s a little bit of a quiet area,” said Jeff Graham, a conservative radio host and the former mayor of Watertown. “If you see your member of Congress on the news, you feel good about it.”

Still, there are awkward moments.

Last fall, when Ms. Stefanik was at an apple orchard in Saratoga County with her husband and her newborn son, a woman who grew up in the North Country region approached her and told her bluntly how she thought the congresswoman had compromised her values for power.

Ms. Stefanik bristled, telling the woman that she was considered one of the most bipartisan congresswomen in the country, a record that she was proud of. (A [*report by the Lugar Center*](https://www.thelugarcenter.org/ourwork-79.html), which seeks to enhance bipartisanship, ranked her as one of the most bipartisan members of the previous Congress, according to its index.)

In an interview, Ms. Stefanik said she recalled the incident but refused to believe the woman was from her district.

“Not a voter,” she said firmly. “Not a constituent.”

PHOTOS: In the few years since her election, Representative Elise Stefanik, Republican of New York, has morphed from the conservative mainstream into an unlikely star of the MAGA universe. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEFANI REYNOLDS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; SCOTT MCINTYRE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 28, 2022

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[***Classroom Disruptions***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WJ-0FW1-DXY4-X195-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1804 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** We look at the surprising number of recent classroom shutdowns in the U.S. And the latest from Ukraine.

**Body**

We look at the surprising number of recent classroom shutdowns in the U.S. And the latest from Ukraine.

The debate over Covid-19 school closures can sometimes seem to be settled. There is now a consensus that children [*learned much less*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/04/briefing/american-children-crisis-pandemic.html) than usual — and that their mental health suffered — when schools were shut for months in 2020 and 2021. This consensus helps explain why very few school districts fully closed during the Omicron surge.

But Covid-related school shutdowns did not really end during Omicron. They instead became more subtle, often involving individual schools, classrooms or groups of students, rather than entire districts.

My colleagues at The Upshot recently conducted a poll, in collaboration with the survey firm Dynata, of almost 150,000 parents around the country. The results reveal much more lost school time during the Omicron wave than many people understood.

I was genuinely surprised by the numbers: In January, more than half of American children missed at least three days of school. About 25 percent missed more than a week, while 14 percent of students missed nine or more days. For tens of millions of American children last month, school wasn’t anywhere close to normal.

The data, as my colleagues [*Claire Cain Miller and Margot Sanger-Katz write*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/28/upshot/schools-covid-closings.html), “demonstrates the degree to which classroom closures have upended children’s education and parents’ routines, even two years into the pandemic. Five days of in-person school each week used to be virtually guaranteed. Some parents are now wondering if they’ll get that level of certainty again.”

These quiet closures have large costs. Even brief school disruptions can cause students to fall behind, research has found, with the effects largest among boys and children from low-income families, Claire and Margot note. “Routine is really important for young children’s sense of stability,” said Anna Gassman-Pines, a Duke University professor who specializes in psychology and neuroscience.

The disruptions also create problems for parents, especially ***working-class*** parents who cannot do their jobs remotely as easily as many white-collar professionals can. Noelle Rodriguez, a hair stylist in Fresno, Calif., moved her salon to her house, installing a sink and buying a hair dryer chair, because she assumed her children would not reliably be going to school. Her husband could not watch them, because he is a sheet metal foreman who cannot work from home.

Rodriguez was right to assume school would be disrupted: Her third-grade daughter was home for two weeks at one point, and Rodriguez could not see customers. “I cannot collect unemployment, I don’t get any sick pay, I’m self-employed, so I had zero income during that time,” she said.

Unavoidable trade-offs

The obvious question is whether these partial school shutdowns are doing more good or more harm.

Unfortunately, [*there is no simple answer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/11/briefing/covid-cdc-follow-the-science.html). The Omicron surge led to a sharp increase in Covid-19 hospitalizations and deaths. If schools had allowed children, teachers and other staff members to go to school while they had Covid — and were contagious — they could have made the toll even worse.

But many districts went further than requiring only contagious people to stay home. Some also told people to stay home if they had been exposed to Covid even if they hadn’t tested positive — or told them to stay home for many days after a positive test, likely beyond the window of infectiousness. These policies sometimes left schools without enough staff to function.

In justifying the policies, school administrations have frequently said that they are [*acting out of an abundance of caution*](https://www.google.com/search?q=school+district+%22abundance+of+caution%22+covid). It’s not so simple, though. Being abundantly cautious about Covid has other downsides. It can sometimes require a lack of caution in other areas, like children’s educational progress and mental health, as well as their parents’ jobs.

“It means a lot of anxiety, and it’s just not sustainable for the long haul,” said M. Cecilia Bocanegra, a psychotherapist in the Chicago area and mother of three who has been frustrated by the disruptions. (The Upshot’s story [*recreates the chaotic calendars*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/28/upshot/schools-covid-closings.html) of a few families.)

A recent poll by the Pew Research Center indicates that Bocanegra’s attitude [*is becoming more common*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/02/04/academic-emotional-concerns-outweigh-covid-19-risks-in-parents-views-about-keeping-schools-open/). Most parents told Pew that they wanted districts to give priority to students’ academic progress and emotional well-being when deciding whether to keep schools open. By contrast, in the summer of 2020 — before vaccines were available — most parents instead wanted schools to put a higher priority on minimizing Covid risks.

As has often been the case during the pandemic, there are some partisan differences here. Democratic areas have been quicker on average to disrupt classrooms than Republican areas, the Dynata survey suggests:

Burbio, a research firm that tracks school closures, has found [*a similar pattern*](https://cai.burbio.com/school-opening-tracker/). And the Pew poll found that Democratic parents wanted schools to give similar weight to Covid risks, academic progress and students’ emotional well-being; Republican parents wanted schools to put more weight on academics and mental health than on Covid exposure.

What now?

Whatever your views are, I think it’s worth remembering that both approaches have public health benefits and costs.

If schools make reducing Covid cases the top priority, they will probably be able to reduce cases — but will also cause more learning loss and family disruption. The strongest argument for this approach is that it protects unvaccinated, immunocompromised and elderly people while a deadly virus is still causing widespread harm.

If schools make returning to normal the top priority, they will probably reduce learning loss and family disruptions — but will also create more Covid exposure. The strongest argument for this approach is that it protects children and less-affluent families at a time when most severe Covid illness is occurring among unvaccinated people who have voluntarily accepted that risk.

With Omicron receding, this dilemma is becoming easier to resolve: School disruptions have declined in recent weeks. But the dilemma has not disappeared. Many schools [*are still not functioning normally*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/24/us/politics/covid-school-reopening-teen-mental-health.html), and future Covid surges — which would force a new round of hard choices — remain possible.

“We may be moving into a new phase of the pandemic,” Bree Dusseault of the Center on Reinventing Education at Arizona State University, told Claire, “where schools are generally kept open but there are sporadic bursts of disruption to smaller groups of students.”

More on the virus:

New York City [*will end its mask mandate in schools*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/27/world/covid-19-tests-cases-vaccine#new-york-mask-mandate-schools) next week if cases remain low.

THE LATEST NEWS

Ukraine-Russia

* As delegations from Ukraine and Russia [*met for talks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/world/europe/ukraine-war-russia.html), fighting continued, with Russian forces massing outside Kyiv.
* Volodymyr Zelensky, Ukraine’s president, predicted that the talks [*would not result in peace*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/27/world/russia-ukraine-war/ukraine-agrees-to-talk-with-russia-but-isnt-optimistic-the-violence-will-end).

1. [*Russia’s currency plummeted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/world/europe/ruble-russias-currency-sanctions.html)against the dollar after sanctions from the U.S. and its allies.
2. Vladimir Putin [*ordered Russia’s nuclear forces on alert*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/world/europe/us-putin-nuclear-alert.html). President Biden chose to [*respond with de-escalation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/us/politics/putin-nuclear-alert-biden-deescalation.html).
3. More than 350 civilians have died since the Russian invasion began. Here’s [*where the fighting is happening*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/world/europe/ukraine-maps.html).
4. The E.U. will close its airspace to Russian aircraft and will [*deliver weapons*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/27/world/russia-ukraine-war/europe-escalates-measures-against-russia-with-flight-bans-and-weapons-for-ukraine) to Ukraine.
5. Germany, in a foreign-policy U-turn, will [*strengthen its military*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/world/europe/germany-ukraine-russia.html).
6. More than 100,000 people [*demonstrated in Berlin against the war*](https://www.dw.com/en/anti-war-rally-draws-at-least-100000-in-berlin/a-60934518), and [*thousands of people marched*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/us/ukraine-rallies.html) in cities across the U.S. Russians also protested, [*despite threats of arrests*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/27/world/russia-ukraine-war/defying-police-russians-protest-putins-decision-to-send-troops-to-brotherly-nation).
7. The latest episode of “[*This American Life*](https://www.thisamericanlife.org/763/the-other-mr-president)” looks at Putin’s history. On “[*The Daily,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/28/podcasts/the-daily/ukraine-citizens-kyiv-russia.html)” The Times’s Sabrina Tavernise spoke to residents of Kyiv.

Other Big Stories

* The Supreme Court will hear arguments in a dispute over [*the E.P.A.’s power to limit greenhouse gases*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/climate/supreme-court-will-hear-biggest-climate-change-case-in-a-decade.html).

1. Nations aren’t doing nearly enough to respond to the [*hazards of climate change*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/28/climate/climate-change-ipcc-report.html), a U.N. report says.
2. An “atmospheric river” will [*bring flooding to the Pacific Northwest*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/us/atmospheric-river-pacific-northwest.html), forecasters say.
3. At least nine people died after [*torrential rain*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/world/asia/australia-flood-queensland.html) brought floods to Queensland, Australia.
4. Following George Floyd’s murder, U.S. police departments are [*training officers to intervene*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/us/police-intervention-minneapolis-george-floyd.html) when they see misconduct by colleagues.

Opinions

The Supreme Court seems determined to [*thwart federal action to fight climate change*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/26/opinion/climate-change-supreme-court.html), Jody Freeman writes.

Ash Wednesday is [*a somber reminder that our lives are brief*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/28/opinion/christians-church-lent.html), Margaret Renkl writes.

MORNING READS

World Through a Lens: In search of Panama’s [*elusive spider monkeys*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/28/travel/panama-azuero-spider-monkeys.html).

Work Friend: [*Your self worth is not in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/business/work-self-worth-email.html).

Advice from Wirecutter: A [*good kitchen scale*](https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/best-kitchen-scale/) is the secret weapon of many ace bakers.

Lives Lived: Leo Bersani was a scholar of French literature, but he found renown for his argument that gay men should embrace a more radical lifestyle that rejected the rules of male-female relationships. [*He died at 90*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/books/leo-bersani-dead.html).

ARTS AND IDEAS

Finding the perfect word

What’s your go-to starting Wordle word?

Regular players of the daily word puzzle tend to have [*strong feelings about their opening strategies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/23/arts/wordle-strategies.html), Emma Dibdin writes in The Times. Some maximize the number of vowels, as with ADIEU. Others emphasize common consonants, as in NORTH.

Dibdin spoke to Wordle fans about their favorite starters:

Beth Biester, an English teacher in Ohio, says her first word is IRATE, with MOUSY as a fallback.

J. Smith-Cameron, who plays Gerri on “Succession,” likes to switch up her opening word: SUAVE and ATONE are two favorites.

Monica Lewinsky cycles among a few, including HOIST and ARISE.

For more: Read about [*the game’s romantic origins*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/03/technology/wordle-word-game-creator.html), and [*play today’s Wordle*](https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html).

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

A [*Cheddar, cucumber and marmalade sandwich*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1013813-cheddar-cucumber-and-marmalade-sandwiches) makes for a sweet and salty lunch.

Theater

The Times spoke to four playwrights whose new shows [*invite audiences to laugh*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/theater/comedies-theater-off-broadway.html).

Classical

World politics intruded on Carnegie Hall, but the Rachmaninoff concerto went on — and the show was [*“miraculous in its execution,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/arts/music/vienna-philharmonic-carnegie-hall-review.html) Joshua Barone writes.

Now Time to Play

The pangram from Saturday’s Spelling Bee was toothpick. Here is today’s puzzle — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

Here’s [*today’s Wordle*](https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html). Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Up to this point (five letters).

If you’re in the mood to play more, find [*all our games here*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. — David

P.S. The word “lumpsucker” — a [*three-inch fish with suction cups and toothy scales*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/science/pacific-spiny-lumpsucker-fish.html) — recently appeared for the first time in The Times.

Here’s [*today’s front page*](https://static01.nyt.com/images/2022/02/28/nytfrontpage/scan.pdf).

“[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about the battle for Kyiv. “[*Sway*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/28/opinion/sway-kara-swisher-maggie-gyllenhaal.html)” features an interview with Maggie Gyllenhaal.

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Tom Wright-Piersanti, Ashley Wu and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](mailto:themorning@nytimes.com).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

PHOTO: Noelle Rodriguez moved her hair salon to her home in Fresno, Calif. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tomas Ovalle for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

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[***Germany's Would-Be Chancellor Faces a Tangle of Clashing Goals***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63PW-NC71-DXY4-X4T9-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1254 words

**Byline:** By Katrin Bennhold

**Body**

Olaf Scholz, the leader of the center-left Social Democrats, narrowly won the night. But now the hard part begins -- building a durable governing coalition.

BERLIN -- For a moment it felt like he was already chancellor. As Olaf Scholz stood on the stage surrounded by euphoric followers chanting his name and celebrating him as if he were the next leader of Germany, he was the clear winner of the night.

Mr. Scholz had just done the unthinkable -- carry his long moribund center-left Social Democrats to victory, however narrow, in elections on Sunday that were the most volatile in a generation.

But if winning wasn't hard enough, the hardest part may be yet to come.

Mr. Scholz, an affable but disciplined politician, most recently served as the vice chancellor and finance minister in the outgoing government of Chancellor Angela Merkel. Though he leads the party opposing her conservative Christian Democratic Union, he came out on top by persuading voters that he was not so much an agent of change as one of stability and continuity. In a race without an incumbent he ran as one.

It is a balancing act that may be hard to sustain for a onetime socialist who today is firmly rooted in the center of a fast-changing political landscape.

It's not that Germans have suddenly shifted left. In fact, three in four Germans did not vote for his party at all, and Mr. Scholz campaigned on raising the minimum wage, strengthening German industry and fighting climate change -- all mainstream positions.

Despite earning the most votes, Mr. Scholz is not yet assured of becoming chancellor. And if he does, he risks being absorbed in wrangling among multiple coalition partners, not to speak of rebellious factions within his own party.

On Monday, as his conservative rival continued to insist that he would work to form a government, the momentum seemed to swing behind Mr. Scholz as it became increasingly evident he had the strongest hand to play in coalition talks involving two other parties. ''The voters have spoken,'' he told reporters confidently.

Still, his will be no easy task.

Mr. Scholz has been a familiar face in German politics for more than two decades and served in several governments. But even now it's hard to know what kind of a chancellor he would be.

A fiery young socialist in the 1970s, he gradually mellowed into a post-ideological centrist. Today he is to the right of significant parts of his party -- not unlike President Biden in the United States, to whom he is sometimes compared. He lost his party's leadership contest two years ago to two leftists.

His party's surprise revival in the election rested heavily on his own personal popularity. But many warn that Mr. Scholz's appeal does not solve the deeper problems and divisions that have plagued the Social Democrats, known by their German acronym S.P.D.

''None of the claims of staleness or political irrelevance leveled at the S.P.D. over the past few years have gone away,'' the newspaper Süddeutsche Zeitung wrote on Monday.

Or as Thomas Kleine-Brockhoff of the German Marshall Fund put it: ''Social Democrats aren't offering a new package, they're offering a centrist who makes you forget the party behind it.''

Like many of its sister parties elsewhere in Europe, Germany's Social Democrats have been in crisis for years, losing traditional ***working-class*** voters to the extremes on the left and right and young urban voters to the Greens.

Now Mr. Scholz will not only have to satisfy his own leftist party base, but he must also deal with a wholly new political landscape.

Instead of two dominant parties competing to go into coalition with one partner, four midsize parties are now jockeying for a place in government. For the first time since the 1950s, the next chancellor will have to get at least three different parties behind a governing deal -- that's how Mr. Scholz's conservative runner-up, Armin Laschet, could theoretically still beat him to the top job.

A new era in politics has officially begun in Germany -- and it looks messy. Germany's political landscape, long a place of sleepy stability where several chancellors stayed on for more than a decade, has fractured into multiple parties that no longer differ all that much in size.

''There is a structural shift going on that I don't think we have understood yet,'' said Mr. Kleine-Brockhoff. ''We are confronted with a change in the party system that we didn't see coming just weeks ago. A multidimensional chess game has opened.''

Mr. Scholz is walking into a fiendishly complicated process where the power to decide who will become the next leader lies almost more with the two smaller parties that will be part of any future administration: the progressive Greens, who at 14.8 percent had the best result in their history; and the pro-business Free Democrats, with 11.5 percent. Together, these two kingmakers are now stronger than either of the two main parties.

In another first, the Free Democrats signaled that they would hold talks with the Greens first before turning to the larger parties.

The Free Democrats have never been shy about their preference to govern with the conservatives. The Greens are a much more natural fit with the Social Democrats, but might see advantages in negotiating with a weaker candidate. On the state level they have co-governed successfully with the Christian Democrats for years.

Meanwhile, Mr. Laschet, whose unpopularity and campaign blunders sent his party crashing nine percentage points to its lowest election result ever, said he would not concede on ''moral'' grounds, ignoring a growing number of calls from his own camp to accept defeat.

''No one should behave as if they alone can build a government,'' Mr. Laschet told reporters Monday. ''You become chancellor if you can build a majority.''

It would not be the first time that someone who lost the popular vote became chancellor. In 1969, 1976 and 1980, Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt, both center-left chancellors, formed coalition governments having lost the popular vote. But both got upward of 40 percent of the vote and did not face the complex multiparty negotiations now getting underway in Germany.

Several conservatives urged Mr. Laschet to concede on Monday.

''It was a defeat,'' said Volker Bouffier, the governor of the state of Hesse, adding that others were now called upon to form a government.

Ellen Demuth, another conservative lawmaker, warned Mr. Laschet that his refusal to concede was hurting his party further. ''You have lost,'' Ms. Demuth tweeted. ''Please recognize that. Avoid further hurting the C.D.U. and resign.''

The state leader of the conservative youth wing was equally adamant. ''We need a true renewal,'' said Marcus Mündlein and that, he said, could be successful only if Mr. Laschet ''bears the consequences of this loss in trust and steps down.''

An opinion poll released after the election showed that more than half of Germans preferred a coalition led by Mr. Scholz, compared to a third who said they wanted Mr. Laschet at the helm. When asked who they preferred as chancellor, 62 percent opted for Mr. Scholz, compared to 16 percent for Mr. Laschet.

Some argued that a Scholz-led government would present his party with an opportunity to revive its declining fortunes.

''It's a momentous moment for German social democracy which was on the verge of eternal decline,'' Mr. Kleine-Brockhoff said. ''Mr. Scholz will have a very powerful position because he alone is the reason his party won.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/world/europe/germany-election-results-olaf-scholz-spd.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/world/europe/germany-election-results-olaf-scholz-spd.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Olaf Scholz, head of the Social Democrats, served as Angela Merkel's vice chancellor and finance minister. He ran a campaign positioning himself as an agent of stability and continuity. (PHOTOGRAPH BY WOLFGANG RATTAY/REUTERS) (A9)

**Load-Date:** September 28, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Leader of the Labor Party in Britain Struggles to Escape Johnson's Shadow***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63PN-P971-DXY4-X2WK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 27, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 8

**Length:** 1322 words

**Byline:** By Stephen Castle

**Body**

Competent but low on charisma, Keir Starmer has yet to give British voters a clear reason to support the main opposition party, critics say.

LONDON -- If Prime Minister Boris Johnson went to one extreme with his pithy 2019 election slogan -- ''get Brexit done'' -- the leader of the opposition Labour Party, Keir Starmer, has gone to the other.

Ahead of Labour's annual conference, which began this weekend, Mr. Starmer penned a policy statement designed to showcase his beliefs that ran to more than 11,000 words. Despite that novella-like length, it is unlikely to compete with the best-sellers.

Serious, competent but lacking charisma, Mr. Starmer is a mirror image of Mr. Johnson, a polarizing politician renowned for phrasemaking and showmanship rather than steadiness or a firm grip on policy.

Yet when Mr. Starmer speaks to Labour members in the English seaside city of Brighton this week, he badly needs some pizazz -- both to raise his profile and to explain the agenda of a party that suffered a crushing election defeat in 2019 under its previous, left-wing leader, Jeremy Corbyn.

''If you put Keir Starmer and Boris Johnson together they would be the ideal politician,'' said Steven Fielding, a professor of political history at Nottingham University. But after a lackluster year, Professor Fielding said, Mr. Starmer ''has got to communicate his sense of purpose and what the point of the Labour Party is under his leadership in post-Covid Britain.''

''It's an existential question he has to ask himself, to answer and then communicate,'' Professor Fielding said.

No one doubts the intelligence, seriousness or competence of Mr. Starmer, a former chief prosecutor who worked his way from a modest start in life to the highest echelons of the legal establishment.

But some think he is not savvy enough politically, while others accuse him of picking internal fights to underscore his opposition to the Corbynite left. Those include a dispute over changes to the voting system for future party leadership contests that would probably have stopped a left-winger from getting the top job again. That plan caused sufficient anger within the party that Mr. Starmer was forced to put forward a watered-down version instead.

Yet the more telling complaint is that he has simply failed to make his presence felt in a way that showcases the party's positions or enhances its standing with the public. Nor, critics say, has he exploited Mr. Johnson's numerous setbacks.

Elected last year following Labour's catastrophic 2019 defeat, Mr. Starmer has spent much of his leadership detoxifying a party whose image was marred by persistent infighting over allegations of anti-Semitism. That culminated in the suspension of Mr. Corbyn, who remains excluded from Labour's parliamentary group.

That focus on interparty turmoil, along with the 80-seat majority that Mr. Johnson's conservatives enjoy, has relegated Labour to the role of an onlooker in Parliament -- so much so that Mr. Johnson brazenly broke a vow and raised taxes this month without fear that Mr. Starmer and his colleagues could do much to take advantage of it.

Perhaps mindful of the need to confront the Conservatives more aggressively, Mr. Starmer stepped up his criticism this weekend, telling the BBC that there had been a ''complete lack of planning'' by the government over the shortage of truck drivers that has Britons anxious about the delivery of fuel and goods.

In terms of election strategy, Labour faces a huge challenge. In 2019, it lost a clutch of parliamentary seats in its former strongholds -- the middle and north of the country -- as ***working-class*** voters warmed to Mr. Johnson, with his pro-Brexit agenda and willingness to wade into culture wars.

That left Mr. Starmer with the unenviable task of winning back those traditional Labour voters behind the so-called ''red wall'' without alienating anti-Brexit supporters in big cities like London, where the party's support is increasingly concentrated.

His bad luck is that the pandemic has dominated the media agenda, keeping the government at center stage and giving it a megaphone to trumpet its leadership role, whether merited or not.

During the early months of the Covid crisis, the prime minister floundered, initially resisting lockdowns then having to reverse course, and Mr. Starmer outperformed Mr. Johnson in their head-to-heads in Parliament. The government's effective vaccine rollout revived the Conservatives' fortunes, but that effect has now faded and Britain faces an uncertain winter, with the effects of the pandemic difficult to predict. Still, Mr. Johnson is polling reasonably well for an accident-prone leader in the middle of his term.

Critics on the left say that Mr. Starmer's camp has opted for platitudes and shied away from distinctive left-of-center policies to avoid offending any electoral group.

''They thought that Starmer is Biden and Johnson is Trump, and that Johnson would self-destruct,'' said James Schneider, a former spokesman for Mr. Corbyn. ''The difference is that Biden is a hugely more appealing figure to the American public -- he has an everyman appeal.''

When Labour lost an election for a vacant parliamentary seat in northern England in May, Mr. Starmer suffered another self-inflicted setback with a botched reshuffle of his top team. He appeared to blame his deputy, Angela Rayner, for the defeat, stripping her of a key position, but he was forced to retreat in the face of a backlash and eventually gave her more responsibilities.

A full-blown leadership crisis was averted when Labour unexpectedly went on to win an election in another northern constituency, Batley and Spen, in July.

But there may be challenges to Mr. Starmer's authority as he prepares to take on Mr. Johnson in a general election that must take place by 2024 but is expected a year earlier. One Labour member on the ascent is Andy Burnham, the mayor of Manchester, who has raised his profile during the pandemic.

Others in the party are still committed to Mr. Corbyn's hard-left agenda and remain angry about Mr. Starmer's push to change the voting system. It also wants Mr. Corbyn reinstated to the parliamentary group.

The worry for more moderate Labour supporters is that they may be seeing a repeat of the leadership of Ed Miliband, who, like Mr. Starmer, came from the ''soft left'' of the Labour Party, but who lost the 2015 general election.

Tom Baldwin, a former spokesman for Mr. Miliband, said that he believed Mr. Starmer could win and that he could well be an effective prime minister. But he was also critical of his lack of a convincing message and his focus on internal battles, which he said ''are not going to help us reconnect ourselves to voters.''

''I would prefer if the Labour Party were having a conversation with the country about the country,'' Mr. Baldwin said.

Mr. Starmer's supporters say voters will become disenchanted with Mr. Johnson in light of his broken promise not to raise taxes, and that the government will fail to deliver on his pledges to bring prosperity to neglected parts of the country.

Once ''normal'' politics resumes after the pandemic, voters will ultimately warm to Mr. Starmer, they argue. Though he prefers to talk about policy rather than personality, Mr. Starmer spoke movingly about his upbringing in a recent interview with Piers Morgan.

Still, his personality is very different from that of Mr. Johnson, and most analysts believe his best tactic is to lean into his strengths, hoping that voters are drawn to a man who exudes stability after years of political turmoil.

It is also critical, political analysts say, that Mr. Starmer give voters a clear reason to support the Labour Party.

''He's got to find a message, he's got to be able to communicate that message and to be able to sell it, and he's not done any of this so far,'' Professor Fielding said. ''Competence isn't enough.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/26/world/europe/keir-starmer.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/26/world/europe/keir-starmer.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Keir Starmer on Saturday at the party's annual conference, in Brighton, on England's south coast. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JUSTIN TALLIS/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** September 27, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Winner but Not Chancellor, Yet: The Race to Replace Merkel***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63PS-7J01-JBG3-63NG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 27, 2021 Monday 18:16 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1276 words

**Byline:** Katrin Bennhold

**Highlight:** Olaf Scholz, of the center-left Social Democrats, narrowly won the night. But now the hard part begins — building a durable governing coalition.

**Body**

Olaf Scholz, of the center-left Social Democrats, narrowly won the night. But now the hard part begins — building a durable governing coalition.

BERLIN — For a moment it felt like he was already chancellor. As Olaf Scholz stood on the stage surrounded by euphoric followers chanting his name and celebrating him as if he were the next leader of Germany, he was the clear winner of the night.

Mr. Scholz had just done the unthinkable — carry his long moribund center-left Social Democrats to victory, however narrow, in [*elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/28/world/europe/germany-election-merkel.html) on Sunday that were the most volatile in a generation.

But if winning wasn’t hard enough, the hardest part may be yet to come.

Mr. Scholz, an affable but disciplined politician, most recently served as the vice chancellor and finance minister in the outgoing government of Chancellor Angela Merkel. Though he represents the party opposing her conservative [*Christian Democratic Union*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/28/world/europe/germany-election-merkel.html), he came out on top by persuading voters that he was not so much an agent of change as one of stability and continuity. In a race without an incumbent he ran as one.

It is a balancing act that may be hard to sustain for a onetime socialist who today is firmly rooted in the center of a fast-changing political landscape.

It’s not that Germans have suddenly shifted left. In fact, three in four Germans did not vote for his party at all, and [*Mr. Scholz campaigned on*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/09/world/europe/olaf-scholz-merkel-germany-election.html)raising the minimum wage, strengthening German industry and fighting climate change — all mainstream positions.

Despite earning the most votes, Mr. Scholz is not yet assured of becoming chancellor. And if he does, he risks being absorbed in wrangling among multiple [*coalition*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/07/world/europe/germany-coalition-election.html) partners, not to speak of rebellious factions within his own party.

On Monday, as his conservative rival continued to insist that he would work to form a government, the momentum seemed to swing behind Mr. Scholz as it became increasingly evident he had the strongest hand to play in coalition talks involving two other parties. “The voters have spoken,” he told reporters confidently.

Still, his will be no easy task.

Mr. Scholz has been a familiar face in German politics for more than two decades and served in several governments. But even now it’s hard to know what kind of a chancellor he would be.

A fiery young socialist in the 1970s, he gradually mellowed into a post-ideological centrist. Today he is to the right of significant parts of his party — not unlike President Biden in the United States, to whom he is sometimes compared. He lost his party’s leadership contest two years ago to two leftists.

His party’s surprise revival in the [*election*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/09/28/world/japan-party-elections) rested heavily on his own personal popularity. But many warn that Mr. Scholz’s appeal does not solve the deeper problems and divisions that have plagued the Social Democrats, known by their German acronym S.P.D.

“None of the claims of staleness or political irrelevance leveled at the S.P.D. over the past few years have gone away,” the newspaper Süddeutsche Zeitung wrote on Monday.

Or as Thomas Kleine-Brockhoff of the German Marshall Fund put it: “Social Democrats aren’t offering a new package, they’re offering a centrist who makes you forget the party behind it.”

Like many of its sister parties elsewhere in Europe, Germany’s Social Democrats have been in crisis for years, losing traditional ***working-class*** voters to the extremes on the left and right and young urban voters to the Greens.

Now Mr. Scholz will not only have to satisfy his own leftist party base, but he must also deal with a wholly new political landscape.

Instead of two dominant parties competing to go into coalition with one partner, four midsize parties are now jockeying for a place in government. For the first time since the 1950s, the next chancellor will have to get at least three different parties behind a governing deal — that’s how Mr. Scholz’s conservative runner-up, Armin Laschet, could theoretically still beat him to the top job.

A new era in politics has officially begun in Germany — and it looks messy. Germany’s political landscape, long a place of sleepy stability where several chancellors stayed on for more than a decade, has fractured into multiple parties that no longer differ all that much in size.

“There is a structural shift going on that I don’t think we have understood yet,” said Mr. Kleine-Brockhoff. “We are confronted with a change in the party system that we didn’t see coming just weeks ago. A multidimensional chess game has opened.”

Mr. Scholz is walking into a fiendishly complicated process where the power to decide who will become the next leader lies almost more with the two smaller parties that will be part of any future administration: the progressive Greens, who at 14.8 percent had the best result in their history; and the pro-business Free Democrats, with 11.5 percent. Together, these two kingmakers are now stronger than either of the two main parties.

In another first, the Free Democrats signaled that they would hold talks with the Greens first before turning to the larger parties.

The Free Democrats have never been shy about their preference to govern with the conservatives. The Greens are a much more natural fit with the Social Democrats, but might see advantages in negotiating with a weaker candidate. On the state level they have co-governed successfully with the Christian Democrats for years.

Meanwhile, Mr. Laschet, whose unpopularity and campaign blunders sent his party crashing nine percentage points to its lowest election result ever, said he would not concede on “moral” grounds, ignoring a growing number of calls from his own camp to accept defeat.

“No one should behave as if they alone can build a government,” Mr. Laschet told reporters Monday. “You become chancellor if you can build a majority.”

It would not be the first time that someone who lost the popular vote became chancellor. In 1969, 1976 and 1980, Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt, both center-left chancellors, formed coalition governments having lost the popular vote. But both got upward of 40 percent of the vote and did not face the complex multiparty negotiations now getting underway in Germany.

Several conservatives urged Mr. Laschet to concede on Monday.

“It was a defeat,” said Volker Bouffier, the governor of the state of Hesse, adding that others were now called upon to form a government.

Ellen Demuth, another conservative lawmaker, warned Mr. Laschet that his refusal to concede was hurting his party further. “You have lost,” Ms. Demuth tweeted. “Please recognize that. Avoid further hurting the C.D.U. and resign.”

The state leader of the conservative youth wing was equally adamant. “We need a true renewal,” said Marcus Mündlein and that, he said, could be successful only if Mr. Laschet “bears the consequences of this loss in trust and steps down.”

An opinion poll released after the election showed that more than half of Germans preferred a coalition led by Mr. Scholz, compared to a third who said they wanted Mr. Laschet at the helm. When asked who they preferred as chancellor, 62 percent opted for Mr. Scholz, compared to 16 percent for Mr. Laschet.

Some argued that a Scholz-led government would present his party with an opportunity to revive its declining fortunes.

“It’s a momentous moment for German social democracy which was on the verge of eternal decline,” Mr. Kleine-Brockhoff said. “Mr. Scholz will have a very powerful position because he alone is the reason his party won.”

PHOTO: Olaf Scholz, head of the Social Democrats, served as Angela Merkel’s vice chancellor and finance minister. He ran a campaign positioning himself as an agent of stability and continuity. (PHOTOGRAPH BY WOLFGANG RATTAY/REUTERS) (A9)

**Load-Date:** October 7, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Inflammatory Portuguese TV Star Tries Her Hand at Politics***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63PN-P971-DXY4-X2WD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 27, 2021 Monday

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 7

**Length:** 1326 words

**Byline:** By Nicholas Casey

**Body**

A mayoral bid by a TV commentator known for her inflammatory messaging on race raises a larger question: How should Portugal address its colonial legacy?

AMADORA, Portugal -- She is a former TV commentator whose penchant for provocation has won her fame, or at least notoriety, in Portugal: for instance, by describing calls for racial justice traitorous, and by referring to Black Portuguese by an old-fashioned term that translates to something like ''Negro.''

Now the former commentator, Suzana Garcia, is running for mayor of Amadora, a city adjacent to Lisbon with one of the largest Black populations in Portugal.

The mayoral election in Amadora, set this year for Sunday alongside hundreds of other local races, is usually a sleepy affair, watched by few outside this ***working-class*** city of 185,000 that is home to many immigrants from former Portuguese colonies like Cape Verde, Angola and Mozambique.

But Ms. Garcia's high profile and her combative persona mean she has tapped into a question far larger than who should be mayor: Namely, how a former colonial power like Portugal should deal with today's debates about racial justice.

The country, which had African colonies until the 1970s, is home to sizable communities of African immigrants and second-generation Black Portuguese, many of whom say today that they face systemic racism and attacks by the police.

''Yes, we have racist countries in the European Union, but my country is not a racist country,'' Ms. Garcia said in an interview. She said those who disagreed were ''opportunist people that have never known what it is to work.''

The Amadora campaign is also gaining attention for another reason: Ms. Garcia does not claim allegiance to the far right, long known in Europe for stoking racial tensions. She is running with the Social Democratic Party, the country's moderate conservative party known as the P.S.D.

For years, a wave of populism roiling other European nations seemed to have skipped Portugal. Two establishment parties -- the conservative P.S.D. and the more liberal Socialist Party -- controlled politics, trading power every few election cycles, much as the Republicans and Democrats do in the United States.

But that changed with the arrival of a right-wing party called Chega, whose leader split from the P.S.D. in 2018 amid disputes over how far he could go with his loaded language against Portugal's Roma population.

The P.S.D. has lost votes to Chega ever since, and analysts say that might be partly why the party is so interested in Ms. Garcia. In many ways, her campaign seems less about whether she wins -- the P.S.D. has not run Amadora in years -- but more about changing the party's image to cater more to the political extreme.

''It's a sign they're trying to engage with the ideology of the far right,'' said Marina Costa Lobo, a political scientist at the University of Lisbon. ''By selecting this woman as a candidate for Amadora, which is ethnically diverse, they are validating a certain discourse.''

For her part, Ms. Garcia says she is often misunderstood. In an interview, she spoke of growing up in Mozambique (where her father was based as a geologist), and arriving in Portugal at age 12, an experience she said gave her insight into the challenge of being an immigrant from Africa. Though white, she claims some Black ancestry (from one grandmother), noting that many of her relatives are darker than she is.

In her television appearances, though, Ms. Garcia, 45, has a different tone. In 2016, she became a commentator on ''SOS 24,'' a television show focusing on crime news, and soon became known for her provocative language and heated debate style, which often involved yelling down those who disagreed with her in the studio. Hate crimes were one of her most impassioned topics.

In 2019, Luis Giovani dos Santos Rodrigues, a 21-year-old student from Cape Verde, was heading home from a party when a group of men armed with belts surrounded him and his friends. They beat Mr. dos Santos, who died in a hospital days later.

Ms. Garcia soon stepped into an ensuing debate over whether the attack should be treated as a hate crime.

''When a white was killed by the Blacks, we didn't talk about it being a racist incident,'' she said on her show early last year. ''Nor did we say that immigrants came here to do this and do that. We didn't say anything. So we don't have to say anything now.''

Throughout that broadcast, she referred to Black Portuguese using a once common term to refer to Africans during Portugal's colonial era, but which today it is widely considered offensive.

Despite the backlash from activists, Ms. Garcia became even more outspoken. She dug into her focus on violent crimes on her show, despite government statistics indicating that crime had fallen for years. When activists accused the police of violence against Black immigrants, Ms. Garcia sided with law enforcement.

When Mamadou Ba, an activist and a Senegalese immigrant, challenged her ideas, saying one root of Portugal's problems was its systemic racism, Ms. Garcia called him a ''parasite.''

''His existence is dangerous to all Portuguese,'' she said.

In 2020, after management changes at the network she was at, Ms. Garcia left, saying she wanted to spend more time with her family.

As the elections neared, she said, she was approached by several political groups, mostly small right-wing parties which said they were interested in her views. The Social Democrats also approached, but Ms. Garcia said she was concerned at first that she might not fit into an establishment political party, saying that it was necessary to ''speak my mind freely.''

But in the end, Ms. Garcia said, she decided to take up their offer to run as their candidate for Amadora mayor. She said she hoped to add a populist element to the political equation, saying establishment politicians ''seem to be talking about a reality that we, the people, don't know.''

Carla Tavares, Amadora's current mayor, who is seeking re-election with the Socialist Party, took issue with this idea, observing that Ms. Garcia's stances instead seemed intended to offend a large portion of the city.

Ms. Tavares also said she was taken aback that the Social Democratic Party had agreed to align with someone who took such pleasure in provocation. She pointed to a huge election billboard that Ms. Garcia had erected in front of City Hall.

''I was never confronted with such inflammatory rhetoric,'' Ms. Tavares said.

Flávio Almada, a rapper and community organizer in Cova da Moura, the Black neighborhood that Ms. Garcia often spotlighted on her show, said that even though Ms. Garcia was also born in Africa, she would never know the reality that he did as a Black immigrant from Cape Verde.

In 2015, when Mr. Almada went looking for a friend who had been arrested, the Portuguese police beat him and called him numerous slurs. The attack made headlines, and eight officers were convicted in the episode.

Among Ms. Garcia's proposals is an expansion of the police force that assaulted him in Amadora.

''It's only to get votes from whoever is afraid,'' Mr. Almada said, adding that he believed Ms. Garcia was using the election to raise her profile among right-wing voters nationally regardless of whether she wins.

And there are hints that she may already be looking beyond Amadora. Recently, Ms. Garcia erected campaign billboards in Lisbon in front of the Parliament building. Though the P.S.D. had another candidate running for mayor in the capital, many took it as a signal that she wanted to be seen as a national player.

Ms. Garcia says she simply does what she pleases, even if it bothers the establishment.

''When you have an animal like me, that you cannot put in place, it's very antagonizing for them,'' she said. ''But I don't really care. I just want to work.''

Daniela Ferreira Pinto contributed reporting.Daniela Ferreira Pinto contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/26/world/europe/portugal-election-suzana-garcia.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/26/world/europe/portugal-election-suzana-garcia.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Suzana Garcia campaigning. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANA BRIGIDA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 27, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Known for Feuding With Immigrants, a TV Star Wants to Run a Town Many Call Home***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63PG-KGV1-JBG3-61KF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 26, 2021 Sunday 00:55 EST

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**Byline:** Nicholas Casey

**Highlight:** A mayoral bid by a TV commentator known for her inflammatory messaging on race raises a larger question: How should Portugal address its colonial legacy?

**Body**

A mayoral bid by a TV commentator known for her inflammatory messaging on race raises a larger question: How should Portugal address its colonial legacy?

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But Ms. Garcia’s high profile and her combative persona mean she has tapped into a question far larger than who should be mayor: Namely, how a former colonial power like Portugal should deal with today’s debates about racial justice.

The country, which had African colonies until the 1970s, is home to sizable communities of African immigrants and second-generation Black Portuguese, many of whom say today that they face systemic racism and attacks by the police.

“Yes, we have racist countries in the European Union, but my country is not a racist country,” Ms. Garcia said in an interview. She said those who disagreed were “opportunist people that have never known what it is to work.”

The Amadora campaign is also gaining attention for another reason: Ms. Garcia does not claim allegiance to the far right, long known in Europe for stoking racial tensions. She is running with the Social Democratic Party, the country’s moderate conservative party known as the P.S.D.

For years, a wave of populism roiling other European nations seemed to have skipped Portugal. Two establishment parties — the conservative P.S.D. and the more liberal Socialist Party — controlled politics, trading power every few election cycles, much as the Republicans and Democrats do in the United States.

But that changed with the arrival of a right-wing party called Chega, whose leader split from the P.S.D. in 2018 amid disputes over how far he could go with his loaded language against Portugal’s Roma population.

The P.S.D. has lost votes to Chega ever since, and analysts say that might be partly why the party is so interested in Ms. Garcia. In many ways, her campaign seems less about whether she wins — the P.S.D. has not run Amadora in years — but more about changing the party’s image to cater more to the political extreme.

“It’s a sign they’re trying to engage with the ideology of the far right,” said Marina Costa Lobo, a political scientist at the University of Lisbon. “By selecting this woman as a candidate for Amadora, which is ethnically diverse, they are validating a certain discourse.”

For her part, Ms. Garcia says she is often misunderstood. In an interview, she spoke of growing up in Mozambique (where her father was based as a geologist), and arriving in Portugal at age 12, an experience she said gave her insight into the challenge of being an immigrant from Africa. Though white, she claims some Black ancestry (from one grandmother), noting that many of her relatives are darker than she is.

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But in the end, Ms. Garcia said, she decided to take up their offer to run as their candidate for Amadora mayor. She said she hoped to add a populist element to the political equation, saying establishment politicians “seem to be talking about a reality that we, the people, don’t know.”

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In 2015, when Mr. Almada went looking for a friend who had been arrested, the Portuguese police beat him and called him numerous slurs. The attack made headlines, and eight officers were convicted in the episode.

Among Ms. Garcia’s proposals is an expansion of the police force that assaulted him in Amadora.

“It’s only to get votes from whoever is afraid,” Mr. Almada said, adding that he believed Ms. Garcia was using the election to raise her profile among right-wing voters nationally regardless of whether she wins.

And there are hints that she may already be looking beyond Amadora. Recently, Ms. Garcia erected campaign billboards in Lisbon in front of the Parliament building. Though the P.S.D. had another candidate running for mayor in the capital, many took it as a signal that she wanted to be seen as a national player.

Ms. Garcia says she simply does what she pleases, even if it bothers the establishment.

“When you have an animal like me, that you cannot put in place, it’s very antagonizing for them,” she said. “But I don’t really care. I just want to work.”

Daniela Ferreira Pinto contributed reporting.

Daniela Ferreira Pinto contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Suzana Garcia campaigning. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANA BRIGIDA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***U.S. Pins Its Hopes For the World Cup On a Teenage No. 9***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:642P-GFD1-JBG3-6434-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1320 words

**Byline:** By Andrew Keh

**Body**

CINCINNATI -- Ricardo Pepi is young. He is unproven, unseasoned and unfinished. He could use a few more lines on his résumé and possibly a couple of more pounds on his lanky frame.

But because it has become equally evident in the early days of his career that Pepi possesses in abundant quantity the intangible, invaluable and often ephemeral magic needed to do the one thing valued above all else in soccer -- because, in other words, he scores goals -- none of the aforementioned stuff particularly matters.

Pepi, 18, may or may not become the striker of the future for the United States men's soccer team. Many have tried to make the position -- the No. 9, in soccer parlance -- their own, and most have failed. But questions about Pepi's long-term viability, his ceiling as a player, can wait. At the moment, there is a World Cup to qualify for.

And there is no question that Pepi is the American striker of right now.

''Pressure is nothing to him -- I think he relishes it, more so than his age should allow,'' said Eric Quill, who coached Pepi at North Texas S.C. in 2019 and 2020. ''No. 9s, when they're in great form, it's like, 'Look out.' And I think he's as confident as they come right now.''

Ready or not, Pepi is being asked to carry a heavy responsibility on his teenage shoulders. After making his debut with the United States senior national team just two months ago, he was the only pure striker that Gregg Berhalter, the team's coach, summoned for the team's two World Cup qualifiers this month. The first of these was a marquee match on Friday night against Mexico in Cincinnati, where the U.S. won, 2-0.

The show of faith, if risky, made sense: Pepi, who plays professionally for F.C. Dallas in Major League Soccer, had collected three goals and two assists in his first four appearances with the United States. He has also been one of the most consistent bright spots in the team's somewhat shaky start to the qualifying tournament.

Pepi is the youngest player on a notably young team. (''Lose Yourself'' by Eminem was the top song in the country when he was born in January 2003, and Tom Brady had only one Super Bowl ring back then.) The youth of the American squad has been at once a point of pride (when things go well) and an excuse (when things don't go as well). But the team's disastrous failure to qualify for the 2018 World Cup has helped coaches justify turning over a new leaf -- track records be damned.

Pepi embodies that desire to start fresh more than anyone. He is all potential, a blank slate personified.

Yet his emergence could not be more timely. In recent years, the United States' program has seen promising players sprout up all over the field. (American attacking midfielders, for instance, seem to be multiplying like jack rabbits.) But the center forward position has long been something of a barren patch.

Brian McBride, who played from 1993 to 2006, remains the gold standard for American strikers, according to Herculez Gomez, a former national team striker. Jozy Altidore came closest to filling McBride's shoes, Gomez said. Countless others have been hyped, but few have followed through.

''We could start spouting off a lot names,'' Gomez, now an analyst for ESPN, said about the revolving door of strikers. ''A lot of players have been put in the role, but not a lot of guys have taken the reins.''

He added with a laugh: ''I was one of them.''

Gomez said Pepi was raw, but undoubtedly promising, showing a sharp trajectory of improvement in the last year alone.

''I think his mentality is the strongest trait he has,'' Gomez said. ''He's just so hungry. He's got this arrogance about him. Borderline cocky. A swagger to him.''

That may be the case in the penalty area, but in most other circumstances Pepi is known as an introvert. In conversations with the news media, for example, he has a tendency to meander cautiously through the early beats of a response before settling on phrasing he has used before. (The problem with playing well, for some athletes, is that people want to speak with you.)

This type of shyness might be concerning for a coach, were it not so easily, and so ferociously, shed on the field.

''In the dressing room he was always kind of in the corner by himself,'' said Francisco Molina, the former scouting director for F.C. Dallas, who met Pepi when he was playing in the team's youth system. ''On the field, he was a loud, screaming, rebellious kid.''

The first thing Molina noticed about Pepi was his spindly frame. (''Like a baby deer, he said.'') The second was his steady stream of goals: He could score them with his right foot or his left, with his head, with his knees and shoulders and shins. He can find almost any way to nudge the ball into the net.

''He has that instinct,'' Molina said. ''He's a pure 9.''

These skills have drawn interest from the top clubs in Europe. Among those tracking Pepi's development, there seems to be agreement that his next step should be a careful, conscientious one -- a spot on a good team in a medium-profile league, perhaps, or one on a medium-profile team in a top league.

''You have to go somewhere where you play right away,'' his U.S. teammate Chris Richards, who made a similar move to Europe from F.C. Dallas at age 18, said in an interview with the website Transfermarkt last week. ''Sometimes you get caught up in the big names, but it might not be the perfect situation.''

There appears to be consensus, too, on the one area where he could improve the most: playing with his back to the goal. In those situations, Pepi prefers laying the ball off quickly to a teammate to get himself moving again. He does not yet look as comfortable holding the ball and withstanding a physical challenge from a defender, the kind of pause that top strikers must master in order to give their teammates time to build an attack around them.

For Pepi, the key may be as simple as putting on some muscle.

''At the higher levels, the center backs, most of them are athletic beasts,'' said Quill, Pepi's former youth coach. ''He's got a slim frame. He's going to have to do a lot of work in the gym.''

Molina concurred. ''His body hasn't caught up to his brain yet,'' he said.

Pepi's soccer brain and body will continue to develop, but his heart was already put to the test this past summer when he was forced to choose between representing the United States, where he was born, or Mexico, the home of his parents.

Pepi grew up in San Elizario, Texas, a ***working-class*** town just outside El Paso. He spoke Spanish at home, followed Club América of the Mexican league, rooted for Mexico's national team and idolized its stars. Moving seamlessly between cultures was natural for him, the way it can be for countless children of immigrants around the world.

In the end, Pepi chose the United States because of the comfort he had developed with the federation, and because of the opportunities the team offered to help him to thrive.

''Follow your own path,'' Pepi said when asked what advice he might give to another Mexican American player facing the same choice. ''Make your decision with your heart.''

Michael Orozco, a fellow Mexican American who played 29 games for the U.S. national team, was happy with Pepi's choice. But he warned that Pepi could expect criticism, even vitriol, from Mexican fans moving forward, perhaps as soon as Friday night.

In 2012, Orozco scored for the United States in a friendly at Azteca Stadium in Mexico City, helping to lead the Americans to their first-ever win on Mexican soil. Orozco, who was playing in the Mexican league at the time and now plays for the U.S.L.'s Orange County S.C., said he was criticized by his club teammates for scoring and, worse, for celebrating. Orozco said he had no regrets, and he hoped Pepi wouldn't have any either.

''He's starting to prove himself,'' he said. ''Now, he has to live up to the potential.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/12/sports/soccer/usa-mexico-world-cup-pepi.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/12/sports/soccer/usa-mexico-world-cup-pepi.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: U.S. Pins Its Hopes For the World Cup On a Teenage No. 9 (PHOTOGRAPH BY BIENVENIDO VELASCO/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

**Load-Date:** November 13, 2021

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[***After Autocrat Falls, Kazakhs Hunger for Change***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64MP-9801-JBG3-613F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1630 words

**Byline:** By Valerie Hopkins

**Body**

Nursultan Nazarbayev, the autocratic former president, all but vanished after violent protests this month. But with his legacy so pervasive, will anything change?

NUR-SULTAN, Kazakhstan -- For three decades, Nursultan Nazarbayev was seemingly everywhere in Kazakhstan, the country he ruled with an autocrat's clenched fist. The capital's airport was named after him, as were the city's best university, a group of elite high schools throughout the country, well-endowed foundations and wide boulevards.

Mr. Nazarbayev designed a futuristic white steel tower in the center of the city, with a gold orb on top. Inside, visitors can place their hands in a giant gold relief of Mr. Nazarbayev's own hand, his fingers pointing out the plate-glass windows to his presidential palace in the distance. He stepped down as president in 2019 after 28 years, but retained power and influence as the official ''Leader of the Nation.'' His rubber-stamp Parliament renamed the capital city in his honor.

It was an open secret that he was the one still calling the shots.

Now, the man who was everywhere, and who controlled everything, has all but vanished after violent protests this month that spread like wildfire and marked the country's greatest political upheaval since it became independent after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Political power now rests with Mr. Nazarbayev's handpicked successor, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, who stripped his longtime boss and mentor of his title and his last remaining footholds of power. Except for making a brief video statement, the former leader has receded, the speed of his fall from power almost as stunning as the length of his reign.

In the days after the protests, Kazakhstan was closed to many outsiders. A visit to Nur-Sultan soon after it reopened revealed that life in the bureaucratic city, populated by many civil servants, had mostly returned to normal. On a recent weekend, shoppers braving the risks of the coronavirus perused the Khan Shatyr mall, designed by the British architect Norman Foster in the shape of a large tent, with visitors searching for post-holiday sales.

The calm stood in contrast to the nation's largest city, Almaty, where violence and looting and brutal police crackdowns have traumatized residents, some of whom are still searching for relatives who disappeared. Almaty's monumental City Hall was vandalized during the unrest and burned for three days, leaving a gutted, blackened shell.

Kazakhstan, a former Soviet republic with a population of 19 million, faces an uncertain future. Mr. Nazarbayev had maintained a fragile independence from Vladimir V. Putin's Russia, but Mr. Tokayev was forced to call for Russian-led military support to help quell the violence this month, raising the question of whether he is beholden to the Russian leader for helping to assure his political survival. As Mr. Putin squares off against the West in a standoff over Ukraine, the Russian president has made clear his intention to maintain influence over neighboring countries.

Internally, Mr. Tokayev has promised overhauls to address the country's ballooning inequality -- the reason that spawned the protests in the first place.

Leysan Zoripova, 50, who was visiting her daughter in Nur-Sultan, said, ''We are of course waiting for better days, when products are available and essential things like groceries were not so expensive.''

''But,'' she added, ''all this violence wasn't necessary.''

With Mr. Nazarbayev's legacy so pervasive, the question is whether anything will truly change in a country rich in resources, but where autocratic rule had allowed Mr. Nazarbayev's family and friends to reap great wealth and keep it concentrated in the hands of a few.

''The formal and informal construction of the regime remains the same,'' said Dimash Alzhanov, one of the founding members of Wake Up, Kazakhstan, an opposition movement whose activists have been regularly harassed and detained. ''The relations between elites -- the way they construct patron-client relations -- remains the same.''

Mr. Nazarbayev grew up in a rural town near Almaty, the former capital. He was a steelworker before joining the Communist Party, rising through the ranks to regional party secretary. In 1984, he became prime minister of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Nazarbayev became the first president of Kazakhstan in 1990, and the next year, just weeks before the collapse of Soviet Union, Kazakhstan declared its independence. It was the only newly independent former Soviet state where its titular people -- Kazakhs -- were not the ethnic majority. Forty percent of the population were ethnic Russian, a number that has since dropped to 19 percent.

At the time, President Boris N. Yeltsin of Russia was speaking openly about wanting to expand his country's borders to include Abkhazia, a region of Georgia that Russia eventually invaded in 2008; and Crimea, the Ukrainian peninsula that Russia annexed in 2014. He also coveted Donbas, the eastern part of Ukraine where Russian-backed separatists have been fighting since the annexation.

Northern Kazakhstan was the fourth region in Mr. Yeltsin's sights, but Russian forces never showed up uninvited, and today it is the only region of the four that is not contested.

In part, that's because even his toughest critics acknowledge that Mr. Nazarbayev handled thorny relations with Moscow in a savvy manner. When he moved the capital from Almaty to a windy, grassland site in the north (the new capital was previously called Astana), it was not a pure vanity project; he was effectively planting a flag.

He championed a ''multivector'' foreign policy, balancing between his powerful neighbors Russia and China while also courting U.S. investment, especially in the oil-rich west. His mantra for development was, ''Economics first, politics later.''

But over 28 years, Mr. Nazarbayev's reign came to look more like kleptocracy. His family enjoyed vast riches, with influence in the banking and extraction industries and real estate in Switzerland, London and New York.

A recent report by the think tank Chatham House listed 34 properties bought by members of the country's ruling elite from 1998 to 2020 at a total cost of about $733 million. Most of the purchases were made by members of the Nazarbayev family or people close to them, according to John Heathershaw, one of the report's authors.

Mr. Nazarbayev's middle daughter, Dinara, and her husband, Timur Kulibayev, were each worth $3 billion before the recent unrest in Kazakhstan, according to Forbes, and they own the country's biggest bank. His eldest daughter, Dariga Nazarbayeva, an amateur opera singer and politician, and her son own real estate in London worth almost $200 million. Their properties are said to include the house at 221B Baker Street that is the address of the fictional detective Sherlock Holmes.

Mr. Nazarbayev's youngest daughter, Aliya, had a monopoly on the recycling industry through a private company called Operator ROP, which has taken in about $1.6 billion since 2016, according to remarks by Serikkali Brekeshev, a Kazakh minister, in a government meeting this month.

The cronyism and corruption chafed at ***working-class*** citizens who grew weary of government-connected businesspeople funneling money to themselves.

Posing with her teenage daughter for a photograph with the presidential palace in the background, Gulya Chumkent, 48, said that Mr. Nazarbayev had taken advantage of his position.

''Of course it wasn't right that he enriched himself,'' she said. ''But it wasn't in our power to do anything about it.''

Mr. Tokayev acknowledged the vast wealth accumulated by his predecessor's family for the first time in a speech to Parliament on Jan. 11.

''Thanks to the first president, Elbasy,'' he said, using the Kazakh term for Leader of the Nation, ''a group of very profitable companies emerged in the country, as well as a group of people whose wealth is significant even by international standards.''

His criticism was striking in a country where denouncing the government can sometimes be cause for arrest. A 2010 law makes it impossible to sue Mr. Nazarbayev or his family members, and it makes all of his and his family's banking documents secret.

Mr. Tokayev also demanded that local governments cancel contracts with Operator ROP, which many took as a sign of the beginning of a process to unravel Mr. Nazarbayev's grip on profit-making centers.

Mr. Nazarbayev's nephew, Samat Abish, was dismissed as deputy of the powerful security agency. The sovereign wealth fund said that two Nazarbayev in-laws had left top posts at national energy companies. And Mr. Kulibayev, the son-in-law, resigned as head of Kazakhstan's leading business lobby, though he retained positions in an influential energy group and on the board of Russia's Gazprom.

On Tuesday, Mr. Tokayev fired the head of the Central Election Commission, whose daughter is married to one of Ms. Nazarbayeva's sons.

Many Kazakhs are waiting to see how Mr. Tokayev's approach will differ from that of his predecessor.

Erzhan Kazykhan, an adviser to Mr. Tokayev, said that his country was committed to democratic reforms. Still, he demurred when asked if the post-Nazarbayev period would herald a new era of genuine political competition.

''You cannot build a Jeffersonian democracy overnight,'' he said in an interview.

Regardless of who Mr. Tokayev brings into his inner circle, Mr. Nazarbayev's effective removal from control has emboldened people, said Zhanbolat Mamai, an opposition politician. He cited what he said was a crucial difference between the two men.

''For 30 years, people were afraid of Mr. Nazarbayev,'' Mr. Mamai said. ''No one is afraid of Mr. Tokayev.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/25/world/europe/kazakhstan-nursultan-nazarbayev.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/25/world/europe/kazakhstan-nursultan-nazarbayev.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, visitors placing their hands in a giant gold relief of a hand of former President Nursultan Nazarbayev, in Nur-Sultan, the Kazakh capital renamed to honor him. Left, a gate in Almaty, Kazakhstan's largest city, bears Mr. Nazarbayev's image.

Children near a statue of Mr. Nazarbayev in Nur-Sultan. His presence seems to be everywhere. Mr. Nazarbayev ruled Kazakhstan for about three decades, but now, stripped of his power, he has receded into the background. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SERGEY PONOMAREV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 27, 2022

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[***Staunch Critic of the N.Y.P.D. Grapples With Deaths of 2 Officers***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64MG-NCH1-JBG3-6018-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1716 words

**Byline:** Katie Glueck

**Highlight:** Harlem Councilwoman Kristin Richardson Jordan, who has equated the policing system to slavery, is now considering how to deliver her message in a district mourning for two officers.

**Body**

Harlem Councilwoman Kristin Richardson Jordan, who has equated the policing system to slavery, is now considering how to deliver her message in a district mourning for two officers.

On one side of Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard in Harlem, dozens of candles and bouquets of flowers were clustered outside the 32nd Precinct station house after a shooting that would leave two officers dead.

Across the boulevard was the apartment building where the officers were struck by gunfire as they responded to a report of a domestic incident.

And in between, the neighborhood’s new city councilwoman sat in a bare-bones office, trying to reconcile the need to comfort a grieving community with her firm belief that police departments should ultimately be abolished.

Councilwoman Kristin Richardson Jordan, 35, has equated the policing system with slavery, and emphasized her deep compassion for not only the fallen officers but also for the man who the police said killed them — messaging that is vastly out-of-step with many of her fellow Democrats.

Her political style, as a revolutionary activist and poet, is distinctive.

But in the context of left-wing politics, her overarching argument around policing — that New York City should invest far more in social services while cutting spending on law enforcement — is not.

“The greatest way to honor the loss of life on all sides, loss of life due to gun violence,” Ms. Jordan, the granddaughter of a police officer, said in an interview on Monday, “would be to invest in our communities.”

Discussions around policing, justice and how best to ensure public safety have divided Democrats across the country and shaped elections from [*Long Island*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/republican-election-results-new-york.html) to [*San Francisco*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/us/san-francisco-recall-chesa-boudin.html). But this week, on that sliver of 135th Street in Harlem, those debates were especially raw.

“Right here,” said Ms. Jordan, a democratic socialist who lives a few minutes from where the shooting occurred. “We’re at the center.”

Against the backdrop of the [*Harlem shooting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/22/nyregion/nypd-officers-shot-harlem.html), Mayor Eric Adams, who has promised to battle crime in a just fashion, [*released an expansive public safety plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/24/nyregion/adams-crime-nypd-shooting.html) on Monday. The response — early [*praise from the White House*](https://twitter.com/NYCMayor/status/1486045114384502786?s=20) but plenty of pushback at home — freshly illustrated Democratic tensions around those searing issues.

The proposal called for significant policing efforts to combat gun violence, including the restoration of an anti-gun police unit. Mr. Adams [*also urged*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/24/nyregion/adams-crime-nypd-shooting.html) state lawmakers to make changes to New York’s bail law and to a law that altered how the state handles teenage defendants.

The plan for revamping anti-crime units, which [*were disbanded*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/15/nyregion/nypd-plainclothes-cops.html) in 2020, has stoked particular controversy, with even some of Mr. Adams’s typical ideological allies expressing reservations. But the most vociferous criticism has come from supporters of criminal justice reform who are to his left.

“I am concerned about some of the elements that are in the mayor’s plan for safety, that they’re rolling back the clock on some things that have been some really meaningful reforms,” Ms. Jordan said.

At another point, she warned that the shooting could be used “as an excuse to over-police and continue oppression in the community.”

The murder rate and other measures of violent crime in New York City [*remain far below*](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/nypd/downloads/pdf/crime_statistics/cs-en-us-city.pdf) the rates of the early 1990s, but gun violence in particular has spiked during the pandemic, and the U.S. murder rate has [*gone up significantly.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/18/briefing/crime-surge-homicides-us.html) Mr. Adams’s speech crystallized a national debate around how to respond and followed a spate of [*high-profile*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/17/nyregion/eric-adams-crime-subway-shoving.html) [*crimes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/19/nyregion/bronx-baby-shot.html) that has left many New Yorkers shaken and that culminated in the shooting deaths of the two officers.

Officer [*Jason Rivera*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/22/nyregion/nypd-officers-shot-harlem.html), 22, was killed while responding to the 911 call on Friday. The death of Officer [*Wilbert Mora*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/25/nyregion/wilbert-mora-dead-nypd-shooting.html), 27, was announced on Tuesday, a day after [*Lashawn McNeil*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/24/nyregion/lashawn-mcneil-dead-harlem-officers.html), the man who the New York City police said was the gunman, also died from injuries.

On Friday night, Ms. Jordan was hosting a planning meeting, and attending a neighborhood gathering of Black socialists at her office, when she learned of the shooting. She headed to Harlem Hospital, joining other elected officials and Mr. Adams, who held a news conference.

But as many of her colleagues expressed their pain on social media, a post from Ms. Jordan’s Twitter account that evening [*focused*](https://twitter.com/Kristin4Harlem/status/1484697979097341955?s=20) on community gardens.

It was a preplanned message, she later said, posted “mistakenly” by a staff member — but it touched a nerve online.

She did not comment on the shooting directly for several more hours, because of directions given by officials at the hospital, she said. (Assemblywoman Inez Dickens broadly confirmed those instructions, though others in attendance quickly issued statements of sorrow.)

“I stand with the families of the fallen,” Ms. Jordan [*later wrote*](https://twitter.com/Kristin4Harlem/status/1484750754191749125?s=20). “The death of police officers is not what abolition is. Abolition is an end to violence altogether.”

In the days since, she said, she prayed with constituents for the recovery of Officer Mora. She attended vigils. She plans to attend the officers’ funerals.

She also indicated that there was a parallel between the loss of the officers’ lives and the death of Lashawn McNeil. “I see every single human life as equivalent,” she said on Monday.

After Officer Mora died from his injuries, Ms. Jordan went a step further.

“My deepest condolences to the families of Officer Rivera, Officer Mora and Lashawn McNeil,” [*she wrote*](https://twitter.com/Kristin4Harlem/status/1486076703864668171?s=20) on Twitter on Tuesday. “Lives lost due to broken public safety &amp; mental health systems that spare nobody.”

Debates around policing and safety played a defining role in the New York City mayoral primary. Many of the [***working-class*** *voters of color*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/26/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor.html) who propelled Mr. Adams to victory — reflecting, in some ways, President Biden’s [*base*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/19/us/politics/joe-biden-working-class.html) — embraced his message of both supporting a powerful role for law enforcement and demanding policing reforms. Those discussions took on fresh urgency again this week in Ms. Jordan’s district.

“They want mutual respect between the police and the community,” Ms. Dickens, who represents an overlapping district, said. “But they want the police.”

At the memorial outside the police station in Harlem, one sign read, “Mayor Adams, N.Y.P.D. need a raise.” Lenny Gardner, 67, a Democrat who works at a hospital, seemed sympathetic to that argument as he walked by.

“They have a hard job, and they’re underpaid and sometimes not given credit for what they do,” said Mr. Gardner, who said he had lived in the area for 33 years and had relied on the police himself. “I’m not with the abolishing police. That’s the only way that we can keep order.”

Ms. Jordan, too, has deep roots in the area, [*describing herself*](https://council.nyc.gov/kristin-richardson-jordan/) as a third-generation Harlemite. She attended the Calhoun School, a progressive private school on the Upper West Side, and Brown University and built a career around activism — she was involved in the Black Lives Matter and Occupy Wall Street movements and founded a “cop watch” team, she has said. And she spent time writing and in publishing, including releasing a book that grapples with her personal experiences with domestic violence.

She ran for City Council last year, [*initially inspired*](https://www.thenation.com/article/politics/kristin-richardson-jordan-city-council/), she told The Nation, by the left-wing members of the “Squad” in Congress. Ms. Jordan identifies as a Black socialist, though groups like the Democratic Socialists of America and the left-wing Working Families Party made no endorsement in her primary.

Other prominent left-wing organizations, including the political group associated with Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, [*did offer support*](https://kristinforharlem.com/endorsements/), though to date Ms. Jordan is not considered a prominent member of the city’s left wing — she is largely unknown even to like-minded officials.

In the ranked-choice primary election, she ultimately prevailed over the incumbent by around 100 votes.

Asked to assess her performance so far in office, Keith L.T. Wright, the chairman of the Manhattan Democratic Party, replied, “I’ve never had a conversation with her, and I don’t know what she does.”

(Ms. Jordan said she welcomed conversations and noted her relationship with the Manhattan Young Democrats. “The future of the Democratic Party is progressive and bold,” she said.)

Patrick J. Lynch, the head of the Police Benevolent Association — a union considered toxic by many Democrats for, among other things, [*endorsing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/14/nyregion/ny-police-unions-racial-disparity-trump.html) Donald J. Trump in 2020 — also said that Ms. Jordan “is new to the office and we have had no interactions with her.”

“We are aware of her public statements about police officers and public safety,” he said. “They don’t reflect what police officers hear from her constituents.”

Ms. Jordan acknowledges “hit-and-miss” dynamics with the police, also saying that she has been both “falsely arrested” and has relied on law enforcement herself when confronting domestic violence.

Her style is more radical than that of many of her colleagues, but the broadest contours of her approach — to see social services as vital components of public safety — are shared widely among many New York Democrats, including, to some degree, Mr. Adams.

“Deep investments in the communities that have for so long been overlooked and left out, underfunded, disinvested in — that is what will keep our communities safe,” said Councilwoman Crystal Hudson of Brooklyn.

Since the shooting, Ms. Jordan contacted the families of both the officers and of Mr. McNeil, though as of Tuesday she had not connected with them.

She has also maintained other aspects of her schedule, attending a balloon-festooned inauguration celebration on Saturday. There, she held a moment of silence to mark the shooting. Then, she recalled, she thanked her team and sought to brace them for the task ahead.

“It’s been a really tough moment to navigate,” she said. “Because people are searching for a villain.”

Susan C. Beachy contributed research.

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PHOTOS: Mayor Eric Adams speaking to members of the media last week at Harlem Hospital after two officers were shot nearby. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEENAH MOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); A vigil for the fallen officers in Harlem. Mr. Adams released his public safety plan Monday, to criticism from some on the left. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID DEE DELGADO/GETTY IMAGES); Councilwoman Kristin Richardson Jordan, who represents the district where the officers were killed, calls for eliminating the police. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DESIREE RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 27, 2022

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[***Critic of N.Y.P.D. Grapples With Deaths of 2 Officers***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64MP-9801-JBG3-6158-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 27, 2022 Thursday

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 20

**Length:** 1652 words

**Byline:** By Katie Glueck

**Body**

Harlem Councilwoman Kristin Richardson Jordan, who has equated the policing system to slavery, is now considering how to deliver her message in a district mourning for two officers.

On one side of Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard in Harlem, dozens of candles and bouquets of flowers were clustered outside the 32nd Precinct station house after a shooting that would leave two officers dead.

Across the boulevard was the apartment building where the officers were struck by gunfire as they responded to a report of a domestic incident.

And in between, the neighborhood's new city councilwoman sat in a bare-bones office, trying to reconcile the need to comfort a grieving community with her firm belief that police departments should ultimately be abolished.

Councilwoman Kristin Richardson Jordan, 35, has equated the policing system with slavery, and emphasized her deep compassion for not only the fallen officers but also for the man who the police said killed them -- messaging that is vastly out-of-step with many of her fellow Democrats.

Her political style, as a revolutionary activist and poet, is distinctive.

But in the context of left-wing politics, her overarching argument around policing -- that New York City should invest far more in social services while cutting spending on law enforcement -- is not.

''The greatest way to honor the loss of life on all sides, loss of life due to gun violence,'' Ms. Jordan, the granddaughter of a police officer, said in an interview on Monday, ''would be to invest in our communities.''

Discussions around policing, justice and how best to ensure public safety have divided Democrats across the country and shaped elections from Long Island to San Francisco. But this week, on that sliver of 135th Street in Harlem, those debates were especially raw.

''Right here,'' said Ms. Jordan, a democratic socialist who lives a few minutes from where the shooting occurred. ''We're at the center.''

Against the backdrop of the Harlem shooting, Mayor Eric Adams, who has promised to battle crime in a just fashion, released an expansive public safety plan on Monday. The response -- early praise from the White House but plenty of pushback at home -- freshly illustrated Democratic tensions around those searing issues.

The proposal called for significant policing efforts to combat gun violence, including the restoration of an anti-gun police unit. Mr. Adams also urged state lawmakers to make changes to New York's bail law and to a law that altered how the state handles teenage defendants.

The plan for revamping anti-crime units, which were disbanded in 2020, has stoked particular controversy, with even some of Mr. Adams's typical ideological allies expressing reservations. But the most vociferous criticism has come from supporters of criminal justice reform who are to his left.

''I am concerned about some of the elements that are in the mayor's plan for safety, that they're rolling back the clock on some things that have been some really meaningful reforms,'' Ms. Jordan said.

At another point, she warned that the shooting could be used ''as an excuse to over-police and continue oppression in the community.''

The murder rate and other measures of violent crime in New York City remain far below the rates of the early 1990s, but gun violence in particular has spiked during the pandemic, and the U.S. murder rate has gone up significantly. Mr. Adams's speech crystallized a national debate around how to respond and followed a spate of high-profile crimes that has left many New Yorkers shaken and that culminated in the shooting deaths of the two officers.

Officer Jason Rivera, 22, was killed while responding to the 911 call on Friday. The death of Officer Wilbert Mora, 27, was announced on Tuesday, a day after Lashawn McNeil, the man who the New York City police said was the gunman, also died from injuries.

On Friday night, Ms. Jordan was hosting a planning meeting, and attending a neighborhood gathering of Black socialists at her office, when she learned of the shooting. She headed to Harlem Hospital, joining other elected officials and Mr. Adams, who held a news conference.

But as many of her colleagues expressed their pain on social media, a post from Ms. Jordan's Twitter account that evening focused on community gardens.

It was a preplanned message, she later said, posted ''mistakenly'' by a staff member -- but it touched a nerve online.

She did not comment on the shooting directly for several more hours, because of directions given by officials at the hospital, she said. (Assemblywoman Inez Dickens broadly confirmed those instructions, though others in attendance quickly issued statements of sorrow.)

''I stand with the families of the fallen,'' Ms. Jordan later wrote. ''The death of police officers is not what abolition is. Abolition is an end to violence altogether.''

In the days since, she said, she prayed with constituents for the recovery of Officer Mora. She attended vigils. She plans to attend the officers' funerals.

She also indicated that there was a parallel between the loss of the officers' lives and the death of Lashawn McNeil. ''I see every single human life as equivalent,'' she said on Monday.

After Officer Mora died from his injuries, Ms. Jordan went a step further.

''My deepest condolences to the families of Officer Rivera, Officer Mora and Lashawn McNeil,'' she wrote on Twitter on Tuesday. ''Lives lost due to broken public safety & mental health systems that spare nobody.''

Debates around policing and safety played a defining role in the New York City mayoral primary. Many of the ***working-class*** voters of color who propelled Mr. Adams to victory -- reflecting, in some ways, President Biden's base -- embraced his message of both supporting a powerful role for law enforcement and demanding policing reforms. Those discussions took on fresh urgency again this week in Ms. Jordan's district.

''They want mutual respect between the police and the community,'' Ms. Dickens, who represents an overlapping district, said. ''But they want the police.''

At the memorial outside the police station in Harlem, one sign read, ''Mayor Adams, N.Y.P.D. need a raise.'' Lenny Gardner, 67, a Democrat who works at a hospital, seemed sympathetic to that argument as he walked by.

''They have a hard job, and they're underpaid and sometimes not given credit for what they do,'' said Mr. Gardner, who said he had lived in the area for 33 years and had relied on the police himself. ''I'm not with the abolishing police. That's the only way that we can keep order.''

Ms. Jordan, too, has deep roots in the area, describing herself as a third-generation Harlemite. She attended the Calhoun School, a progressive private school on the Upper West Side, and Brown University and built a career around activism -- she was involved in the Black Lives Matter and Occupy Wall Street movements and founded a ''cop watch'' team, she has said. And she spent time writing and in publishing, including releasing a book that grapples with her personal experiences with domestic violence.

She ran for City Council last year, initially inspired, she told The Nation, by the left-wing members of the ''Squad'' in Congress. Ms. Jordan identifies as a Black socialist, though groups like the Democratic Socialists of America and the left-wing Working Families Party made no endorsement in her primary.

Other prominent left-wing organizations, including the political group associated with Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, did offer support, though to date Ms. Jordan is not considered a prominent member of the city's left wing -- she is largely unknown even to like-minded officials.

In the ranked-choice primary election, she ultimately prevailed over the incumbent by around 100 votes.

Asked to assess her performance so far in office, Keith L.T. Wright, the chairman of the Manhattan Democratic Party, replied, ''I've never had a conversation with her, and I don't know what she does.''

(Ms. Jordan said she welcomed conversations and noted her relationship with the Manhattan Young Democrats. ''The future of the Democratic Party is progressive and bold,'' she said.)

Patrick J. Lynch, the head of the Police Benevolent Association -- a union considered toxic by many Democrats for, among other things, endorsing Donald J. Trump in 2020 -- also said that Ms. Jordan ''is new to the office and we have had no interactions with her.''

''We are aware of her public statements about police officers and public safety,'' he said. ''They don't reflect what police officers hear from her constituents.''

Ms. Jordan acknowledges ''hit-and-miss'' dynamics with the police, also saying that she has been both ''falsely arrested'' and has relied on law enforcement herself when confronting domestic violence.

Her style is more radical than that of many of her colleagues, but the broadest contours of her approach -- to see social services as vital components of public safety -- are shared widely among many New York Democrats, including, to some degree, Mr. Adams.

''Deep investments in the communities that have for so long been overlooked and left out, underfunded, disinvested in -- that is what will keep our communities safe,'' said Councilwoman Crystal Hudson of Brooklyn.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/26/us/politics/kristin-richardson-jordan-nypd.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/26/us/politics/kristin-richardson-jordan-nypd.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Mayor Eric Adams speaking to members of the media last week at Harlem Hospital after two officers were shot nearby. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEENAH MOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

A vigil for the fallen officers in Harlem. Mr. Adams released his public safety plan Monday, to criticism from some on the left. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID DEE DELGADO/GETTY IMAGES)

Councilwoman Kristin Richardson Jordan, who represents the district where the officers were killed, calls for eliminating the police. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DESIREE RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 27, 2022

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[***Katie Couric Likes Books on Paper, and Articles Onscreen; By the Book***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64C7-N6Y1-JBG3-60CT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 23, 2021 Thursday 05:00 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1532 words

**Highlight:** “Sometimes I read my iPad in the bathtub, which is probably not a great idea.”

**Body**

“Sometimes I read my iPad in the bathtub, which is probably not a great idea,” says the broadcast journalist Katie Couric, whose new memoir is “Going There.”

What books are on your night stand?

Sally Rooney’s “Beautiful World, Where Are You” and Jean Hanff Korelitz’s “The Plot” are both on my night stand. “The Vanishing Half” is nearby; I still haven’t had a chance to read it, but I’ve heard Brit Bennett is brilliant. I also bought “Oh, William!” I have read every book Elizabeth Strout has written, so I’m excited when I can stop thinking and talking about my own book and start reading others.

What’s the last great book you read?

I recently read “Becoming Duchess Goldblatt” for the second time — it’s a memoir, written by anonymous, about a working woman in the throes of motherhood and divorce who takes on an online persona named “Duchess Goldblatt” and develops a special relationship with … Lyle Lovett. The book is quirky and moving and Duchess has become a wise, comforting voice on Twitter that provides an excellent counterbalance to all the vitriol.

Are there any classic novels that you only recently read for the first time?

“Things Fall Apart,” by Chinua Achebe. My daughters both read it in high school and I finally caught up. I loved the lilting lyricism of the prose.

Describe your ideal reading experience (when, where, what, how).

I love reading newsletters and articles in the morning when I wake up. I spend about an hour reading the news and saving pieces that are too long and would keep me from ever getting out of bed. At night, I dig into them on my iPad. I love The Atlantic, The New Yorker, The New York Times Magazine, Time, Medium and so many other great publications. These pieces always restore my faith in journalism and thoughtful, nuanced writing. Sometimes I read my iPad in the bathtub, which is probably not a great idea.

But I still love the feel of holding an actual book in my hands. My favorite place to read is at the beach in the late afternoon. That’s where I read “Fleishman Is in Trouble” (I love Taffy Brodesser-Akner) and reread “Maybe You Should Talk to Someone,” by Lori Gottlieb, because she and I are developing the book into a scripted series.

Which writers — novelists, playwrights, critics, journalists, poets — working today do you admire most?

Amor Towles, Lisa Taddeo, Isabel Wilkerson, Jia Tolentino, Joan Didion, Colson Whitehead, Bob Woodward, Cheryl Strayed, Michael Lewis, Ibram X. Kendi, Curtis Sittenfeld.

Do you have any comfort reads?

My mom’s copy of “The Best Loved Poems of the American People.” My mom loved poetry and when I read “In Flanders Fields” it always makes me think of her.

Has a book ever brought you closer to another person, or come between you?

My sister Clara (Kiki) is a voracious reader. A few years ago, she told me what an impact “The Warmth of Other Suns” had on her. She said it was the most important book she ever read. I read it and thought it was a masterpiece. It prompted several rich and memorable conversations between us. Then, when my husband and I were planning to visit Auschwitz a few years ago, my mother-in-law, Paula, suggested I read Primo Levi’s “If This Is a Man.” The memoir made the experience even more meaningful and made me appreciate Paula even more.

What’s the most interesting thing you learned from a book recently?

Sheera Frenkel’s and Cecilia Kang’s brilliant exposé of Facebook, “An Ugly Truth,” revealed the nefarious actions by company executives months before Frances Haugen blew the lid off the whole enterprise. These two should win a Pulitzer Prize.

Even before the pandemic, I’d been interested in exploring the epidemic of loneliness. “Together,” by Vivek Murthy, underscored how loneliness and social isolation damage our emotional and physical health. It’s the equivalent of smoking two packs of cigarettes a day.

Sanjay Gupta’s book “Keep Sharp” says that occasionally holding your fork with your less dominant hand helps with brain health. Who knew?

Which subjects do you wish more authors would write about?

There have been so many excellent books written lately about the environment and I’d welcome even more. Recently on my podcast I featured Christiana Figueres and Tom Rivett-Carnac, the authors of “The Future We Choose: Surviving the Climate Crisis.” My friends Laurie David and Heather Reisman also wrote a book called “Imagine It!” Both books explain in an accessible way our current environmental challenges, but more important, they help us understand what we can do collectively and individually.

Meanwhile, more and more authors are writing honestly about loss and grief, which is something I tried to do in my memoir. “When Breath Becomes Air,” by Paul Kalanithi, “The Light of the World,” by Elizabeth Alexander, and “Notes on Grief,” by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, helped me metabolize my own experience.

What moves you most in a work of literature?

Beautiful, descriptive sentences that play with language in original, unexpected ways. I know I love a book when I read a passage and it stops me in my tracks and makes me read it again. I did this repeatedly when I read Lisa Taddeo’s book “Three Women” as well as her novel, “Animal.”

Have you ever changed your opinion of a book based on information about the author, or anything else?

Katharine Graham was a mythic, almost unknowable figure for me growing up outside Washington, D.C. Her memoir, “Personal History,” was fascinating. It not only helped me understand some of the issues she wrestled with and the challenges she faced running The Washington Post, but it allowed me to connect with her on a deeply personal level, because she was so forthcoming about every aspect of her life.

How do you organize your books?

Easy answer: I don’t. My daughter Ellie color-coded one of our bookshelves and it looks great, but organizing doesn’t exactly fall within my skill set. Besides, there’s something fun about perusing the spines, not knowing what you’ll stumble upon next.

What book might people be surprised to find on your shelves?

“Golf Courses of the U.S. Open,” by David Barrett (obviously, my husband’s), and “Ya Wanna Go?,” by Paul Stewart, an N.H.L. referee.

What’s the best book you’ve ever received as a gift?

A dictionary from my father, inscribed, “To my favorite wordsmith.”

Who is your favorite fictional hero or heroine? Your favorite antihero or villain?

Elizabeth Bennet in “Pride and Prejudice” and Esther in “The Bell Jar.” Antihero: Holden Caulfield, of course.

What kind of reader were you as a child? Which childhood books and authors stick with you most?

When I was little and complained that I was bored, my mom would say, “Go read a book.” I remember sitting in the den, reading our World Books on the lowest shelf of the library. I recently found the paperback copy of “A Patch of Blue” in a box of books from my childhood. I was totally entranced with that book as an adolescent. I loved another book called “Light a Single Candle.” Both were about young blind women. I worked at a camp for blind kids while I was in high school. So that was an interesting theme that ran through my childhood. I also loved anything written by James Thurber. Another favorite was “The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter.” I thought about naming our first daughter Carson, after Carson McCullers. But we decided to name her Elinor instead. I also loved “The Human Comedy,” by William Saroyan and remember being so moved by “Death Be Not Proud,” by John Gunther. Oh, and “In Cold Blood.” That gave me nightmares for weeks.

Have your reading tastes changed over time?

Lately, I’m gravitating to books that help me understand the state of the world. I’m drawn to anything that attempts to explain what’s happening to our country, like “White ***Working Class***,” by Joan Williams, and “Strangers in Their Own Land,” by Arlie Russell Hochschild. I try to use history as my guide as well, which is why I devoured “Eleanor,” by my friend David Michaelis. It’s a stunning character study of someone I deeply admire. It also explains how someone can survive a miserable childhood and go on to do great things.

What book would you recommend for America’s current political moment?

“Peril,” by Bob Woodward and Robert Costa — a meticulously reported deconstruction of the insane final days of the Trump administration.

You’re organizing a literary dinner party. Which three writers, dead or alive, do you invite?

I have to cheat just a bit, and invite four: Edith Wharton, Mary Shelley, Bryan Stevenson and Herman Wouk. Bryan Stevenson is my personal hero, and I’d like to show Edith Wharton how much the world has changed. Mary Shelley would be fascinating to talk to, as her life story is like something out of a novel (whirlwind romance with Percy Bysshe Shelley and all). And Herman Wouk was the most charming, spirited and fun writer I’ve ever met.

What books are you embarrassed not to have read yet?

“One Hundred Years of Solitude” (my daughter Carrie’s favorite book).

What do you plan to read next?

“Both/And,” by Huma Abedin. “The Lyrics,” by Paul McCartney. “The Stranger in the Lifeboat,” by Mitch Albom. I’m treating myself to all three, the minute I come up for air!

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Rebecca Clarke FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 23, 2021

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[***Is New York Still a ‘Tale of Two Cities’?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64C1-NYD1-DXY4-X2Y5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 22, 2021 Wednesday 13:51 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1485 words

**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons and Jeffery C. Mays

**Highlight:** Checking in on Bill de Blasio’s pledge to improve inequality, eight years later.

**Body**

In his final weeks in office, Mayor Bill de Blasio has sought to cement his legacy, arguing that he has accomplished what he set out to do when he first ran for mayor in 2013: reduce inequality in New York City.

There is some evidence to support this. His signature accomplishment, creating a prekindergarten-for-all program, set the stage for a “3K-for-all” expansion in 2017. Currently, about 96,000 children are enrolled in both programs. The mayor has also pointed to the city’s poverty rate, which fell before the pandemic to roughly 18 percent in 2019, from 20.5 percent in 2013.

“We know there was a huge transfer of wealth,” Mr. de Blasio recently told reporters. “I’m a believer in redistribution of wealth. It happened to the tune of tens of billions of dollars.”

Experts say his legacy is more complicated. Mr. de Blasio ran for mayor vowing to fix the inequality that had [*created a “tale of two cities,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/21/nyregion/de-blasios-tale-of-2-new-yorks-echoed-by-liberals-statewide.html) and his policies often did not live up to that rhetoric.

Mr. de Blasio, who is considering running for governor in 2022 and declined a request for an interview, made progress on key issues like bringing down the poverty level and building affordable housing, but the [*pandemic was catastrophic*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/nyregion/coronavirus-race-deaths.html) for poor New Yorkers.

When the virus was at its worst in New York, Black and [*Latino*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/26/us/corona-virus-latinos.html) people were dying from it at twice the rate as white people — a [*disparity*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/07/us/coronavirus-latinos-disparity.html) that the mayor acknowledged was a reflection of long-held inequities in access to health care. The unemployment rate soared to 20 percent, and the poverty level likely rose again.

The mayor also failed to address longstanding inequities facing the transit system and segregated schools, and said that his greatest failure was his response to the homelessness crisis.

There were certainly wins that improved the lives of ***working-class*** New Yorkers — many of them outlined in a [*new 12-page report*](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/home/downloads/pdf/press-releases/2021/Wealth-Transfer-Report.pdf) by the city called “The de Blasio Years: The Tale of a More Equal City,” including pushing for a $15 minimum wage, paid sick leave, rent freezes and municipal IDs for undocumented immigrants. The city delivered more than 200 million meals to New Yorkers during the height of the pandemic.

Mr. de Blasio’s most lasting accomplishment may be his creation of universal prekindergarten, a popular program that could serve as a national model for the Biden administration.

Porshia Rogers, who lives in public housing in Queens and works at a nonprofit, recalled how relieved she was when her daughter Paije secured a free 3-K spot this year. She said that it was difficult to afford $800 per month on child care.

“I knew that once she turned three, I would at least have some type of break,” she said. “When the mayor announced 3-K for all, I was like, thank you, God.”

Mr. de Blasio’s ascension to mayor was viewed by Democrats as a chance to reset the city’s trajectory to the left, after 20 years of being led by Rudolph W. Giuliani, a Republican, and Michael R. Bloomberg, who was first elected as a Republican and later changed parties.

In the 2013 Democratic mayoral primary, Mr. de Blasio drew a sharp contrast to Mr. Bloomberg, vowing to undo the policies that he said had led New York to become a “tale of two cities.” He then followed through on his pledge to end discriminatory police stops against Black and Latino men, and created universal prekindergarten to help close educational gaps.

But the mayor had to be pushed by city leaders when it came to other initiatives, including [*closing the Rikers Island jail*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/17/nyregion/de-blasio-says-idea-of-closing-rikers-jail-complex-is-unrealistic.html) complex, [*offering half-price MetroCards to poor New Yorkers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/04/nyregion/fair-fares-metrocard-discount-nyc.html), and providing deeper levels of affordability in his housing plan.

Wealthy New Yorkers certainly continued to prosper during the de Blasio years — the number of billionaires in the city jumped to 99, second in the world to Beijing, [*according to Forbes*](https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnhyatt/2021/04/06/worlds-richest-cities-the-top-10-cities-billionaires-call-home/?sh=2db8251543e3) — and Mr. de Blasio’s attempt to secure a tax on millionaires or [*their second homes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/29/nyregion/pied-a-terre-tax.html) failed in Albany, where the mayor lacked strong allies.

By 2019, the city’s poverty rate had dropped, but [*the Gini index*](https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/income-inequality/about/metrics/gini-index.html) — the primary U.S. census figure that measures income inequality — [*had not budged*](https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=B19083%3A%20GINI%20INDEX%20OF%20INCOME%20INEQUALITY&amp;g=1600000US3651000). It has remained flat since 2013 at a rate that is worse than other major American cities like Los Angeles and Chicago.

“There has been an explosion of wealth in New York City, but it hasn’t trickled down,” said David R. Jones, president of the Community Service Society of New York, an antipoverty nonprofit.

The next mayor, [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/07/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-nyc.html), will have to navigate a series of complex issues left unresolved by Mr. de Blasio. Mr. Adams grew up in poverty in southeast Queens and says that addressing inequality is a priority. But he also promised a [*closer relationship with the city’s elites*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/nyregion/eric-adams-bloomberg.html).

Mr. Adams might be better served by improving on Mr. de Blasio’s relationship with state lawmakers and the governor. Mr. de Blasio [*fought constantly*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/22/nyregion/cuomo-deblasio-feud-nyc.html) with former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo — over subway funding, the response to the pandemic, public housing, the homeless crisis and even whether to [*euthanize a deer*](https://nypost.com/2016/12/15/deer-who-came-to-manhattan-to-find-a-mate-will-be-put-down/).

Even with Mr. de Blasio’s first-year success in getting prekindergarten approved, he was forced to accept state funding instead of a tax on the wealthy. Mr. Cuomo often had the upper hand in their confrontations, and the city suffered.

Some former allies grew disillusioned. Mr. de Blasio waited until late in his second term to [*phase out the gifted and talented*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/nyregion/gifted-talented-nyc-schools.html) program for elementary schools, and to [*open supervised drug injection sites*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/30/nyregion/supervised-injection-sites-nyc.html). A plan to create 100,000 jobs that paid $50,000 or more faced criticism for not doing enough to [*include New Yorkers in the city’s poorest neighborhoods.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/19/nyregion/nyc-jobs-de-blasio-poor.html)

Bertha Lewis, president of the Black Institute, who helped Mr. de Blasio win over progressives during the 2013 Democratic primary for mayor, said it became difficult to defend Mr. de Blasio because he failed to act on key issues. His allies wanted the all-hands on deck approach that the mayor had used to win prekindergarten to confront other issues like public housing but Mr. de Blasio often seemed unwilling to risk the political capital to do so.

Ms. Lewis called universal prekindergarten “an incredible accomplishment,” but said that the program alone was not enough to declare victory against inequality.

“How long are you going to ride that surfboard?” she said.

James Parrott, an economist with the Center for New York City Affairs at the New School, said Mr. de Blasio does not get enough credit for “actively using policy to actually reduce poverty,” including instituting other labor protections like settling union contracts.

Workers in the bottom half of the economy saw a 15 percent increase in wage share from 2013 to 2019, while the rest of the country held steady, according to Mr. Parrott’s analysis of data from the Independent Budget Office.

The discount MetroCard proposal seemed to fit squarely within Mr. de Blasio’s left-wing rhetoric. Mr. Jones pitched the idea to the mayor, and Mr. de Blasio liked it so much that he called Mr. Jones and said he was going to appoint him to the board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to help see it through.

“Almost immediately after that, he began [*moon-walking away from it,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/11/nyregion/half-price-metrocards-for-poor-new-yorkers.html)” Mr. Jones said.

Mr. de Blasio unsuccessfully argued that Mr. Cuomo should pay for the program since he ran the subway. At the same time, the mayor announced significant city funding for a heavily subsidized ferry system that is used mostly by affluent, white New Yorkers.

“If you’re able to provided a subsidized ferry system for middle and upper class people, very few of whom are people of color, what’s so difficult about providing almost the same amount of money to the very poor?” Mr. Jones said.

The City Council speaker, Corey Johnson, convinced the mayor to add it to the city budget in 2018; [*more than 260,000 New Yorkers*](https://www.bxtimes.com/mta-wants-city-to-double-fair-fares-enrollment-by-next-year/) have since enrolled. “It’s been incredibly popular, and it’s putting hundreds of dollars in poor people’s pockets,” Mr. Johnson said.

On the homelessness crisis, Mr. de Blasio has said that it took him too long to fully understand the problem. The number of single adults living in shelters has risen, and Mr. de Blasio received criticism for moving thousands of homeless people out of hotel rooms and back into barrackslike dorm shelters during the pandemic.

“This is an area where we didn’t see all the solutions in the beginning — I’m very honest about that,” the mayor told reporters recently.

Shams DaBaron, one of the homeless men living at the Lucerne hotel on Manhattan’s Upper West Side last year, said that the city’s shelters were inhumane and Mr. de Blasio did not focus enough on creating permanent housing.

“Those places are warehouses — they have no services on site and they’re havens for drugs and other activities that are not healthy for human beings,” he said. “That is part of the mayor’s legacy — not having compassion for homeless populations.”

PHOTO: Mayor Bill de Blasio, a Democrat, is considering a run for governor. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNIE TRITT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 26, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Picturing the Power of Community; Picture Books***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:642H-XNG1-JBG3-62XH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 12, 2021 Friday 13:15 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1362 words

**Byline:** Matt de la Peña

**Highlight:** Four invitations to reach across borders and affirm our shared humanity.

**Body**

BRIGHT STAR

Written and illustrated by Yuyi Morales

MY TWO BORDER TOWNS

Written by David Bowles

Illustrated by Erika Meza

THE WELCOME CHAIR

Written by Rosemary Wells

Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney

DREAM STREET

Written by Tricia Elam Walker

Illustrated by Ekua Holmes

We are living in a time of great polarization. We watch this cable news show or that one. We live on one side of the tracks or the other. We scowl at the unmasked parent at the playground or the parent wearing the N95-face-shield combo. Sometimes it seems we are so consumed with what separates us, what counts as a political or ideological win or loss, we forget to celebrate all that we have in common. Not even a global pandemic has changed this. Thankfully, four wonderful new picture books have come along that artfully acknowledge the impact of barriers but ultimately shine their light on the power of compassion, generosity and community.

“Bright Star,” which might be the Caldecott honoree Yuyi Morales’s best book yet, opens with an omniscient parental narrator proclaiming, “Child, you are awake. Breathe in, then breathe out, hermosa creatura. You are alive!”

We see a fawn curled in a ball, eyes just having opened to a new life. When it stands in the next spread, Mom is there with a loving gesture that sets in motion a profound journey, told in a pleasing blend of Spanish and English, through the wonders of a desert landscape. Make no mistake, there are dangers here. But in the midst of darkness the fawn is encouraged to “Shout it loud! Let the world know how you feel!” In the accompanying art, it butts up against a menacing wall topped with barbed wire.

The critique is obvious, but Morales resists moral lecturing. Instead, she focuses on what positive new story might bloom in such a complicated context. In an especially stirring sequence, the fawn, staring directly at the reader, is replaced by a young girl, who also stares at the reader. On the following page she is joined by several other humans of varying ages. Morales dares us to look away, dares us not to acknowledge their humanity. “Bright Star,” which was simultaneously published in an all-Spanish version called “Lucero,” does what very few picture books can do: captivate a child while moving the adult who is reading to her.

We encounter a physical barrier again in “My Two Border Towns,” beautifully written by David Bowles, with vibrant illustrations by Erika Meza. In this case, however, our unnamed child narrator is able to pass through the border with little difficulty, because he and his father have U.S. passports, “cards that give us the freedom to travel back and forth.”

While the setting in “Bright Star” is never specifically stated, in “My Two Border Towns” we know that the main character lives with his family in Texas, and that every other Saturday he and his father travel to “el Otro Lado” to run errands. Just before the border checkpoint, our narrator is reminded that “Coahuiltecans once lived here, before all this was Mexico — both riverbanks.” Now there are two countries and they must pay to cross. This sets up one of the central themes of the book, handled masterfully by both Bowles and Meza. The ***working-class*** neighborhoods on either side of the border are mirror images of each other. Spanish is the predominant language. The streets are teeming with life and there is a powerful sense of community. Father and son are just as at home in Mexico — grabbing breakfast at a favorite restaurant, weaving through vendor stalls, playing soccer in a vacant lot, picking up various items from local shops.

This alone would make for an evocative and relevant story, but Bowles has one final turn for us. As the father and son are waiting to cross back into America, we discover that one of the purposes of their trip is to provide goods for refugee families from the Caribbean and Central America — people who are stuck between countries. Our narrator hops out of the idling car and visits with his friends, sharing comics and foods and medicines. The story closes with his longing for a day when they can pass back and forth between countries the way he can. “My Two Border Towns” is a sophisticated, heartfelt look at what life is like in the shadow of the border.

In “The Welcome Chair,” written by Rosemary Wells and illustrated by Jerry Pinkney, who died in October, the camera is pulled back so that we can take a more comprehensive, generational look at immigration in America. This is a wildly ambitious story, inspired by Wells’s own family legends, as well as by her immigrant father’s belief that “America’s door is open to suffering people from foreign lands.”

In the early 1800s, Wells’s great-great-grandfather, a woodworker, leaves Bavaria to escape mounting pressure to become a rabbi like his father and grandfather. After arriving in New York, he finds work as a bookkeeper and an apprentice carpenter. When he makes a cherrywood rocking chair for his employers’ new child, carving the German word “Willkommen” into it, the story commences.

As we watch the welcome chair pass from family to family, it becomes the backbone of the narrative, accompanied by vignettes exploring different communities and the fabric of America. Along the way, the word “welcome” is carved into the chair in many different languages, including Hebrew, English, Irish, Spanish and Haitian Creole. But it’s Pinkney’s intricate watercolor illustrations that truly bring the chair, the characters and an ever-changing America to life.

While “The Welcome Chair” casts a wide geographic and temporal net — which can sometimes leave readers feeling spread thin — the stunning “Dream Street,” written by Tricia Elam Walker and illustrated by Ekua Holmes, focuses on a single avenue in a special neighborhood. We get to know this dynamic Black community by getting to know some of the people who live on Dream Street.

There’s stylish Mr. Sidney, a former mail carrier, who spends his mornings reading the newspaper on his stoop. He “tips his big brown fedora and greets everyone with, ‘Don’t wait to have a great day. Create one.’” There’s quiet Zion, a boy who spends his days in the library working his way through “skyscraper-tall piles of books that take him on adventures around the world.” He dreams of becoming a librarian. The Phillips family has five boys, all named after jazz musicians. On Sundays before church, their father “lines them up on the front porch for inspection, from hats down to shined shoes.”

Walker’s poetic text dances across the page and Holmes’s striking collage portraits are filled with joy. Simply put, “Dream Street” is a triumph. Like the street itself, this book is a place where a child reader, or any reader, “can become whatever and whoever they want, because their dreams are nourished and cared for.”

As Rudine Sims Bishop noted in her groundbreaking 1990 article, “Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors,” it is powerful and validating to see one’s life and community reflected in a book. But it is just as essential that books provide readers with a glimpse into the lives of others. In the past, these four picture books might have been set aside for young readers who could identify with the characters and communities reflected in the stories. My hope is that today they will be celebrated by all readers.

Matt de la Peña is the Newbery Medal-winning author of seven young adult novels and five picture books. BRIGHT STAR Written and illustrated by Yuyi Morales 40 pp. Neal Porter/Holiday House. $18.99. (Ages 4 to 8) MY TWO BORDER TOWNS Written by David Bowles Illustrated by Erika Meza 40 pp. Kokila. $17.99. (Ages 4 to 8) THE WELCOME CHAIR Written by Rosemary Wells Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney 40 pp. Paula Wiseman/Simon & Schuster. $17.99. (Ages 4 to 8) DREAM STREET Written by Tricia Elam Walker Illustrated by Ekua Holmes 32 pp. Anne Schwartz. $17.99. (Ages 4 to 8)

PHOTOS: From left: “Bright Star”; “The Welcome Chair.” (BR20); From above: “Dream Street”; “My Two Border Towns.” (BR21)

**Related Articles**

* [*Read These 3 Books on the Toll of Migration on Children*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/19/books/immigration-children-detention-migration-families.html)

1. [*Picture Books Tell Children the Harsh Stories of Migrants and Refugees*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/30/books/review/refugee-children-picture-day-war-came-nicola-davies.html)
2. [*Reframing Refugee Children’s Stories*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/11/books/review/we-are-displaced-malala-yousafzai.html)

**Load-Date:** November 12, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Labour’s Leader Struggles to Emerge From Boris Johnson’s Shadow***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63PG-KGV1-JBG3-61K6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 26, 2021 Sunday 05:09 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1334 words

**Byline:** Stephen Castle

**Highlight:** Competent but low on charisma, Keir Starmer has yet to give British voters a clear reason to support the main opposition party, critics say.

**Body**

Competent but low on charisma, Keir Starmer has yet to give British voters a clear reason to support the main opposition party, critics say.

LONDON — If Prime Minister Boris Johnson went to one extreme with his pithy 2019 election slogan — “get Brexit done” — the leader of the opposition Labour Party, Keir Starmer, has gone to the other.

Ahead of Labour’s annual conference, which began this weekend, Mr. Starmer penned a policy statement designed to showcase his beliefs that ran to more than 11,000 words. Despite that novella-like length, it is unlikely to compete with the best-sellers.

Serious, competent but lacking charisma, Mr. Starmer is a mirror image of Mr. Johnson, a polarizing politician renowned for phrasemaking and showmanship rather than steadiness or a firm grip on policy.

Yet when Mr. Starmer speaks to Labour members in the English seaside city of Brighton this week, he badly needs some pizazz — both to raise his profile and to explain the agenda of a party that suffered [*a crushing election defeat in 2019*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/12/world/europe/uk-election-boris-johnson.html) under its previous, left-wing leader, Jeremy Corbyn.

“If you put Keir Starmer and Boris Johnson together they would be the ideal politician,” said Steven Fielding, a professor of political history at Nottingham University. But after a lackluster year, Professor Fielding said, Mr. Starmer “has got to communicate his sense of purpose and what the point of the Labour Party is under his leadership in post-Covid Britain.”

“It’s an existential question he has to ask himself, to answer and then communicate,” Professor Fielding said.

No one doubts the intelligence, seriousness or competence of Mr. Starmer, a former chief prosecutor who worked his way from a modest start in life to the highest echelons of the legal establishment.

But some think he is not savvy enough politically, while others accuse him of picking internal fights to underscore his opposition to the Corbynite left. Those include a dispute over changes to the voting system for future party leadership contests that would probably have stopped a left-winger from getting the top job again. That plan caused sufficient anger within the party that Mr. Starmer was forced to put forward a watered-down version instead.

Yet the more telling complaint is that he has simply failed to make his presence felt in a way that showcases the party’s positions or enhances its standing with the public. Nor, critics say, has he exploited Mr. Johnson’s numerous setbacks.

[*Elected last year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/04/world/europe/labour-party-keir-starmer.html) following Labour’s catastrophic 2019 defeat, Mr. Starmer has spent much of his leadership detoxifying a party whose image was marred by persistent infighting over allegations of anti-Semitism. That culminated in [*the suspension of Mr. Corbyn*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/29/world/europe/jeremy-corbyn-labour-anti-semitism.html), who remains excluded from Labour’s parliamentary group.

That focus on interparty turmoil, along with the 80-seat majority that Mr. Johnson’s conservatives enjoy, has relegated Labour to the role of an onlooker in Parliament — so much so that Mr. Johnson brazenly broke a vow and raised taxes this month without fear that Mr. Starmer and his colleagues could do much to take advantage of it.

Perhaps mindful of the need to confront the Conservatives more aggressively, Mr. Starmer stepped up his criticism this weekend, telling the BBC that there had been a “complete lack of planning” by the government over the shortage of truck drivers that [*has Britons anxious about the delivery of fuel and goods*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/24/world/europe/britain-shortages-economy-1970s.html).

In terms of election strategy, Labour faces a huge challenge. In 2019, it lost a clutch of parliamentary seats in its former strongholds — the middle and north of the country — as ***working-class*** voters warmed to Mr. Johnson, with his pro-Brexit agenda and willingness to wade into culture wars.

That left Mr. Starmer with the unenviable task of winning back those traditional Labour voters behind [*the so-called “red wall”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html) without alienating anti-Brexit supporters in big cities like London, where the party’s support is increasingly concentrated.

His bad luck is that [*the pandemic has dominated the media agenda*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/world/united-kingdom-covid-cases.html), keeping the government at center stage and giving it a megaphone to trumpet its leadership role, whether merited or not.

During the early months of the Covid crisis, [*the prime minister floundered*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/26/world/europe/cummings-johnson-covid.html), initially resisting lockdowns then having to reverse course, and Mr. Starmer outperformed Mr. Johnson in their head-to-heads in Parliament. The government’s effective vaccine rollout revived the Conservatives’ fortunes, but that effect has now faded and [*Britain faces an uncertain winter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/28/world/europe/coronavirus-britain-uk.html), with the effects of the pandemic difficult to predict. Still, Mr. Johnson is polling reasonably well for an accident-prone leader in the middle of his term.

Critics on the left say that Mr. Starmer’s camp has opted for platitudes and shied away from distinctive left-of-center policies to avoid offending any electoral group.

“They thought that Starmer is Biden and Johnson is Trump, and that Johnson would self-destruct,” said James Schneider, a former spokesman for Mr. Corbyn. “The difference is that Biden is a hugely more appealing figure to the American public — he has an everyman appeal.”

When Labour [*lost an election for a vacant parliamentary seat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/10/world/europe/uk-labour-starmer-election.html) in northern England in May, Mr. Starmer suffered another self-inflicted setback with a botched reshuffle of his top team. He appeared to blame his deputy, Angela Rayner, for the defeat, stripping her of a key position, but he was forced to retreat in the face of a backlash and eventually gave her more responsibilities.

A full-blown leadership crisis was averted when Labour unexpectedly went on to [*win an election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/02/world/europe/labor-by-election-victory-batley-and-spen.html) in another northern constituency, Batley and Spen, in July.

But there may be challenges to Mr. Starmer’s authority as he prepares to take on Mr. Johnson in a general election that must take place by 2024 but is expected a year earlier. One Labour member on the ascent is Andy Burnham, the mayor of Manchester, who has raised his profile during the pandemic.

Others in the party are still committed to Mr. Corbyn’s hard-left agenda and remain angry about Mr. Starmer’s push to change the voting system. It also wants Mr. Corbyn reinstated to the parliamentary group.

The worry for more moderate Labour supporters is that they may be seeing a repeat of the leadership of Ed Miliband, who, like Mr. Starmer, came from the “soft left” of the Labour Party, but who lost the 2015 general election.

Tom Baldwin, a former spokesman for Mr. Miliband, said that he believed Mr. Starmer could win and that he could well be an effective prime minister. But he was also critical of his lack of a convincing message and his focus on internal battles, which he said “are not going to help us reconnect ourselves to voters.”

“I would prefer if the Labour Party were having a conversation with the country about the country,” Mr. Baldwin said.

Mr. Starmer’s supporters say voters will become disenchanted with Mr. Johnson in light of his broken promise not to raise taxes, and that the government will fail to deliver on his pledges to bring prosperity to neglected parts of the country.

Once “normal” politics resumes after the pandemic, voters will ultimately warm to Mr. Starmer, they argue. Though he prefers to talk about policy rather than personality, [*Mr. Starmer spoke movingly*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-57321990) about his upbringing in a recent interview with Piers Morgan.

Still, his personality is very different from that of Mr. Johnson, and most analysts believe his best tactic is to lean into his strengths, hoping that voters are drawn to a man who exudes stability after years of political turmoil.

It is also critical, political analysts say, that Mr. Starmer give voters a clear reason to support the Labour Party.

“He’s got to find a message, he’s got to be able to communicate that message and to be able to sell it, and he’s not done any of this so far,” Professor Fielding said. “Competence isn’t enough.”

PHOTO: Keir Starmer on Saturday at the party’s annual conference, in Brighton, on England’s south coast. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JUSTIN TALLIS/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** September 27, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Hail Kevin McCarthy, People Pleaser and Trump Appeaser; Michelle cottle***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62RN-8VC1-DXY4-X2SW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 23, 2021 Sunday 12:30 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1124 words

**Byline:** Michelle Cottle

**Highlight:** Kevin McCarthy will do anything to be speaker of the House.

**Body**

Representative Kevin McCarthy, the House Republican leader, is frequently derided as a weak, hollow, craven, opportunistic, transactional, nakedly ambitious political animal with no core principles.

Last week, he set heads shaking by [*announcing his opposition*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/05/18/us/joe-biden-news-today#kevin-mccarthy-capitol-riot-commission) to the bill establishing a bipartisan commission to investigate the Jan. 6 sacking of the U.S. Capitol. The legislative negotiations had been led on the Republican side, [*reportedly*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/05/18/us/joe-biden-news-today#kevin-mccarthy-capitol-riot-commission) at Mr. McCarthy’s explicit request, by Representative John Katko of New York. But Mr. McCarthy and his leadership team urged members to reject the deal, leaving Mr. Katko twisting in the wind. The plan passed on Wednesday. Thirty-five Republicans supported it, in what was viewed as [*a rebuke of Mr. McCarthy*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/05/18/us/joe-biden-news-today#kevin-mccarthy-capitol-riot-commission).

Some in the G.O.P. conference are asking: What kind of leader dispatches one of his troops to make a deal, then abandons and humiliates him over a bill that’s going to pass anyway? The most obvious answer: a pathetic one.

Such harsh assessments are unfair — though not because they are inaccurate. Mr. McCarthy has long done whatever it takes to get what he wants. And what he really, really wants now is the speaker’s gavel, which hovers just a few precious seats beyond his grasp. If Mitch McConnell, the ruthless, calculating Senate Republican leader, is a shark, Mr. McCarthy is a jellyfish, carried spinelessly along by the political currents.

But these days, such inchoate non-leadership is the best that House Republicans can hope for. In fact, that’s what they demand. In a conference increasingly dominated by Trumpian trolls (See: Marjorie Taylor Greene, Madison Cawthorn, Lauren Boebert, Louie Gohmert, Paul Gosar, Mo Brooks…), maintaining serious order is out of the question. Forestalling total anarchy requires a leader with an extraordinary gift for abject appeasement. It’s equal parts feeding the base the unhinged grievance it craves, while still keeping members from less Trumpy districts on board.

Mr. McCarthy has shown himself to be that leader, and he deserves recognition for rising — or rather sinking — to meet the moment.

Mr. McCarthy [*grew up the son of* ***working-class*** *Democrats*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/05/18/us/joe-biden-news-today#kevin-mccarthy-capitol-riot-commission) in Bakersfield, Calif. He began his political career as an establishment player, working for Representative Bill Thomas, who was Mr. McCarthy’s congressman. In 1987, young Kevin applied for an internship in Mr. Thomas’s Washington offices. He was rejected, but finagled an unpaid post clipping news items in the Bakersfield office. Affable and sociable, Mr. McCarthy charmed his new boss and began working his way up.

Mr. Thomas, who served nearly three decades in Congress, was a political force both at home (his political machine dominated the district) and in Washington, especially during his time as chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. Under his wing, Mr. McCarthy learned the ins and outs of politics while hobnobbing with the party’s power players.

These connections helped smooth Mr. McCarthy’s own rise. [*In 2002*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/05/18/us/joe-biden-news-today#kevin-mccarthy-capitol-riot-commission), he was elected to the California Assembly.

In Sacramento, Mr. McCarthy organized social outings with colleagues, and poker nights became a regular draw for legislators at the place he shared with four other members. “I learned everything that happened in every committee while we’re sitting around talking,” he [*once told me*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/05/18/us/joe-biden-news-today#kevin-mccarthy-capitol-riot-commission) of poker night. He traveled to colleagues’ districts, learned their needs, learned all about their families. In his first term, Mr. McCarthy was voted minority leader. Everyone loved Kevin.

He worked especially hard to bond with his fellow freshman members on both sides of the aisle. He became fast friends with Democrat Fabian Núñez, who became Assembly speaker. The two men worked well together, in part because Mr. McCarthy understood the art of negotiation and compromise. “Kevin is smart enough to know that, when dealing with politics, you have your views that are important,” Mr. Núñez once told me. “Beyond that, you have to accommodate the other side.” Come budget time, Mr. McCarthy knew how to do the give and take.

Mr. Thomas retired in 2006 and all but handed his seat to Mr. McCarthy. In the House, Mr. McCarthy continued his strategic schmoozing — visiting colleagues’ districts, handing out campaign cash, learning what made people tick. In his second term, he was tapped to be the chief deputy whip. “Kevin’s capacity to build and maintain relationships is not normal,” Representative Jim Banks, the Indiana Republican, recently marveled to [*The Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/05/18/us/joe-biden-news-today#kevin-mccarthy-capitol-riot-commission).

Mr. McCarthy joined forces with two other young up-and-comers, Paul Ryan and Eric Cantor. Known as the Young Guns — the eventual title of a book they [*wrote about themselves*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/05/18/us/joe-biden-news-today#kevin-mccarthy-capitol-riot-commission) — the trio proclaimed themselves the new generation of Republican leaders. Each had a clear role: Mr. Cantor was the leader and seen as on the fast track to head the conference. Mr. Ryan was the policy wonk. Mr. McCarthy was the political strategist. In keeping with the zeitgeist, the Young Guns were feistier, more conservative and more uncompromising than the old establishment. Gone were Mr. McCarthy’s days of playing nicely with the other side. They were going to reshape the G.O.P. in their image.

Today, Mr. McCarthy is the last Young Gun still in office. Mr. Cantor became House majority leader in 2011, before falling to a Tea Party challenger in his [*2014 primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/05/18/us/joe-biden-news-today#kevin-mccarthy-capitol-riot-commission) — an early sign of the G.O.P.’s anti-establishment drift. Mr. Ryan rose to be speaker in 2015, only to announce in April 2018 that he would not run for re-election, after a bumpy couple of years dealing with Mr. Trump.

McCarthy is not one to resign on principle nor let himself get outflanked on the right. To survive the rise of Trumpism, he has had to execute increasingly impressive political contortions. There have been missteps and setbacks. On those rare occasions when he has offended Mr. Trump — such as acknowledging that [*Mr. Trump bore responsibility*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/05/18/us/joe-biden-news-today#kevin-mccarthy-capitol-riot-commission) for the Jan. 6 attack — he has scrambled to make amends and prove his fealty. All that groveling would have crushed most men’s spirits. Not Mr. McCarthy. He is a champion people pleaser and appeaser.

But even the minority leader’s formidable skills are being tested by this moment. Some days, finding a way through this mess without a full-on meltdown looks impossible. But if anyone can manage the necessary mix of political nihilism and constant self-abasement, it will be Kevin McCarthy.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/05/18/us/joe-biden-news-today#kevin-mccarthy-capitol-riot-commission) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/05/18/us/joe-biden-news-today#kevin-mccarthy-capitol-riot-commission). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/05/18/us/joe-biden-news-today#kevin-mccarthy-capitol-riot-commission).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Stefani Reynolds for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 25, 2021

**End of Document**



[***This 18-Year-Old May Be the Key to America’s World Cup Hopes***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:642J-0SF1-JBG3-630V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 12, 2021 Friday 08:41 EST

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**Section:** SPORTS; soccer

**Length:** 1320 words

**Byline:** Andrew Keh

**Highlight:** Ricardo Pepi has played only five games for the U.S., but he provides the one thing his team needs most: goals.

**Body**

CINCINNATI — Ricardo Pepi is young. He is unproven, unseasoned and unfinished. He could use a few more lines on his résumé and possibly a couple of more pounds on his lanky frame.

But because it has become equally evident in the early days of his career that Pepi possesses in abundant quantity the intangible, invaluable and often ephemeral magic needed to do the one thing valued above all else in soccer — because, in other words, he scores goals — none of the aforementioned stuff particularly matters.

Pepi, 18, may or may not become the striker of the future for the United States men’s soccer team. Many have tried to make the position — the No. 9, in soccer parlance — their own, and most have failed. But questions about Pepi’s long-term viability, his ceiling as a player, can wait. At the moment, there is a [*World Cup*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/world-cup-2022) to qualify for.

And there is no question that Pepi is the American striker of right now.

“Pressure is nothing to him — I think he relishes it, more so than his age should allow,” said Eric Quill, who coached Pepi at North Texas S.C. in 2019 and 2020. “No. 9s, when they’re in great form, it’s like, ‘Look out.’ And I think he’s as confident as they come right now.”

Ready or not, Pepi is being asked to carry a heavy responsibility on his teenage shoulders. After making his debut with the United States senior national team just two months ago, he was the only pure striker that Gregg Berhalter, the team’s coach, summoned for the team’s two [*World Cup*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/world-cup-2022) qualifiers this month. The first of these was a marquee match on Friday night against Mexico in Cincinnati, where the U.S. won, 2-0.

The show of faith, if risky, made sense: Pepi, who plays professionally for F.C. Dallas in Major League Soccer, had collected three goals and two assists in his first four appearances with the United States. He has also been one of the most consistent bright spots in the team’s somewhat shaky start to the qualifying tournament.

Pepi is the youngest player on a notably young team. (“Lose Yourself” by Eminem was the top song in the country when he was born in January 2003, and Tom Brady had only one Super Bowl ring back then.) The youth of the American squad has been at once a point of pride ([*when things go well*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/07/sports/soccer/us-jamaica-world-cup.html)) and an excuse ([*when things don’t go as well*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/08/sports/soccer/usmnt-honduras-world-cup.html)). But the team’s disastrous failure to qualify for the 2018 World Cup has helped coaches justify turning over a new leaf — track records be damned.

Pepi embodies that desire to start fresh more than anyone. He is all potential, a blank slate personified.

Yet his emergence could not be more timely. In recent years, the United States’ program has seen promising players sprout up all over the field. (American attacking midfielders, for instance, seem to be multiplying like jack rabbits.) But the center forward position has long been something of a barren patch.

Brian McBride, who played from 1993 to 2006, remains the gold standard for American strikers, according to Herculez Gomez, a former national team striker. Jozy Altidore came closest to filling McBride’s shoes, Gomez said. Countless others have been hyped, but few have followed through.

“We could start spouting off a lot names,” Gomez, now an analyst for ESPN, said about the revolving door of strikers. “A lot of players have been put in the role, but not a lot of guys have taken the reins.”

He added with a laugh: “I was one of them.”

Gomez said Pepi was raw, but undoubtedly promising, showing a sharp trajectory of improvement in the last year alone.

“I think his mentality is the strongest trait he has,” Gomez said. “He’s just so hungry. He’s got this arrogance about him. Borderline cocky. A swagger to him.”

That may be the case in the penalty area, but in most other circumstances Pepi is known as an introvert. In conversations with the news media, for example, he has a tendency to meander cautiously through the early beats of a response before settling on phrasing he has used before. (The problem with playing well, for some athletes, is that people want to speak with you.)

This type of shyness might be concerning for a coach, were it not so easily, and so ferociously, shed on the field.

“In the dressing room he was always kind of in the corner by himself,” said Francisco Molina, the former scouting director for F.C. Dallas, who met Pepi when he was playing in the team’s youth system. “On the field, he was a loud, screaming, rebellious kid.”

The first thing Molina noticed about Pepi was his spindly frame. (“Like a baby deer, he said.”) The second was his steady stream of goals: He could score them with his right foot or his left, with his head, with his knees and shoulders and shins. He can find almost any way to nudge the ball into the net.

“He has that instinct,” Molina said. “He’s a pure 9.”

These skills have drawn interest [*from the top clubs in Europe*](https://www.planetfootball.com/quick-reads/everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-in-demand-ricardo-pepi-liverpool-man-utd/). Among those tracking Pepi’s development, there seems to be agreement that his next step should be a careful, conscientious one — a spot on a good team in a medium-profile league, perhaps, or one on a medium-profile team in a top league.

“You have to go somewhere where you play right away,” his U.S. teammate Chris Richards, who made [*a similar move to Europe*](https://fcbayern.com/en/news/2019/01/fc-bayern-sign-chris-richards) from F.C. Dallas at age 18, [*said in an interview*](https://www.transfermarkt.com/chris-richards-bayern-quot-is-a-machine-quot-ricardo-pepi-needs-quot-to-go-somewhere-to-play-quot-/view/news/394814) with the website Transfermarkt last week. “Sometimes you get caught up in the big names, but it might not be the perfect situation.”

There appears to be consensus, too, on the one area where he could improve the most: playing with his back to the goal. In those situations, Pepi prefers laying the ball off quickly to a teammate to get himself moving again. He does not yet look as comfortable holding the ball and withstanding a physical challenge from a defender, the kind of pause that top strikers must master in order to give their teammates time to build an attack around them.

For Pepi, the key may be as simple as putting on some muscle.

“At the higher levels, the center backs, most of them are athletic beasts,” said Quill, Pepi’s former youth coach. “He’s got a slim frame. He’s going to have to do a lot of work in the gym.”

Molina concurred. “His body hasn’t caught up to his brain yet,” he said.

Pepi’s soccer brain and body will continue to develop, but his heart was already put to the test this past summer when he was forced to choose between representing the United States, where he was born, or Mexico, the home of his parents.

Pepi grew up in San Elizario, Texas, a ***working-class*** town just outside El Paso. He spoke Spanish at home, followed Club América of the Mexican league, rooted for Mexico’s national team and idolized its stars. Moving seamlessly between cultures was natural for him, the way it can be for countless children of immigrants around the world.

In the end, Pepi chose the United States because of the comfort he had developed with the federation, and because of the opportunities the team offered to help him to thrive.

“Follow your own path,” Pepi said when asked what advice he might give to another Mexican American player facing the same choice. “Make your decision with your heart.”

Michael Orozco, a fellow Mexican American who played 29 games for the U.S. national team, was happy with Pepi’s choice. But he warned that Pepi could expect criticism, even vitriol, from Mexican fans moving forward, perhaps as soon as Friday night.

In 2012, Orozco scored for the United States in a friendly at Azteca Stadium in Mexico City, helping to lead the Americans to their first-ever win on Mexican soil. Orozco, who was playing in the Mexican league at the time and now plays for the U.S.L.’s Orange County S.C., said he was criticized by his club teammates for scoring and, worse, for celebrating. Orozco said he had no regrets, and he hoped Pepi wouldn’t have any either.

“He’s starting to prove himself,” he said. “Now, he has to live up to the potential.”

PHOTO: U.S. Pins Its Hopes For the World Cup On a Teenage No. 9 (PHOTOGRAPH BY BIENVENIDO VELASCO/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

**Load-Date:** November 16, 2021

**End of Document**



[***What It’s Like to Live Next to America’s Largest Port Amid a Global Supply Chain Crisis; California Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64C2-BFM1-DXY4-X30W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1558 words

**Byline:** Soumya Karlamangla

**Highlight:** In one Los Angeles neighborhood, traffic spilling over from the backlogged port has brought noise, pollution and safety hazards.

**Body**

In one Los Angeles neighborhood, traffic spilling over from the backlogged port has brought noise, pollution and safety hazards.

LOS ANGELES — The stucco cottage looks every bit the California dream: a grassy yard and big patio, encircled by a white picket fence. Next to the front door, a Santa figurine greets visitors and a dog’s snout peeks through a window, as if an advertisement for domestic bliss.

Except.

This home is in Wilmington, a mostly Latino ***working-class*** enclave north of the Port of Los Angeles, where the effects of the [*supply chain crisis*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/05/business/economy/supply-chain.html) have spilled over in a big way. For the past several months, the street that the house is on has served as a 24-hour thoroughfare for semi trucks headed to and from the port.

“It’s like a highway,” said Imelda Ulloa, who has lived in this home for more than 20 years.

Ulloa, 57, can’t open her windows anymore because of how much noise and dust flood in. She doesn’t invite guests over to barbecue because the din of engines drowns out their conversations. Her grandson isn’t allowed to play out front because it’s too dangerous.

One afternoon last week, I stood on Ulloa’s stoop and counted: In 10 minutes, 44 trucks drove by, inches from her front gate.

Police and city officials ramped up ticketing of trucks in Wilmington after an increase in complaints from residents, but the sheer volume of vehicles makes it difficult to eliminate the problem.

“Obviously clearing out the ship backlog is going to be No. 1,” said Jacob Haik, deputy chief of staff for Councilman Joe Buscaino, who represents the Harbor neighborhood.

As with many consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, the disruption in the supply chain has revealed something that has always been true, said Manuel Pastor, a sociology professor at the University of Southern California: A small group of people pay a high price for what we view as quick and easy access to goods.

So much of the discussion around the port backlog “has focused on ‘How do we maximize the throughput?’” Pastor told me. “But the throughput is through someone’s neighborhood.”

Wilmington residents are accustomed to dealing with the effects of living just a few miles from North America’s largest port, which [*handles a big percentage of the shipping containers entering the United States by sea.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/18/us/port-of-los-angeles-supply-chain.html)

But the few trucks that drove in front of Ulloa’s home on Drumm Avenue when her children were growing up didn’t stop them from playing tag with neighbors or skateboarding in the street.

Such activities would be impossible now. Trucks are regularly stalled outside her house, forming a colorful chain that extends tens deep.

As we sat last week in her living room, decorated with family pictures and bouquets of flowers, Ulloa and I were interrupted by a near-constant roaring of engines and honking even though the windows and doors had been shut.

It isn’t just Drumm. Elsewhere in Wilmington, residents have [*put up homemade barricades to protect their children from trucks*](https://www.foxla.com/news/wilmington-residents-upset-over-increase-of-trucks-on-neighborhood-streets). Roads have been damaged because they weren’t built to withstand throngs of heavy vehicles. In October, a container fell off a truck and [*crushed a parked car*](https://abc7.com/port-backlog-of-los-angeles-long-beach-wilmington/11144096/).

Wilmington, which is home to about 50,000 people, already has high levels of pollution from [*nearby oil fields and suffers some of the state’s highest rates of cancer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/30/opinion/drilling-and-dirty-air-in-los-angeles.html) and asthma. This latest development is unlikely to help.

Ulloa used to clean her patio and car once every two weeks, but so much grime accumulates now that she rinses them twice a week.

“You wash your car in the morning and it’s dirty in the afternoon,” she told me.

Other residents say their commutes have grown because it takes so long to merge in and out of the traffic outside their homes. Drivers delivering takeout meals or packages have to park down the street because there’s no way to pull into the driveways.

“We’re living in a port — that’s what it feels like,” said Cesar Vigil, who lives next door to Ulloa. He acknowledged that the port plays a vital function: “But at what cost?”

In general, semi trucks aren’t supposed to drive on residential roads unless it’s the only way to reach their destinations, officials say. But with [*a record-breaking amount of goods coming into the port*](https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-business-los-angeles-global-trade-long-beach-dc2ede07c81ecedcd699b11eaeb07c3d), drivers may be taking shortcuts to try to pick up an extra load or could be searching for places to drop off empty containers [*amid a shortage of storage facilities.*](https://qz.com/2079345/cargo-ships-containers-are-piling-up-in-long-beach/)

Haik said that trucks in Wilmington must sometimes travel near homes because they are close to businesses. But the police can check whether drivers’ manifests match the routes they take, he said.

“The enforcement is over there,” he told me. “Eventually we’re going to catch them.”

Since September, port police officers have issued 700 moving violations to truck drivers, including for going down roads they weren’t supposed to, said Sgt. Glenn Twardy of the Los Angeles Port Police. They have also handed out 1,000 citations to trucks parked illegally and impounded 400 chassis that had been left in the streets.

Twardy, who has worked in the area for more than 15 years, said that while some port activity encroaching into Wilmington has always been unavoidable, “I’ve never seen it this bad.”

According to Ulloa, the traffic in front of her home slows on Sundays but doesn’t completely stop. Holidays are the only time when the number of trucks passing by drops to maybe one or two, she said.

Thinking about the upcoming reprieve made her almost giddy.

“I love those days,” she told me, grinning. “You can sit on your patio. You can hear your conversations.”

For more:

* Why Christmas gifts are [*arriving on time this year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/22/business/christmas-gifts-delivery-supply-chain.html).

1. How the supply chain crisis [*unfolded*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/05/business/economy/supply-chain.html).
2. Supply chain snarls for cars [*on display at a Kansas terminal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/02/business/supply-chain-car-shipping.html).

The latest on Omicron and the pandemic

* Omicron is just beginning and [*Americans are already tired*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/22/us/omicron-virus-worry-dread.html).

1. [*The variant will surge despite Biden’s new plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/21/health/omicron-covid-biden-scientists.html), scientists say.
2. What are the [*symptoms of Omicron?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/21/well/live/omicron-variant-symptoms-covid.html)
3. All anyone [*wants for Christmas is a Covid test*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/21/style/christmas-covid-home-tests.html).
4. Are schools [*ready for the next big surge?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/21/us/covid-schools.html)

The rest of the news

* Redistricting: New state maps appear to have given Democrats an advantage over Republicans, [*The Associated Press reports*](https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-texas-california-los-angeles-race-and-ethnicity-1dd1d2aebdb7a1e889a43a859bb909c5). But the Los Angeles area [*lost one U.S. House seat*](https://apnews.com/article/elections-california-los-angeles-voting-rights-long-beach-7b32de36ee482486eb4bab9e98d710fa).The longtime congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard has announced she will not seek re-election for her Los Angeles district, [*The Associated Press reports*](https://apnews.com/article/elections-california-donald-trump-los-angeles-devin-nunes-eae16638a41b9f72e673bd39a5fcb7b4).

1. Intimidation sentence: A California man who made personal threats to politicians and journalists in the wake of Trump’s defeat has been sentenced to [*three years in prison*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/21/us/politics/robert-lemke-capitol-riot.html).

* Covid-19 vaccine mandate: A judge struck down San Diego’s student vaccination mandate, preventing thousands of unvaccinated students from being kicked out of in-person school, [*The San Diego Union-Tribune reports*](https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/education/story/2021-12-20/sd-me-san-diego-unified-mandate-ruling).

1. Chief of staff arrested: Joseph Iniguez, the chief of staff for the Los Angeles County district attorney, was arrested on suspicion of public intoxication, [*The Associated Press reports*](https://apnews.com/article/arrests-california-los-angeles-8c0c212eed8ff92ad68766ded66835bd).

* Inmate rights: The A.C.L.U. of Northern California has accused Tulare County of denying female prisoners sufficient prenatal care, [*The Fresno Bee reports*](https://www.fresnobee.com/news/local/article256693587.html).
* Mandatory boosters: San Jose proposed requiring booster shots for all city employees, the first city in the state to do so, [*The Los Angeles Times reports*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-12-21/san-jose-wants-to-require-covid-19-booster-shots).

1. Crypto start-ups: A wave of Silicon Valley executives and engineers are leaving jobs at large tech companies to [*chase cryptocurrency*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/20/technology/silicon-valley-cryptocurrency-start-ups.html).
2. Humboldt quake: An early-alert system gave some residents up to 10 seconds to take cover during Monday’s 6.2-magnitude earthquake, [*The Guardian reports*](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/dec/21/california-earthquake-early-warning-system).

What we’re eating

[*Lemony orzo*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1021068-lemony-orzo-with-asparagus-and-garlic-bread-crumbs) with asparagus and garlic bread crumbs.

Where we’re traveling

Today’s travel tip comes from Tom Stallard, who recommends [*Anza-Borrego Desert State Park*](https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=638) east of San Diego:

“We call it ‘down-market desert’ as there are few restaurants and no stoplights in the town of Borrego Springs. But there are hundreds of interesting trails to hike in the park, which is the largest state park in the lower 48 states. It is often the warmest place in California in winter. Accommodations are reasonable.”

Tell us about your favorite places to visit in California. Email your suggestions to [*CAtoday@nytimes.com*](mailto:CAtoday@nytimes.com). We’ll be sharing more in upcoming editions of the newsletter.

What we’re recommending

The year’s [*best podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/01/arts/best-podcasts.html).

And before you go, some good news

If you’re still looking for some low-key holiday plans, consider walking across San Francisco in a day.

The [*Crosstown Trail*](https://crosstowntrail.org/) starts at the city’s southeastern corner and ends at its northwestern tip. Over 16.5 miles, it traverses dirt paths and city streets and covers an elevation gain of over 2,000 feet and temperatures that can vary as much as 30 degrees. (That’s microclimates for you.)

The trail was [*introduced in summer 2019*](https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/nativeson/article/SF-s-new-17-mile-trail-offers-look-at-rarely-13915382.php), but parts were closed last year because of the pandemic.

Now that the course is fully open again, a National Geographic writer and photographer made the trek and [*documented this spectacular urban hike*](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/you-can-walk-across-san-francisco-in-a-day-heres-how).

Thanks for reading. I’ll be back tomorrow. — Soumya

P.S. Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Suffix that changes an adjective to a noun (4 letters).

Jack Kramer and Mariel Wamsley contributed to California Today. You can reach the team at [*CAtoday@nytimes.com*](mailto:CAtoday@nytimes.com).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/california-today).

PHOTO: Imelda Ulloa with her grandson Anthony Maganá outside her home in the Wilmington neighborhood of Los Angeles. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Allison Zaucha for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 22, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Kazakhstan’s Longtime Leader Is Gone, but Still Seemingly Everywhere***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64M9-S1S1-JBG3-63H3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1700 words

**Byline:** Valerie Hopkins

**Highlight:** Nursultan Nazarbayev, the autocratic former president, all but vanished after violent protests this month. But with his legacy so pervasive, will anything change?

**Body**

Nursultan Nazarbayev, the autocratic former president, all but vanished after violent protests this month. But with his legacy so pervasive, will anything change?

NUR-SULTAN, Kazakhstan — For three decades, Nursultan Nazarbayev was seemingly everywhere in Kazakhstan, the country he ruled with an autocrat’s clenched fist. The capital’s airport was named after him, as were the city’s best university, a group of elite high schools throughout the country, well-endowed foundations and wide boulevards.

Mr. Nazarbayev designed a futuristic white steel tower in the center of the city, with a gold orb on top. Inside, visitors can place their hands in a giant gold relief of Mr. Nazarbayev’s own hand, his fingers pointing out the plate-glass windows to his presidential palace in the distance. He [*stepped down as president*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/19/world/asia/kazakhstan-nazarbayev-resigns.html) in 2019 after 28 years, but retained power and influence as the official “Leader of the Nation.” His rubber-stamp Parliament renamed the capital city in his honor.

It was an open secret that he was the one still calling the shots.

Now, the man who was everywhere, and who controlled everything, has all but vanished after violent protests this month that spread like wildfire and marked the country’s greatest political upheaval since it became independent after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Political power now rests with Mr. Nazarbayev’s handpicked successor, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, who stripped his longtime boss and mentor of his title and his last remaining footholds of power. Except for making [*a brief video statement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/18/world/europe/kazakhstan-nursultan-nazarbayev-video.html), the former leader has receded, the speed of his fall from power almost as stunning as the length of his reign.

In the days after the protests, Kazakhstan was closed to many outsiders. A visit to Nur-Sultan soon after it reopened revealed that life in the bureaucratic city, populated by many civil servants, had mostly returned to normal. On a recent weekend, shoppers braving the risks of the coronavirus perused the Khan Shatyr mall, designed by the British architect Norman Foster in the shape of a large tent, with visitors searching for post-holiday sales.

The calm stood in contrast to the nation’s largest city, Almaty, where violence and looting and brutal police crackdowns have traumatized residents, some of whom are still searching for relatives who disappeared. Almaty’s monumental City Hall was vandalized during the unrest and burned for three days, leaving a gutted, blackened shell.

Kazakhstan, a former Soviet republic with a population of 19 million, faces an uncertain future. Mr. Nazarbayev had maintained a fragile independence from Vladimir V. Putin’s Russia, but Mr. Tokayev was forced to call for [*Russian-led military support to help quell the violence*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/01/06/world/kazakhstan-protests) this month, raising the question of whether he is beholden to the Russian leader for helping to assure his political survival. As Mr. Putin squares off against the West in [*a standoff over Ukraine*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/russia-ukraine-nato-europe.html), the Russian president has made clear his intention to maintain influence over neighboring countries.

Internally, Mr. Tokayev has promised overhauls to address the country’s ballooning inequality — the reason that spawned the protests in the first place.

Leysan Zoripova, 50, who was visiting her daughter in Nur-Sultan, said, “We are of course waiting for better days, when products are available and essential things like groceries were not so expensive.”

“But,” she added, “all this violence wasn’t necessary.”

With Mr. Nazarbayev’s legacy so pervasive, the question is whether anything will truly change in a country rich in resources, but where autocratic rule had allowed Mr. Nazarbayev’s family and friends to reap great wealth and keep it concentrated in the hands of a few.

“The formal and informal construction of the regime remains the same,” said Dimash Alzhanov, one of the founding members of Wake Up, Kazakhstan, an opposition movement whose activists have been regularly harassed and detained. “The relations between elites — the way they construct patron-client relations — remains the same.”

Mr. Nazarbayev grew up in a rural town near Almaty, the former capital. He was a steelworker before joining the Communist Party, rising through the ranks to regional party secretary. In 1984, he became prime minister of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Nazarbayev became the first president of Kazakhstan in 1990, and the next year, just weeks before the collapse of Soviet Union, Kazakhstan declared its independence. It was the only newly independent former Soviet state where its titular people — Kazakhs — were not the ethnic majority. Forty percent of the population were ethnic Russian, a number that has since dropped to 19 percent.

At the time, President Boris N. Yeltsin of Russia [*was speaking openly*](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2011/04/18/nowheresville-keith-gessen) about wanting to expand his country’s borders to include Abkhazia, a region of Georgia that Russia eventually invaded in 2008; and Crimea, the Ukrainian peninsula that Russia annexed in 2014. He also coveted [*Donbas, the eastern part of Ukraine*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/16/magazine/ukraine-war.html) where Russian-backed separatists have been fighting since the annexation.

Northern Kazakhstan was the fourth region in Mr. Yeltsin’s sights, but Russian forces never showed up uninvited, and today it is the only region of the four that is not contested.

In part, that’s because even his toughest critics acknowledge that Mr. Nazarbayev handled thorny relations with Moscow in a savvy manner. When he moved the capital from Almaty to a windy, grassland site in the north (the new capital was previously called Astana), it was not a pure vanity project; he was effectively planting a flag.

He championed a “multivector” foreign policy, balancing between his powerful neighbors Russia and China while also courting U.S. investment, especially in the oil-rich west. His mantra for development was, “Economics first, politics later.”

But over 28 years, Mr. Nazarbayev’s reign came to look more like kleptocracy. His family enjoyed vast riches, with influence in the banking and extraction industries and real estate in Switzerland, London and New York.

A [*recent report*](https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/2021-12/2021-12-08-uk-kleptocracy-problem-heathershaw-mayne-et-al.pdf) by the think tank Chatham House listed 34 properties bought by members of the country’s ruling elite from 1998 to 2020 at a total cost of about $733 million. Most of the purchases were made by members of the Nazarbayev family or people close to them, [*according to John Heathershaw*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/08/how-the-kazakh-elite-put-its-wealth-into-uk-property), one of the report’s authors.

Mr. Nazarbayev’s middle daughter, Dinara, and her husband, Timur Kulibayev, were each worth $3 billion before the recent unrest in Kazakhstan, [*according to Forbes*](https://www.forbes.com/sites/daviddawkins/2022/01/07/kazakhstans-tycoonsincluding-members-of-nazarbayev-familyshed-billions-as-stocks-plunge/?sh=19a2608b4186), and they own the country’s biggest bank. His eldest daughter, Dariga Nazarbayeva, an amateur opera singer and politician, and her son own real estate in London worth almost $200 million. Their properties are said to include [*the house at 221B Baker Street*](https://qz.com/1245110/the-unsolved-mystery-of-who-owns-sherlock-holmes-130-million-home/) that is the address of the fictional detective Sherlock Holmes.

Mr. Nazarbayev’s youngest daughter, Aliya, had a monopoly on the recycling industry through a private company called Operator ROP, which has taken in about $1.6 billion since 2016, according to remarks by Serikkali Brekeshev, a Kazakh minister, in [*a government meeting*](https://rus.azattyq.org/a/31650309.html) this month.

The cronyism and corruption chafed at ***working-class*** citizens who grew weary of government-connected businesspeople funneling money to themselves.

Posing with her teenage daughter for a photograph with the presidential palace in the background, Gulya Chumkent, 48, said that Mr. Nazarbayev had taken advantage of his position.

“Of course it wasn’t right that he enriched himself,” she said. “But it wasn’t in our power to do anything about it.”

Mr. Tokayev acknowledged the vast wealth accumulated by his predecessor’s family for the first time in a speech to Parliament on Jan. 11.

“Thanks to the first president, Elbasy,” he said, using the Kazakh term for Leader of the Nation, “a group of very profitable companies emerged in the country, as well as a group of people whose wealth is significant even by international standards.”

His criticism was striking in a country where denouncing the government can sometimes be cause for arrest. A [*2010 law*](https://www.akorda.kz/ru/official_documents/constitutional_laws/o-pervom-prezidente-respubliki-kazahstan-lidere-nacii) makes it impossible to sue Mr. Nazarbayev or his family members, and it makes all of his and his family’s banking documents secret.

Mr. Tokayev also demanded that local governments cancel contracts with Operator ROP, which many took as a sign of the beginning of a process to unravel Mr. Nazarbayev’s grip on profit-making centers.

Mr. Nazarbayev’s nephew, Samat Abish, was dismissed as deputy of the powerful security agency. The sovereign wealth fund said that two Nazarbayev in-laws had left top posts at national energy companies. And Mr. Kulibayev, the son-in-law, resigned as head of Kazakhstan’s leading business lobby, though he retained positions in an influential energy group and on the board of Russia’s Gazprom.

On Tuesday, Mr. Tokayev fired the head of the Central Election Commission, whose daughter is married to one of Ms. Nazarbayeva’s sons.

Many Kazakhs are waiting to see how Mr. Tokayev’s approach will differ from that of his predecessor.

Erzhan Kazykhan, an adviser to Mr. Tokayev, said that his country was committed to democratic reforms. Still, he demurred when asked if the post-Nazarbayev period would herald a new era of genuine political competition.

“You cannot build a Jeffersonian democracy overnight,” he said in an interview.

Regardless of who Mr. Tokayev brings into his inner circle, Mr. Nazarbayev’s effective removal from control has emboldened people, said Zhanbolat Mamai, an opposition politician. He cited what he said was a crucial difference between the two men.

“For 30 years, people were afraid of Mr. Nazarbayev,” Mr. Mamai said. “No one is afraid of Mr. Tokayev.”

PHOTOS: Above, visitors placing their hands in a giant gold relief of a hand of former President Nursultan Nazarbayev, in Nur-Sultan, the Kazakh capital renamed to honor him. Left, a gate in Almaty, Kazakhstan’s largest city, bears Mr. Nazarbayev’s image.; Children near a statue of Mr. Nazarbayev in Nur-Sultan. His presence seems to be everywhere. Mr. Nazarbayev ruled Kazakhstan for about three decades, but now, stripped of his power, he has receded into the background. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SERGEY PONOMAREV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 27, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Hong Kong Is Holding Elections. It Wants Them to Look Real.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63P1-YDF1-JBG3-652C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 24, 2021 Friday 11:06 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; asia

**Length:** 1367 words

**Byline:** Vivian Wang and Joy Dong

**Highlight:** China has already determined the outcome, but the government is pressuring opposition parties to participate to lend the vote legitimacy.

**Body**

China has already determined the outcome, but the government is pressuring opposition parties to participate to lend the vote legitimacy.

HONG KONG — As far as the trappings of a healthy democracy go, Hong Kong’s upcoming legislative election has them all.

Hundreds of politicians hand out leaflets in the tropical heat. Posters remind residents of voter registration deadlines. During a preliminary ballot on Sunday, the government touted a record 90 percent turnout rate.

All the ingredients are there — except one: any uncertainty about the outcome.

The legislative election, set for December, is the first since the Chinese government [*ordered sweeping changes to Hong Kong’s election system*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/30/world/asia/china-hong-kong-elections.html) to ensure its favored candidates win. Some opposition groups have pledged to boycott in protest, and the largest of them, the Democratic Party, will decide this weekend whether to follow.

But Hong Kong officials have warned that a boycott could violate the city’s expansive national security law. After all, an election doesn’t look valid if the opposition doesn’t show up.

Welcome to elections in Hong Kong now: not so much exercises in democracy as the vigorous performance of it.

“They want to continue to give the illusion that they respect the Basic Law,” said [*Jean-Pierre Cabestan*](https://gis.hkbu.edu.hk/staff_list/staff_detail/15/), a professor of Chinese politics at Hong Kong Baptist University. The law is Hong Kong’s mini-Constitution, which promises the city, a former British colony, certain political rights under Chinese rule. “That’s the best way to legitimize their rule.”

Hong Kong’s elections have never been fully free, with rules that favored Beijing’s allies even before this spring’s overhaul. Even so, the opposition had long managed to win at least some influence on government policy, and polls had consistently shown that they had the majority of the public’s support. In late 2019, months of fierce antigovernment protests helped fuel an unprecedented landslide victory by pro-democracy candidates in local elections.

The Chinese Communist Party was determined not to see a repeat. After imposing the security law last summer to crush the protests, it quickly followed up with election changes that allowed only government-approved “patriots” to hold office. In addition, the general public will now be allowed to choose just 20 of 90 legislators. Most of the rest will be chosen by the electors picked last Sunday — all but one aligned with the authorities.

Yet the party, intent on preserving Hong Kong’s status as a global financial center, has fervently denied international accusations that it is reneging on the pledges it made upon Hong Kong’s return to China in 1997. Hence officials’ determination to make the elections look as credible as possible — even if that requires intimidating the opposition into running.

One senior official has [*suggested*](https://news.mingpao.com/pns/%E8%A6%81%E8%81%9E/article/20210906/s00001/1630865294632/%E7%9B%A7%E6%96%87%E7%AB%AF-%E6%B0%91%E4%B8%BB%E9%BB%A8%E5%80%98%E9%98%BB%E6%88%90%E5%93%A1%E5%8F%83%E9%81%B8-%E6%81%90%E9%81%95%E5%9C%8B%E5%AE%89%E6%B3%95) that boycotting the elections would be a statement of rebellion. Carrie Lam, the city’s chief executive, [*said last month*](https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/politics/article/3146177/hong-kong-leader-carrie-lam-questions-value-political) that it would be “strange” for a party not to run.

“If there is a political party with many members, but it does not discuss or participate in politics, then we might need to question the value of its existence,” she told reporters.

The government has also made it illegal to encourage others to cast protest ballots.

Regardless of what the Democratic Party decides, this past Sunday’s preliminary vote has already offered a preview of what Hong Kong elections may look like in the future.

The purpose of the vote was to form an Election Committee, a group of 1,500 that under Beijing’s new rules will select many legislators, as well as Hong Kong’s next top leader. According to the government, the committee is a diverse microcosm of Hong Kong society.

But fewer than 8,000 residents — 0.1 percent of the population — were eligible to vote in the Election Committee poll, all drawn from a list approved by Beijing.

All the candidates had to be screened by a government panel for loyalty. No major opposition groups fielded candidates, citing the futility given the handpicked electorate. (In addition, many of the opposition’s leaders have been arrested, are in exile or have been disqualified from holding government posts.)

Even the few residents who did have a vote had limited say. Of the Election Committee’s 1,500 seats, three-quarters were uncontested or set aside for designated government allies.

None of that stopped officials from declaring the day a paragon of civic participation. “Hong Kong’s elections have always been known for being fair, open, just, clean and honest, and we take pride in that,” Mrs. Lam said before polls opened.

At times, the authorities’ dedication to the veneer of public engagement verged on absurdism.

The weekend before the Election Committee vote, the Central Liaison Office, Beijing’s official arm in Hong Kong, ordered the ranks of the city’s billionaire tycoons to staff street booths and extol the virtues of the new election system.

Virtually all the tycoons were running uncontested or guaranteed appointed seats on the committee, in keeping with Beijing’s tradition of political partnerships with the business elite. But the central government wanted residents to feel as if they had earned their positions, said Tam Yiu-Chung, a Hong Kong member of the Chinese legislature’s top committee.

“It was the liaison office that asked us to do this,” Mr. Tam said. “Even though we are guaranteed members, we still believe we should tell residents what expectations we have for ourselves, and let them understand us better.”

That was how Pansy Ho, the second-richest woman in Hong Kong, found herself [*hawking leaflets on a 92-degree day*](https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/politics/article/3148367/hong-kong-election-committee-polls-hundreds-prominent?module=inline&amp;pgtype=article). Raymond Kwok, the billionaire chairman of one of Hong Kong’s largest developers, stayed only a few minutes, enough time to be photographed handing out fliers, before leaving.

Kennedy Wong, a lawyer and member of an advisory body to Beijing, lasted longer — about an hour and a half, he said — at a booth in the ***working-class*** neighborhood of North Point. Mr. Wong acknowledged that the success of the outreach was questionable.

“I didn’t receive questions on the street during my time there,” he said, adding that passers-by either flashed signs of support or “walked past and ignored us.”

On the day of the election, officials touted a 90 percent turnout rate. Mrs. Lam [*said*](https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202109/19/P2021091900834.htm) it “reflected the support for the new electoral system.”

But that 90 percent was not calculated out of the total pool of roughly 8,000 eligible voters; it was of the number of voters in the few contested races. It represented 4,380 of 4,889 voters in that category casting ballots. There were more police [*deployed to guard polling stations*](https://news.rthk.hk/rthk/en/component/k2/1611191-20210918.htm) — over 5,000 — than electors.

Still, those who voted professed to be unfazed. In an interview as she left the polling station, Chan Nga Yue said she considered the candidates representative because “many of them are people that we know.”

Even with the few ballots cast, vote counting proved troublesome. The first results were not announced until nine hours after polls closed — for a seat for which 82 votes had been cast. The full results were not finalized for an additional three hours. Officials cited staff errors.

Only one candidate who was not part of the pro-Beijing bloc won a seat. Officials said the victory of Tik Chi-yuen, a self-declared independent, proved that diverse voices were welcome.

But Mr. Tik’s election was, in part, pure luck: After tying with two other candidates, he prevailed in a random draw.

Occasionally, reminders that not everyone was thrilled with the new setup broke through.

One pro-democracy group staged a four-person protest near a polling station, where the members were [*surrounded by dozens of police officers*](https://www.thestandard.com.hk/breaking-news/section/4/180462/Five-thousand-police-versus-five-protesters).

Also, midway through the day, Barnabas Fung, the city’s top elections official, acknowledged that the reduction in the electorate had led “many unregistered people” to line up at polling stations mistakenly.

“There were people who thought they had a vote,” Mr. Fung told reporters. “In the future, we’ll have to see if there’s a way to let everyone know that only registered voters can vote.”

PHOTO: Counting ballots. A flurry of new laws blocked some candidates while insuring victory for others. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANTHONY KWAN/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** September 25, 2021

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[***In Hong Kong, Elections Now Have Little Suspense***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63P7-RXY1-DXY4-X0CD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 25, 2021 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6

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**Byline:** By Vivian Wang and Joy Dong

**Body**

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/24/world/asia/hong-kong-elections.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/24/world/asia/hong-kong-elections.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Counting ballots. A flurry of new laws blocked some candidates while insuring victory for others. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANTHONY KWAN/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** September 25, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Joaquina Kalukango Isn’t Afraid to Speak Up Anymore; Spring Preview***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64VX-F861-DXY4-X205-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 25, 2022 Friday 15:23 EST

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 1729 words

**Byline:** Julia Jacobs

**Highlight:** Before leading her first Broadway musical in “Paradise Square,” she had long deferred to others in the rehearsal room — until she realized how much she has to share.

**Body**

When Joaquina Kalukango was done with [*“Slave Play,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/06/theater/slave-play-review-broadway.html) she was done with “Slave Play.”

After four months in the show, Kalukango had to close the book on her character, Kaneisha, a Black woman desperately trying to find sexual satisfaction with her white husband by role-playing as an enslaved person and an overseer. Eight times a week, she inhabited a character who contends with psychological, sexual, generational and physical trauma, all in a two-hour span.

“How do you do that without your soul falling apart?” Kalukango said in a recent interview. “You have to figure that out.”

So she made a clean break, ceasing all psychoanalysis of Kaneisha and taking onscreen parts, including as Betty Shabazz in “One Night in Miami.”

Now, after two years away from Broadway as it weathered the pandemic, Kalukango is stepping into a radically different role: as the lead actress in the big-budget, large-ensemble musical, [*“Paradise Square.”*](https://www.paradisesquaremusical.com/) She plays Nelly O’Brien, a woman whose father escaped slavery and who now runs a bar in the Five Points neighborhood of Civil War-era Manhattan; her tight-knit community of Black Americans and Irish immigrants unravels in the days leading up to the 1863 Draft Riots, when white ***working-class*** New Yorkers [*formed violent racist mobs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/20/nyregion/1863-nyc-draft-riots-firefighters.html) following a draft lottery.

The show, which starts previews at the Barrymore Theater on March 15 after a five-week run in Chicago in the fall, is Kalukango’s first top billing in a Broadway musical.

“She was making steps toward this leading-lady position, and she’s finally there,” said Danielle Brooks, an actress who has been close friends with Kalukango since they studied at Juilliard together.

“I think she’s ready to walk into this just how Audra did and just how LaChanze did,” she added, comparing her to Audra McDonald and to [*the “Trouble in Mind” star.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/18/theater/trouble-in-mind-review.html)

But this new chapter is about much more than how the industry perceives Kalukango, whose performance as Kaneisha earned her a Tony nomination and a reputation for a magnetic star quality, as the director of “Paradise Square,” Moisés Kaufman, put it.

“It’s about owning my power, trusting who I am, trusting that my opinions about my character are valid,” Kalukango said. (Kalukango landed “Paradise Square” without an audition: In an early Zoom meeting with Kaufman, he said, “I don’t need you to read anything. I know that you can do this.”)

Until recently, Kalukango, 33, would have described herself as a reserved listener, an actress who tended to defer to the authority in the room. In the past, if she had a qualm in a rehearsal about a character or a scene, she would let it be, then end up feeling awkward and foolish onstage. It wasn’t until she saw other Black actresses speaking up in rehearsals — such as Tonya Pinkins in [*“Hurt Village”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/28/theater/reviews/hurt-village-by-katori-hall.html) — that she began to start building the confidence to do the same. Then came age, experience and a pandemic that filled her with a sense of urgency.

“Once that pandemic hit, it was like, this is life or death, people,” she said. “You can’t sit up here and be in a shell anymore. You have to take ownership of your craft, ownership of your art, ownership of who you are as a person.”

Kalukango was born in Atlanta, the youngest child of Angolan parents who had immigrated to the United States after escaping civil war. Her three siblings were all much older; she remembers being too young to participate in the animated conversations about politics at the dinner table — one place where she grew accustomed to observing from the background.

As a child, Kalukango’s experiences performing were mostly limited to impersonating Whitney Houston and Aaliyah at home on her family’s karaoke machine. It wasn’t until after a middle school talent show that a counselor suggested she audition for a performing arts high school.

That trajectory led her to Juilliard, where Brooks and Kalukango remember the frustrations of being the only Black women in their acting classes, with few Black instructors. They were frequently mistaken for each other at auditions, Brooks remembered, and Kalukango felt some instructors did not have the faculties to advise her on how to incorporate her race and background into her characters.

“Some teachers weren’t able to communicate what it meant for me to play a character — to play Hedda Gabler as a Black woman,” she recalled. “Could I interpret anything of myself in this character? Or is my color completely gone from this — my culture gone from this?”

“They weren’t having those conversations,” she continued. “And so I felt unseen.”

After college, Kalukango had a brief stint as a swing in the 2011 Off Broadway revival of [*“Rent,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/12/theater/reviews/rent-revival-at-new-world-stages-review.html) then had her Broadway debut as an understudy in [*“Godspell.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/08/theater/reviews/godspell-at-the-circle-in-the-square-review.html) She went on to join the ensemble in [*“Holler if Ya Hear Me,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/08/theater/holler-if-ya-hear-me-uses-songs-by-tupac-shakur.html?_r=0) a musical inspired by Tupac Shakur’s music, then took on larger parts as the rival to Sutton Foster’s character in “The Wild Party” and as Nettie, the sister to Cynthia Erivo’s Celie, in the 2015 Broadway revival of [*“The Color Purple.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/11/theater/review-the-color-purple-on-broadway-stripped-to-its-essence.html)

She became pregnant during the run of “The Color Purple,” staying with the production until a month before she was due. Onstage, she learned to throw herself to the ground in a doctor-approved way, and backstage she wore a surgical mask to protect herself and the baby from viruses. When her son was born, she thought to herself, “I can’t hold back anymore. This is for him.”

After Kalukango found out in 2018 that her father had cancer, she and her son moved back to Atlanta from New Jersey. She decided to stay there after her father died, traveling with her son and her mother for jobs, including to Chicago for “Paradise Square” and now to New York for its Broadway opening.

Kalukango’s character wasn’t always the lead; in earlier scripts, Nelly was one figure in an assemblage of Five Points inhabitants, including a formerly enslaved man escaping to Canada and an immigrant who just stepped off the boat from Ireland. The show itself has been in development for nine years. In 2013, Garth Drabinsky, the lead producer, first heard music from [*“Hard Times”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/21/theater/reviews/hard-times-an-american-musical-at-the-cell-theater.html) — ​​a musical conceived by Larry Kirwan, the lead singer of the Celtic rock band Black 47, which largely revolved around the songs of the 19th-century American songwriter Stephen Foster, who spent time in Five Points toward the end of his life.

Drabinsky saw the choreographic potential, the multilayered socioeconomic dynamics of the neighborhood and the sense that the story was not particularly well known to audiences.

As the producer brought on writers to develop the musical for Broadway, the show moved further and further away from Foster and his music — especially after the production reckoned fully with [*Foster’s contributions*](https://www.npr.org/transcripts/126035325) to American minstrelsy.

It wasn’t until after “Paradise Square” was performed at [*California’s Berkeley Repertory Theater in 2019*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/01/theater/paradise-square-musical-berkeley-drabinsky.html) that the writers identified the show’s heroine in Nelly, who is waiting for her husband, an Irish immigrant fighting in the Civil War, to come home.

“What became clear is that you need to know who you are rooting for and who you’re hopeful about,” said Jason Howland, the show’s composer and music supervisor. “Ultimately, that’s Joaquina’s character.”

Nelly’s presence in the show grew even larger after the production in Chicago, where audiences reliably gave a standing ovation when Kalukango sang “Let It Burn,” a climax in the second act in which she unleashes her powerful voice, said Masi Asare, who wrote the show’s lyrics with Nathan Tysen.

“Every time she comes onstage she energizes the whole thing,” Asare said.

“Paradise Square” bursts with action and movement — from the rough-and-tumble of Nelly’s bar, to the scenes of violent protest as Irish immigrants mobilize against the draft, to lively ensemble dance numbers that blend Irish step dancing with Juba and the beginnings of tap (the choreography is by Bill T. Jones). In between the action, there are the quieter scenes of sinister politicking as an uptown party boss seeks to undercut Nelly’s influence in her community and turn Irish residents against abolition.

To prepare, Kalukango read seven books about Five Points and Black society in 19th-century New York. Knowing the history helped her shed her reserve in the rehearsal room and assert herself when she was moved to, she said.

In one scene, in which Nelly discovers another character has a bounty on his head for killing his former master, Kalukango sensed there was something off.

“The windows are open, people are outside walking in the street, and we’re literally having a conversation, holding a ‘Wanted’ poster up,” Kalukango said. “At any point in time, if someone saw this, we all would be arrested or, worse, killed.”

After she raised that concern to Kaufman, the stage directions were changed to make the conversation more discreet.

When she doubts herself, Kalukango often thinks back to advice she received while doing “Slave Play” — something the intimacy coordinator said to the cast during a rehearsal.

“She told us ‘no’ is a full sentence,” Kalukango said. “I think that was revelatory for so many of us.”

She had trained for over a decade in an industry where teachers explained how to walk, talk and even how to breathe. There was a sense that, as actors, they were just lucky to have a job — so the answer should always be “yes.”

“Actors, I feel like, in recent times, have a real ownership,” she went on. “We’re the ones onstage doing this eight times a week. And nobody knows your character better than you.”

Although Kalukango tries not to think much about “Slave Play,” she does note some similarities between Kaneisha and Nelly: Both are Black women married to white men (one British, the other Irish). Both are, in their own ways, grappling with affects of centuries of racism on their lives.

And yet the characters’ psychologies are sharply different. In a turn of irony, Kaneisha, a famous writer who lives in the present day, is “still mentally enslaved and is bonded by her history,” Kalukango said. And Nelly, who was disenfranchised and lived in a time of slavery, somehow manages to make her spirit free.

“She feels limitless to me,” she said.

PHOTOS: Joaquina Kalukango plays Nelly O’Brien, whose bar in Civil War-era Manhattan serves as the center of gravity for an integrated neighborhood of Black Americans and Irish immigrants, in “Paradise Square,” above right. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY OLIVIA GALLI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; KEVIN BERNE)

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Tales of Racism and Sexism, From 3 Leading Asian-American Women; in her words***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:627T-TDX1-JBG3-64V3-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** US

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**Byline:** Alisha Haridasani Gupta

**Highlight:** Tina Tchen, Min Jin Lee, and Sung Yeon Choimorrow discuss the ‘unique way that Asian-American women experience sexual harassment.’

**Body**

Tina Tchen, Min Jin Lee, and Sung Yeon Choimorrow discuss the ‘unique way that Asian-American women experience sexual harassment.’

“It’s complicated, it’s intersectional. And we need to think about it in a complex way.”

— Min Jin Lee, author of “Pachinko”

[In Her Words is available as a newsletter. [*Sign up here to get it delivered to your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words).]

A gunman stormed through three Atlanta-area massage parlors on Tuesday night, shooting nine people and killing eight.

Six of them were [*women of Asian descent*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words).

The [*suspect now charged in the killings,*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words) a 21-year-old white man, told the police he had a “sexual addiction” and said the spas were an outlet for something “that he shouldn’t be doing,” said Capt. Jay Baker of the Cherokee County Sheriff’s Office. (Captain Baker has since been removed as a spokesman on the case.)

While the investigation is still continuing, the shootings underscored for many women how racism and sexism are inextricably linked, leaving them uniquely vulnerable to violence and discrimination.

The shootings come amid a surge of anti-Asian discrimination and violence in the past year. About [*three in 10 Asian-Americans*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words) — a number higher than those of any other groups surveyed — reported that they had been subjected to slurs or jokes because of their race or ethnicity since the start of the coronavirus outbreak, according to a Pew Research Center survey of nearly 10,000 Americans in June 2020. Nearly [*3,800 hate incidents*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words) against Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders — ranging from verbal harassment to physical assaults — have been reported nationwide since March 2020, according to Stop AAPI Hate, an initiative tracking the violence.

Advocates say these numbers are an underestimate of what is really going on: many incidents go unreported, and those with a sexual dimension tend to be classified as sex offenses, not racial incidents.

Almost 70 percent of the incidents reported to Stop AAPI Hate were done so by women. Research from Virulent Hate, a project run by researchers at the University of Michigan to analyze how Asian-Americans have experienced racism during the pandemic, [*found a similar pattern*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words) when looking at incidents reported in the news media.

Last year alone, women of Asian descent were [*screamed at*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words), [*shoved*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words), coughed on or [*spit at*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words), [*shunned*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words), [*assaulted*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words) and subjected to other forms of [*harassment*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words) or [*discrimination*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words) that coupled hateful remarks with [*sexist, misogynistic*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words) language.

Researchers suggest that harmful stereotypes about Asian-American women [*as hypersexual, meek or submissive make them seem like easy targets*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words). And overseas, entire sex industries revolving around American army bases in the Philippines, Korea, Thailand and Vietnam, compound the fetishization of Asian women, Kyeyoung Park, a professor of anthropology and Asian-American studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, [*told The Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words).

To unpack these issues, In Her Words spoke with Tina Tchen, president and chief executive of the anti-sexual harassment organization Time’s Up Now; Min Jin Lee, author of “Pachinko”; and Sung Yeon Choimorrow, executive director of National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum.

The conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

How are you feeling as you watch this unfold? What’s going through your minds?

Tina Tchen: I feel like it’s yet another extension of what we’ve been all going through last summer. When the George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Black Lives Matter movement all came together, I spent a lot of time with our Black staff and my Black friends and community and was really conscious of making sure that we took care of people. But now, it’s personal, right? When it is someone who is from your community or looks like you or looks like your daughter or your son who is now the target of a deadly attack — it lands differently. I’ve talked to folks who have family members who feel vulnerable because they are working in nail salons or storefronts.

Min Jin Lee: I’m really tired. I feel tired and vulnerable. And I feel the responsibility of trying to be objective and thoughtful and, at the same time, I feel that we all have the right to have emotions. It’s very disturbing.

Sung Yeon Choimorrow: I’m still feeling very devastated and appalled at what happened. But I’m mostly angry and really sad that none of it was a surprise. That’s the thing that keeps coming up most with my staff and our members and my Asian-American friends that have reached out to me in the last couple of days — no one is surprised at what happened. This was our worst fear coming true. And, frankly, right now, I’m also worried about the safety of our staff and myself, because I’ve gone on national TV and my face is all over the place and, of course, white men are coming after me.

Let’s step back a little bit. There is a long history of sexism and racism against Asian women. Walk us through some of that history.

Lee: One of the things we have to think about is, first of all, Asian-Americans have an enormous tent with so many diverse histories, so many countries of origin. What we often forget is that, within the countries of origin, there’s certain stories of patriarchy that we don’t want to talk about, histories of colonialism and imperialism. That’s incredibly informative when we think about sex workers, in particular, and ***working-class*** women because we have all these class issues. We also have ethnicity issues, we have regional issues. It’s really complicated.

Tchen: I think it’s about otherness. It doesn’t matter how long you’ve been here. I mean, I can’t even speak Chinese and yet, I feel very othered, always feel it. Why did “[*Minari” win best foreign-language film even though it’s an American story*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words)? It’s part of othering.

You layer on top of that the sexualization of Asian women — which has always existed and is fueling this. The law enforcement are sort of saying this has to do with his sex addiction, so therefore it’s not a hate crime or racially targeted. No, no, no — that’s all together — all part of one piece.

I can remember when I was younger, just out of college in 1978, there were men who would come up to me in the street, drop their pants and say I reminded them of the girlfriend they left behind in Vietnam. Literally drop their pants and begin to touch themselves in the middle of downtown Chicago, and this happened more than once.

Lee: This happened to me, too. It happened to me several times. People would actually grope me in the street saying things like, “You remind me of somebody in Vietnam.” Very often, these are poor, homeless people. It’s not as if I don’t have sympathy for them — they’re maybe suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. But it doesn’t mean that we don’t deserve sympathy either.

There’s been so much of just swallowing the assault, all this repression, and we carry it forward, saying, “Oh, it’s not a big deal, it’ll be OK.” But now people are saying: “No more. We are first among equals. This is not OK.”

Choimorrow: I had those experiences, too. I came to the United States as a college student when I was 18. And actually the hometown that I’m from in Korea, the main economic engine was a U.S. military base. I know what it’s like to live in a town where there’s an entire sex-work industry that revolves around the military bases.

So I came to the United States and the first time it happened to me, I was like, “This man is just weird, right?” He stopped me and asked me if I’m Korean and then he used some Korean phrases and said, “I love Korea, I served in the army and you remind me of my girlfriend in Korea” and then proceeded to say something really, really inappropriate. I was having these experiences in rural Indiana. You’ll have these 80-year-old white men telling me that they saved me and my country, and then you’ll have men fresh out of the military, still with their crew cuts. This is rampant in this country today. This is not [*1875 when Chinese women weren’t allowed to come into this country because they were all seen as prostitutes*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/in-her-words), or even the Vietnam War or the Korean War.

When I tell these stories, people are shocked because we never really tell these stories. In the the MeToo movement, we never really talked about the unique way that Asian-American women experience sexual harassment. So often, people want to talk about race, so they want me to leave my gender at the door. People want to talk about sexual harassment, so they want me to leave my race at the door. And so I become invisible.

Tchen: The confluence here of anti-Asian sentiment and misogyny has a relationship, I would say, to the events of Jan. 6. The shooting is not just a manifestation of specific commentary around Covid-19; it is more directly connected to this wave of domestic terrorism that we have in the country. It really needs to be seen as seriously as that.

We have a very narrow definition of hate crime, actually, and Asians don’t even fit in the paradigm. And let’s be clear, targeting people because they’re women isn’t really anything that people think is a hate crime either. But it is.

Another narrative that I’ve seen come up is, “Oh, you know, this is a one-off because Asians are successful and high earning.” What are your thoughts on that?

Lee: The class issue is such an important piece, and I can only speak about the Koreans because it’s so complicated for every single different country of origin, but in Korea, even today, the classism is outrageous. So these four women, at least who have been confirmed to be ethnically Korean, are aged 50 to 70. Two of them are, according to Korean media, 70 years old. And these women apparently lived in those salons. Their job was to open doors, and provide food and housekeeping services for these spots. These are very, very poor women without protections. It’s something that I think all of us, as feminists and women of color, have to really talk about.

In terms of the poverty rates of Asian-Americans — in New York City, the poorest people are actually Asian-Americans. We just have this different image in our minds of very rich visible Asian people. But the people who are delivering your food, the people who are preparing your food, the people who are taking care of your children, the people working in hospitals, they’re Asian. We are all making ourselves blind.

Choimorrow: During this pandemic, it’s become more clear that not all Asian-Americans are lawyers, doctors and engineers. And part of the harm is that some of us within our community want to live up to that model minority stereotype. We want to be that lawyer, engineer and doctor and separate ourselves from the ***working class*** members of our community. And the combination of not talking about misogyny and sexism and patriarchy and issues of class, both in our countries of origin and in the United States, has really done a disservice to the most vulnerable people.

Tchen: The fragmentation within the AAPI community is by class, by ethnicity, it’s East Asians versus South Asians versus Southeast Asians. There’s a lot of historical prejudice even within the AAPI community. We come from countries that have fought wars with each other and there are people who carry a lot of scars from being victimized by other Asians in those wars, in addition to historical class issues that still persist in Asia.

Lee: Exactly. I really want to encourage everybody to see this as a political issue, a physical issue, an economic issue. It’s complicated, it’s intersectional. And we need to think about it in a complex way.

Alexandra E. Petri contributed reporting.

Alexandra E. Petri contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Woojin Kang, 27, a priest, cried near Gold Spa and Aromatherapy Spa. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Chang W. Lee/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 20, 2021

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[***What’s on TV Monday: ‘The Plot Against America’ and ‘My Brilliant Friend’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YF7-PB01-DXY4-X36D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Peter Libbey

**Highlight:** The six-part adaptation of Philip Roth’s 2004 novel debuts on HBO. And the series based on Elena Ferrante’s Neapolitan novels returns for Season 2.

**Body**

The six-part adaptation of Philip Roth’s 2004 novel debuts on HBO. And the series based on Elena Ferrante’s Neapolitan novels returns for Season 2.

What’s on TV

THE PLOT AGAINST AMERICA 9 p.m. on HBO. Ed Burns and David Simon’s [*six-part adaptation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/arts/television/plot-against-america-hbo-david-simon.html) of   [*Philip Roth’s 2004 novel*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/arts/television/plot-against-america-hbo-david-simon.html) conjures an alternative history of the 1940s in which the United States takes a dark path under the sway of a popular demagogue. In the premiere episode, the tension is already beginning to build. Charles Lindbergh, a hero to many for his solo trans-Atlantic flight in 1927, foments anti-Semitic sentiment as he campaigns to prevent the United States from declaring war on Nazi Germany. Herman (Morgan Spector) and Elizabeth (Zoe Kazan), a ***working class*** couple Jewish couple in New Jersey, try to shield sons their sons Sandy and Phillip from the growing unrest while also wrangling with more mundane family issues.

MY BRILLIANT FRIEND 10 p.m. on HBO. Spurred by the reported disappearance of the mercurial Lila, an aging Elena began to share the story of their transformative friendship at the beginning of [*the first season*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/arts/television/plot-against-america-hbo-david-simon.html) of this ongoing adaptation of   [*Elena Ferrante’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/arts/television/plot-against-america-hbo-david-simon.html)Neapolitan novels. The two met as girls in a poor neighborhood in 1950s Naples. Both were promising students but only Elena was able to pursue her education. Despite her talent and spirit, Lila was left behind to ply her father’s trade and eventually accept the marriage proposal of a suitor. In the second season, based on Ferrante’s   [*“The Story of a New Name,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/arts/television/plot-against-america-hbo-david-simon.html) the ambivalent but deep connection between the women continues to develop as Elena’s academic success takes her further from her community and Lila’s troubled relationship crumbles.

What’s Streaming

THE LADY FROM SHANGHAI (1948) Stream on the Criterion Channel; rent on [*Amazon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/arts/television/plot-against-america-hbo-david-simon.html),   [*Google Play*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/arts/television/plot-against-america-hbo-david-simon.html),   [*iTunes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/arts/television/plot-against-america-hbo-david-simon.html),   [*Vudu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/arts/television/plot-against-america-hbo-david-simon.html) and   [*YouTube*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/arts/television/plot-against-america-hbo-david-simon.html). This film noir   [*by Orson Welles*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/arts/television/plot-against-america-hbo-david-simon.html) includes just about everything one might expect: stylized black and white photography, an alluring but destructive femme fatale figure, and a plot rife with misdirection and sudden bursts of revelation. Welles stars as Michael, a sailor conscripted into a yacht trip from New York to San Francisco by Arthur, a wealthy lawyer, and his wife, Elsa (Rita Hayworth). Michael hopes to win Elsa’s affection, and is drawn into a scheme to help fake the death of Arthur’s partner George. But the deal Michael makes is not what it initially appears. In the hands of Welles, a master filmmaker, these conventional elements are   [*used to explore*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/arts/television/plot-against-america-hbo-david-simon.html) identity, truth and desire.

THE RETURN (2003) Stream on [*Acorn TV*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/arts/television/plot-against-america-hbo-david-simon.html). Julie Walters plays Lizzie, a recovering alcoholic who is released from prison after serving a 10-year sentence for killing her husband in a drunken haze. As she readjusts to life on the outside, Lizzie’s memory of that event begins to return and she realizes that she may not have been her partner’s murderer. There’s an investigation, plot twists and salacious details aplenty but   [*this film focuses*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/arts/television/plot-against-america-hbo-david-simon.html) on its imperfect main character’s struggle to reconcile herself with a past that she largely wasn’t really present for.

PHOTOS: Foreground, Morgan Spector and Zoe Kazan.; Gaia Girace, left, and Margherita Mazzucco. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HBO); Rita Hayworth and Orson Welles. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CRITERION COLLECTION)

**Load-Date:** March 16, 2020

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[***After a Campaign Uprising, Morales Presses On***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62W7-JK11-DXY4-X13J-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Jazmine Hughes

**Body**

Dianne Morales Faced a Campaign Uprising. Will It Matter to Voters?

The New York City mayoral race is one of the most consequential political contests in a generation, with immense challenges awaiting the winner. This is the eighth in a series of profiles of the major candidates.

Dianne Morales arrived at a racial justice protest in April, as she had done many times before. This one, however, was different: she was still a Black woman, a mother, an activist -- but now, she had become well-known as a mayoral candidate, too.

She was a familiar sight at the Barclays Center, hugging friends and greeting supporters, while a handful of aides flanked her. One speaker warned that the protest was not a ''campaign stop.'' So Ms. Morales asked a campaign staffer, outfitted in a loud purple T-shirt emblazoned with ''DIANNE MORALES FOR N.Y.C. MAYOR,'' to turn the shirt inside out.

''I don't want this to be political -- this isn't just a moment for us,'' she said that evening.

From the beginning of her campaign for mayor, Ms. Morales set out to establish herself as the activist-candidate-next-door, the person riding the bus instead of advertising on the side of it. Her long-shot candidacy sought to tap into the zeitgeist of last summer, when the pandemic and protests against police brutality shined a light on New York's stark racial and economic inequities.

But in recent weeks, Ms. Morales's campaign has been stalled by its own dysfunction. Two high-level staffers resigned following staff misconduct, six more were terminated and most remaining staff members, who have formed a union, are on strike. At least four political groups, including the Working Families Party, have rescinded their endorsements, donations slowed to a crawl and her senior adviser has joined a rival campaign.

Over the weekend, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez endorsed Maya Wiley, Ms. Morales's ideologically closest opponent. The endorsement was the most significant sign that progressive leaders see Ms. Wiley as their last, best hope to prevent a more centrist candidate from becoming mayor.

Ms. Morales, who staked a claim to the ''inherently radical'' nature of her campaign, is now struggling to explain why her own staff has abandoned her weeks before the June 22 primary and why one of the most prominent left-wing leaders in the country is not supporting her.

Still, she is marching on, holding campaign events and filming an ad in the wake of the walkout. She addressed the accusations last week during a mayoral debate, highlighting her decades of experience as a manager of the operations and staffs of large nonprofits and stressing that she had acted quickly to address personnel concerns.

''We responded, we addressed it and we are moving on, moving forward on this campaign, and I'm looking forward to that,'' she said.

Her career path, largely in education and nonprofits, stands out in a field of lawyers, politicians and businessmen. Her background -- ***working class***, Afro-Latina, first-generation college graduate -- has helped her appeal to traditionally underrepresented groups. And her campaign, with the most left-leaning platform in the race, has drawn in supporters who believed she would eschew politics as usual.

'She may compromise, but she doesn't lose'

A native of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, Ms. Morales, 53, was raised by Puerto Rico-born parents. Her mother worked as an office manager for a union, and her father as a building manager. Finances were so tight that Ms. Morales shared a bed with her grandmother until she left for college.

She attended Stuyvesant High School, where one of her teachers was the Pulitzer Prize-winning author Frank McCourt, and Dartmouth College. Ms. Morales has said that she was sexually assaulted during her first week on campus, and she left Dartmouth at the end of her freshman year, eventually graduating from Stony Brook University, on Long Island. After college, she worked as a waitress and a special-education teacher; she later received master's degrees, in social administration and education administration, from Columbia and Harvard.

Ms. Morales then spent two years at the city's Department of Education, under Michael Bloomberg, as chief of operations and implementation in the Office of Youth Development. She held leadership positions at various nonprofits like The Door, a youth development organization, and Phipps Neighborhoods, the social services arm of Phipps Houses, a housing development group, where she served as chief executive for a decade before filing to run for mayor.

She raised her two children in Brooklyn; both graduated from public schools. Ms. Morales has been transparent about struggles her family has faced: her son, 22, was punched by a police officer at a protest, her daughter, 20, was sexually assaulted, and Ms. Morales had to sue the D.O.E. for what she said was a lack of services provided for her daughter's learning disability. The city provided the services Ms. Morales requested after six years. In the interim, she placed her daughter in a private school.

''There's a fierceness about her, and you want that on your side,'' said Lutonya Russell-Humes, a professor and longtime friend of Ms. Morales. ''She just doesn't lose. She may compromise, but she doesn't lose.''

She has talked about how after a career in advocacy work, she wanted to tackle inequity in a bigger, broader way. So in 2019, she filed to run for mayor. Ms. Morales said she was moved to act in part by her disappointment over Donald J. Trump's victory in the 2016 election, and she pledged to run a campaign that would be heavy on ethics, respect and dignity.

She officially kicked off her campaign in November 2020, amid months of heavy involvement in a mutual aid group in Bedford-Stuyvesant, where she coordinated food distribution efforts, organized a community fund-raiser, and later arranged for vaccine appointments.

As a candidate, Ms. Morales has advocated for rent relief, hazard pay and the release of vulnerable people from Rikers Island. Her staff grew from about a dozen to nearly 100 aides this spring, as Ms. Morales continued to push her central proposal: cutting $3 billion from the police budget, which she says would ultimately lead to greater protection of New Yorkers, especially Black and Latino residents.

Facing the progressive paradox

Almost immediately, Ms. Morales faced the same paradox that has confronted politicians and activists in the progressive left at large: Members of the communities they say they speak for -- especially Black and brown New Yorkers -- do not always agree with the agendas they propose.

Last year, many Black and Latino council members were hesitant to vote yes on a proposal that included, among other things, a pledge to cut $1 billion from the N.Y.P.D., worried that shrinking the police force would adversely affect underserved neighborhoods already marred by violence. Several Black council members vehemently opposed the proposed cut, calling the movement ''political gentrification'' or likening it to ''colonization.''

A recent NY1/Ipsos poll found that 72 percent of likely Democratic primary voters supported an increased police presence, following an uptick in high-profile incidents of violent crime. Ms. Morales said that many constituents she has spoken to wanted more access to resources and community programs, services she said could be funded by cuts to the police department's budget.

Her plan for her first 100 days in office includes a citywide rent moratorium for individuals and small businesses, ending the N.Y.P.D.'s relationship with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and providing immediate housing, through hotels and city-leased properties, for homeless people.

The funding for her policies is largely contingent on increasing taxes on wealthy New Yorkers, and reimagining the city's budget, cutting bloat and overspending.

''I don't think she identifies as a socialist, but a lot of socialists really like Dianne,'' State Senator Jabari Brisport said in March, around the time he endorsed Ms. Morales.

Still, Ms. Morales has battled questions of ideological consistency among activists on the left. She supported charter schools, which many progressives believe exacerbate inequality, as recently as last year. And an old interview in which she admitted to voting for Governor Andrew M. Cuomo in the 2018 Democratic primary for governor instead of his progressive challenger, Cynthia Nixon, made waves.

''I'm one of those people that was at the point of feeling like the government wasn't having an impact on my life on a day-to-day basis, and I went with the familiar,'' she said in an interview with The New York Times. ''It's definitely not something I feel great about.''

She's also faced plenty of scrutiny around her term as the chief executive of Phipps Neighborhoods: Tenant activists deemed its umbrella organization, Phipps Houses, one of the worst evictors in New York City in 2018 and 2019. (A Phipps spokesperson said the organization followed through with evictions on less than 1 percent of its tenants each year.)

She emphasized the separation between the development group and the organization she led. ''I'm very deeply proud of the work I did,'' she said in an interview. ''But it's also true that Phipps Houses is a serious evictor. Those two things are true at the same time.''

In addition to concerns about Phipps' reputation, Ms. Morales's reported take-home pay, nearly $350,000 in 2018, was an eye-popping figure for a candidate who has strongly emphasized her ***working-class*** identity, though even as chief executive, Ms. Morales was not the highest paid employee at the organization -- filings show that at least three men earned more than she did.

''I'm not going to apologize for making a decent living and being able to provide for my family,'' Ms. Morales said. Since she stepped down from that position in January 2020, she says, she has not collected a salary.

A leftist candidate in a liberal town

Running for major office as a leftist is no easy feat, even in a town as overwhelmingly Democratic as New York City. As last summer's uproar over police brutality, social justice and inequality began to cool, polls mostly placed Ms. Morales in the single-digits, despite some indications that voters were looking for a progressive candidate.

She became increasingly focused on capturing voters who felt either excluded by or disappointed with their current representation: people on the front lines of protests and the pandemic.

''It's surprising to me, given what the appetite felt like a year ago,'' Ms. Morales said. ''It felt like we were ready for a little bit more of rebel revolution. And now it feels kind of like, we're like, 'OK, that's nice.'''

Gabe Tobias, manager of Our City, a super PAC that supports progressive candidates, pointed to the recent elections of Mr. Brisport and Representative Jamaal Bowman as proof that left-leaning candidates can win. ''People in New York are open to voting for people on the left if they like the candidate,'' he said. ''But the candidates aren't rallying people.''

Still, Ms. Morales had a devoted, even if small, following that she thought she could grow. Fervent supporters defended her when an investigation by The City last month revealed that in 2002, Ms. Morales paid a $300 bribe to a corrupt water inspector to erase a $12,000-plus water meter bill and then lied twice to city investigators.

She was working as a senior employee at the Department of Education at the time, and investigators recommended that she be fired. Instead, Ms. Morales resigned. The water bill turned out to have been fraudulently inflated, and the inspector was later convicted of misconduct.

Ms. Morales sought to turn the negative press into a moment that, once again, reinforced her theme of being an ordinary New Yorker. In a statement, she cast herself as a victim, and emphasized how many people were vulnerable to similar scams: ''When I say I know what it means to be a New Yorker, I mean it.''

The day after her statement appeared was her best fund-raising day on record: she received over $50,000 from 1,225 people.

Then, later in May, Whitney Hu, Ms. Morales's campaign manager, and Ifeoma Ike, her senior adviser, resigned to protest what they called weeks of inaction regarding two staff members accused of discrimination and sexual harassment. (Ms. Hu and Ms. Ike did not respond to requests for comment; Ms. Ike has since joined Ms. Wiley's campaign.) The two accused staff members have since been terminated. Allegations of poor management, discrimination, lack of pay and health care and a hostile work environment had plagued the campaign for weeks.

Some of her staff members said they felt she was not living up to the lofty ideals she espoused on the campaign trail: A candidate who immediately called for the resignations of Mr. Cuomo and Scott M. Stringer, the city comptroller and mayoral candidate, over allegations of sexual misconduct, was now accused of not addressing it among her own staff.

Many of the 90-plus members of the staff moved to unionize, striking after Ms. Morales fired four employees associated with the organizing effort and did not provide a reason. Less than two weeks before the mayoral primary, the strike is still underway, and union members have reported being locked out of work accounts.

Ms. Morales recognized the union, but she said she could not agree to many of its demands, some of which -- such as for workers to be paid severance after the campaign's end -- she contended violated campaign finance laws. (The Campaign Finance Board handbook disputes this.)

''I'm supportive of the organizing, I'm supportive of folks making good trouble, but I can't actually tolerate disruptive, undermining behavior, and I think that is an issue that we have to deal with,'' she said.

The fallout has been particularly damaging for Ms. Morales, whose progressive base of supporters may be less likely to forgive what they see as ethical transgressions.

''Was there anything that could've been done differently? I guess so,'' said Peter Ragone, a political adviser who has worked on more than two dozen campaigns. ''No candidate or their advisers has ever had to manage their way through something like this, so of course it's a mess,'' he added.

But Ms. Morales has embraced the tension within her campaign. In a recent interview with NY1 about the unionization effort, she said: ''It's a beautiful and messy thing.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/09/nyregion/dianne-morales-nyc-mayor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/09/nyregion/dianne-morales-nyc-mayor.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Running for mayor of New York, Dianne Morales has faced ideological questions from the left. (A1)

Dianne Morales dancing with a little supporter in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. She plans to pay for her policies, in part, with higher taxes on wealthy New Yorkers. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

From left, Ms. Morales with her son Benjamin at home in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn

Nia Evans, one of the organizers of a campaign staff union, speaking at a union rally last month

Ms. Morales, who vowed an operation heavy on ethics, respect and dignity, on the campaign trail at a barber shop in Sunset Park. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

ANNA WATTS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A16)

**Load-Date:** June 9, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Unity Prevails at an Israeli Hospital***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62PY-G681-DXY4-X3PG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 20, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 23; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1073 words

**Byline:** By Adam Lee Goldstein

**Body**

HOLON, Israel -- Late in the evening on Tuesday, I was working in my office in Wolfson Medical Center, the hospital where I am the director of trauma surgery. The sun had set and suddenly the sirens started blaring from every corner of Tel Aviv, warning of rockets headed our way.

Our hospital is on the southern edge of the city, in a ***working-class*** neighborhood filled with Jews and Arabs, recent immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa and the countries of the former Soviet Union. From the hospital's intercom came a calm, programmed voice: ''Red alert,'' it said. ''Please move away from the windows and into a protected area as soon as possible.''

I ran down the internal stairway to the emergency room and waited. Moments later I heard booms -- some sounded distant, others sounded like they were right over our heads, a result of Israel's Iron Dome antimissile system exploding rockets in the sky.

After a while, things were quiet again. I walked outside to the entrance where the ambulances are. Medics -- most of them volunteers, some as young as 15 -- were running to their ambulances and speeding off; they wore bulletproof vests and helmets. One told me that a bus in a nearby neighborhood had been hit. There were casualties. The hospital staff knew that we had only minutes to prepare for the influx.

Doctors, nurses, radiologist technicians, transport techs, the blood bank and social workers were called to the emergency room. The operating rooms were notified. Within an hour, more than 40 patients had arrived. Four were in critical condition; three needed emergency surgery. For the next few hours, the entire hospital worked to evaluate and treat the wounded. People cleaned wounds, set fractures, did whatever was necessary.

At 3 a.m., I left the operating room and went back to the emergency room. Everything had returned more or less to normal. As the sun rose, our trauma team rounded on our patients. I was called urgently back to the operating room because one patient was still bleeding. Once I finished treating her, I was ready to sleep on the couch in my office for a few hours. Maybe I would even shave. (A colleague in the gynecology department had found me a razor.) But first it was time for a debriefing: The whole staff gathered to discuss what we would do differently, and how to improve our performance the next time there was a mass casualty incident.

As I looked around at my colleagues, I couldn't help but notice the diversity of our team. From the trauma center to the inpatient ward to the operating rooms, this was a team of Arabs, Jews, Muslims, Christians and Druze (and I'm sure a few others).

In parallel with the rising conflict with Gaza last week, tension rose between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel. There have been violent riots, with Jewish extremists pulling Arabs from their cars and Arabs doing the same to their Jewish neighbors. Businesses and homes have been destroyed. The police have used more violence to control the violence.

We have been treating the people injured in those clashes, too. The groups fighting each other on the streets were suddenly confined together inside the walls of our emergency room. As they arrived, one would wear the religious Jewish undergarment, the next would be an Arab. One of our Arab nurses would thoroughly treat a Jewish wounded woman; a Jewish intern examined a young Arab man who had been injured by a rubber bullet to the chest. An Arab specialist checked the wounds of a Jewish man who had been beaten, and the Jewish cleaning lady helped an Arab man put on his hospital gown. A Jewish nurse cleaned the blood off the forehead of an Arab boy.

To help with the influx of patients one of our Arab residents had driven to the hospital from Lod, a city that has seen some of the worst communal violence in recent days with buildings burned, windows smashed and hundreds of people injured. That resident had risked his own life -- he could have been attacked by extremists as he drove through the streets -- to help treat whatever patient was put in front of him. The next day in Lod, his wife's car was set on fire.

Wolfson Medical Center is not the biggest hospital in Israel. It lacks funds, and its exterior probably has not been painted for 40 years. But to me it represents everything that is beautiful and possible with this place. Before, during and after this current disaster we are the hospital for one of the most diverse, elderly and neglected populations in Israel. We train residents from all over the world (especially Africa and Latin America), and Palestinian residents from the West Bank and Gaza. The concepts of free, accessible medicine -- socialized medicine -- and of serving a needy community with the highest standard of care are as essential to this place as its concrete walls.

In two and a half days last week, we received more than 100 people wounded from missiles, falling shrapnel or the violence on the streets. I have no idea what this week will bring; whatever it is, I cannot be proud enough of the team here, which is constantly ready to come into work at any hour, willing to sacrifice themselves to help, to do whatever is needed.

In the coming days, years and decades, I hope that what is happening now under the roof of this hospital -- the selflessness, the lack of ego, the teamwork and diversity and mutual respect -- can be a model for this entire country, for our entire region. If neighbors and communities can't work together, can't get along in the way that I see every night in our hospital, I worry that we are guaranteeing that the suffering across this country will only get worse. If we do come together, as we do inside our walls, it will be a beautiful thing.

In the early hours of Thursday morning, I asked one of our best nurses, a Druze man from a village in the Golan Heights, for a cigarette. I allow myself one a year and this felt like the right moment. He rolled it for me and we stepped outside into the parking lot, together, to enjoy a moment of quiet. And peace.

Adam Lee Goldstein is the director of trauma surgery at Wolfson Medical Center in Holon, Israel.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY AVSHALOM SASSONI/MAARIV, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** May 20, 2021

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[***The Power of Being Well Groomed***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64BD-B6B1-JBG3-64TC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 19, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 12; FACE FORWARD

**Length:** 1657 words

**Byline:** By Rhonda Garelick

**Body**

Ghislaine Maxwell looked impeccable. That was the point.

The prosecution rested on Friday, Dec. 10, in the trial of Ghislaine Maxwell, who stands accused of helping the deceased financier Jeffrey Epstein recruit, traffic and sexually abuse underage girls. Ms. Maxwell has pleaded not guilty and denied the accusations.

Four women offered emotional testimony over two weeks, each recounting the detailed ways Ms. Maxwell allegedly primed them for interactions with Mr. Epstein, describing how she offered them attention, praise, gifts and promises of financial support to ensnare them, they say, in a cycle of exploitation.

Since Mr. Epstein's suicide in jail last year, Ms. Maxwell has been occupying something of a dual role: Officially, she must answer for her own alleged crimes. But symbolically, she is also a stand-in for Mr. Epstein and a conduit to his bizarre, bifurcated world -- whose glittering surface camouflaged a troubling lower depth.

Ms. Maxwell has some familiarity with moving between worlds. As many headlines about this trial remind us, she is a ''socialite,'' and socialites harness style and status to create connections. In fact, examining her particular talent for this avocation -- and how her style contributed to it -- explains a lot about the workings of Mr. Epstein's enterprise.

There are two kinds of socialites, as Dr. Andrew Solomon, a psychologist and the author of ''Far From the Tree,'' suggests: ''Socialites who are to the manner born, whose function is to have connections made with them. And there are those who earn their place, by constantly bringing together people, and then bask in the reflected glory of those introductions.'' Ghislaine Maxwell, he said, was in an ''ironic position.'' She was to the manner born, Dr. Solomon said, but ''she had to shift gears and become that other kind of socialite,'' after her family lost its money.

In both cases, though, ''socialite'' is a term reserved for women. While some men may operate similarly, they would never be labeled socialites because men are presumed to have individual identities beyond their social interactions. And because a socialite's success depends upon an array of attributes still largely considered feminine: charm, poise, grace, beauty, cultivation and polish.

Ghislaine Maxwell had all of these. Born to great wealth, she was raised mainly in England in an Italianate mansion and educated at Oxford University. Her father, the newspaper mogul Robert Maxwell, named his yacht after her (the ''Lady Ghislaine''). She holds French, British and United States passports and is reputed to speak four languages. (She has been overheard in court speaking fluent French with her brother.) She is believed to hold licenses to pilot both helicopters and submarines. She has dabbled in environmental philanthropy. After her family lost everything (in the wake of her father's death and posthumous embezzlement scandal), Ms. Maxwell moved to the United States and for a time sold high-end real estate -- a potentially lucrative choice for a woman with her upper-class manners, plummy accent and good looks.

As countless photos of her demonstrate, Ms. Maxwell has always been dressed and coifed with elegant, Parisian understatement. For decades, she has worn her dark hair in a tousled, gamine crop and favored finely tailored clothes in neutral tones: tweed jackets, silk and cashmere sweaters, collared shirts. She wears little visible makeup and only minimal jewelry (earrings, a good watch). Standing beside more elaborately adorned women, she looks unfussy and confident.

That kind of unstudied elegance attracts people still figuring out how to style themselves or aspiring to learn the cues of a more elevated social world. Mr. Epstein may have been wealthy, but he was a Brooklyn-born arriviste seeking legitimacy and mobility among the moneyed upper classes. Ms. Maxwell would have seemed the perfect guide. And she came through, inducting him into the very highest circles of British society, introducing him most notably to Prince Andrew. A photograph produced at trial even shows Mr. Epstein and Ms. Maxwell relaxing at Balmoral Castle, Queen Elizabeth II's holiday estate in Scotland -- with Ms. Maxwell clad in an appropriately aristo-shabby plaid flannel.

It's easy to imagine how Ms. Maxwell could have beguiled those teenage girls of mostly modest backgrounds -- appearing to them (initially) like a beneficent role model and arbiter of their potential to join the elite world she inhabited. You can hear this in the testimony of her accusers. Annie Farmer, the only witness to reveal her identity at trial, described Ms. Maxwell as a ''trim, attractive woman'' who gave her gifts, such as beauty products and cowboy boots. Ms. Farmer noted, too, that she ''had a British accent and ... was well spoken and articulate.''

The accuser known as ''Jane'' recounts Ms. Maxwell treating her at first like a younger sister, taking her to the movies and buying her clothes, including a cashmere sweater and underwear from Victoria's Secret. And the accuser known as ''Kate'' testified that when she met Ms. Maxwell in London, she ''was quite excited to be friends with her. She seemed to be everything that I wanted to be.''

The admiration Ms. Maxwell inspired in these girls would have made them all the more susceptible to the nefarious tactic known as ''grooming'' -- the slow process of eroding a potential victim's defenses, desensitizing them to increasingly inappropriate or abusive behavior.

But, of course, grooming has another, more common meaning, referring to the everyday habits we perform to be socially presentable. While men practice grooming, the process for women is far more complicated, involving myriad products and learned techniques -- from hair styling to skin care, makeup to manicures. Grooming is part of beauty culture, and despite feminism's strides, the importance of beauty has not materially diminished in women's lives.

The message of beauty's urgent importance bombards us incessantly, from every beauty blog, TikTok makeup tutorial, fashion magazine, weight-loss fad, anti-aging treatment, Hollywood actress profile and beauty contest. (The Miss America organization held its 100th anniversary competition this week, marking a century of young women lining up to be judged before a crowd.)

For a young girl, learning how to groom herself -- being ''well-groomed''-- is a step on the road toward maturity, toward acceding to ''beauty'' and all its promised rewards. From their earliest teens, girls examine and assess their own looks and one another's. They watch as an entire culture does the same with women all around them. ''Our patriarchal culture grooms girls into wanting to be desired,'' as April Alliston, a Princeton comparative literature professor who researches gender and sexuality, said in an interview. In this way, girls absorb and normalize the many practices that can turn a woman's life into an endless, de facto Judgment of Paris.

No wonder Ms. Maxwell was able to gain traction with teenagers by buying them the accouterments of grooming: clothes, lingerie, beauty products.

For a girl to be chosen by Ms. Maxwell, singled out by this refined woman, would have felt like a great compliment, like winning a beauty contest, like opening a portal to a world of privilege and ease. ''Jane'' was herself a contestant in the Miss Teen USA pageant (in which she wore a $2,000 dress given to her by Mr. Epstein). And ''Carolyn'' testified that Ms. Maxwell flattered her by saying ''that I had a great body for Mr. Epstein and his friends.''

It would have been but a small step for Ms. Maxwell to begin that other form of grooming, which entails sexual instructions and, ultimately, actual molestation. This process exists on a continuum, whose earliest moments look much like normal life for millions of teenagers. In other words, Ms. Maxwell's alleged illicit version of grooming would have slipped easily into the all-encompassing practice of regular grooming that already saturates most women's lives -- grooming that is inextricable from learning to be a commodity, to be the object of constant appraisal.

There was a social-class element to Ms. Maxwell's tutelage as well. Beyond his mansions and private planes, Mr. Epstein signaled his desired class status through Ms. Maxwell, who in turn acted as a social-class instructor of sorts, implicitly with the girls she is accused of having recruited (although her alleged sexual instruction for them has been described as graphic), but quite overtly with the household staff she managed.

The trial has brought to light the 58-page manual that she provided for the Epstein staff, which includes lists of banned words and expressions, preferred diction for different situations, and rules of comportment. Forbidden terms included: ''yeah,'' ''no problem,'' ''you bet'' and ''gotcha,'' which were to be replaced with ''my pleasure,'' ''I would be very pleased to'' and ''you are quite right.''

As these lists make plain, Ms. Maxwell was essentially instructing domestic workers in how to sound less like ***working-class*** Americans and more like upper-class Brits (or at least their servants). The manual also advised on telephone manners and what to say upon entering a room; it reminded staff members to smile at all times and avoid direct eye contact. That Mr. Epstein presumably approved these instructions confirms that he longed to transfer her social polish to his own domestic sphere -- whatever horrific crimes may have lain just beneath the faux ''Downton Abbey'' patina.

The ''poshification'' of Mr. Epstein's staff presents a corollary to the grooming (in both senses) of the girls he is accused of harming. In each case, a British socialite -- a stylish woman -- lent her skills and her aura, the currency of her social class, to the task of prettying up what was, by most accounts, a grotesque operation.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/17/style/ghislaine-maxwell-fashion-trial.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/17/style/ghislaine-maxwell-fashion-trial.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Jeffrey Epstein with Ghislaine Maxwell in 2005. For Mr. Epstein, Ms. Maxwell acted as a social-class instructor of sorts. For a teenager, to be singled out by this polished woman would have felt like a great compliment. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE SCHILDHORN/PATRICK MCMULLAN, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** December 19, 2021

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[***An Antisemite's Dangerous Fantasy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64KW-9PK1-DXY4-X49J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 23, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 2; BRET STEPHENS

**Length:** 1655 words

**Byline:** By Bret Stephens

**Body**

A man travels 4,800 miles from the north of England to the heart of Texas.

Once there, appearing to be homeless, he gains entry into a synagogue just before its Shabbat services. The rabbi welcomes him with a cup of tea. With a handgun, he takes the rabbi and others hostage for 11 hours while demanding the release of a convicted terrorist held in a nearby prison. He phones a prominent New York rabbi to help push for the terrorist's release. A hostage reports him as saying, ''I know President Biden will do things for the Jews.'' A witness, who sees the drama unfold on a livestream, watches him ''ranting about Jews and Israel'' and saying he has chosen his target because ''America only cares about Jewish lives.''

Antisemitism? You would think it could not be more obvious, as everyone from the prime minister of Israel to the president of the United States to the Council on American-Islamic Relations agrees. But first you'd have to climb over a strange wall of obfuscation, misdirection and doubt.

''He was singularly focused on one issue, and it was not specifically related to the Jewish community, but we are continuing to work to find motive,'' the F.B.I. special agent in charge, Matthew DeSarno, said shortly after the standoff ended, presumably referring to the assailant's bid to free the imprisoned terrorist. Both The Associated Press and the BBC parroted the line, with the Beeb tweeting, ''Texas synagogue hostage standoff not related to Jewish community -- F.B.I.''

The A.P. later deleted a tweet making a similar claim. And the F.B.I. amended its case on Sunday, calling the attack ''a terrorism-related matter, in which the Jewish community was targeted.'' On Thursday, the F.B.I. director, Christopher Wray, finally acknowledged that it was an antisemitic attack.

Yet the only substantial reporting I found from a major American news organization that explicitly acknowledges the antisemitic nature of the attack was one astute story in The Washington Post. Instead, there was a focus on the assailant's supposed mental illness, along with additional reporting on the ever-increasing security-consciousness of synagogues worldwide.

Compare that with the mountain of reporting regarding the anti-Asian hate that allegedly animated the killer in last year's attacks on Atlanta-area massage parlors. Or compare it with the coverage of the unquestionably racist 2015 shooting at Charleston's Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church. For that matter, compare it with the naked Jew-hatred that drove the killer in the 2018 synagogue massacre in Pittsburgh, which has been extensively reported and discussed. (His immediate ''motive'' was opposition to immigration.)

In the days since the attack, the F.B.I.'s head-in-sand approach, along with so much of the media's strange pattern of omission, has been the chief topic of discussion in every Jewish circle to which I belong. How can it be, we ask ourselves, that Jews should be victimized twice? First, by being physically targeted for being Jewish; second, by being begrudged the universal recognition that we were morally targeted, too? And how can it be that in this era of heightened sensitivity to every kind of hatred, bias, stereotype, -ism and -phobia, both conscious and unconscious, there's so much caviling, caveating and outright denying when it comes to calling out bias aimed at Jews?

The answer begins with the shapeshifting nature of antisemitism, which some perpetrate, others participate in (sometimes unwittingly), and a still greater number fail to recognize for what it is -- in part because each successive mutation doesn't exactly resemble its predecessor.

What we generally call antisemitism is a 19th-century coinage that helped turn an ancient religious hatred into a racial hatred. As racial hatred came to be considered uncouth after World War II, anti-Zionism (that is, blanket opposition to a Jewish state, not criticism of particular Israeli policies) became a more acceptable way of opposing Jewish political interests and denigrating Jews. Should Israel cease to exist, new forms of bigotry will surely develop for the next stage of anti-Judaism, adapted to the prevailing beliefs of the times.

The common denominator in each of these mutations is an idea, based in fantasy and conspiracy, about Jewish power. The old-fashioned religious antisemite believed Jews had the power to kill Christ. The 19th-century antisemites who were the forerunners to the Nazis believed Jews had the power to start wars, manipulate kings and swindle native people of their patrimony.

Present-day anti-Zionists attribute to Israel and its supporters in the United States vast powers that they do not possess, like the power to draw America into war. On the far right, antisemites think that Jews are engaged in an immense scheme to replace white, ***working-class*** America with immigrant labor. Tucker Carlson and others have taken this conspiracy theory mainstream, much to the delight of neo-Nazis like David Duke, even if they are careful to leave out the part about Jews.

The man who attacked the synagogue entertained the same type of fantasy. Just as Willie Sutton was said to rob banks because ''that's where the money is,'' this assailant took Jews hostage because that's where the power was (or so he thought). The F.B.I.'s moral idiocy -- there are no other words for it -- in denying the specifically antisemitic nature of the attack lies in the idea that he could have imagined himself choosing just about any means to achieve his end, like taking hostages at the nearest church or convenience store. Similarly, the focus on his mental health evades the central fact that, crazy or not, his malice was not random. He aimed his gun at Jews.

The fantasy about Jewish power may seem outlandish, but it's far more pervasive than many think -- which gets to the point of people participating in antisemitism even when they aren't knowingly perpetrating it.

Who, for instance, is most responsible for devising the war in Iraq? If your first-pass answer is ''Wolfowitz, Feith, Abrams and Perle,'' you might ask yourself why you are naming second- and third-tier Bush administration officials, all of them Jewish, when all the top decision makers -- Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rice -- are Christians. (If your response to this is that Wolfowitz et al. were the ones who pulled the strings, then you're an antisemite.)

Or take another example: if you think the reason Israel gets so much support in Congress is the money and influence of the pro-Israel lobby, you might be surprised to learn that that lobby ranks 20th on the most recent list of congressional donors, giving away a paltry $4.5 million compared with the $95 million that retiree interest groups donated. ''All about the Benjamins'' it is not, no matter what Representative Ilhan Omar might suppose.

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But there's a larger context here, which has to do with prevailing assumptions about power itself.

A moral conviction of our time, especially prevalent on the cultural left, is that the powerful are presumptively bad while the powerless are presumptively good. These categories aren't just political. They are also social, economic, ethnic and racial. It's why so many conversations today revolve around the concept of ''privilege'' -- a striking redefinition of success that removes the presumption of merit from those who have it and the stigma of failure from those who don't.

It's also the likeliest reason there was so much obvious hesitancy to describe the attack in Texas as antisemitic. Unlike the Pittsburgh shooter or the ''Jews will not replace us'' crowd at Charlottesville -- white, right-wing, mostly Christian and therefore ''privileged'' -- the Texas assailant was a British Muslim of Pakistani descent. Not white. Not privileged. Not right-wing. In the binary narrative of the powerful versus the powerless, his naked antisemitism just doesn't compute: Powerless people are supposed to be victims, not murderous bigots. If he had ranted against Israel for oppressing Palestinians, it might have made more sense. And if he had donned a MAGA hat, we would certainly have had a much fuller exploration of his antisemitism, without time wasted exploring his other motives or state of mind.

For American Jews, this small silence about what happened last week should be profoundly worrisome, and not just as a matter of a journalistic lapse. It's bad enough that the Jewish state, which gained what power it has because its neighbors threatened it with extinction, is still treated by so many as a global pariah -- its sympathizers abroad risking social or professional ostracism by mere association. It's bad enough, too, that the foul antisemitism of the right, yoked to its old themes of nativism, protectionism, nationalism and isolationism, is erupting into the public square like a burst sewage pipe.

Now American Jews find ourselves at perhaps the most successful period in our history, at a moment when much of the progressive left has decreed that privilege is a sin and that those who hold power should be stripped of it. Anyone with a long view of Jewish history should know how quickly economic and social privilege can turn to political and personal ruin, even -- or especially -- in countries where it might seem unthinkable.

There's much to be thankful for about how things ended last week in Texas, and about the outpouring of love and support, across faiths, for a little Jewish community. But the wise counsel for Jews is to be grateful for last week's good luck, while taking it as a warning that our luck in America may run out.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/21/opinion/texas-synagogue-antisemitism.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/21/opinion/texas-synagogue-antisemitism.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY SELIMAKSAN/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** January 23, 2022

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[***What’s at Stake for the Global Economy as Conflict Looms in Ukraine***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64V3-KDD1-JBG3-62P1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BUSINESS; economy

**Length:** 1779 words

**Byline:** Patricia Cohen and Jack Ewing

**Highlight:** Countries that depend on the region’s rich supply of energy, wheat, nickel and other staples could feel the pain of price spikes.

**Body**

Countries that depend on the region’s rich supply of energy, wheat, nickel and other staples could feel the pain of price spikes.

After getting battered by the pandemic, [*supply chain chokeholds*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/01/business/supply-chain-disruption.html)and [*leaps in prices*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/10/business/economy/inflation-cpi-january-2022.html?searchResultPosition=21), the global economy is poised to be sent on yet another unpredictable course by an armed clash on Europe’s border.

Even before the Kremlin [*ordered Russian troops into separatist territories of Ukraine*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/21/world/ukraine-russia-putin-biden/moscow-orders-troops-to-ukraines-breakaway-regions-for-peacekeeping-functions) on Monday, the tension had taken a toll. The promise of punishing [*sanctions*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/29/us/politics/russia-sanctions-economy.html?searchResultPosition=3) in return by President Biden and the potential for Russian retaliation had already [*pushed down stock returns*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/18/business/stocks-bonds-ukraine.html?searchResultPosition=4) and driven up gas prices.

An outright attack by Russian troops could cause dizzying spikes in [*energy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/14/business/oil-markets-prices.html?searchResultPosition=17) and food prices, fuel inflation fears and spook investors, a combination that threatens investment and growth in economies around the world.

However harsh the effects, the immediate impact will be nowhere near as devastating as the sudden economic shutdowns first caused by the coronavirus in 2020. Russia is a transcontinental behemoth with 146 million people and a huge nuclear arsenal, as well as a key supplier of the oil, gas and raw materials that keep the world’s factories running. But unlike China, which is a manufacturing powerhouse and intimately woven into intricate supply chains, Russia is a minor player in the global economy.

Italy, with half the people and fewer natural resources, has an economy that is twice the size. Poland exports more goods to the European Union than Russia.

“Russia is incredibly unimportant in the global economy except for oil and gas,” said Jason Furman, a Harvard economist who was an adviser to President Barack Obama. “It’s basically a big gas station.”

Of course, a closed gas station can be crippling for those who depend on it. The result is that any economic damage will be unevenly spread, intense in some countries and industries and unnoticed in others.

Europe gets nearly 40 percent of its natural gas and 25 percent of its oil from Russia, and is likely to be walloped with [*spikes in heating and gas bills,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/21/business/europe-power-gas-bill.html) which are already soaring. Natural gas reserves are at less than a third of capacity, with weeks of cold weather ahead, and European leaders have already accused Russia’s president, Vladimir V. Putin, of reducing supplies to gain a political edge.

And then there are food prices, which have climbed to their highest level in more than a decade largely because of the pandemic’s supply chain mess, according to a recent [*United Nations report*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/03/business/economy/food-prices-inflation-world.html?searchResultPosition=1). Russia is the [*world’s largest supplier of wheat*](https://www.spglobal.com/platts/en/market-insights/latest-news/agriculture/011722-russias-2021-22-wheat-exports-down-18-on-year-prices-weaken-further#:~:text=Russia%20is%20the%20world's%20largest,exports%20at%2036.5%20million%20mt.), and together with Ukraine, accounts for nearly a quarter of total global exports. For some countries, the dependence is much greater. That flow of grain makes up more than 70 percent of [*Egypt*](https://oec.world/en/profile/bilateral-product/wheat/reporter/egy#:~:text=Historical%20Data&amp;text=In%202019%2C%20Egypt%20imported%20%244.67B%20in%20Wheat%2C%20mainly%20from,%2C%20and%20France%20(%24316M).) and Turkey’s total wheat imports.

This will put further strain on [*Turkey*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/19/world/europe/turkey-inflation-economy-erdogan.html?searchResultPosition=1), which is already in the middle of an economic crisis and struggling with inflation that is running close to 50 percent, with skyrocketing food, fuel and electricity prices.

And as usual, the burden falls heaviest on the most vulnerable. “Poorer people spend a higher share of incomes on food and heating,” said [*Ian Goldin*](https://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/people/professor-ian-goldin/), a professor of globalization and development at Oxford University.

Ukraine, long known as the “breadbasket of Europe,” actually sends more than 40 percent of its wheat and corn exports to the Middle East or Africa, where there are worries that further food shortages and price increases could stoke social unrest.

[*Lebanon,*](https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/01/24/lebanon-s-crisis-great-denial-in-the-deliberate-depression) for example, which is experiencing one of the most devastating economic crises in more than a century, gets more than half of its wheat from Ukraine, which is also the world’s largest exporter of seed oils like sunflower and rapeseed.

On Monday, the White House responded to Mr. Putin’s decision to recognize the independence of [*two Russian-backed territories in the country’s east*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/21/world/europe/donetsk-luhansk-donbas-ukraine.html) by saying it would begin [*imposing limited sanctions*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/21/world/ukraine-russia-putin-biden/russia-will-recognize-two-regions-in-ukraine-a-possible-prelude-to-invasion) on the so-called Donetsk and Luhansk People’s Republics. Jen Psaki, the White House press secretary, said Mr. Biden would soon issue an executive order prohibiting investment, trade and financing with people in those regions.

Analysts watching the unfolding conflict have mapped out a [*range of scenarios*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/20/us/politics/putin-ukraine-strategy.html) from mild to severe. The fallout on ***working-class*** families and Wall Street traders depends on how an invasion plays out: whether Russian troops stay near the border or attack the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv; whether the fighting lasts for days or months; what kind of Western sanctions are imposed; and whether Mr. Putin responds by withholding critical gas supplies from Europe or launching insidious cyberattacks.

“Think about it rolling out in stages,” said Julia Friedlander, director of the economic statecraft initiative at the Atlantic Council. “This is likely to play out as a slow motion drama.”

As became clear from the pandemic, minor interruptions in one region can generate major disruptions far away. Isolated shortages and price surges— whether of gas, wheat, aluminum or nickel — can snowball in a world still struggling to recover from the pandemic.

“You have to look at the backdrop against which this is coming,” said Gregory Daco, chief economist for [*EY-Parthenon*](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/www.ey.com/en_us/strategy/about-ey-parthenon__;!!PIZeeW5wscynRQ!6fpRetj6XiiFaPnoAOoS8zXVu352hacAXmITfQjMGlttP824Wb88BT1HT4_sWhi7hA$). “There is [*high inflation,*](https://blogs.imf.org/2022/01/28/global-inflation-pressures-broadened-on-food-and-energy-price-gains/) strained supply chains and uncertainty about what central banks are going to do and how insistent price rises are.”

The additional stresses may be relatively small in isolation, but they are piling on economies that are still recovering from the economic body blows inflicted by the pandemic.

What’s also clear, Mr. Daco added, is that “political uncertainty and volatility weigh on economic activity.”

That means an invasion could have a dual effect — slowing economic activity and raising prices.

In the United States, the Federal Reserve is already confronting the highest inflation in 40 years, [*at 7.5 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/10/business/economy/inflation-cpi-january-2022.html?searchResultPosition=12)in January, and is expected to start raising interest rates next month. Higher energy prices set off by a conflict in Europe may be transitory but they could feed worries about a wage-price spiral.

“We could see a new burst of inflation,” said Christopher Miller, a visiting fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and an assistant professor at Tufts University.

Also fueling inflation fears are possible shortages of essential metals like palladium, aluminum and nickel, creating another disruption to global supply chains already suffering from the pandemic, [*trucker blockades in Canada*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/11/world/canada/canada-protests-autos.html) and shortages of semiconductors.

The price of [*palladium*](https://think.ing.com/articles/hold-what-a-conflict-between-russia-and-ukraine-could-mean-for-commodities), for example, used in automotive exhaust systems, mobile phones and even dental fillings, has soared in recent weeks because of fears that Russia, the world’s largest exporter of the metal, could be cut off from global markets. The price of nickel, used to make steel and electric car batteries, has also been jumping.

It’s too early to gauge the precise impact of an armed conflict, said Lars Stenqvist, the chief technology officer of Volvo, the Swedish truck maker. But he added, “It is a very, very serious thing.”

“We have a number of scenarios on the table and we are following the developments of the situation day by day,” Mr. Stenqvist said Monday.

The West has taken steps to blunt the impact on Europe if Mr. Putin decides to retaliate. The United States has ramped up delivery of [*liquefied natural gas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/03/business/natural-gas-europe-us.html) and asked other suppliers like [*Qatar*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/31/us/politics/biden-qatar-nato.html?searchResultPosition=2) to do the same.

The demand for oil might add momentum to [*negotiations*](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/significant-progress-seen-vienna-nuclear-talks-irans-foreign-ministry-2022-02-21/) to revive a deal to curb [*Iran*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/18/business/energy-environment/oil-ukraine-russia-iran.html?searchResultPosition=1)’s nuclear program. Iran, which is estimated to have as many as 80 million barrels of oil in storage, has been locked out of much of the world’s markets since 2018, when President Donald J. Trump withdrew from the nuclear accord and reimposed sanctions.

Some of the sanctions against Russia that the Biden administration is considering, such as cutting off access to the system of international payments known as [*SWIFT*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/31/us/politics/russia-swift.html) or blocking companies from selling anything to Russia that contains American-made components, would hurt anyone who does business with Russia. But across the board, the United States is much less vulnerable than the European Union, which is Russia’s[*largest trading partner.*](https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/russia/)

Americans, as Mr. Biden has already warned, are likely to see higher gasoline prices. But because the United States is itself a large producer of natural gas, those price increases are not nearly as steep and as broad as elsewhere. And Europe has many more links to Russia and engages in more financial transactions — including paying for the Russian gas.

Oil companies like Shell and Total have joint ventures in Russia, while BP [*boasts*](https://www.bp.com/en_ru/russia/home/who-we-are/partnership.html)that it “is one of the biggest foreign investors in Russia,” with ties to the Russian oil company Rosneft. Airbus, the European aviation giant, gets titanium from Russia. And [*European banks,*](https://www.ft.com/content/e195353f-00f6-4a21-93eb-f06590ed7ac8) particularly those in Germany, France and Italy, have lent billions of dollars to Russian borrowers.

“Severe sanctions that hurt Russia painfully and comprehensively have potential to do huge damage to European customers,” said Adam Tooze, director of the European Institute at Columbia University.

Depending on what happens, the most significant effects on the global economy may manifest themselves only over the long run.

One result would be to push Russia to have closer [*economic ties to China*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/20/us/politics/russia-china-ukraine-biden.html). The two nations recently [*negotiated a 30-year contract*](https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/exclusive-russia-china-agree-30-year-gas-deal-using-new-pipeline-source-2022-02-04/) for Russia to supply gas to [*China*](http://en.kremlin.ru/supplement/5770) through a new pipeline.

“Russia is likely to pivot all energy and commodity exports to China,” said Carl Weinberg, chief economist at High Frequency Economics.

The crisis is also contributing to a reassessment of the global economy’s structure and concerns about self-sufficiency. The pandemic has already highlighted the downsides of far-flung [*supply chains*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/05/business/economy/supply-chain.html) that rely on lean production.

Now Europe’s dependence on Russian gas is spurring discussions about expanding energy sources, which could further sideline Russia’s presence in the global economy.

“In the longer term, it’s going to push Europe to diversify,” said Jeffrey Schott, a senior fellow working on international trade policy at the Peterson Institute for International Economics. As for Russia, the real cost “would be corrosive over time and really making it much more difficult to do business with Russian entities and deterring investment.”

PHOTOS: Above, an underground gas storage facility in Kasimov, east of Moscow. Russia supplies nearly 40 percent of Europe’s natural gas and 25 percent of its oil. Left, Mykolaiv, a port in Ukraine. The country sends more than 40 percent of its wheat and corn exports to the Middle East or Africa. Ukraine is also the world’s largest exporter of seed oils like sunflower and rapeseed. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREY RUDAKOV/BLOOMBERG; BRENDAN HOFFMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B3)

**Load-Date:** February 24, 2022

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[***Always Well Groomed; Face FORWARD***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64B1-NRC1-JBG3-6302-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 17, 2021 Friday 14:18 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1687 words

**Byline:** Rhonda Garelick

**Highlight:** Ghislaine Maxwell looked impeccable. That was the point.

**Body**

Ghislaine Maxwell looked impeccable. That was the point.

The prosecution rested on Friday, Dec. 10, in the trial of [*Ghislaine Maxwell*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/ghislaine-maxwell-trial), who stands [*accused*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/what-is-ghislaine-maxwell-charged-with.html) of helping the deceased financier [*Jeffrey Epstein*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/23/nyregion/jeffrey-epstein-suicide-death.html) recruit, traffic and sexually abuse underage girls. Ms. Maxwell has pleaded not guilty and denied the accusations.

Four women offered emotional testimony over two weeks, each recounting the detailed ways Ms. Maxwell allegedly primed them for interactions with Mr. Epstein, describing how she offered them attention, praise, gifts and promises of financial support to [*ensnare them*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/30/nyregion/ghislaine-maxwell-accuser-jane-testimony.html), they say, in a cycle of exploitation.

Since Mr. Epstein’s [*suic*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/10/nyregion/jeffrey-epstein-suicide.html) [*ide*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/10/nyregion/jeffrey-epstein-suicide.html?searchResultPosition=6) in jail last year, Ms. Maxwell has been occupying something of a dual role: Officially, she must answer for her own alleged crimes. But symbolically, she is also a stand-in for Mr. Epstein and a conduit to his bizarre, bifurcated world — whose glittering surface camouflaged a troubling lower depth.

Ms. Maxwell has some familiarity with moving between worlds. As many headlines about this trial remind us, she is a “socialite,” and socialites harness style and status to create connections. In fact, examining her particular talent for this avocation — and how her style contributed to it — explains a lot about the workings of Mr. Epstein’s enterprise.

There are two kinds of socialites, as Dr. Andrew Solomon, a psychologist and the author of “Far From the Tree,” suggests: “Socialites who are to the manner born, whose function is to have connections made with them. And there are those who earn their place, by constantly bringing together people, and then bask in the reflected glory of those introductions.” Ghislaine Maxwell, he said, was in an “ironic position.” She was to the manner born, Dr. Solomon said, but “she had to shift gears and become that other kind of socialite,” after her family lost its money.

In both cases, though, “socialite” is a term reserved for women. While some men may operate similarly, they would never be labeled socialites because men are presumed to have individual identities beyond their social interactions. And because a socialite’s success depends upon an array of attributes still largely considered feminine: charm, poise, grace, beauty, cultivation and polish.

Ghislaine Maxwell had all of these. [*Born to great wealth*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/15/us/ghislaine-maxwell-epstein.html), she was raised mainly in England in an Italianate mansion and educated at Oxford University. Her father, the newspaper mogul Robert Maxwell, named his yacht after her (the “Lady Ghislaine”). She holds French, British and United States passports and is reputed to speak four languages. (She has been overheard in court speaking fluent French with her brother.) She is believed to hold licenses to pilot both helicopters and submarines. She has dabbled in environmental philanthropy. After her family lost everything (in the wake of her father’s death and posthumous embezzlement scandal), Ms. Maxwell moved to the United States and for a time sold high-end real estate — a potentially lucrative choice for a woman with her upper-class manners, plummy accent and good looks.

As countless photos of her demonstrate, Ms. Maxwell has always been dressed and coifed with elegant, Parisian understatement. For decades, she has worn her dark hair in a tousled, gamine crop and favored finely tailored clothes in neutral tones: tweed jackets, silk and cashmere sweaters, collared shirts. She wears little visible makeup and only minimal jewelry (earrings, a good watch). Standing beside more elaborately adorned women, she looks unfussy and confident.

That kind of unstudied elegance attracts people still figuring out how to style themselves or aspiring to learn the cues of a more elevated social world. Mr. Epstein may have been wealthy, but he was a Brooklyn-born arriviste seeking legitimacy and mobility among the moneyed upper classes. Ms. Maxwell would have seemed the perfect guide. And she came through, inducting him into the very highest circles of British society, introducing him most notably to Prince Andrew. A photograph produced at trial even shows Mr. Epstein and Ms. Maxwell relaxing at Balmoral Castle, Queen Elizabeth II’s holiday estate in Scotland — with Ms. Maxwell clad in an appropriately aristo-shabby plaid flannel.

It’s easy to imagine how Ms. Maxwell could have beguiled those teenage girls of mostly modest backgrounds — appearing to them (initially) like a beneficent role model and arbiter of their potential to join the elite world she inhabited. You can hear this in the testimony of her accusers. [*Annie Farmer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/10/nyregion/ghislaine-maxwell-trial-annie-farmer.html), the only witness to reveal her identity at trial, described Ms. Maxwell as a “trim, attractive woman” who gave her gifts, such as beauty products and cowboy boots. Ms. Farmer noted, too, that she “had a British accent and … was well spoken and articulate.”

The [*accuser known as “Jane*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/30/nyregion/ghislaine-maxwell-accuser-jane-testimony.html)” recounts Ms. Maxwell treating her at first like a younger sister, taking her to the movies and buying her clothes, including a cashmere sweater and underwear from Victoria’s Secret. And the accuser known as [*“Kate” testified*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/nyregion/ghislaine-maxwell-trial-accuser.html) that when she met Ms. Maxwell in London, she “was quite excited to be friends with her. She seemed to be everything that I wanted to be.”

The admiration Ms. Maxwell inspired in these girls would have made them all the more susceptible to the nefarious tactic known as [*“grooming”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/02/nyregion/grooming-sexual-abuse.html) — the slow process of eroding a potential victim’s defenses, desensitizing them to increasingly inappropriate or abusive behavior.

But, of course, grooming has another, more common meaning, referring to the everyday habits we perform to be socially presentable. While men practice grooming, the process for women is far more complicated, involving myriad products and learned techniques — from hair styling to skin care, makeup to manicures. Grooming is part of beauty culture, and despite feminism’s strides, the importance of beauty has not materially diminished in women’s lives.

The message of beauty’s urgent importance bombards us incessantly, from every beauty blog, TikTok makeup tutorial, fashion magazine, weight-loss fad, anti-aging treatment, Hollywood actress profile and beauty contest. (The Miss America organization held its 100th anniversary competition this week, marking a century of young women lining up to be judged before a crowd.)

For a young girl, learning how to groom herself — being “well-groomed”— is a step on the road toward maturity, toward acceding to “beauty” and all its promised rewards. From their earliest teens, girls examine and assess their own looks and one another’s. They watch as an entire culture does the same with women all around them. “Our patriarchal culture grooms girls into wanting to be desired,” as April Alliston, a Princeton comparative literature professor who researches gender and sexuality, said in an interview. In this way, girls absorb and normalize the many practices that can turn a woman’s life into an endless, de facto Judgment of Paris.

​​No wonder Ms. Maxwell was able to gain traction with teenagers by buying them the accouterments of grooming: clothes, lingerie, beauty products.

For a girl to be chosen by Ms. Maxwell, singled out by this refined woman, would have felt like a great compliment, like winning a beauty contest, like opening a portal to a world of privilege and ease. “Jane” was herself a contestant in the Miss Teen USA pageant (in which she wore a $2,000 dress given to her by Mr. Epstein). And “Carolyn” testified that Ms. Maxwell flattered her by saying “that I had a great body for Mr. Epstein and his friends.”

It would have been but a small step for Ms. Maxwell to begin that other form of grooming, which entails sexual instructions and, ultimately, actual molestation. This process exists on a continuum, whose earliest moments look much like normal life for millions of teenagers. In other words, Ms. Maxwell’s alleged illicit version of grooming would have slipped easily into the all-encompassing practice of regular grooming that already saturates most women’s lives — grooming that is inextricable from learning to be a commodity, to be the object of constant appraisal.

There was a social-class element to Ms. Maxwell’s tutelage as well. Beyond his mansions and private planes, Mr. Epstein signaled his desired class status through Ms. Maxwell, who in turn acted as a social-class instructor of sorts, implicitly with the girls she is accused of having recruited (although her alleged sexual instruction for them has been described as graphic), but quite overtly with the household staff she managed.

The trial has brought to light the [*58-page manual*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/02/nyregion/juan-alessi-testimony-ghislaine-maxwell.html) that she provided for the Epstein staff, which includes lists of banned words and expressions, preferred diction for different situations, and rules of comportment. Forbidden terms included: “yeah,” “no problem,” “you bet” and “gotcha,” which were to be replaced with “my pleasure,” “I would be very pleased to” and “you are quite right.”

As these lists make plain, Ms. Maxwell was essentially instructing domestic workers in how to sound less like ***working-class*** Americans and more like upper-class Brits (or at least their servants). The manual also advised on telephone manners and what to say upon entering a room; it reminded staff members to smile at all times and avoid direct eye contact. That Mr. Epstein presumably approved these instructions confirms that he longed to transfer her social polish to his own domestic sphere — whatever horrific crimes may have lain just beneath the faux “Downton Abbey” patina.

The “poshification” of Mr. Epstein’s staff presents a corollary to the grooming (in both senses) of the girls he is accused of harming. In each case, a British socialite — a stylish woman — lent her skills and her aura, the currency of her social class, to the task of prettying up what was, by most accounts, a grotesque operation.

PHOTO: Jeffrey Epstein with Ghislaine Maxwell in 2005. For Mr. Epstein, Ms. Maxwell acted as a social-class instructor of sorts. For a teenager, to be singled out by this polished woman would have felt like a great compliment. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE SCHILDHORN/PATRICK MCMULLAN, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** December 19, 2021

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[***What an Antisemite’s Fantasy Says About Jewish Reality; Bret Stephens***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64KF-CH01-DXY4-X24X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1648 words

**Byline:** Bret Stephens

**Highlight:** Why America can’t ignore the continual threat against Jews.

**Body**

A man travels 4,800 miles from the north of England to the heart of Texas.

Once there, appearing to be homeless, he gains entry into a synagogue just before its Shabbat services. The rabbi welcomes him with a cup of tea. With a handgun, he takes the rabbi and others hostage for 11 hours while demanding the release of a convicted terrorist held in a nearby prison. He phones a prominent New York rabbi to help push for the terrorist’s release. A [*hostage reports him as saying*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2022/01/18/antisemitism-anti-jewish-texas-synagogue-attack/), “I know President Biden will do things for the Jews.” A witness, [*who sees the drama unfold on a*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/some-people-just-dont-like-us-in-a-texas-synagogue-11-hours-of-terror/2022/01/16/3538f950-76d4-11ec-bf97-6eac6f77fba2_story.html)livestream, watches him “ranting about Jews and Israel” and saying he has chosen his target because “America only cares about Jewish lives.”

Antisemitism? You would think it could not be more obvious, as everyone from the prime minister of Israel to the president of the United States to the Council on American-Islamic Relations agrees. But first you’d have to climb over a strange wall of obfuscation, misdirection and doubt.

“He was singularly focused on one issue, and it was not specifically related to the Jewish community, but we are continuing to work to find motive,” the F.B.I. special agent in charge, Matthew DeSarno, said shortly after the standoff ended, presumably referring to the assailant’s bid to free the imprisoned terrorist. Both The Associated Press and the BBC parroted the line, [*with the Beeb tweeting*](https://twitter.com/BBCWorld/status/1482624581886169091), “Texas synagogue hostage standoff not related to Jewish community — F.B.I.”

The A.P. [*later deleted a tweet*](https://www.mediaite.com/news/ap-deletes-and-corrects-tweet-saying-texas-synagogue-standoff-issue-was-not-connected-to-jewish-community/) making a similar claim. And the F.B.I. amended its case on Sunday, calling the attack “a terrorism-related matter, in which the Jewish community was targeted.” On Thursday, the F.B.I. director, Christopher Wray, [*finally acknowledged*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/20/us/fbi-texas-synagogue-antisemitism.html) that it was an antisemitic attack.

Yet the only substantial reporting I found from a major American news organization that explicitly acknowledges the antisemitic nature of the attack was one astute story [*in The Washington Post*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2022/01/18/antisemitism-anti-jewish-texas-synagogue-attack/). Instead, there was a focus on the assailant’s supposed mental illness, along with additional reporting on the ever-increasing security-consciousness of synagogues worldwide.

Compare that with the mountain of reporting regarding the anti-Asian hate that allegedly animated the killer in last year’s attacks on Atlanta-area massage parlors. Or compare it with the coverage of the unquestionably racist 2015 shooting at Charleston’s Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church. For that matter, compare it with the naked Jew-hatred that drove the killer in the 2018 synagogue massacre in Pittsburgh, which has been extensively reported and discussed. (His immediate “motive” was opposition to immigration.)

In the days since the attack, the F.B.I.’s head-in-sand approach, along with so much of the media’s strange pattern of omission, has been the chief topic of discussion in every Jewish circle to which I belong. How can it be, we ask ourselves, that Jews should be victimized twice? First, by being physically targeted for being Jewish; second, by being begrudged the universal recognition that we were morally targeted, too? And how can it be that in this era of heightened sensitivity to every kind of hatred, bias, stereotype, -ism and -phobia, both conscious and unconscious, there’s so much caviling, caveating and outright denying when it comes to calling out bias aimed at Jews?

\*

The answer begins with the shape-shifting nature of antisemitism, which some perpetrate, others participate in (sometimes unwittingly), and a still greater number fail to recognize for what it is — in part because each successive mutation doesn’t exactly resemble its predecessor.

What we generally call antisemitism is a 19th-century coinage that helped turn an ancient religious hatred into a racial hatred. As racial hatred came to be considered uncouth after World War II, anti-Zionism (that is, blanket opposition to a Jewish state, not criticism of particular Israeli policies) became a more acceptable way of opposing Jewish political interests and denigrating Jews. Should Israel cease to exist, new forms of bigotry will surely develop for the next stage of anti-Judaism, adapted to the prevailing beliefs of the times.

The common denominator in each of these mutations is an idea, based in fantasy and conspiracy, about Jewish power. The old-fashioned religious antisemite believed Jews had the power to kill Christ. The 19th-century antisemites who were the forerunners to the Nazis believed Jews had the power to start wars, manipulate kings and swindle native people of their patrimony.

Present-day anti-Zionists attribute to Israel and its supporters in the United States vast powers that they do not possess, like the power to draw America into war. On the far right, antisemites think that Jews are engaged in an immense scheme to replace white, ***working-class*** America with immigrant labor. Tucker Carlson and others have taken this conspiracy theory mainstream, [*much to the delight of neo-Nazis like David Duke*](https://www.insider.com/tucker-carlson-replacement-theory-david-duke-kkk-trump-2021-10), even if they are careful to leave out the part about Jews.

The man who attacked the synagogue entertained the same type of fantasy. Just as Willie Sutton was said to rob banks because “that’s where the money is,” this assailant took Jews hostage because that’s where the power was (or so he thought). The F.B.I.’s moral idiocy — there are no other words for it — in denying the specifically antisemitic nature of the attack lies in the idea that he could have imagined himself choosing just about any means to achieve his end, like taking hostages at the nearest church or convenience store. Similarly, the focus on his mental health evades the central fact that, crazy or not, his malice was not random. He aimed his gun at Jews.

The fantasy about Jewish power may seem outlandish, but it’s far more pervasive than many think — which gets to the point of people participating in antisemitism even when they aren’t knowingly perpetrating it.

Who, for instance, [*is most responsible for devising the war in Iraq*](https://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/31/magazine/how-to-talk-about-israel.html)? If your first-pass answer is “Wolfowitz, Feith, Abrams and Perle,” you might ask yourself why you are naming second- and third-tier Bush administration officials, all of them Jewish, when all the top decision makers — Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rice — are Christians. (If your response to this is that Wolfowitz et al. were the ones who pulled the strings, then you’re an antisemite.)

Or take another example: if you think the reason Israel gets so much support in Congress is the money and influence of the pro-Israel lobby, you might be surprised to learn that that lobby ranks 20th on the [*most recent list of congressional donors*](https://www.opensecrets.org/industries/mems.php), giving away a paltry $4.5 million compared with the $95 million that retiree interest groups donated. “All about the Benjamins” it is not, [*no matter what Representative Ilhan Omar might suppose*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2019/02/11/its-all-about-benjamins-baby-ilhan-omar-again-accused-anti-semitism-over-tweets/).

\*

But there’s a larger context here, which has to do with prevailing assumptions about power itself.

A moral conviction of our time, especially prevalent on the cultural left, is that the powerful are presumptively bad while the powerless are presumptively good. These categories aren’t just political. They are also social, economic, ethnic and racial. It’s why so many conversations today revolve around the concept of “privilege” — a striking redefinition of success that removes the presumption of merit from those who have it and the stigma of failure from those who don’t.

It’s also the likeliest reason there was so much obvious hesitancy to describe the attack in Texas as antisemitic. Unlike the Pittsburgh shooter or the “Jews will not replace us” crowd at Charlottesville — white, right-wing, mostly Christian and therefore “privileged” — the Texas assailant was a British Muslim of Pakistani descent. Not white. Not privileged. Not right-wing. In the binary narrative of the powerful versus the powerless, his naked antisemitism just doesn’t compute: Powerless people are supposed to be victims, not murderous bigots. If he had ranted against Israel for oppressing Palestinians, it might have made more sense. And if he had donned a MAGA hat, we would certainly have had a much fuller exploration of his antisemitism, without time wasted exploring his other motives or state of mind.

For American Jews, this small silence about what happened last week should be profoundly worrisome, and not just as a matter of a journalistic lapse. It’s bad enough that the Jewish state, which gained what power it has because its neighbors threatened it with extinction, is still treated by so many as a global pariah — its sympathizers abroad risking social or professional ostracism by mere association. It’s bad enough, too, that the foul antisemitism of the right, yoked to its old themes of nativism, protectionism, nationalism and isolationism, is erupting into the public square like a burst sewage pipe.

Now American Jews find ourselves at perhaps the most successful period in our history, at a moment when much of the progressive left has decreed that privilege is a sin and that those who hold power should be stripped of it. Anyone with a long view of Jewish history should know how quickly economic and social privilege can turn to political and personal ruin, even — or especially — in countries where it might seem unthinkable.

There’s much to be thankful for about how things ended last week in Texas, and about the outpouring of love and support, across faiths, for a little Jewish community. But the wise counsel for Jews is to be grateful for last week’s good luck, while taking it as a warning that our luck in America may run out.

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY SELIMAKSAN/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** January 24, 2022

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[***Coronavirus Update***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62NG-8S91-DXY4-X0D4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 13, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1037 words

**Byline:** By James Barron

**Body**

It is not their parents' vaccine anymore, or their grandparents'. Adolescents ages 12 to 15 became eligible for the Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus vaccine on Wednesday.

The announcement came from Dr. Rochelle P. Walensky, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hours after the Pfizer-BioNTech shot received clearance from an advisory committee of experts.

But some states did not wait. At least four -- Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia and Maine -- gave vaccinators permission to administer the shots to adolescents after the vaccine cleared an earlier hurdle: On Monday, the Food and Drug Administration expanded its emergency use authorization to include 12- to 15-year-olds. Other states, facing surpluses of doses that could be redirected, prepared to widen eligibility to those ages as early as Thursday.

''This new population is going to find the rollout fast and efficient,'' President Biden said on Wednesday, explaining that 15,000 pharmacies across the nation would be ready to vaccinate adolescents on Thursday, most ''as close to the family home as the kids' school is to the family home.''

But for many parents, the calculus is complicated. Dr. Hina Talib surveyed her 33,400 followers on Instagram. Of the 600 parents who replied, most began with, ''I'm not an anti-vaxxer or an anti-masker. I'm just worried.'' Many were themselves vaccinated. But when it came to their kids, the unknowns gave them pause. ''I don't want my children to be responding to those lawyer ads you see on TV 25 years from now,'' Kimberly Johnson, the mother of elementary-school-age twins in Pound Ridge, N.Y., said in a Facebook message to the parenting columnist Jessica Grose. ''You know the ones, 'If you were under the age of 16 in the years 2021-2022 and received the Covid-19 vaccination you could be entitled to compensation ...'''

The C.D.C. advisory panel's recommendation came as scientists told a House subcommittee that variants would pose a continuing threat, perhaps even crimping the effectiveness of vaccines. Salim S. Abdool Karim, a professor of clinical epidemiology at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, told the subcommittee that new variants could emerge ''because the virus is being put under pressure from wide-scale vaccination.'' And Rep. Bill Foster, Democrat of Illinois and the chairman of the panel, said it was essential ''that the tools we use to detect, treat and forecast the virus are keeping up with emerging variants.''

But if the nation is to vaccinate its way out of the pandemic, inoculating younger people is increasingly important. Dr. Yvonne Maldonado, who represents the American Academy of Pediatrics on the C.D.C. advisory panel, noted on Wednesday that Covid-19 had become one of the top 10 causes of death in children.

The president also addressed vaccine hesitancy, saying he did not believe ''there's any significant portion of the American people who will refuse to get vaccinated.''

''You keep hearing about how Republicans won't and this -- look, if it's available, if it's nearby, if it's convenient, people are getting vaccinated,'' he said. ''I believe the vast majority of Americans are going to get vaccinated. That's the route we're going now.''

Vaccinations have declined lately, although Mr. Biden said there had been ''a slight increase in the pace'' in the last week. But millions who are unvaccinated are not unwilling. They outnumber those who are hesitant or skeptical, and also the 16 million who, according to a U.S. census estimate, are unsure. They are the people whom Mr. Biden described last week as ''just not sure how to get where they want to go'' -- for the most part, ***working-class*** people with jobs and family responsibilities who are short on time. Some worry that they could not afford to take time off if they had a reaction to the vaccine, or side effects.

Some local health departments are getting creative as they close their mass vaccination clinics because of low turnouts. In Austin, Texas, a group of vaccinators moved to a grocery-store parking lot after administering fewer shots than expected at a school festival. Before long, almost three dozen workers from the store had trooped out to the parking lot.

''Everyone wanted to get vaccinated,'' said Karim Nafal, the store's owner, ''but didn't know how or where.''

XXX

Oxygen cylinders from Mount Everest could go to Covid-19 patients at lower altitudes in Nepal. Relief groups in the Himalayan nation are asking climbers to hand over oxygen cylinders used on the way up, to be refilled for sick patients. Climbers carry oxygen to help breathe in the thin air. They are not supposed to leave the canisters behind -- Nepali law forbids it -- but oxygen tankers are sometimes abandoned in the snow or stashed by expedition operators. Mountaineers' cylinders are smaller than the chest-high tanks usually seen in intensive-care wards. But Mahabir Pun, a well-known Nepali scientist who is helping to lead the cylinder-repurposing campaign, said they could go to patients who cannot be accommodated in hospitals or are being treated at home.

Expedition operators are preparing to airlift thousands of cylinders from the Himalayas as expeditions are completed this month, the culmination of the climbing season.

''We are asking them not to leave even a single oxygen cylinder in the mountains,'' said Kul Bahadur Gurung, the general secretary of the Nepal Mountaineering Association.

Mingma Sherpa, the chairman of Nepal's largest expedition operator, said he expected to ship as many as 500 cylinders from climbs on Everest and other peaks once the climbers had returned to their base camps. But he set one condition: ''That those cylinders should be used for poor and helpless people, rather than V.I.P.s,'' he said.

The outbreak in Nepal is believed to have been fueled by people who crossed its long border with India. Nepal had reported a total of 26 deaths during the entire pandemic at the beginning of the month. On Tuesday, the death toll stood at 225, and doctors said shortages of medical oxygen had figured in many of the deaths.Coronavirus Update wraps up the day's developments with information from across the virus report.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/12/nyregion/12barron.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/12/nyregion/12barron.html)

**Load-Date:** May 13, 2021

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[***Virus Widens A Racial Gap In Longevity***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:636C-RY51-DXY4-X10N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 22, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1202 words

**Byline:** By Julie Bosman, Sophie Kasakove and Daniel Victor

**Body**

The 18-month drop, the steepest decline since World War II, was fueled by the coronavirus pandemic.

New federal data draws one of the starkest illustrations to date of how the coronavirus pandemic has disproportionately affected Hispanic and Black Americans, showing that they suffered a far steeper drop in life expectancy in 2020 than white Americans.

Overall, life expectancy in the United States fell by a year and a half, a federal report said on Wednesday, a decline largely attributed to the pandemic that has killed more than 600,000 Americans.

It was the steepest decline in the United States since World War II.

From 2019 to 2020, Hispanic people experienced the greatest drop in life expectancy -- three years -- and Black Americans saw a decrease of 2.9 years. White people experienced the smallest decline, of 1.2 years.

The coronavirus ''uncovered the deep racial and ethnic inequities in access to health, and I don't think that we've ever overcome them,'' said Dr. Mary T. Bassett, a former New York City health commissioner and professor of health and human rights at Harvard University, who characterized the findings as devastating but unsurprising. ''To think that we'll just bounce back from them seems a bit wishful thinking.''

Life expectancy numbers provide only a snapshot in time of the general health of a population: If American children born today spent their entire lives under the conditions of 2020, they would live an average of 77.3 years, down from 78.8 in 2019.

The last time life expectancy was so low was in 2003, according to the National Center for Health Statistics, the agency that released the figures and a part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Racial and ethnic disparities have persisted throughout the pandemic, a reflection of many factors, including the differences in overall health and available health care between white, Hispanic and Black people in the United States. Black and Hispanic Americans were more likely to be employed in risky, public-facing jobs during the pandemic -- bus drivers, restaurant cooks, sanitation workers -- rather than working on laptops from the relative safety of their homes.

They also more commonly depend on public transportation, risking coronavirus exposure, or live in multigenerational homes and in tighter conditions that are more conducive to spreading the virus.

The precipitous drop in 2020, caused largely by Covid-19, is not likely to be permanent. In 1918, the flu pandemic wiped 11.8 years from Americans' life expectancy, and the number fully rebounded the following year. But Elizabeth Arias, one of the researchers who produced the report, said life expectancy was not likely to bounce back to prepandemic levels anytime soon.

Returning the life expectancy numbers to those of 2019 would require having ''no more excess death because of Covid, and that's already not possible in 2021,'' Dr. Arias said.

Beyond that, she said, the effects of the pandemic on life expectancy, especially for Black and Latino people, could linger for years. (The report noted changes in life expectancy only for white, Hispanic and Black Americans.)

''If it was just the pandemic and we were able to take control of that and reduce the numbers of excess deaths, they may be able to gain some of the loss,'' Dr. Arias said. But additional deaths may emerge as a result of people missing regular doctor visits for other health conditions during the pandemic.

''We may be seeing the indirect effects of the pandemic for some time to come,'' she said.

Americans whose relatives and friends died in the pandemic saw their own painful losses reflected in the report.

Denise Chandler, a mother of eight who lives in Detroit and lost both her husband and father to the coronavirus last year, is now the head of one of the many Black families who have suffered greatly from the pandemic.

''I see a lot of fatherless children now, and a lot of wives without their husbands,'' she said on Wednesday. Ms. Chandler quit work for most of a year to help her children recover from their loss and, even now, has many days when they barely let her out the door -- because they are fearful she will get sick and die, too.

Ms. Chandler points to what she described as substandard care at the hospital in their neighborhood where her husband, Richard, who died at 35, was treated for Covid-19, a facility that serves many patients in Detroit's African American community.

''If he was white, he wouldn't have been at that hospital,'' she said.

The predominantly Latino, ***working-class*** city of Chelsea, just north of Boston, was among the areas of Massachusetts hardest hit by the coronavirus.

Gladys Vega, executive director of a community organization called La Colaborativa, said the death rate from Covid-19 had been exacerbated by lack of access to health care: Many people in Chelsea are undocumented, and they feared that going to a hospital or applying for health insurance could result in deportation.

''That creates all these other dilemmas in their health conditions that make everything worse,'' Ms. Vega said. The community lost ''elders, young people, people that we never thought would be gone,'' she said.

The statistics in the report released on Wednesday laid bare the staggering toll of the pandemic, which has, at times, pushed the health system to its limits.

Measuring life expectancy is not intended to precisely predict actual life spans; rather, it is a measure of a population's health, revealing either societywide distress or advancement. The sheer magnitude of the drop in 2020 wiped away decades of progress.

In recent decades, life expectancy had steadily risen in the United States -- until 2014, when an opioid epidemic took hold and caused the kind of decline rarely seen in developed countries. The decline flattened in 2018 and 2019.

The pandemic appears to have amplified the opioid crisis. More than 40 states have recorded increases in opioid-related deaths since the pandemic began, according to the American Medical Association.

Even if deaths from Covid-19 markedly decline in 2021, the economic and social effects will linger, especially among racial groups that were disproportionately affected, researchers have noted.

Though there have long been racial and ethnic disparities in life expectancy, the gaps had been narrowing for decades. In 1993, white Americans were expected to live 7.1 years longer than Black Americans, but the gap had been winnowed to 4.1 years in 2019.

Covid-19 did away with much of that progress: White Americans are now expected to live 5.8 years longer.

Hispanic Americans had a life expectancy that was three years longer than that of white Americans in 2019, but that gap decreased to 1.2 years in 2020.

As before, there remains a gender gap. Women in the United States were expected to live 80.2 years in the new figures, down from 81.4 in 2019, while men were expected to live 74.5 years, down from 76.3.

While the 1.5-year decline was caused mostly by the pandemic, making up 74 percent of the negative contribution, there were also smaller rises in unintentional injuries, chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, homicide and diabetes.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/21/us/american-life-expectancy-report.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/21/us/american-life-expectancy-report.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Responding to a call in the Bronx in April 2020

flags in honor of Texas' Covid-19 victims in Austin in September

and Denise Chandler, of Detroit, who lost her husband and father to the virus last year. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES

BRITTANY GREESON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

**Load-Date:** July 22, 2021

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[***In Queen's Speech, Elizabeth Details Plans for Rising Conservative Party***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62N8-33S1-JBG3-632P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 12, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1107 words

**Byline:** By Mark Landler

**Body**

The government plans laid out in the Queen's Speech suggest that Prime Minister Boris Johnson intends to make full use of favorable political conditions.

LONDON -- Prime Minister Boris Johnson hoped to use the opening of Britain's Parliament on Tuesday to galvanize his government's agenda after a striking series of victories in regional elections in England last week. But the spotlight shone brightest on Queen Elizabeth II, who appeared in public for the first time since burying her husband, Prince Philip, to handle the age-old pageantry.

Squired by her eldest son and heir, Prince Charles, the queen presided over a ceremony she had attended for decades with Philip. Now a widow, and three weeks after turning 95, her voice was firm and steady as she read the Queen's Speech, in which Mr. Johnson's government laid out an ambitious agenda to ''level up'' the economically depressed north of England with the more prosperous south.

It was the queen's 67th opening of Parliament, a reassuring sign of continuity for Britain's constitutional monarchy after a turbulent period for the royal family. For Mr. Johnson, it was a chance to bring normalcy back to politics, after the turmoil of Brexit and a pandemic that paralyzed the country, leaving more than 127,000 people dead.

Mr. Johnson signaled that he intended to keep playing a dominant role in the political arena, proposing to scrap a law that restricts his ability to call general elections. With the government reaping credit for Britain's swift rollout of vaccines and the prospect of a post-lockdown economic boom, Mr. Johnson might decide to call an election a year early, in 2023, to take better advantage of the good news.

The government also proposed that voters be required to show photo identification at polling places in general elections, which it defended as a means to prevent fraud. But opposition parties criticized the move as unnecessary, and said it could suppress turnout, particularly among ethnic minorities -- an argument often made about voter ID laws that have been passed by several American states.

''Voter I.D. is a disgraceful piece of chicanery,'' said Baroness Rosalind Scott, a member of the House of Lords and a former president of the Liberal Democrats. ''Voter fraud is very rare here, so it's a solution in search of a problem.''

It was one of a handful of right-leaning measures -- including a crime bill that would allow police to sharply restrict demonstrations and legislation to protect speech on university campuses -- that served as a reminder that, for all its Social Democratic-style spending, Mr. Johnson's party is still conservative.

The policing legislation has ignited angry ''Kill the Bill'' protests in London and other cities, where demonstrators view it as a way to crack down on legitimate gatherings. In Bristol, protesters lobbed rocks and fireworks at the police, which some warned would backfire by stoking public support for the measures.

''Johnson's going for what's long been the sweet spot in British politics,'' said Timothy Bale, a professor of politics at Queen Mary University in London. ''Just to the left of center on economics and public provision; quite a long way to the right on pretty much everything else, especially if it has to do with law and order, immigration and now anything that smacks of political correctness gone mad.''

Much of the speech, however, was on more familiar, conciliatory ground. The government promised to ''deliver a national recovery from the pandemic that makes the United Kingdom stronger, healthier and more prosperous than before.''

Reading a text prepared by Downing Street, the queen spoke fluently of Mr. Johnson's plans to roll out ''5G mobile coverage and gigabit capable broadband'' throughout the country. The government will plow money into the National Health Service, a popular measure after it withstood a year of unrelenting pressure from the pandemic and overhaul planning regulations to encourage more construction of single-family houses.

The speech did not directly address perhaps the thorniest challenge facing Mr. Johnson: pressure for a second independence referendum in Scotland, where pro-independence parties expanded their majority in the regional Parliament in last week's election.

The government said only that it would ''promote the strength and integrity of the union'' -- a pledge that is likely to involve pouring more public money into Scotland and putting off the Scottish National Party's demands to allow a vote.

''The question is, is Boris Johnson right to think that delaying it might help him?'' said Jonathan Powell, who served as chief of staff to Prime Minister Tony Blair. ''This will be the dominating issue of British politics for the next four or five years.''

With strict social distancing rules in place, the ceremony was scaled back and stripped down. The queen was driven from Buckingham Palace in a Range Rover rather than a gilded carriage. She shunned the 18-foot velvet cape and imperial crown that she once wore at state openings in favor of a more sensible lilac coat and hat.

The recent death of Philip also lent the proceedings a wistful atmosphere, even though he had turned over the duties of escorting the queen to Charles a few years ago, after his retirement. Charles and his wife, the Duchess of Cornwall, watched from the sidelines as Elizabeth sat on a carved wooden throne.

Though missing hundreds of jockeying lawmakers and V.I.P. guests, the ceremony still had its share of otherworldly pomp. The crown, which normally resides in the Tower of London, was paraded through the echoing hallways of the Palace of Westminster on a red velvet pillow rather than on the queen's head.

Lawmakers were summoned from the House of Commons by the Lady Usher of the Black Rod, who first had the door slammed in her face as a sign of its members' independence. Mr. Johnson and the leader of the opposition, Keir Starmer, said nothing to each other as they walked, single file and masked, to the House of Lords.

Last week's elections left the Labour Party in disarray, as Mr. Johnson's Conservative Party made further inroads into Labour's stronghold in ***working-class*** districts in the Midlands and the north of England.

Mr. Starmer tried to regain his footing in the debate that followed the ceremony, excoriating the government for not introducing legislation to bolster Britain's care for older people and those with disabilities. Mr. Johnson, he said, had promised to do so 657 days ago.

''Failure to act after a pandemic is nothing short of an insult to a whole nation,'' Mr. Starmer declared.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/world/europe/queens-speech-boris-johnson.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/world/europe/queens-speech-boris-johnson.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Queen Elizabeth II, above, was escorted to Parliament on Tuesday by her eldest son and heir, Prince Charles. Prime Minister Boris Johnson, center left, leaving after the Queen's Speech. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS JACKSON

STEFAN ROUSSEAU)

**Load-Date:** May 12, 2021

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[***The Democrats Get the Ball Rolling***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60MH-G151-JBG3-612R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 19, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 26; LETTERS

**Length:** 709 words

**Body**

Readers share thoughts and impressions of the speakers on Night 1.

To the Editor:

Re ''Variety of Voices Helps Democrats Open Convention'' (front page, Aug. 18):

This convention met the moment with a brilliantly produced confirmation of all the elements Michelle Obama iterated in her talk. The absence of a noisy, distracting background of conventioneers was a bonus allowing us to focus on the panorama of participants and the words of the presenters.

It was personal and patriotic, and it spoke to me. I hope that it spoke to millions of Americans who will vote to save our Constitution and reinstate our democracy.

Ellen Nelson-LarsonDanville, Calif.

To the Editor:

All elections are about three things: getting out your supporters, persuading the undecideds and creating as much doubt as possible in the minds of the opposition.

The Democratic convention opener on Monday did a good job on Task 1, but did little or nothing on Tasks 2 and 3.

What was most sorely missing was a set of statements from the white ***working class***. A group of middle-aged truck drivers or meatpacking workers would have been worth much more than any senator.

William HarrisNew York

To the Editor:

I wasn't going to watch the Democratic Convention. I thought that it would be a flop. It wasn't.

The tight schedule covered three themes -- economic hardship, Covid-19 and racism -- and wrapped them in a package stressing unity even with those with whom you don't totally agree.

The grand finish was with Bernie Sanders and then Michelle Obama, who said: ''If you think things cannot possibly get worse, trust me -- they can and they will if we don't make a change in this election. If we have any hope of ending this chaos, we have got to vote for Joe Biden like our lives depend on it.''

A lot of the evening was moving.

It will be hard to make each night that good. But I will watch and see. As a 78-year-old activist and depressed cynic, I was comforted by the seriousness and the range of subjects. The convention wrapped the party into something more coherent, comprehensive, deep and respectful of us regular people.

Carole TravisWeaverville, N.C.

To the Editor:

Re ''Kasich, 'Deeply Worried,' Puts His Republican Voice at Biden's Service'' (news article, Aug. 18):

I freely identify as a left-liberal progressive. As a registered Democrat, I voted for Bernie Sanders in the last two primaries and admire the grass-roots movements he put together, pulling the Democratic Party further to the left.

That said, I welcome John Kasich's defection and presence at the Democratic National Convention. While I disagree with most of his policy positions, he is a moderate Republican, and defeating President Trump is the most urgent priority.

Mr. Trump's dismantling of major arms treaties and environmental protections is extremely dangerous for the world. He fires government officials who disagree with him, and he is undermining the coming election: This represents an existential threat to our democracy.

The Trump administration is so dangerous that reaching across the aisle is exactly what we need to be doing.

Ravi KatariNew York

To the Editor:

Re ''All the Republicans Who Have Decided Not to Support Trump'' (nytimes.com, Aug. 17):

Sadly, many Republicans unwilling to break with President Trump will admit privately that he is politically volatile, is often careless with the truth, has used language that offends them, is too often cozy with controversial foreign leaders, has poorly managed the coronavirus crisis, and is personally unpredictable.

If these supporters are truly conservatives -- as most of them claim -- what is there about the president's behavior so worthy of conserving and so unworthy of the condemnation of even more G.O.P. politicians who are honest and bold enough to take a stand?

David L. EvansCambridge, Mass.

To the Editor:

Re ''How Harris Emerged From a Formidable Field'' (front page, Aug. 14):

Your coverage of Joe Biden's selection of Kamala Harris showcased thoughtful management, an organized process and a focused weighing of alternatives.

What a breath of fresh air compared with the current administration's approach to just about everything besides tax cuts for the rich.

Daniele GerardNew York

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/18/opinion/letters/democrats-convention.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/18/opinion/letters/democrats-convention.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Michelle Obama criticized President Trump bluntly as ''clearly in over his head'' in her keynote speech. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Democratic National Convention, via Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 19, 2020

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[***The Democrats Get the Ball Rolling; letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60MC-H891-DXY4-X0DW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 18, 2020 Tuesday 23:30 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; letters

**Length:** 728 words

**Highlight:** Readers share thoughts and impressions of the speakers on Night 1.

**Body**

Readers share thoughts and impressions of the speakers on Night 1.

To the Editor:

Re “[*Variety of Voices Helps Democrats Open Convention*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/17/us/politics/democratic-national-convention-recap.html?searchResultPosition=1)” (front page, Aug. 18):

This convention met the moment with a brilliantly produced confirmation of all the elements Michelle Obama iterated in her talk. The absence of a noisy, distracting background of conventioneers was a bonus allowing us to focus on the panorama of participants and the words of the presenters.

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The grand finish was with Bernie Sanders and then Michelle Obama, who said: “If you think things cannot possibly get worse, trust me — they can and they will if we don’t make a change in this election. If we have any hope of ending this chaos, we have got to vote for Joe Biden like our lives depend on it.”

A lot of the evening was moving.

It will be hard to make each night that good. But I will watch and see. As a 78-year-old activist and depressed cynic, I was comforted by the seriousness and the range of subjects. The convention wrapped the party into something more coherent, comprehensive, deep and respectful of us regular people.

Carole Travis

Weaverville, N.C.

To the Editor:

Re “[*Kasich, ‘Deeply Worried,’ Puts His Republican Voice at Biden’s Service*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/17/us/politics/democratic-national-convention-recap.html?searchResultPosition=1)” (news article, Aug. 18):

I freely identify as a left-liberal progressive. As a registered Democrat, I voted for Bernie Sanders in the last two primaries and admire the grass-roots movements he put together, pulling the Democratic Party further to the left.

That said, I welcome John Kasich’s defection and presence at the Democratic National Convention. While I disagree with most of his policy positions, he is a moderate Republican, and defeating President Trump is the most urgent priority.

Mr. Trump’s dismantling of major arms treaties and environmental protections is extremely dangerous for the world. He fires government officials who disagree with him, and he is undermining the coming election: This represents an existential threat to our democracy.

The Trump administration is so dangerous that reaching across the aisle is exactly what we need to be doing.

Ravi Katari

New York

To the Editor:

Re “[*All the Republicans Who Have Decided Not to Support Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/17/us/politics/democratic-national-convention-recap.html?searchResultPosition=1)” (nytimes.com, Aug. 17):

Sadly, many Republicans unwilling to break with President Trump will admit privately that he is politically volatile, is often careless with the truth, has used language that offends them, is too often cozy with controversial foreign leaders, has poorly managed the coronavirus crisis, and is personally unpredictable.

If these supporters are truly conservatives — as most of them claim — what is there about the president’s behavior so worthy of conserving and so unworthy of the condemnation of even more G.O.P. politicians who are honest and bold enough to take a stand?

David L. Evans

Cambridge, Mass.

To the Editor:

Re “[*How Harris Emerged From a Formidable Field*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/17/us/politics/democratic-national-convention-recap.html?searchResultPosition=1)” (front page, Aug. 14):

Your coverage of Joe Biden’s selection of Kamala Harris showcased thoughtful management, an organized process and a focused weighing of alternatives.

What a breath of fresh air compared with the current administration’s approach to just about everything besides tax cuts for the rich.

Daniele Gerard

New York

PHOTO: Michelle Obama criticized President Trump bluntly as “clearly in over his head” in her keynote speech. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Democratic National Convention, via Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 18, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Our Health Care System Is An Engine Of Inequality***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YPH-XW61-JBG3-61D5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 19, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 8

**Length:** 1428 words

**Byline:** By Anne Case and Angus Deaton

**Body**

Our system takes from the poor and ***working class*** to generate wealth for the already wealthy.

In March, Congress passed a coronavirus bill including $3.1 billion to develop and produce drugs and vaccines. The bipartisan consensus was unusual. Less unusual was the successful lobbying by pharmaceutical companies to weaken or kill provisions that addressed affordability -- measures that could be used to control prices or invalidate patents for any new drugs.

The notion of price control is anathema to health care companies. It threatens their basic business model, in which the government grants them approvals and patents, pays whatever they ask, and works hand in hand with them as they deliver the worst health outcomes at the highest costs in the rich world.

The American health care industry is not good at promoting health, but it excels at taking money from all of us for its benefit. It is an engine of inequality.

Now is a difficult time to talk about the costs of health care. Doctors and nurses are risking their lives to fight the virus. We need more doctors and nurses. We need more beds, more ventilators and more protective equipment, and we need vaccines and drugs. High prices are not the best nor the only way to get drugs or vaccines that will win the war against the virus, but they can help.

Yet we cannot go on as we have been. America is a rich country that can afford a world-class health care system. We should be spending a lot of money on care and on new drugs. But we need to spend to save lives and reduce sickness, not on expensive, income-generating procedures that do little to improve health. Or worst of all, on enriching pharma companies that feed the opioid epidemic.

The crisis will, inevitably, change health care in countless ways. The industry might emerge as a superhero of the war against Covid-19, like the Royal Air Force in the Battle of Britain during World War II. If so, it might become even more untouchable than before. Or it may be seen as a financial predator that leaves many thousands with unpayable bills for coronavirus care.

But the virus also provides an opportunity for systemic change. The United States spends more than any other nation on health care, and yet we have the lowest life expectancy among rich countries. And although perhaps no system can prepare for such an event, we were no better prepared for the pandemic than countries that spend far less.

The first step to reform is to change the way we think about the health care system. Many Americans think their health insurance is a gift from their employers -- a ''benefit'' bestowed on lucky workers by benevolent corporations. It would be more accurate to think of employer-provided health insurance as a tax.

One way or another, everyone pays for health care. It accounts for about 18 percent of G.D.P. -- nearly $11,000 per person. Individuals directly pay about a quarter, the federal and state governments pay nearly half, and most of the rest is paid by employers.

In 2019, employer-based insurance plans cost an average of $21,000 for a family policy or $7,200 for a single person. This system requires companies to calculate whether a worker's value to the company can cover both wages and benefits, a difficult test for less-skilled workers. Wages fall or employers shed or outsource these positions to companies with few benefits and fewer prospects for career advancement.

Rising health care costs account for much of the half-century decline in the earnings of men without a college degree, and contribute to the decline in the number of less-skilled jobs. Employer-based health insurance is a wrecking ball, destroying the labor market for less-educated workers and contributing to the rise in ''deaths of despair.''

Rising costs are an untenable burden on our government, too. States' payments for Medicaid have risen from 20.5 percent of their spending in 2008 to 28.9 percent in 2019. To meet those rising costs, states have cut their financing for roads, bridges and state universities. Without those crucial investments, the path to success for many Americans is cut off. We face a looming trillion-dollar federal deficit caused almost entirely by the rising costs of Medicaid and Medicare, even without the recent coronavirus relief bill.

Every year, the United States spends $1 trillion more than is needed for high quality care. Of course, that waste is also someone's income; executives at hospitals, medical device makers and pharmaceutical companies, and some physicians, are very well paid.

American doctors control access to their profession through a system that limits medical school admissions and the entry of doctors trained abroad -- an imbalance that was clear even before the pandemic. That keeps their numbers down and their salaries up. As of 2012, doctors were the largest single occupation in the top 1 percent. The business model under which most doctors practice isn't working; without the revenue from high-paid elective care, some hospitals are now resorting to furloughs and layoffs of doctors and nurses.

Hospitals, many of them classified as nonprofits, have consolidated, with monopolies over health care in many cities, and they have used that monopoly power to raise prices. Many Americans, even those with insurance, face bills that they cannot pay, or are hit with ''surprise'' medical bills charged by providers working at in-network hospitals who have opted not to accept insurance. Ambulance services and emergency departments that don't accept insurance have become favorites of private equity investors because of their high profits. Medical device manufacturers have also consolidated, in some cases using a ''catch and kill'' strategy to swallow up nimbler start-ups and keep the prices of their products high.

These are all strategies that lawmakers and regulators could put a stop to, if they choose.

They choose not to. And so we Americans have too few doctors, too few beds and too few ventilators -- but lots of income for providers. While millions suffer, our health care system has turned into an inequality machine, taking from the poor and ***working class*** to generate wealth for the already wealthy.

The health care industry has armored itself, employing five lobbyists for each elected member of Congress. But public anger has been building -- over drug prices, co-payments, surprise medical bills -- and now, over the fragility of our health care system, which has been laid bare by the pandemic. This anger could breach the protective cordon in Washington.

If it does, what will we get instead?

A single-payer system is just one possibility. There are many systems in wealthy countries to choose from, with and without insurance companies, with and without government-run hospitals. But all have two key characteristics: universal coverage -- ideally from birth -- and cost control.

Britain, for example, has the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, which vets drugs, devices and procedures for their benefit relative to cost. The institute can sometimes delay the availability of good treatments, but it prevents the public system from spending money on expensive therapies of questionable value. It is designed to put the interests of patients ahead of providers.

In the United States, public funding is likely to play a significant role in any treatments or vaccines that are eventually developed for Covid-19. Americans should demand that they be available at a reasonable price to everyone -- not in the sole interest of drug companies.

At the very least, America must stop financing health care through employer-based insurance, which encourages some people to work but it eliminates jobs for less-skilled workers. Employer-based health care is a particular nightmare in this pandemic. In recent weeks, millions have lost their paychecks and their insurance, and will have to face the virus without either.

We are believers in free-market capitalism, but health care is not something it can deliver in a socially tolerable way.

Anne Case and Angus Deaton, the 2015 Nobel laureate in economics, are professors at Princeton and the University of Southern California and the authors of ''Deaths of Despair and the Future of Capitalism.''

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 19, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Amid Climate Talks, an Actor’s Call to Action Unfolds Onstage***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6406-4011-JBG3-61K1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 1361 words

**Byline:** Whitney Bauck

**Highlight:** A filmed version of Fehinti Balogun’s play about his awakening to climate issues is being shown at the COP26 summit. He is among the theater artists trying to make a difference through their work.

**Body**

A filmed version of Fehinti Balogun’s play about his awakening to climate issues is being shown at the COP26 summit. He is among the theater artists trying to make a difference through their work.

The actor Fehinti Balogun knows that theater can mobilize people toward climate action, because that’s what it did for him.

Back in 2017, while preparing for a role in [*“Myth,”*](https://www.rsc.org.uk/mischief-festivals-past/mischief-festival-archive-may-2017) a climate parable, he began reading books about climate change and became alarmed by the unusually warm summer he was experiencing in England. The play itself called for him and the other actors to repeatedly run through the same mundane lines, to the point of absurdity, as their environment ruptured terrifyingly around them — the walls streaking with oil, the stove catching fire, the freezer oozing water.

The whole experience changed his life, Balogun said. Suddenly, nothing seemed more important than addressing the global crisis. Not even landing the lead in a West End production (a long-coveted dream) of “The Importance of Being Earnest.” His growing anxiety made him feel as if he were living a real-world version of “Myth” in which society kept repeating the same old script even as the planet descended into chaos.

“Knowing all that I did made me angry at the world for not doing anything,” the 26-year-old Balogun (“Dune,” “I May Destroy You”) said in a phone interview. “I didn’t get how we weren’t revolting.”

That sense of urgency is what he said he hopes to pass along to audiences in “[*Can I Live?*](http://www.complicite.org/productions/CanILive),” a new play that he wrote, stars in and created with the theater company [*Complicité*](http://www.complicite.org/company.php). A filmed version of the piece, which also features supporting actors and musicians and was originally conceived as a live show, was screened Monday as part of [*COP26, the United Nations climate meeting in Glasgow*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/30/climate/climate-summit-glasgow.html). The resulting work is as innovative as any piece of theater to emerge during the Covid-19 era: Initially it appears to be just an intimate Zoom session with Balogun but evolves into an explosive mix of spoken word, animation, hip-hop and dialogue.

The hourlong production, which the [*Barbican Center has made available for streaming on its website*](https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2021/event/complicite-fehinti-balogun-can-i-live) through Nov. 12, combines scientific facts about how the greenhouse effect works with the story of Balogun’s own journey into the climate movement. It also focuses on the gap between the largely white mainstream environmental groups he joined, and the experiences of his primarily Black friends and family.

Throughout the show, Balogun fields phone calls from family members about issues seemingly unrelated to the central thrust of the play, asking him when he’s going to get married or why he left a bag in the hallway at home. Though at first it seems as if they are interrupting Balogun’s primary narrative about “emissions, emissions, emissions,” as he sings at one point, their interjections hammer home one of his central ideas: If the movement isn’t willing to prioritize someone like his Nigerian grandma, it’s missing the point. Climate action, in other words, is for everyday people with everyday concerns.

“The goal is to make grass-roots activism accessible, and to represent people of color and ***working-class*** people,” he said. To that end, he interweaves his own story with that of the Nigerian writer and activist [*Ken Saro-Wiwa*](https://www.nytimes.com/1995/11/11/world/nigeria-executes-critic-of-regime-nations-protest.html), who campaigned against destructive oil extraction on behalf of his Ogoni people. “So often we don’t talk about the global South,” Balogun said. “We don’t talk about the communities who’ve been leading this fight for years.”

Though Balogun is the only theater artist on the official COP26 schedule, he is certainly not the first playwright to grapple with climate themes. [*Climate Change Theater Action*](http://www.climatechangetheatreaction.com/), an initiative of the nonprofit [*the Arctic Cycle*](https://www.thearcticcycle.org/), was created to encourage theater-making that might draw greater attention to COP21, the U.N. climate meeting in 2015 that resulted in the landmark Paris Agreement. (The theater group has never been officially affiliated with any of the annual COP meetings.)

Since its inception, the group has produced 200 works that have been performed for 40,000 people in 30 countries, said its co-founder, Chantal Bilodeau. The organization commissions plays with environmental themes, paying the writers and then providing the scripts free to theater companies, schools or any other groups that want to stage readings or productions.

The first year, Bilodeau said, they ended up with a “whole lot of depressing plays.” Now they try to steer playwrights away from dystopia and toward visions of a livable future, and encourage those staging the works to pair them with programming that helps audiences get a deeper understanding of the issues.

Lanxing Fu, co-director of the nonprofit [*Superhero Clubhouse*](http://www.superheroclubhouse.org/) in New York City, spends part of her time focused on those who will be most affected by a hotter planet: the next generation. Through Superhero Clubhouse’s after-school program [*Big Green Theater*](http://www.superheroclubhouse.org/bgt/), run in collaboration with the [*Bushwick Starr*](https://www.thebushwickstarr.org/) and the Astoria Performing Arts Center, public elementary school students in Brooklyn and Queens are taught about climate issues and write plays in response to what they’re learning.

Over a decade after the program began, Fu said that what is most striking about the students’ plays is how instinctively the young writers understand a basic truth about climate that evades a lot of adults: to find long-term solutions, we’ll need to work together.

“A huge element of climate resilience is in the community we build and how we come together,” she said. “That’s always really present in their stories; it’s often part of the way that something gets resolved.”

The Queens-based playwright and TV writer Dorothy Fortenberry also spends plenty of time thinking about children’s roles in the movement. Her play “The Lotus Paradox,” which will have its [*world premiere*](https://warehousetheatre.com/shows/lotus-paradox/) in January at the Warehouse Theater in Greenville, S.C., asks, What happens when children are constantly receiving the message that it’s their job to save the world? Like much of Fortenberry’s work in TV (she’s a writer on “The Handmaid’s Tale”), “The Lotus Paradox” includes the subject of climate change without making it the singular focus of the story.

“If you’re making a story about anything, in any place, and you don’t have climate change in it, that’s a science-fiction story,” she said. “You have made a choice to make the story less realistic than it would have been otherwise.”

That’s a sentiment also shared by Anaïs Mitchell, the musician and writer of the musical “Hadestown,” which reopened on Broadway in September. In her retelling of Greek mythology, Hades is portrayed in song as a greedy “king of oil and coal” who fuels his industrialized hell of an underworld with the “fossils of the dead.” Aboveground, the lead characters, Orpheus and Eurydice, endure food scarcity and brutal weather that’s “either blazing hot or freezing cold,” a framing that was inspired by headlines about climate refugees.

It’s worth intentionally wrestling with climate narratives in the theater, not just because they make plays more believable, Mitchell said, but also because theater might just be one of best tools for handling such themes. Like Orpheus trying to put things right with a song that shows “how the world could be, in spite of the way that it is,” Mitchell sees theater as a powerful tool for helping us imagine our way into a better future.

“Theater is capable of opening our hearts and our eyes to an alternate reality than the one we’re living in,” she said.

That’s why Balogun — though he remarks more than once in “Can I Live?” that he’s “not a scientist” — said he believes he has just as crucial a role to play as any climatologist. “Scientists are begging for artists and theater makers to help deliver this message,” he said. “And there’s a need for it now more than ever.”

PHOTOS: The actor Fehinti Balogun, top center, wrote the play “Can I Live?,” top left, with the playwright performing. The production aims to make “grass-roots activism accessible,” Balogun said. Above, Superhero Clubhouse’s after-school program, Big Green Theater, in New York. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TOM JAMIESON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; DAVID HEWITT; RACHEL DENISE APRIL)

**Load-Date:** November 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Why Democrats Are Still Not the Party of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez; news analysis***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YBX-V8D1-JBG3-63RS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 17, 2020 Friday 10:24 EST

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**Section:** SUNDAY-REVIEW

**Length:** 1522 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Steinhauer

**Highlight:** In contests for party control between progressives and moderates, electoral and governing results speak for themselves.

**Body**

In contests for party control between progressives and moderates, electoral and governing results speak for themselves.

WASHINGTON — Congressional Democrats are very familiar with the political dramaturgy now playing out in their party’s White House primary and know of its lessons and consequences.

Voters appear to be in a death match between those who crave an aggressively [*progressive policy agenda*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/podcasts/the-daily/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-coronavirus.html) with little tolerance for dissent and more moderates whose central goal is to undermine the populist movements in both parties and defeat Donald J. Trump. Both believe theirs is the winning formula to unseat President Trump.

On Super Tuesday, this played out at the presidential level across the country between Bernie Sanders and Joe Biden. But it was evident at the congressional level as well. On Tuesday, Jessica Cisneros in Texas, the highest profile primary challenger of the Justice Democrats, a very progressive group, [*lost*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/podcasts/the-daily/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-coronavirus.html) to the moderate Democratic incumbent, Henry Cuellar. Left-wing-activist-backed Senate candidates in Texas and [*North Carolina*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/podcasts/the-daily/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-coronavirus.html) were crushed by more moderate candidates.

The first dress rehearsal for this battle was the 2018 midterm elections, when the Justice Democrats put its muscle behind nearly 80 Sanders-like insurgent candidates to target House seats, many of them held by less liberal Democratic incumbents. That year, scores of Democrats ranging from left of center (like Katie Porter of California) to fairly conservative (Anthony Brindisi of New York) took advantage of waning support for Mr. Trump in America’s suburbs to make a run for House seats held by Republican incumbents.

The results were pretty unequivocal. Justice Democrats lost virtually every primary race in 2018 when they fielded a homegrown liberal candidate, but they won one very important race: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez upset Representative Joe Crowley in a New York seat he had held for years.

At the same time, scores of middle-of-the-road Democrats were able to get through crowded primaries and win over Republican and independent voters in the general election, giving their party a net gain of 40 seats and flipping the House.

The theory of the case for progressive candidates is that they galvanized the Democratic base, and if people would just give them a chance, they will force through policies that most of the country supports. But the data — and many of the experiences of the 116th Congress — tell a more nuanced story.

A 2019 Gallup [*poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/podcasts/the-daily/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-coronavirus.html) found that from 1994 to 2018, the percentage of all Democrats who call themselves liberal had more than doubled, to 51 percent from 25 percent. But Gallup also found that between 1993 and 2016, the percentage of Americans identifying as conservative rested between 36 percent and 40 percent, holding at 35 percent in 2018.

Looked at another way, in this Congress, the size of the Progressive Caucus, representing the House’s most liberal members, reached historic size — just under 100 of the chamber’s 235 Democrats — but the New Democrat Coalition, a more moderate group, also grew to historic levels, to roughly 100 members.

Part of the issue is definitional. Socially liberal but fiscally conservative is now far too pat a description for contemporary moderate Democrats, many of whom would be to the left of the last Democratic president, Barack Obama.

Max Rose of Staten Island, a typical freshman who picked off a Republican in 2018, is a veteran who was awarded a Purple Heart and Bronze Star in Afghanistan. He cares little about the deficit and is strongly against the Green New Deal. Like the vast majority of freshman Democrats who won in 2018, he does not like Medicare for All, but he supports a public option on the Affordable Care Act’s insurance exchanges, which was considered a far left position not so long ago. He and the rest of the freshman Democrats support abortion rights, which was not true for many moderates before this class.

Further, racial and geographic dynamics often get conflated with generational ones among Democratic voters.

The 2018 races illuminated this as well. The Ocasio-Cortez victory was considerably more complicated than the postelection analysis, which focused almost completely on shifting demographics in her district. While the narrative of her victory portrayed younger, nonwhite and ***working-class*** voters as her secret base, in reality Ms. Ocasio-Cortez had soundly beaten the incumbent in the areas of the district that were by and large more wealthy and educated, in particular parts of Queens filled with white residents fleeing overpriced Manhattan.

Mr. Crowley prevailed in most ***working-class*** corners of the district, including the district’s Hispanic and African-American enclaves; he beat Ms. Ocasio-Cortez by more than 25 points in her own Parkchester section of the Bronx.

David Freedlander neatly summed this up in his [*analysis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/podcasts/the-daily/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-coronavirus.html) for Politico magazine soon after the race: “Ocasio-Cortez, the young Latina who proudly identifies as a democratic socialist, hadn’t been all but vaulted into Congress by the party’s diversity, or a blue-collar base looking to even the playing field. She won because she had galvanized the college-educated gentrifiers who are displacing those people.”

In short, deeply blue areas, especially with young and affluent voters, may be seeking political representation far to the left of the Democrats who were once easily re-elected. But as scores of Democrats saw in 2018, and still more saw on Super Tuesday, much of the rest of the country’s Democrats, especially older African-American voters who are a major component of the base, prefer more centrist candidates. This is the dichotomy that hangs over the party today.

The 116th Congress also demonstrated that political influence outside of Washington does not always translate into legislative victories, as progressives are promising.

Without question Ms. Ocasio-Cortez’s influence on the Democratic Party also is striking in modern politics for a freshman House member. In her first few months in office she got normally skittish Democrats and some early presidential candidates to sign on to her Green New Deal (introduced with Senator Edward Markey of Massachusetts), forced a national conversation about marginal tax rates and Medicare for All, helped tank a plan for Amazon to move to Queens, and catalyzed a vast rejection of corporate PAC money for incumbents who had just a year ago eschewed that plan as impractical at best, unilateral disarmament at worst.

But here was the reality for progressives: Medicare for All got little more than a hearing or two, while the House passed bill after bill pressing more incremental health care changes (but none of which the Republican-controlled Senate would even entertain). The Green New Deal had a messy if high-profile roll out, then fizzled. Ms. Ocasio-Cortez did not have even the modest legislative victories enjoyed by other [*freshman*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/podcasts/the-daily/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-coronavirus.html) Democrats like Joseph Neguse of Colorado, Deb Haaland of New Mexico and Lauren Underwood of Illinois, who ran on getting health care bills on the floor.

What is more, many Democrats began to fret early on that the far left was going to do to them what the Tea Party had done to Republicans a few years back: Run them out of town, one primary at a time. Ms. Ocasio-Cortez previously suggested that Democrats who were not sufficiently loyal to an emergent brand of progressive politics should have others like her run against them in a primary. She is now suggesting that, exit polling be damned, Mr. Biden’s latest string of successes is because of the strong-arming of corporate lobbyists, something Mr. Sanders has [*underscored*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/podcasts/the-daily/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-coronavirus.html) by repeatedly calling Mr. Biden the establishment candidate.

But the results speak for themselves. Ms. Ocasio-Cortez threw her weight behind Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez in her Senate primary campaign in Texas to defeat the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee’s chosen candidate, M.J. Hegar. Ms. Hegar ended up easily outpacing a crowded Democratic field.

“There are some people who one don’t really seem to understand the math of the majority making,” said Representative Abigail Spanberger of Virginia, a former intelligence officer, whose Richmond-area district had been held by Republicans for decades. “There’s some people that just think that we’re out of touch and that if we just worked hard, more Democrats would come out of the woodwork, and so we should just try to say all the things that excite all the Democrats. You can say that until you’re blue in the face, but there are just not that many Democrats in my district.”

Jennifer Steinhauer, a political reporter for The Times, is the author of the forthcoming “[*The Firsts: The Inside Story of the Women Reshaping Congress*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/podcasts/the-daily/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-coronavirus.html).”

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/podcasts/the-daily/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-coronavirus.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/podcasts/the-daily/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-coronavirus.html). And here&#39;s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/podcasts/the-daily/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-coronavirus.html).

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PHOTO: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez at a Queens rally for Bernie Sanders last year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER LEE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 13, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Really, Talk to Your Kids About Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:635J-NC21-DXY4-X54R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 18, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 5; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1239 words

**Byline:** By Melinda Wenner Moyer

**Body**

If race is largely a social construct, then teaching children about it will only perpetuate racism -- right? Wrong: Studies show precisely the opposite. Open conversations about race and racism can make white children less prejudiced and can increase the self-esteem of children of color.

If states ban the teaching of critical race theory, as conservative lawmakers in many are attempting to do, or if schools don't provide consistent education about racism and discrimination, it's imperative that parents pick up the slack.

Even if we don't want them to, children do notice differences in race and skin color. And that means that attempts to suppress discussions about race and racism are misguided. Those efforts won't eliminate prejudice. They may, in fact, make it worse.

So-called colorblind parenting -- avoiding the topic of race in an effort to raise children who aren't prejudiced -- is not just unhelpful, it actually perpetuates racism. That's because racism isn't driven solely by individual prejudice. It's a system of inequity bolstered by racist laws and policies -- the very fact that opponents of teaching critical race theory are trying to erase.

Some people, especially white people like me, may shy away from talking to their children about race, either because they've been socialized to treat the subject as taboo or because they fear that instilling an awareness of race is itself problematic. That's a privilege that nonwhite families often don't have -- racism is a fact of life that many can't ignore. While parents of white children may be able to choose if, when and how they have these conversations, parents of children of color often have no choice but to discuss the subject as it arises.

Parents may believe their children are too young to learn about topics like prejudice, discrimination and violence. But it's possible -- advisable, actually -- to have age-appropriate conversations about race and racism throughout children's lives, including when they are very young.

I asked more than 80 parents about how they think their children view race. Many said their children are oblivious to skin color. Yet research strongly contradicts this notion. Babies as young as 3 months old discern racial differences, and they prefer looking at faces that share their caregivers' skin color.

Racial awareness and prejudice continue to develop during the preschool and grade school years. A 2012 study showed that many white parents of preschoolers believed that their children harbored no racial prejudice. When the researchers tested the children, though, some said they wouldn't want Black friends.

Children learn from what they see. They notice that in American culture, race and power intersect in a clear way. Children may observe, for instance, that all but one president has been white, that many of the wealthiest people are white and that more ***working-class*** people are people of color.

When children aren't presented with the context required to understand why our society looks the way it does, ''they make up reasons, and a lot of kids make up biased, racist reasons,'' said Rebecca Bigler, a developmental psychologist who studies the development of prejudice. Children often start to believe that white people are more privileged because they're smarter or more powerful, Dr. Bigler says.

Parents should explicitly challenge these wrong assumptions and explain the role of centuries of systemic racism in creating these inequities. Brigitte Vittrup, a psychologist at Texas Woman's University, and George W. Holden, a psychologist at Southern Methodist University, found that white children whose parents talked with them about race became less prejudiced over time, compared with children whose parents didn't have such conversations.

Another study co-written by Dr. Bigler found that white children who had learned about racial discrimination had more positive attitudes toward Black people than children who were not exposed to that curriculum. The same researchers later found that classroom discussions about racial discrimination also had a positive impact on Black children.

Indeed, children of color also benefit from conversations about race and racism. In particular, Adriana J. Umaña-Taylor and Nancy E. Hill at the Harvard Graduate School of Education found that when families of color regularly talk about their culture's values and traditions, children develop a strong sense of identity and pride, and they fare better in terms of self-esteem, psychological health and academic success.

But talking about race isn't enough. Parents should also foster respect for diverse cultural backgrounds by ensuring their children interact with people who are different from them. If you can choose where you live or where your children go to school, it helps to prioritize diversity. And consider the curriculum: Children who hear teachers talk explicitly about race are better at identifying bias than students who are given vague messages about kindness and equality.

At home, choose books, TV shows and movies with characters from a variety of backgrounds -- and discuss the characters' race and ethnicity with your children. When all of the characters are white, acknowledge it. Start a conversation about why that might be the case, and why it's not representative of the world we live in. Point out racist tropes in books, movies and TV shows when you see them.

Encourage your children to be friends with children of different races, too. ''Friendships are a major mechanism for promoting acceptance and reducing prejudice,'' explained Deborah Rivas-Drake, a psychologist and educational researcher at the University of Michigan. But if you're white, don't expect people of color to do the labor of educating your children about race.

If you're like me, you may struggle with conversations about race, but they get easier. If your children comment on someone's skin color, instead of shushing or scolding them, explain the science of skin color -- that we all have a pigment in our skin called melanin that protects against ultraviolet radiation. Your melanin levels depend on how much your parents have and on where your ancestors lived.

If your children make racist or insensitive comments, gently probe for more information before responding. ''Get a sense of what they understand it to mean from their perspective,'' said Howard C. Stevenson, a professor of urban education and Africana studies at the University of Pennsylvania. ''Where did they hear it from? How is it being used in the social context they're in? Then you have a better angle to how you can speak to it.''

These conversations can feel awkward, but remember that whatever your children don't learn about race from you, they'll learn from the media, their friends or their own imaginations.

Racism won't end until parents -- and children -- see prejudice, recognize its perniciousness and unravel the system that fuels it.

Melinda Wenner Moyer (@lindy2350) is a science journalist and the author of the forthcoming book ''How to Raise Kids Who Aren't Assholes,'' from which this essay is adapted.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Fran Caballero FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**End of Document**



[***In a Colombian Artist's Work, and Life, Classes Collide***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:648N-NJT1-JBG3-6445-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 11, 2021 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 8; THE SATURDAY PROFILE

**Length:** 1444 words

**Byline:** By Silvana Paternostro

**Body**

Oscar Murillo, a Colombian-born painter raised in London, considers it an ''infiltration'' when his class-conscious canvases wind up on the walls of collectors.

LONDON -- When he was a boy, Oscar Murillo told his best friend he was moving to London, but his buddy refused to take him seriously: Their tight-knit community in southwestern Colombia was the sort of place families stayed for generations, where almost everybody worked at the candy factory that dominated the town's economy.

The news, however, was true. In the 1990s, the 11-year-old Oscar left La Paila, Colombia, and arrived in East London, where his parents took jobs as office cleaners.

Speaking little English and having been displaced, he took refuge in drawing. These early scribblings pointed Mr. Murillo to painting, which in turn led to a multimedia art practice and, in 2019, to his winning the Turner Prize, one of the art world's most prestigious honors.

But the memories of La Paila, and of the succor he found in those early doodles, still inform his work, which now hangs in major museums around the world. His canvases, multilayered patchworks of color that can also include glued grime and supersize Spanish words, now fetch $300,000 or more at auction.

''My work is a social detonator,'' said the soft-spoken Mr. Murillo, a way for the son of ***working-class*** immigrant parents to blast through the barriers surrounding a social class that typically denies entry to people like him. ''It's a way to infiltrate the system.''

While some might see a contradiction or even hypocrisy in an artist earning so much to send a socially conscious message, critics see it differently.

''Yes, his work is relatively expensive, but it is also anchored to the exploitation of labor in global markets,'' said Linda Yablonsky, a noted art writer. ''It calls attention to it through his materials and his working process.''

As an example, in his first significant solo exhibition in New York in 2014, he reconfigured the gallery into a working replica of the chocolate factory of his childhood, as a way to highlight social inequities and post-colonial economies.

His enormous studio in industrial North London, where he not only paints but also works in sculptural installations, video and other mediums, has a more conventional look, filled with stacks of canvases. But the unexpected twist is that many hundreds of these paintings were not created by Mr. Murillo -- but by children from around the world.

In 2013, he sent blank canvases to La Paila so the children there would have something to express themselves on. Next, he sent canvases to schools in Zambia, then Kenya.

Mr. Murillo has since made available more than 40,000 canvases whose empty spaces have been filled with the creative efforts of children in 34 countries.

As Mr. Murillo strode around his studio on a crisp November day, he stopped before some of the canvases and brought out ones from children in Mumbai, whose use of color he particularly admired.

''The idea is to let these kids explore in the intimate reality of the school desk, to make marks of their own desires,'' he said, adding that he sees the canvases as ''recording devices'' absorbing the children's thoughts. ''The truth of a society comes out naturally.''

The canvases, which are collected after acquiring months' of patina in students' classrooms, have been exhibited at major art venues and triennials on three continents, and are being digitized.

It is important to Mr. Murillo that the canvases ''weren't treated paternalistically as children's drawing,'' said Clara Dublanc, a co-director of Frequencies Institute, as the nonprofit project, a work in progress, is known.

While Mr. Murillo, 35, left Colombia a quarter-century ago, his studio can feel like an extension of his homeland. Some studio assistants are from La Paila. Chitchat is about Colombian soccer scores.

If he had grown up in La Paila, Mr. Murillo imagines he would have wound up either as a ''factory worker or 'sicario,''' a hit man.

His childhood friend Yeison Murillo (not a relation) spent 12 years as an adult pouring chocolate powder into a machine until he was fired and immigrated to Seattle.

On the phone from the United States, he said he remembered when Mr. Murillo returned at 17 for a visit to La Paila.

''Oscar came back with big hair and big ideas,'' said Yeison, who added that he did not pay much attention to the lofty conversation because his friend ''still wanted to play soccer without shoes.''

But Mr. Murillo's artistic ambitions were serious, and he earned an M.F.A. at the Royal College of Art, helping pay for his tuition by working as a cleaner.

An advanced degree, however, was no guarantee of success in London's crowded art world, where he was just another graduate struggling to find a gallery. He often hung out at exhibition openings.

''There was something different about him,'' recalled Tom Cole, a gallerist who met him in those lean years. ''Chatty. Forthcoming.''

Curious, Mr. Cole asked for a studio visit; Mr. Murillo invited him to a home-cooked dinner as well.

''He was very engaging with very strong opinions about what art should be,'' said Mr. Cole, now a co-owner of the Sunday Painter gallery in London. ''How important it was for art to have a social and political role and how art was lacking that.''

Adding a communal element to his art helped him land his first shows, and a collaborative approach has been a signature part of his practice ever since: Mr. Murillo proposed to Mr. Cole that he cook at his gallery the same arepas and tamales that he had just made for him.

''The show brought a big crowd and was fun,'' Mr. Cole said of the 2011 exhibition. ''He was really interested in the communal aspect of bringing people together.''

Mr. Murillo was also interested in colliding together worlds that otherwise would probably never intersect: like art-world insiders and Colombian-born cleaners.

These were the early signs of what Mr. Murillo calls his ''infiltrations,'' like, he said, when ''a collector in the United States sees the word 'tamales''' floating on his wall in a six-figure painting in an expensively styled home.

Mr. Murillo soon grabbed the attention of the blue-chip David Zwirner gallery, which added him to its roster and still represents him.

''He had a meteoric ascent, a justified ascent,'' Mr. Cole said, adding that Mr. Murillo had achieved both commercial and critical appeal. ''Few artists manage that,'' Mr. Cole said. ''Murillo does both.''

One thing Mr. Murillo does not do, in his own words, is American-style identity politics.

''The only experience that counts seems to be the American one, and that is not my experience,'' Mr. Murillo said. ''The world is a broader landscape. Where is Brazil? Where is Colombia in the race conversation? I prefer not to enter that conversation as it stands today. I find it ultimately divisive.''

That's not to say Mr. Murillo does not consider his art politically charged. But he views his preoccupations through that most English of lenses: ''I prefer to talk about class,'' he said, which he considers a more universal struggle.

While exhibiting from Paris to Tokyo, there was one place he remained largely unknown: Colombia.

For the past seven years, María Belén Saéz de Ibarra, a Colombian curator, has been working to change that, planning a Murillo exhibition at the National University of Colombia in Bogotá. The show, ''Conditions Yet Not Known,'' finally opened in October.

Ms. Saéz de Ibarra remembers his arrival: ''He opened his suitcase and out came a black cloth,'' she said, referring to one of the unstretched canvases that Mr. Murillo is known to hang like drooping flags in art pavilions. ''He is a planetary nomad carrying his pain around the world.''

When the time came to install the show, sometimes violent street protests over inequality and police abuses were rocking Colombia. Mr. Murillo invited student leaders from the protests to help set up the exhibition. ''They were in danger. It was my way to get engaged,'' he said.

While there, Mr. Murillo saw some of the discrimination that the millions of displaced Venezuelans who have arrived there are experiencing, even in La Paila.

''Ironically, in Colombia, I'm most sympathetic with the Venezuelan,'' he said. ''As a migrant, I understand what they are going through.''

The struggles he faced growing up have stuck with him and influenced his politics and art, but he has become leery of dividing the world too neatly.

''I knew the oppressor and I romanticized the oppressed people,'' he said. ''But the oppressed can become monsters, too.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/10/world/americas/oscar-murillo-colombian-artist.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/10/world/americas/oscar-murillo-colombian-artist.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above left, Oscar Murillo's work in Berlin in 2020. Right, a 2014 installation at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Mr. Murillo immigrated to Britain in the 1990s, when he was 11. In 2019, he won the Turner Prize, one of the art world's most prestigious honors. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW TESTA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

GORDON WELTERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

HIROKO MASUIKE/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**End of Document**



[***Room to Grow in Retail's Choppy Waters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63KH-1M41-DXY4-X0SY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 12, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1220 words

**Byline:** By David Gelles

**Body**

Brick-and-mortar retailers have been decimated in recent years. First came Amazon. Then the pandemic.

Yet even as giant shopping malls are dying and many storefronts are shuttered, the big box stores that anchor strip malls throughout the exurbs are enjoying something of a renaissance. Companies like Best Buy, Dick's Sporting Goods and Home Depot have managed to hang on, and even thrive. Add to that list another, somewhat unlikely, entrant: Kohl's.

The retailer, which sells clothes, home wares, sporting goods and more, is hanging on against the odds. Just where Kohl's fits in isn't always clear. It's smaller than a department store, but has many of the same offerings. Its stores are often near Walmarts, but feature more mainstream brands.

Since taking over as Kohl's chief executive in 2018, Michelle Gass has been working to carve out a distinct identity for the company. She joined the company eight years ago after more than a decade working at Starbucks.

Among her moves -- besides keeping the stores open during the pandemic -- has been striking a series of partnerships with other companies.

The most unconventional was a deal with Amazon in 2019 that allows customers to return Amazon products to Kohl's stores. While there, Ms. Gass hopes, they might do some shopping.

Another new partner is Sephora, the beauty retailer, which is setting up mini-stores inside Kohl's locations. It's a bit like, well, a department store.

This interview was condensed and edited for clarity.

What about your childhood informs your work as a C.E.O. today?

I was born and raised in a small town in Maine, and grew up in a very ***working-class*** family and community. I was among the first in my family to get a four-year college degree. That fostered a drive to do more, achieve more, from a really young age. I worked all the way through high school and college. My first job was bagging groceries. I waitressed and even did factory work. I like to work hard, and I really put a high value on people who also work hard.

I got my degree in chemical engineering. Sometimes people ask me, ''How did you learn engineering, especially as a woman?'' And candidly, I was quite pragmatic, and I knew I could get a great job with it. I didn't grow up with any engineers around me, but I did my homework and I had a sense that this was going to open up doors. And it really did.

What did you learn from working with Howard Schultz at Starbucks?

Three things. One is the importance of culture; such a strong culture was built over time. Secondly, it's not just what you sell, but it's the importance of that human connection, the emotional connection around the life or consumer, the affinity for the brand. And then the third, and a big passion of mine, is the power of innovation.

Starbucks has a very clear brand proposition. How do you define where Kohl's sits in the consumer ecosystem?

Kohl's had a successful model for a long time, sort of this hybrid department store brand, but with mass mall convenience. But over time that got blurred. So the challenge and opportunity is, ''OK, what is the space we can occupy that will be differentiated?'' Part of it was becoming a relevant omni-channel retailer. And I really feel like we've checked that box. But from a product and brand standpoint, how are we going to be more relevant? How are we going to have a brand stand for something?

Department stores have struggled over the last several years. So how do you make it work when the J.C. Penney's and the Macy's have had such a hard go of it?

We are very far apart from what a traditional department store is. We are small, we're super convenient and that allows us to do things like buy online, pick up in store and curbside. But more importantly, we see ourselves as a specialty concept, that Kohl's is the curator and the editor to bring you all the products and brands you need to lead a more active and casual lifestyle.

Is it up market? Is it down market? Who are the target consumers?

We have America. We serve a very broad base of customers, really all demographics. Our strategy is the active and casual lifestyle, and selling the kinds of products that were amplified during the pandemic. People want to look good. They want to be comfortable. Their work wardrobe is going to look very different coming out of this eventually than what it was going in.

A lot of people would think that a brick-and-mortar retailer would be crazy to work with Amazon. What's the logic behind your deal with them?

When you take a step back and think about what it's like to return goods, it can be very inconvenient in the traditional way, especially with online returns. Looking for the box, looking for the tape, attaching the receipt, all of that. We're addressing that pain point. Amazon gets a deal that can address the friction point, and we're able to leverage our appetite and welcome in traffic. It was certainly unconventional at the time when we announced it, but I think it worked out really well.

How has the pandemic changed the retail business in ways that are going to endure in the months and years ahead?

When you're in the crisis, you have to make decisions very quickly. We clearly needed to prioritize how we were going to keep our people and our customers safe. When that got settled, we used the opportunity to look at our strategy and say, ''How do we be bigger and bolder?'' And that allowed us to start having conversations with Sephora.

When you talk about the increases in profitability, how much of that is getting passed on to the associates and the people in the stores?

We had to make tough decisions like that, in terms of furlough and when we opened doors and invited our associates back, and it's a very tight labor market. We are doing a lot to ensure that we are competitive in a market-by-market basis. So we're providing bonuses to our hourly associates. So I feel like we're doing a lot to ensure that we are creating a very good environment for our people.

What are you having to do to attract the employees you need right now? What do they want and what are they getting, frankly, that they weren't?

More than 75 percent of that work force is part time, and our associates like the flexibility. They like the culture.

Do people really prefer to be part time? If you offered them a full-time role, are you telling me they would really turn it down?

I think it's hard to answer that question. The overarching thing I hear from people a lot is they like this notion of flexibility. And I strongly believe we provide a lot of opportunities.

You've talked about being a servant leader before. How do you balance that imperative to take care of your employees with your commitment to deliver for shareholders?

As the C.E.O. leading the business, I have a lot of stakeholders, and certainly our investors are one of them. One of my responsibilities is to ensure that we have a sustainable business, a business that can employ a lot of people and also serve the stakeholders and the community at large. As it relates to the people we employ, people are working in Kohl's for a lot of reasons outside of what is in their paycheck. That's an important part. Absolutely. But there is pride in having a great job and being part of a company that you're proud to be associated with.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/10/business/michelle-gass-kohls-corner-office.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/10/business/michelle-gass-kohls-corner-office.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MAGGIE SHANNON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**End of Document**



[***An Electricity Crisis Complicates the Climate Crisis in Europe***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63YH-7321-DXY4-X31B-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Melissa Eddy and Somini Sengupta

**Highlight:** Prices for power have soared, and some politicians are now trying to use that as a lever to slow action on climate change, a strategy with far-reaching consequences.

**Body**

Prices for power have soared, and some politicians are now trying to use that as a lever to slow action on climate change, a strategy with far-reaching consequences.

BERLIN — The soaring price of electricity represents a Rorschach test for Europe’s politicians. Depending on their leanings, it is either a reason to wean the continent from fossil fuels more swiftly — or more slowly.

The timing is crucial. European Union leaders have cast themselves as the vanguard of a global green transition at the international climate talks that kick off this weekend in Glasgow.

The repercussions are vast. How [*Europe*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/01/business/energy-environment/europe-climate-action-cost.html) emerges from the current energy crisis will bear on how the world addresses the climate crisis. Europe accounts for a very large share of global emissions produced since the start of the industrial age, and its ability to pivot away from fossil fuels is key to averting ruinous rates of global warming.

At the heart of the surge in electricity prices is Europe’s reliance on natural gas to turn on the lights, heat homes, and power industry. Even though most countries in the bloc are moving away from coal faster than other parts of the world, like Asia, they have continued to lean on gas while building out their renewable energy infrastructure.

Under European energy rules, the price of gas drives the price of electricity. Gas accounts for a fifth of Europe’s energy consumption, and most of it is imported from Russia.

But while natural gas is less polluting than coal, it is still a fossil fuel that produces carbon dioxide emissions that are warming up the planet. And without a gas exit plan, there is no way for Europe to meet its own climate target, which is to reduce its emissions by 55 percent by 2030 compared with 1990 levels.

The power crisis, in other words, is accelerating a reckoning over gas — and foreshadowing what other parts of the world will face as they make their energy transitions.

“It’s bringing to the fore the question, ‘What do we do about gas?’” said Lucie Mattera, the Europe analyst for E3G, a climate research group.

It is also undermining unity about how to transition to renewables. While policies designed to address climate change are not the main driver of rising electricity prices, some European leaders are claiming that is the case. The cause is basically that demand for gas has soared — sending prices skyward — as the industrialized world has bounced back from the depths of the pandemic and started returning to its normal working rhythm.

But some governments across the continent now fear that higher heating bills this winter could bolster populists in upcoming national elections in several countries, or trigger social unrest like the [*“Yellow Vests” protests*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/17/world/europe/macron-yellow-vests-france.html) from 2018 in France.

Those fears have caused several European countries to question the ambitious E.U. target of cutting emissions of planet-warming gases by at least 55 percent within a decade.

Hungary has claimed that rising gas prices are linked to the European Union’s climate ambitions, which its prime minister, Viktor Orban, decried as “utopian fantasy.” Poland, a major coal producer that has never been a fan of the European Commission’s emissions-reductions targets, has pressed Brussels to change or delay some of its proposed measures.

Spain, on the other hand, has pressed for a faster transition to renewable energy, precisely so that the continent isn’t forever subjected to the ups and downs of the gas market. “The present and the future belong to renewable energies and we cannot solve a crisis caused precisely by dependence on fossil fuels by looking to the past,” Teresa Ribera, its deputy prime minister and a longtime climate advocate, said in an email. “The Spanish government believes that the transition must be accelerated, not slowed down.”

Tim Gore at the Brussels-based Institute for European Environmental Policy, a research group, called the price jumps for electricity a “perfect storm.” Global demand for gas rose sharply just as winds in Northern Europe (where there is significant wind power) dropped off and gas reserves ran low during a long, lockdown winter. Added to the mix was the closing of coal-burning power plants, largely in Western Europe.

“The fact that the E.U. has succeeded in getting a lot of coal off the energy grid actually makes things worse,” Mr. Gore pointed out. “That’s a good thing, but it’s unfortunate that it happened to coincide with everything else.”

The human consequences play out in the 7th floor apartment of Ascención García López in a ***working class*** suburb of Madrid, where electricity prices have risen sharply, sparking some protests on the streets.

Ms. López’s power bills have nearly doubled since last year, forcing her to change habits. She keeps her blinds open until sundown, so the last rays of sun can light the rooms. She cooks her stews in a pressure cooker, instead of simmering for better flavor. She does the laundry in the middle of the afternoon, when the electricity rates are cheaper, but she fears her neighbors will complain because the middle of the afternoon in Madrid is siesta time.

Ms. López, 56, who is currently unemployed and in charge of caring for two young grandchildren and her elderly mother, hasn’t yet had to turn on the heater. Winter worries her. “I will use it only on the coldest days, not every day,” she said.

One evening this week, her youngest grandson wandered around the apartment as dusk descended. Only when it’s completely dark will she turn on a light.

Everyone on a tight budget has come up with their own hacks. Some say they’ve resorted to unscrewing some of their light bulbs from light fixtures. Others report skipping daily hot showers or cooking big batches of food to save on bills.

Problems like these among voters represent risks to the left-of-center government, for which Ms. Ribera, the deputy prime minister, is also the minister for the ecological transition. Spain has redirected more than 2.6 billion euros in profits from energy companies to consumers, slashed electricity taxes and imposed a cap on how much natural-gas prices are allowed to increase. The energy crisis, Ms. Ribera argued, should not punish the poor.

She compared this moment to the oil crisis of the 1970s. “It is important to share both the risks and the benefits, so the consequences of market behavior are not always paid by the same people,” Ms. Ribera said.

Spain is also pushing the European Union to organize a centralized platform for buying natural gas, similar to how its members banded together to negotiate the price of coronavirus vaccines. That approach raises questions relating to the bloc’s competition laws, and many members remain skeptical.

The European Commission recently proposed some possible measures that individual members could take, largely focused on protecting the most vulnerable members of society and small businesses, similar to the action taken in Spain, and said it would begin exploring the possibility of shared natural gas reserves. It stressed that speeding up the transition to green energy remained the best solution.

In many ways, all across the continent, the Achilles’ heel of Europe’s green transition is gas.

Britain, by contrast, has been doubling down on its domestic gas reserves in the North Sea, despite protests by climate campaigners. Norway, which does not belong to the European Union but has set ambitious climate targets modeled after the European Union’s, is in the throes of a robust domestic political debate about how much longer it can exploit its North Sea oil and gas resources.

The European Commission’s climate package aims to reduce gas consumption by a third by 2030, compared with 2015 levels, and virtually eliminate it by 2050. Exactly how to do that is still unclear, and the surge in gas prices is likely to complicate those efforts.

The gas question complicates domestic politics. Hungary and France have elections next year. In Germany, higher gas prices could create tension in the future government between the Greens, who are hoping to push for a swift exit from coal, and the Social Democrats, who ran on a strong social justice platform.

“Any politician who says this will be simplistic is unrealistic,” said Bas Eickhout, a Green Party politician from the Netherlands and member of the European Parliament. “We are rebuilding our economy. That is a huge transition. The phasing of that transition is tricky and has vulnerable moments.”

José Bautista contributed reporting from Madrid.

PHOTOS: A natural gas pipeline being built in Germany. The Green Party is pressing a swift exit from coal. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SEAN GALLUP/GETTY IMAGES); Solar panels in Spain. Madrid is advocating a faster shift to clean energy to relieve Europe’s problems with gas price volatility. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GIANFRANCO TRIPODO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A7)

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**End of Document**



[***E.U. Reliance On Gas Hurts Climate Goals***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63YP-R991-DXY4-X49B-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1426 words

**Byline:** By Melissa Eddy and Somini Sengupta

**Body**

Prices for power have soared, and some politicians are now trying to use that as a lever to slow action on climate change, a strategy with far-reaching consequences.

BERLIN -- The soaring price of electricity represents a Rorschach test for Europe's politicians. Depending on their leanings, it is either a reason to wean the continent from fossil fuels more swiftly -- or more slowly.

The timing is crucial. European Union leaders have cast themselves as the vanguard of a global green transition at the international climate talks that kick off this weekend in Glasgow.

The repercussions are vast. How Europe emerges from the current energy crisis will bear on how the world addresses the climate crisis. Europe accounts for a very large share of global emissions produced since the start of the industrial age, and its ability to pivot away from fossil fuels is key to averting ruinous rates of global warming.

At the heart of the surge in electricity prices is Europe's reliance on natural gas to turn on the lights, heat homes, and power industry. Even though most countries in the bloc are moving away from coal faster than other parts of the world, like Asia, they have continued to lean on gas while building out their renewable energy infrastructure.

Under European energy rules, the price of gas drives the price of electricity. Gas accounts for a fifth of Europe's energy consumption, and most of it is imported from Russia.

But while natural gas is less polluting than coal, it is still a fossil fuel that produces carbon dioxide emissions that are warming up the planet. And without a gas exit plan, there is no way for Europe to meet its own climate target, which is to reduce its emissions by 55 percent by 2030 compared with 1990 levels.

The power crisis, in other words, is accelerating a reckoning over gas -- and foreshadowing what other parts of the world will face as they make their energy transitions.

''It's bringing to the fore the question, 'What do we do about gas?''' said Lucie Mattera, the Europe analyst for E3G, a climate research group.

It is also undermining unity about how to transition to renewables. While policies designed to address climate change are not the main driver of rising electricity prices, some European leaders are claiming that is the case. The cause is basically that demand for gas has soared -- sending prices skyward -- as the industrialized world has bounced back from the depths of the pandemic and started returning to its normal working rhythm.

But some governments across the continent now fear that higher heating bills this winter could bolster populists in upcoming national elections in several countries, or trigger social unrest like the ''Yellow Vests'' protests from 2018 in France.

Those fears have caused several European countries to question the ambitious E.U. target of cutting emissions of planet-warming gases by at least 55 percent within a decade.

Hungary has claimed that rising gas prices are linked to the European Union's climate ambitions, which its prime minister, Viktor Orban, decried as ''utopian fantasy.'' Poland, a major coal producer that has never been a fan of the European Commission's emissions-reductions targets, has pressed Brussels to change or delay some of its proposed measures.

Spain, on the other hand, has pressed for a faster transition to renewable energy, precisely so that the continent isn't forever subjected to the ups and downs of the gas market. ''The present and the future belong to renewable energies and we cannot solve a crisis caused precisely by dependence on fossil fuels by looking to the past,'' Teresa Ribera, its deputy prime minister and a longtime climate advocate, said in an email. ''The Spanish government believes that the transition must be accelerated, not slowed down.''

Tim Gore at the Brussels-based Institute for European Environmental Policy, a research group, called the price jumps for electricity a ''perfect storm.'' Global demand for gas rose sharply just as winds in Northern Europe (where there is significant wind power) dropped off and gas reserves ran low during a long, lockdown winter. Added to the mix was the closing of coal-burning power plants, largely in Western Europe.

''The fact that the E.U. has succeeded in getting a lot of coal off the energy grid actually makes things worse,'' Mr. Gore pointed out. ''That's a good thing, but it's unfortunate that it happened to coincide with everything else.''

The human consequences play out in the 7th floor apartment of Ascención García López in a ***working class*** suburb of Madrid, where electricity prices have risen sharply, sparking some protests on the streets.

Ms. López's power bills have nearly doubled since last year, forcing her to change habits. She keeps her blinds open until sundown, so the last rays of sun can light the rooms. She cooks her stews in a pressure cooker, instead of simmering for better flavor. She does the laundry in the middle of the afternoon, when the electricity rates are cheaper, but she fears her neighbors will complain because the middle of the afternoon in Madrid is siesta time.

Ms. López, 56, who is currently unemployed and in charge of caring for two young grandchildren and her elderly mother, hasn't yet had to turn on the heater. Winter worries her. ''I will use it only on the coldest days, not every day,'' she said.

One evening this week, her youngest grandson wandered around the apartment as dusk descended. Only when it's completely dark will she turn on a light.

Everyone on a tight budget has come up with their own hacks. Some say they've resorted to unscrewing some of their light bulbs from light fixtures. Others report skipping daily hot showers or cooking big batches of food to save on bills.

Problems like these among voters represent risks to the left-of-center government, for which Ms. Ribera, the deputy prime minister, is also the minister for the ecological transition. Spain has redirected more than 2.6 billion euros in profits from energy companies to consumers, slashed electricity taxes and imposed a cap on how much natural-gas prices are allowed to increase. The energy crisis, Ms. Ribera argued, should not punish the poor.

She compared this moment to the oil crisis of the 1970s. ''It is important to share both the risks and the benefits, so the consequences of market behavior are not always paid by the same people,'' Ms. Ribera said.

Spain is also pushing the European Union to organize a centralized platform for buying natural gas, similar to how its members banded together to negotiate the price of coronavirus vaccines. That approach raises questions relating to the bloc's competition laws, and many members remain skeptical.

The European Commission recently proposed some possible measures that individual members could take, largely focused on protecting the most vulnerable members of society and small businesses, similar to the action taken in Spain, and said it would begin exploring the possibility of shared natural gas reserves. It stressed that speeding up the transition to green energy remained the best solution.

In many ways, all across the continent, the Achilles' heel of Europe's green transition is gas.

Britain, by contrast, has been doubling down on its domestic gas reserves in the North Sea, despite protests by climate campaigners. Norway, which does not belong to the European Union but has set ambitious climate targets modeled after the European Union's, is in the throes of a robust domestic political debate about how much longer it can exploit its North Sea oil and gas resources.

The European Commission's climate package aims to reduce gas consumption by a third by 2030, compared with 2015 levels, and virtually eliminate it by 2050. Exactly how to do that is still unclear, and the surge in gas prices is likely to complicate those efforts.

The gas question complicates domestic politics. Hungary and France have elections next year. In Germany, higher gas prices could create tension in the future government between the Greens, who are hoping to push for a swift exit from coal, and the Social Democrats, who ran on a strong social justice platform.

''Any politician who says this will be simplistic is unrealistic,'' said Bas Eickhout, a Green Party politician from the Netherlands and member of the European Parliament. ''We are rebuilding our economy. That is a huge transition. The phasing of that transition is tricky and has vulnerable moments.''

José Bautista contributed reporting from Madrid.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/29/climate/europe-energy-crisis-cop.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/29/climate/europe-energy-crisis-cop.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A natural gas pipeline being built in Germany. The Green Party is pressing a swift exit from coal. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SEAN GALLUP/GETTY IMAGES)

Solar panels in Spain. Madrid is advocating a faster shift to clean energy to relieve Europe's problems with gas price volatility. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GIANFRANCO TRIPODO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A7)

**Load-Date:** October 30, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Why the New Monthly Child Tax Credit Is More Likely to Be Spent on Children***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6355-RY51-DXY4-X4BS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 1123 words

**Byline:** Claire Cain Miller

**Highlight:** Money seems different when it shows up regularly, influencing not only how people use it, but also how they think about government aid.

**Body**

Money seems different when it shows up regularly, influencing not only how people use it, but also how they think about government aid.

Hundreds of dollars began arriving in parents’ bank accounts Thursday, as the first installment of the Biden administration’s [*monthly child tax credit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/us/politics/child-tax-credit-payments.html). Compared with programs that require a lot of paperwork or happen only at tax time, it was hard to deny the power of government assistance in the form of a direct deposit.

It offers a psychology [*lesson that could inform public policy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/us/politics/child-tax-credit-payments.html). Sending people money on a regular basis — no paperwork to file, no strings attached — [*achieves policy goals*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/us/politics/child-tax-credit-payments.html), and perhaps political ones, too. It’s a powerful way to make people aware of exactly what the government is doing for them.

President Biden emphasized that aspect in a speech Thursday: “We’re proving that democracy can deliver for people, and deliver in a timely way.”

The [*simplicity of direct deposit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/us/politics/child-tax-credit-payments.html) — the new credit is $300 per child under 6, and $250 per child from 6 through 17 — is a major reversal from most safety net programs, which have work requirements and other hurdles and oblige recipients to [*navigate a complicated bureaucracy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/us/politics/child-tax-credit-payments.html). (People who don’t use direct deposit for their taxes are receiving checks; those who don’t file taxes can [*sign up for the credit online*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/us/politics/child-tax-credit-payments.html).)

Also, money labeled for children — the deposit that arrived in parents’ bank accounts Thursday was called CHILD CTC — is more likely to be spent on children, research shows. The previous child tax credit was one of many payments and credits folded into a final tax number each April, so it was easy for taxpayers to lose track of a credit meant for children.

An influential [*study on a child allowance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/us/politics/child-tax-credit-payments.html) sent to mothers in Britain in the 1970s found that unlike previous benefits not designated for children, it was more likely to be spent on things like clothing and toys for children. Other studies suggest that when mothers are given money, they are [*likely to spend it on food*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/us/politics/child-tax-credit-payments.html) and other necessities for their children.

Also, labeling the purpose of the money guides people on how to spend it. The behavioral economist Richard Thaler described in 1985 the ways in which [*people keep mental accounts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/us/politics/child-tax-credit-payments.html), allocating money for different purposes, even though this “violates the economic principle of fungibility” — the idea that money is interchangeable. People tend to use monthly payments for daily expenses and lump sums for long-term investments, like education or a car, said H. Luke Shaefer, a professor of social work studying antipoverty policy at the University of Michigan.

Although the new tax credit is a large increase for low earners, higher earners end up receiving [*the same amount annually*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/us/politics/child-tax-credit-payments.html) that they would have in previous years — with half of it coming earlier in monthly installments. Still, it’s likely to make a difference in what they do with it, researchers said.

“I’m an economist, so I would say money is fungible and aren’t people funny being tricked by this?” said Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach, who studies child poverty and policy at Northwestern. “But that’s how people work. You sort of have your mental accounts — this is money I spend on food, this is money for the kids.”

A policy goal of the tax credit is to slash child poverty, and direct monthly payments have the biggest effect on the poorest families. The poorest third of children were excluded from the previous child tax credit because their parents didn’t pay income taxes, and even for those who received it, a once-a-year tax refund did not help in an efficient way with daily expenses like food, child care and rent.

Since the last major changes to family welfare policy in the 1990s, and especially during the pandemic, there has been [*a much greater realization*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/us/politics/child-tax-credit-payments.html) that families’ income is rarely stable over time. People across income levels go in and out of financial stability and employment.

“When we load up so much of our aid in an annual big refund, it means so many of our families are going into the red by the end of the year,” Professor Shaefer said. “We used to think about poverty in the United States as static — your income is below the poverty line — but people’s lives are very volatile.”

Politically, the more universal a program is, the more buy-in it has, because the money isn’t benefiting just some people, and there is no stigma attached. Nearly nine in 10 American families qualify — all but the richest.

Also, automatic monthly payments are a recurring reminder of government support. Both parties became more willing to send unconditional checks during the pandemic, and to seek credit for it. President Trump made sure his name was on stimulus checks, and President Biden sent letters to each family receiving the child benefit.

It’s a sharp contrast with President Obama’s 2009 tax cut, in which he decreased the taxes withheld from people’s paychecks so they took home more money — but they [*didn’t necessarily realize it or give him political credit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/us/politics/child-tax-credit-payments.html).

“I think Democrats learned their lesson under Obama,” said Samuel Hammond, director of poverty and welfare policy at the Niskanen Center. “Quietly reducing people’s taxes may be based in theory, but doesn’t win you any political favors. Democrats are very aware that the saliency of this policy will help remind voters that Democratic governments help ordinary people.”

Republican voters, generally proponents of small government, seemed as excited as anyone else to have the credit hit their bank accounts, he said. And Republican lawmakers, with a few exceptions, were mostly quiet about the policy. It [*reflects a growing split*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/us/politics/child-tax-credit-payments.html) between social conservatives, who are increasingly open to the government financially supporting families, and economic conservatives, who prioritize limiting government spending.

Many of today’s ***working-class***, socially conservative and religious Republican voters aren’t as concerned about free-market economics, Mr. Hammond said. They want strong families and are likelier to favor direct payments that people can spend as they wish, rather than to support policies with more governmental involvement, like universal child care. Widespread support may also make the child credit, which is only for 2021, harder to reverse from a political perspective.

Helping families is an uncontroversial policy goal, researchers said, but there’s less agreement on how to do it. In this case, the government is betting that the simplest answer — appealing to people’s satisfaction at money appearing in their bank accounts — may be the most effective.

PHOTO: The new monthly credit is $300 per child under age 6, and $250 per child from 6 through 17, for all but the wealthiest families.  (PHOTOGRAPH BY Benjamin Norman for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 18, 2021

**End of Document**



[***‘Social Detonator’: In Artist’s Work, and Life, Different Classes Collide; The Saturday Profile***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:648H-04N1-DXY4-X0RB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1485 words

**Byline:** Silvana Paternostro

**Highlight:** Oscar Murillo, a Colombian-born painter raised in London, considers it an “infiltration” when his class-conscious canvases wind up on the walls of collectors.

**Body**

Oscar Murillo, a Colombian-born painter raised in London, considers it an “infiltration” when his class-conscious canvases wind up on the walls of collectors.

LONDON — When he was a boy, Oscar Murillo told his best friend he was moving to London, but his buddy refused to take him seriously: Their tight-knit community in southwestern Colombia was the sort of place families stayed for generations, where almost everybody worked at the candy factory that dominated the town’s economy.

The news, however, was true. In the 1990s, the 11-year-old Oscar left La Paila, Colombia, and arrived in East London, where his parents took jobs as office cleaners.

Speaking little English and having been displaced, he took refuge in drawing. These early scribblings pointed Mr. Murillo to painting, which in turn led to a multimedia art practice and, in 2019, to his [*winning the Turner Prize*](https://turnercontemporary.org/whats-on/turner-prize-2019/), one of the art world’s most prestigious honors.

But the memories of La Paila, and of the succor he found in those early doodles, still inform his work, which now hangs in major museums around the world. His canvases, multilayered patchworks of color that can also include glued grime and supersize Spanish words, now fetch [*$300,000 or more*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/16/arts/design/oscar-murillo-keeps-his-eyes-on-the-canvas.html) at auction.

“My work is a social detonator,” said the soft-spoken Mr. Murillo, a way for the son of ***working-class*** immigrant parents to blast through the barriers surrounding a social class that typically denies entry to people like him. “It’s a way to infiltrate the system.”

While some might see a contradiction or even hypocrisy in an artist earning so much to send a socially conscious message, critics see it differently.

“Yes, his work is relatively expensive, but it is also anchored to the exploitation of labor in global markets,” said Linda Yablonsky, a noted art writer. “It calls attention to it through his materials and his working process.”

As an example, in his first significant solo exhibition in New York in 2014, he [*reconfigured the gallery into a working replica of the chocolate factory*](https://www.davidzwirner.com/exhibitions/2014/mercantile-novel) of his childhood, as a way to highlight social inequities and post-colonial economies.

His enormous studio in industrial North London, where he not only paints but also works in sculptural installations, video and other mediums, has a more conventional look, filled with stacks of canvases. But the unexpected twist is that many hundreds of these paintings were not created by Mr. Murillo — but by children from around the world.

In 2013, he sent blank canvases to La Paila so the children there would have something to express themselves on. Next, he sent canvases to schools in Zambia, then Kenya.

Mr. Murillo has since made available more than 40,000 canvases whose empty spaces have been filled with the creative efforts of children in 34 countries.

As Mr. Murillo strode around his studio on a crisp November day, he stopped before some of the canvases and brought out ones from children in Mumbai, whose use of color he particularly admired.

“The idea is to let these kids explore in the intimate reality of the school desk, to make marks of their own desires,” he said, adding that he sees the canvases as “recording devices” absorbing the children’s thoughts. “The truth of a society comes out naturally.”

The canvases, which are collected after acquiring months’ of patina in students’ classrooms, have been exhibited at major art venues and triennials on three continents, and are being digitized.

It is important to Mr. Murillo that the canvases “weren’t treated paternalistically as children’s drawing,” said Clara Dublanc, a co-director of [*Frequencies Institute*](https://itinerantworks.com/Frequencies), as the nonprofit project, a work in progress, is known.

While Mr. Murillo, 35, left Colombia a quarter-century ago, his studio can feel like an extension of his homeland. Some studio assistants are from La Paila. Chitchat is about Colombian soccer scores.

If he had grown up in La Paila, Mr. Murillo imagines he would have wound up either as a “factory worker or ‘sicario,’” a hit man.

His childhood friend Yeison Murillo (not a relation) spent 12 years as an adult pouring chocolate powder into a machine until he was fired and immigrated to Seattle.

On the phone from the United States, he said he remembered when Mr. Murillo returned at 17 for a visit to La Paila.

“Oscar came back with big hair and big ideas,” said Yeison, who added that he did not pay much attention to the lofty conversation because his friend “still wanted to play soccer without shoes.”

But Mr. Murillo’s artistic ambitions were serious, and he earned an M.F.A. at the Royal College of Art, helping pay for his tuition by working as a cleaner.

An advanced degree, however, was no guarantee of success in London’s crowded art world, where he was just another graduate struggling to find a gallery. He often hung out at exhibition openings.

“There was something different about him,” recalled Tom Cole, a gallerist who met him in those lean years. “Chatty. Forthcoming.”

Curious, Mr. Cole asked for a studio visit; Mr. Murillo invited him to a home-cooked dinner as well.

“He was very engaging with very strong opinions about what art should be,” said Mr. Cole, now a co-owner of the Sunday Painter gallery in London. “How important it was for art to have a social and political role and how art was lacking that.”

Adding a communal element to his art helped him land his first shows, and a collaborative approach has been a signature part of his practice ever since: Mr. Murillo proposed to Mr. Cole that he cook at his gallery the same arepas and tamales that he had just made for him.

“The show brought a big crowd and was fun,” Mr. Cole said of the 2011 exhibition. “He was really interested in the communal aspect of bringing people together.”

Mr. Murillo was also interested in colliding together worlds that otherwise would probably never intersect: like art-world insiders and Colombian-born cleaners.

These were the early signs of what Mr. Murillo calls his “infiltrations,” like, he said, when “a collector in the United States sees the word ‘tamales’” floating on his wall in a six-figure painting in an expensively styled home.

Mr. Murillo soon grabbed the attention of the blue-chip David Zwirner gallery, which added him to its roster and still represents him.

“He had a meteoric ascent, a justified ascent,” Mr. Cole said, adding that Mr. Murillo had achieved both commercial and critical appeal. “Few artists manage that,” Mr. Cole said. “Murillo does both.”

One thing Mr. Murillo does not do, in his own words, is American-style identity politics.

“The only experience that counts seems to be the American one, and that is not my experience,” Mr. Murillo said. “The world is a broader landscape. Where is Brazil? Where is Colombia in the race conversation? I prefer not to enter that conversation as it stands today. I find it ultimately divisive.”

That’s not to say Mr. Murillo does not consider his art politically charged. But he views his preoccupations through that most English of lenses: “I prefer to talk about class,” he said, which he considers a more universal struggle.

While exhibiting from Paris to Tokyo, there was one place he remained largely unknown: Colombia.

For the past seven years, María Belén Saéz de Ibarra, a Colombian curator, has been working to change that, planning a Murillo exhibition at the National University of Colombia in Bogotá. The show, “[*Conditions Yet Not Known*](http://patrimoniocultural.bogota.unal.edu.co/internas-museo/2021/condiciones-aun-por-titular-2.html),” finally opened in October.

Ms. Saéz de Ibarra remembers his arrival: “He opened his suitcase and out came a black cloth,” she said, referring to one of the unstretched canvases that Mr. Murillo is known to hang like drooping flags in art pavilions. “He is a planetary nomad carrying his pain around the world.”

When the time came to install the show, sometimes violent [*street protests over inequality and police abuses were rocking Colombia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/18/world/americas/colombia-protests-what-to-know.html). Mr. Murillo invited student leaders from the protests to help set up the exhibition. “They were in danger. It was my way to get engaged,” he said.

While there, Mr. Murillo saw some of [*the discrimination*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/17/world/americas/venezuela-crisis-colombia-migration.html) that the [*millions of displaced Venezuelans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/20/world/americas/venezuela-refugees-colombia.html) who have arrived there are experiencing, even in La Paila.

“Ironically, in Colombia, I’m most sympathetic with the Venezuelan,” he said. “As a migrant, I understand what they are going through.”

The struggles he faced growing up have stuck with him and influenced his politics and art, but he has become leery of dividing the world too neatly.

“I knew the oppressor and I romanticized the oppressed people,” he said. “But the oppressed can become monsters, too.”

PHOTOS: Above left, Oscar Murillo’s work in Berlin in 2020. Right, a 2014 installation at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Mr. Murillo immigrated to Britain in the 1990s, when he was 11. In 2019, he won the Turner Prize, one of the art world’s most prestigious honors. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW TESTA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; GORDON WELTERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; HIROKO MASUIKE/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 11, 2021

**End of Document**



[***How to Raise Kids Who Won’t Be Racist; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:634X-5YC1-DXY4-X20C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1239 words

**Byline:** Melinda Wenner Moyer

**Highlight:** Research shows that talking openly about race makes children more empathetic and raises their self-esteem.

**Body**

If race is largely a social construct, then teaching children about it will only perpetuate racism — right? Wrong: Studies show precisely the opposite. Open conversations about race and racism can make white children less prejudiced and can increase the self-esteem of children of color.

If states ban the teaching of [*critical race theory*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/09/podcasts/the-daily-newsletter-critical-race-theory.html), as conservative lawmakers in many are [*attempting to do*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/09/podcasts/the-daily-newsletter-critical-race-theory.html), or if schools don’t provide consistent education about racism and discrimination, it’s imperative that parents pick up the slack.

Even if we don’t want them to, children do notice differences in race and skin color. And that means that attempts to suppress discussions about race and racism are misguided. Those efforts won’t eliminate prejudice. They may, in fact, make it worse.

So-called colorblind parenting — avoiding the topic of race in an effort to raise children who aren’t prejudiced — is not just unhelpful, it actually perpetuates racism. That’s because racism isn’t driven solely by individual prejudice. It’s a system of inequity bolstered by racist laws and policies — the very fact that opponents of teaching critical race theory are trying to erase.

Some people, especially white people like me, may shy away from talking to their children about race, either because they’ve been socialized to treat the subject as taboo or because they fear that instilling an awareness of race is itself problematic. That’s a privilege that nonwhite families often don’t have — racism is a fact of life that many can’t ignore. While parents of white children may be able to choose if, when and how they have these conversations, parents of children of color often have no choice but to discuss the subject as it arises.

Parents may believe their children are too young to learn about topics like prejudice, discrimination and violence. But it’s possible — advisable, actually — to have age-appropriate conversations about race and racism throughout children’s lives, including when they are very young.

I asked more than 80 parents about how they think their children view race. Many said their children are oblivious to skin color. Yet research strongly contradicts this notion. Babies as young as 3 months old [*discern racial differences*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/09/podcasts/the-daily-newsletter-critical-race-theory.html), and they prefer looking at faces that share their caregivers’ skin color.

Racial awareness and prejudice continue to develop during the preschool and grade school years. A 2012 [*study*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/09/podcasts/the-daily-newsletter-critical-race-theory.html) showed that many white parents of preschoolers believed that their children harbored no racial prejudice. When the researchers tested the children, though, some said they wouldn’t want Black friends.

Children learn from what they see. They notice that in American culture, race and power intersect in a clear way. Children may observe, for instance, that all but one president has been white, that many of the wealthiest people are white and that [*more* ***working-class*** *people*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/09/podcasts/the-daily-newsletter-critical-race-theory.html) are people of color.

When children aren’t presented with the context required to understand why our society looks the way it does, “they make up reasons, and a lot of kids make up biased, racist reasons,” said Rebecca Bigler, a developmental psychologist who studies the development of prejudice. Children often start to believe that white people are more privileged because they’re smarter or more powerful, Dr. Bigler says.

Parents should explicitly challenge these wrong assumptions and explain the role of centuries of systemic racism in creating these inequities. Brigitte Vittrup, a psychologist at Texas Woman’s University, and George W. Holden, a psychologist at Southern Methodist University, [*found*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/09/podcasts/the-daily-newsletter-critical-race-theory.html) that white children whose parents talked with them about race became less prejudiced over time, compared with children whose parents didn’t have such conversations.

Another study co-written by Dr. Bigler [*found*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/09/podcasts/the-daily-newsletter-critical-race-theory.html) that white children who had learned about racial discrimination had more positive attitudes toward Black people than children who were not exposed to that curriculum. The same researchers later found that classroom discussions about racial discrimination also had a positive impact on Black children.

Indeed, children of color also benefit from conversations about race and racism. In particular, Adriana J. Umaña-Taylor and Nancy E. Hill at the Harvard Graduate School of Education [*found*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/09/podcasts/the-daily-newsletter-critical-race-theory.html) that when families of color regularly talk about their culture’s values and traditions, children develop a strong sense of identity and pride, and they fare better in terms of self-esteem, psychological health and academic success.

But talking about race isn’t enough. Parents should also foster respect for diverse cultural backgrounds by ensuring their children interact with people who are different from them. If you can choose where you live or where your children go to school, it helps to prioritize diversity. And consider the curriculum: Children who hear teachers talk explicitly about race are better at identifying bias than students who are given vague messages about kindness and equality.

At home, choose books, TV shows and movies with characters from a variety of backgrounds — and discuss the characters’ race and ethnicity with your children. When all of the characters are white, acknowledge it. Start a conversation about why that might be the case, and why it’s not representative of the world we live in. Point out racist tropes in books, movies and TV shows when you see them.

Encourage your children to be friends with children of different races, too. “Friendships are a major mechanism for promoting acceptance and reducing prejudice,” explained Deborah Rivas-Drake, a psychologist and educational researcher at the University of Michigan. But if you’re white, don’t expect people of color to do the labor of educating your children about race.

If you’re like me, you may struggle with conversations about race, but they get easier. If your children comment on someone’s skin color, instead of shushing or scolding them, explain the science of skin color — that we all have a pigment in our skin called melanin that protects against ultraviolet radiation. Your melanin levels depend on how much your parents have and on where your ancestors lived.

If your children make racist or insensitive comments, gently probe for more information before responding. “Get a sense of what they understand it to mean from their perspective,” said Howard C. Stevenson, a professor of urban education and Africana studies at the University of Pennsylvania. “Where did they hear it from? How is it being used in the social context they’re in? Then you have a better angle to how you can speak to it.”

These conversations can feel awkward, but remember that whatever your children don’t learn about race from you, they’ll learn from the media, their friends or their own imaginations.

Racism won’t end until parents — and children — see prejudice, recognize its perniciousness and unravel the system that fuels it.

Melinda Wenner Moyer ([*@lindy2350*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/09/podcasts/the-daily-newsletter-critical-race-theory.html)) is a science journalist and the author of the forthcoming book “How to Raise Kids Who Aren’t Assholes,” from which this essay is adapted.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/09/podcasts/the-daily-newsletter-critical-race-theory.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/09/podcasts/the-daily-newsletter-critical-race-theory.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/09/podcasts/the-daily-newsletter-critical-race-theory.html).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Fran Caballero FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***I’m With Condoleezza Rice About White Guilt; John McWhorter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63YJ-RCF1-JBG3-62DS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 29, 2021 Friday 15:41 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1396 words

**Byline:** John McWhorter

**Highlight:** Its influence just isn’t productive.

**Body**

Condoleezza Rice, the first Black female secretary of state, who now heads Stanford University’s Hoover Institution — and who, by her account, attended segregated schools in the Deep South — was a guest last week on “The View.” When asked about the critical race theory debate, [*she said*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hdx4JsDIsWs), “One of the worries that I have about the way that we’re talking about race” sometimes these days is that “somehow white people now have to feel guilty for everything that happened in the past.” She added, “I don’t think that’s very productive.” Of course, as she and we know, there’s more to the critical race theory debate than that. But about the strain of educational philosophy that looks to raise students’ awareness of racial injustice, she said that for Black kids to be empowered, “I don’t have to make white kids feel bad for being white.”

Writing for The Grio, the longtime cultural critic Touré offered a piercing reply, calling Rice a “soldier for white supremacy” and [*saying*](https://thegrio.com/2021/10/22/condoleezza-rice-foot-solider-for-white-supremacy/) that white people today, including children, “should cringe at what their ancestors did.” If school curriculums include the harshest aspects of America’s history, he argued, “I really don’t care if learning this makes white kids feel bad — and if it doesn’t, then they are too heartless.”

I can see how someone arrives at that perspective, because white guilt can seem so central to what Black progress needs to be about — emphasis on “seem.” We’re increasingly encouraged to dwell on “white privilege” and “systemic racism” as key impediments, if not the key impediments, to Black progress. But we must ask just what purpose fostering white guilt serves.

Of course, there is a visceral sense of power in fostering white guilt: One has made people realize something and made them see you as deserving of recompense, as harmed and therefore owed. There can be a sense of accomplishment in just demanding that white Americans sit with past wrongs.

But presumably, the goal is to make America “a more perfect union,” as [*the Constitution*](https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/full-text) has it. And if that’s the goal, our collective efforts to reach it presumably would be about addressing societal conditions rather than these more soul-focused endeavors. One might argue that a realer, not to mention healthier, manifestation of Black affirmation would come from more concrete markers of progress than the dutiful hand-wringing of well-meaning white people about their forebears’ sins.

A compelling reason for fostering white guilt would be that if doing so led white Americans to go out and foster change in society. And sometimes it can — but is white guilt necessary to or the best way to effect societal change?

For the civil rights victories of the 1960s, it wasn’t. We tend to forget how seismic the changes were during that one decade: The Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Fair Housing Act of 1968 were undeniably huge advances, even if they did not (and they did not) end racism or completely level the societal playing field. In any case, all of this did not happen because white people became guilty nationwide.

America’s white majority, and with them America’s political leaders, got behind tangible change because segregation as policy, and the violence required to maintain it, was pragmatically inconvenient on the world stage during the Cold War standoff. Technology was the accelerant, in that television illustrated the civil rights movement in a way that radio and newspapers could not.

Certainly, the televised struggle, and the sympathy of a white countercultural movement that rapidly grew in the ’60s, created a sense of guilt among a certain contingent of, especially, younger white Americans questioning the establishment. But these white kids, for all the fascination they elicit in hindsight as preludes to us moderns, were a relatively fringe element at the time. The mid-20th-century American (white) Everyman tended to lack the visceral sense of revulsion at racism that we now take for granted as at least a courtesy norm.

In his classic “An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy,” Gunnar Myrdal [*observed*](https://books.google.com/books?id=2cygAAAAQBAJ&amp;pg=PA1003&amp;lpg=PA1003&amp;dq=An+American+Dilemma+even+the+white+man+who+defends+discrimination&amp;source=bl&amp;ots=KlVCphVSVW&amp;sig=ACfU3U0FYUBgLGvJtHAupxKfHUAONdlsHA&amp;hl=en&amp;sa=X&amp;ved=2ahUKEwiFsf_ise3zAhWKqHIEHWHaBykQ6AF6BAgREAM#v=onepage&amp;q=An%20American%20Dilemma%20even%20the%20white%20man%20who%20defends%20discrimination&amp;f=false) that “even the white man who defends discrimination frequently describes his motive as ‘prejudice’ and says that it is ‘irrational.’” In other words, the Everyman acknowledged racism but felt no need to disavow it. For example, Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson harbored no special guilt about the challenges faced by Black America but eventually saw it as politically prudent to court the Black electorate.

Thus, in the 1960s, civil rights leaders were able to take advantage of chance configurations. We might take a page from them. The gradual legalization of marijuana could be the start of a general reanalysis of the war on drugs that ravages Black communities. Beyond the current fight over President Biden’s legislative agenda, a new and more targeted demand on infrastructure could and should undergird a focus on training or retraining underserved ***working-class*** Black Americans for solid, well-paying vocational jobs. White guilt would be of little relevance amid such on-the-ground developments.

In that light, it bears mentioning that over the decades since the 1960s, when the idea that white Americans need to be guilty settled in among a contingent of Black thinkers, it seems that somehow, no matter what we say or do, white people are never guilty enough and white guilt is supposed to go on in perpetuity. Might it be that the effort to make white people any guiltier than they are is a Sisyphean effort? The dream that white people will, en masse, shed their “[*fragility*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/26/opinion/wokeness-america.html)” and embrace feeling really, really guilty is about as likely as Schoenberg’s ever being brunch music for more than a rarefied few.

We seek for enlightened white people to acknowledge that they are complicit — to use a term especially popular in recent years — in a system constructed for the benefit of whites. Note that even that word is a strategy to shake white people by the collar, in that telling them they are complicit is a fresher way of saying that they should be guilty. Because many white Americans have a way of resisting feeling guilty about things racial that they know are bad but that they themselves didn’t do, using a euphemism such as “complicit” is a way of trying to make the case without eliciting those typical objections: “I’ve never discriminated against anyone”; “I didn’t own slaves.”

But even phrased as complicity, the charge requires not just the occasional acolyte but the white populace as a whole to feel guilty about things people did not individually do, that were often done in the deep past rather than by their parents and that were done within a vast societal system, the operations of which even experts disagree on. That’s a lot. Recall also that most human beings are not, and will never be, dedicatedly history-minded — we live in the present.

What’s more, I don’t completely trust white guilt. It lends itself too easily to virtue signaling, which overlaps only partially, and sometimes not at all, with helping people. I recall a brilliant, accomplished, kind white academic of a certain age who genially told me — after I published my first book on race, “Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America,” two decades ago — “John, I get what you mean, but I reserve my right to be guilty.” I got what he meant, too, and did not take it ill. But still, note that word “right.” Feeling guilty lent him something personally fulfilling and signaled that he was one of the good guys without obligating him further. The problem is that one can harbor that feeling while not actually doing anything to bring about change on the ground.

So, I’m with Secretary Rice. Especially because people can actively foster change without harboring (or performing?) a sense of personal guilt for America’s history. Black America likely will not overcome without some white assistance. But I’m not convinced that the way this happens is with white people’s cheeks burning in shame over their complicity. Maybe they can just help.

Have feedback? Send a note to [*McWhorter-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:McWhorter-newsletter@nytimes.com).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Michael Morris FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Brick-and-Mortar Retail in the Age of Covid, and Amazon; corner office***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63K3-MHC1-JBG3-6019-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 10, 2021 Friday 01:52 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 1219 words

**Byline:** David Gelles

**Highlight:** Michelle Gass, the chief executive of Kohl’s, is striking deals with Amazon and Sephora in a bid to stay relevant.

**Body**

Brick-and-mortar retailers have been decimated in recent years. First came [*Amazon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/25/business/macys-kohls-nordstrom-problems.html?searchResultPosition=1). Then the [*pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/29/business/retail-industry-2020-pandemic.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article).

Yet even as giant [*shopping malls*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/10/briefing/shopping-pandemic-american-malls.html?searchResultPosition=1) are dying and many storefronts are shuttered, the big box stores that anchor strip malls throughout the exurbs are enjoying something of a renaissance. Companies like Best Buy, Dick’s Sporting Goods and Home Depot have managed to hang on, and even thrive. Add to that list another, somewhat unlikely, entrant: Kohl’s.

The retailer, which sells clothes, home wares, sporting goods and more, is hanging on against the odds. Just where Kohl’s fits in isn’t always clear. It’s smaller than a department store, but has many of the same offerings. Its stores are often near Walmarts, but feature more mainstream brands.

Since taking over as Kohl’s chief executive in 2018, Michelle Gass has been working to carve out a distinct identity for the company. She joined the company eight years ago after more than a decade working at Starbucks.

Among her moves — besides keeping the stores open during the pandemic — has been striking a series of partnerships with other companies.

The most unconventional was a [*deal with Amazon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/08/business/kohls-amazon-returns.html?searchResultPosition=1) in 2019 that allows customers to return Amazon products to Kohl’s stores. While there, Ms. Gass hopes, they might do some shopping.

Another new partner is Sephora, the beauty retailer, which is setting up mini-stores inside Kohl’s locations. It’s a bit like, well, a department store.

This interview was condensed and edited for clarity.

What about your childhood informs your work as a C.E.O. today?

I was born and raised in a small town in Maine, and grew up in a very ***working-class*** family and community. I was among the first in my family to get a four-year college degree. That fostered a drive to do more, achieve more, from a really young age. I worked all the way through high school and college. My first job was bagging groceries. I waitressed and even did factory work. I like to work hard, and I really put a high value on people who also work hard.

I got my degree in chemical engineering. Sometimes people ask me, “How did you learn engineering, especially as a woman?” And candidly, I was quite pragmatic, and I knew I could get a great job with it. I didn’t grow up with any engineers around me, but I did my homework and I had a sense that this was going to open up doors. And it really did.

What did you learn from working with Howard Schultz at Starbucks?

Three things. One is the importance of culture; such a strong culture was built over time. Secondly, it’s not just what you sell, but it’s the importance of that human connection, the emotional connection around the life or consumer, the affinity for the brand. And then the third, and a big passion of mine, is the power of innovation.

Starbucks has a very clear brand proposition. How do you define where Kohl’s sits in the consumer ecosystem?

Kohl’s had a successful model for a long time, sort of this hybrid department store brand, but with mass mall convenience. But over time that got blurred. So the challenge and opportunity is, “OK, what is the space we can occupy that will be differentiated?” Part of it was becoming a relevant omni-channel retailer. And I really feel like we’ve checked that box. But from a product and brand standpoint, how are we going to be more relevant? How are we going to have a brand stand for something?

Department stores have struggled over the last several years. So how do you make it work when the J.C. Penney’s and the Macy’s have had such a hard go of it?

We are very far apart from what a traditional department store is. We are small, we’re super convenient and that allows us to do things like buy online, pick up in store and curbside. But more importantly, we see ourselves as a specialty concept, that Kohl’s is the curator and the editor to bring you all the products and brands you need to lead a more active and casual lifestyle.

Is it up market? Is it down market? Who are the target consumers?

We have America. We serve a very broad base of customers, really all demographics. Our strategy is the active and casual lifestyle, and selling the kinds of products that were amplified during the pandemic. People want to look good. They want to be comfortable. Their work wardrobe is going to look very different coming out of this eventually than what it was going in.

A lot of people would think that a brick-and-mortar retailer would be crazy to work with Amazon. What’s the logic behind your deal with them?

When you take a step back and think about what it’s like to return goods, it can be very inconvenient in the traditional way, especially with online returns. Looking for the box, looking for the tape, attaching the receipt, all of that. We’re addressing that pain point. Amazon gets a deal that can address the friction point, and we’re able to leverage our appetite and welcome in traffic. It was certainly unconventional at the time when we announced it, but I think it worked out really well.

How has the pandemic changed the retail business in ways that are going to endure in the months and years ahead?

When you’re in the crisis, you have to make decisions very quickly. We clearly needed to prioritize how we were going to keep our people and our customers safe. When that got settled, we used the opportunity to look at our strategy and say, “How do we be bigger and bolder?” And that allowed us to start having conversations with Sephora.

When you talk about the increases in profitability, how much of that is getting passed on to the associates and the people in the stores?

We had to make tough decisions like that, in terms of furlough and when we opened doors and invited our associates back, and it’s a very tight labor market. We are doing a lot to ensure that we are competitive in a market-by-market basis. So we’re providing bonuses to our hourly associates. So I feel like we’re doing a lot to ensure that we are creating a very good environment for our people.

What are you having to do to attract the employees you need right now? What do they want and what are they getting, frankly, that they weren’t?

More than 75 percent of that work force is part time, and our associates like the flexibility. They like the culture.

Do people really prefer to be part time? If you offered them a full-time role, are you telling me they would really turn it down?

I think it’s hard to answer that question. The overarching thing I hear from people a lot is they like this notion of flexibility. And I strongly believe we provide a lot of opportunities.

You’ve talked about being a servant leader before. How do you balance that imperative to take care of your employees with your commitment to deliver for shareholders?

As the C.E.O. leading the business, I have a lot of stakeholders, and certainly our investors are one of them. One of my responsibilities is to ensure that we have a sustainable business, a business that can employ a lot of people and also serve the stakeholders and the community at large. As it relates to the people we employ, people are working in Kohl’s for a lot of reasons outside of what is in their paycheck. That’s an important part. Absolutely. But there is pride in having a great job and being part of a company that you’re proud to be associated with.

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MAGGIE SHANNON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Home Grown***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61FT-C2G1-DXY4-X0BM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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National

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**Section:** Section M2; Column 0; T: Holiday Magazine; Pg. 59

**Length:** 3758 words

**Byline:** By Mark Anthony Neal, Hank Willis Thomas, Deb Willis and Alex Harrington

**Body**

PATTI LABELLE'S superpower is a spellbinding scream -- a refined shriek, really -- that makes hairs stand at attention, bones shiver and spines twist. It was 1975 when I first heard it. I was 10, in my parents' South Bronx tenement, where the radio station WBLS -- offering ''the total Black experience in sound,'' as the promos said -- was always on during our morning rush to school. That's when it hit me -- ''Creole Lady Marmalaaaaade,'' the last word of those titular lyrics, which debuted the year before, filling the air. My first Patti LaBelle moment. There have been many such moments since -- like hearing ''Love, Need and Want You'' (1983), which I put on the very first slow-jam tape I made as a teen -- and with each one, the only logical reaction is to throw up your hands, kick off your shoes and, on occasion, break out in a praise dance.

There's no such thing as a passive response to a Patti LaBelle song -- nor should there be. LaBelle came to prominence in the 1970s, a decade that was defined by the greatest generation of divas of soul and gospel music: Aretha Franklin, Diana Ross, Shirley Caesar, Gladys Knight and Inez Andrews, as well as the relative youngsters Chaka Khan and Natalie Cole. But there was something so relatable about LaBelle, who reminded you of your favorite church soloist or the girl at the high school talent show who could saaang, not just sing. LaBelle has been described as the Godmother of Soul, a master of one of America's classic art forms, but that moniker ultimately fails to capture the singularity of her musical prowess: Perhaps more than any living performer, LaBelle sits at the intersections of soul and gospel, the former a genre that is indebted to the latter. Gospel is a form of Black religious music that emerged in the 1930s courtesy of Thomas A. Dorsey, the onetime pianist for the blues legend Ma Rainey who also wrote the classic ''Take My Hand, Precious Lord.'' Soul took shape in the 1950s, in large part because of Ray Charles, who added secular lyrics to the melodies of familiar gospel songs, most famously with the track ''I Got a Woman'' (1954), an early remix of sorts of the Southern Tones' ''It Must Be Jesus.'' Many Black churchgoers considered Charles's music blasphemous, but he opened a portal to a generation of gospel singers like Sam Cooke, Johnnie Taylor and Franklin, who became early stars of the new genre.

But LaBelle is more than someone who exhibits a mastery of soul and gospel; she is ''church,'' a style of singing taken from Black Pentecostal and Baptist musical traditions, where gospel music is unfettered by the business of religion and soul is unfettered by expectations of the music industry. LaBelle's rendition of the ABCs on ''Sesame Street'' in 1998 is just one example. She begins in a slow, bluesy style, accompanied by a piano, and as a congregation of Muppets joins in, the song is transformed into a sanctified shout, performed with a fervor no one had ever had for the ABCs -- and perhaps never will again. It was church.

IT FELT LIKE the last day of summer on the autumn afternoon that I arrived at LaBelle's home, just north of Philadelphia -- the whir of her family and staff was not unlike that of children during recess. While Tupac Shakur and Dr. Dre's ''California Love'' played in the background at LaBelle's request, the photographers Deb Willis and Hank Willis Thomas went about the work of capturing a woman who is beyond simple impressions. Watching them made me think of Roy DeCarava's classic photos of Ornette Coleman, Billie Holiday or John Coltrane, or Malcolm X taking a photo of Muhammad Ali -- one of the most photographed Black Americans of the 20th century taking pictures of one of the most photographed Black Americans of the 20th century. In other words: an alignment of Black brilliance and genius.

At 76, the unwieldy rawness of LaBelle's youthful instrument has given way to a refined and nuanced power that she summons with the aplomb of a master craftswoman. She's ''truly gotten better,'' Dyana Williams, the longtime Philadelphia radio personality and a friend of LaBelle's, told me. The singer, she added, ''has transcended generations and still remained relevant to each generation of music makers.''

Yet even more significant than her longevity is the context of her staying power. LaBelle is of a generation of Black women who are regularly lauded with the honorific of ''auntie'' -- Auntie Phylicia, Auntie Gladys, Auntie Cicely -- a term of affection for women who continue to hold an important place in the culture. These are the women who young Black folks know will always offer support without immediate judgment -- who will provide correction and counsel. As I was shown into LaBelle's living room, the scents of nutmeg and cinnamon hanging in the air -- there was peach cobbler in the oven -- I realized I was no longer in Patti LaBelle's home but in any number of aunties' homes, which I've come to expect to smell this way. ''Oh my,'' I thought to myself, sitting on the couch across from a piano covered with dozens of photographs of close family and friends, including the Clintons and Barack Obama, ''I'm in Auntie Patti's house.'' And then she appeared: stunning, regal, beautiful.

We later moved to her sitting room, where she keeps a selection of her many awards; she has five certified gold records, the platinum-selling ''Winner in You'' (1986) and two Grammys, earned for her albums ''Burnin''' (1991) and ''Live! One Night Only'' (1998). LaBelle lives by herself, but the assorted family members in the house that day -- her two young granddaughters, her son Zuri and his wife (who's also her personal makeup artist), who all live nearby -- were a good indication of how welcoming a space it is: a home, not a way station, an important place for someone who has spent a lifetime on the road (until the recent pandemic, she still toured regularly). ''Philadelphia is a place for me to live all my life because it's quiet enough for me,'' LaBelle said of her hometown. ''It's not crazy like New York or L.A. I love Philly. Philly is my home.''

But Philadelphia has also been a musical inspiration for LaBelle and generations of artists from the city and beyond. ''It's the most productive city I know,'' LaBelle said, reeling off a string of artists who were either born in the city or made their reputations there: Bunny Sigler, Thom Bell, Pink, Jill Scott, the Roots, Eve, Musiq Soulchild, her close friend Teddy Pendergrass, Phyllis Hyman, Billy Paul. Philadelphia sits between and thus in the shadows of America's cultural capital, New York City, and the seat of American power, Washington, D.C. There's an underdog quality to the place, something that makes its residents try harder than they might. Indeed, when you listen to LaBelle's vocals on early covers of ''Over the Rainbow'' (recorded in 1966) or the Irish hymn ''Danny Boy'' (in 1964) -- the young LaBelle singing as though each note will be her last -- there's a feeling of ''I can't believe she did that with this song,'' trampling all conventions in her range and phrasing, making us rethink how these Tin Pan Alley standards were supposed to be sung. The essence of Patti LaBelle the singer is that she is always willing to do that to a song, and it's one reason she is the exemplar of what has become known as the Philly Sound.

And yet, what is that sound? ''You know Philly when you hear it,'' LaBelle said coyly. Williams, who's been based in Philadelphia for the past 40 years, described it as ''melodic, harmonic, rhythmic and funky at the same time -- the embodiment of multiple genres,'' including European classical music: The string arrangements you hear in many of the genre's songs -- like the intro to the O'Jays' ''Stairway to Heaven'' (1975) or the proto-disco classic ''Love Is the Message'' (1973) by MFSB -- were often performed by members of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Williams is referencing Philadelphia International Records specifically, the label founded by Kenneth Gamble and Leon Huff in 1971 that is synonymous with Philadelphia Soul. The label's sound married the earthy vocals of local singers with the pop appeal of Motown. Philadelphia Soul was the embodiment of the aspirations of ***working-class*** Black Americans who wanted the good life for themselves in the post-civil rights era. At its best, the label balanced those aspirations (the lush strings) with a prideful defiance, emboldened by those signature bass lines, which you can hear on a track like LaBelle's ''Love Bankrupt'' (1983). Ostensibly a song about losing love, it's also a subtle analogy for a retreat from the early gains of the civil rights movement: ''You changed on me,'' LaBelle sings, and you can tell she means it.

BORN PATRICIA HOLTE -- her family called her Patsy -- on May 24, 1944, LaBelle was raised in the Eastwick neighborhood in southwest Philadelphia, a largely Black ***working-class*** community, by her parents, Henry and Bertha Holte. She was the second youngest of five children: Her brother, Thomas, was the eldest, and she had three sisters, Vivian, Barbara and Jackie. In her memoir, ''Don't Block the Blessings'' (1996), LaBelle recounts a doting father, a railroad man and sometime nightclub performer who braided her hair, cooked her breakfast and had a voice like Nat King Cole. Her mother worked in food service before becoming a full-time homemaker. When her father became abusive toward her mother, the two divorced. On one occasion following her parents' split, LaBelle was sexually abused by her mother's new boyfriend. After that, it was the music of Nina Simone, Gloria Lynne, Dakota Staton and James Moody -- introduced to her by her brother -- that became LaBelle's ''escape hatch ... [and] gave me something to believe when I thought I had lost my faith.'' She started singing shortly thereafter, with ''the broom as a microphone,'' as she recalled. She then moved on to the church choir at Beulah Baptist Church -- which was close to her childhood home -- at a time when the church played a prominent role in the daily lives of Black Americans. It was the choir director, Harriet Chapman, who forced LaBelle to take a solo. '''Oh, no, Patsy, you have to come in front and do the lead,''' LaBelle remembered her saying. When she protested, Chapman suggested a duet with her son, Nathan. LaBelle got the bug quickly thereafter, singing ''God Specializes,'' and received the amen from the whole congregation: ''They all stood up saying, 'Hallelujah!' That's when I first realized I had talent.''

The pace of ballads allows LaBelle to explore a range of emotion that speaks so palpably to the lives of everyday folk: Ballads are the comfort food of soul music -- melodies that stick to the bones, sustenance for ***working-class*** communities whose very humanity is challenged on a daily basis.

LaBelle began her career in 1960 when she joined a quartet that had originally included Jean Brown, Yvonne Hogen and Johnnie Dawson but would later feature the singers Nona Hendryx, Sarah Dash and Cindy Birdsong. (Birdsong would go on to join the Supremes in 1967, making the quartet a trio.) The Ordettes, as they called themselves, signed with Harold Robinson's Newtown Records label in 1962 and were rechristened the Bluebelles; their lead singer, ''little'' Patsy Holte, became Patti LaBelle. But the group was largely overshadowed by others like the Shirelles and the Supremes, the latter of which became one of the most successful groups ever; their lead singer, Diana Ross, became a global superstar. But Ross was never tied to one place like LaBelle -- she moved to Los Angeles in the early 1970s, and later relocated to New York City. LaBelle, on the other hand, remained, becoming synonymous with her hometown. Diana Ross was a pure pop confection; Patti LaBelle is, and has always been, a home-style meal.

During their early years, the Bluebelles, like many of their peers, made their living on the so-called chitlin' circuit, a network of clubs and theaters primarily in the eastern and Southern parts of the United States that catered to Black artists and audiences throughout much of the 20th century. Chitlins, short for chitterlings, was a Black American delicacy derived from scraps -- pigs' intestines -- so the chitlin' circuit was a metaphor for the leftover opportunities granted to Black performers in segregated America. Yet it was also a story of resilience, as theaters like the Fox in Detroit, the Howard in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia's own Uptown and, most famously, New York's Apollo became incubators for Black music. ''I'm happy we had a chitlin' circuit,'' LaBelle told me. ''It makes me be a better me.'' Those things that have made her better included cross-country drives, because the group couldn't afford airfare, or surviving on a paltry per diem by buying candy bars, cans of tuna and 10-cent sardines. ''I have a pantry full of sardines and tuna,'' LaBelle half-joked, noting, ''That's what I had yesterday, a nice tuna sandwich, and sardines the other night.'' She grinned. ''Our good Black was good,'' she said, again referring to the circuit -- a reminder that Black Americans had long ago established their own criteria of cultural affirmation.

But not everything on the chitlin' circuit was ''good.'' It was on one such tour that the singer Jackie Wilson attempted to rape her, as LaBelle recounts in her memoir. Such stories about life on the R&B circuit, or the ''Rough and Black'' circuit, as the fictional character James (Thunder) Early describes it in the film ''Dreamgirls'' (2006), rated very little attention in the 1960s. LaBelle's willingness to share her story about Wilson, who was revered by audiences and whose legendary stage performances were an inspiration for a young Michael Jackson, was especially brave at the time -- 20 years before #MeToo -- and highlighted the precarious position of being a young woman, in particular a young Black woman, in the record industry.

Such experiences inspired the music that the group recorded in the 1970s, as women who were taking control of their image, their bodies and their sexuality. When the Bluebelles transformed into Labelle in 1971, they also redefined the very idea of the girl group. Absent were the bouffants and Bob Mackie gowns that the Supremes made so famous. As the scholar Maureen Mahon writes in her book ''Black Diamond Queens'' (2020), Labelle instead emphasized ''individual voices and personalities in vocals, clothing and onstage style.'' Girl groups? No, Labelle was about grown-ass Black women who were ''bold, brash [and] brazen,'' which is how the group's manager Victoria Wickham imagined them. As LaBelle recalls in her memoir, Wickham believed the trio would be revolutionary: ''Three Black women singing about racism, sexism and eroticism.'' On their first albums they covered signature songs from the Rolling Stones (''Wild Horses''), Gil Scott-Heron (''The Revolution Will Not Be Televised''), the Who (''Won't Get Fooled Again'') and Cat Stevens (''Moonshadow''), forcing themselves into a domain dominated by male performers. As Mahon notes, Labelle's ''rebellious performance stances, frank engagement with sexuality and adventurous, high-energy music positioned the group to take a place on the rock stage.'' And indeed, their styles, which seemed inspired by the Afrofuturism of Sun Ra -- metallic headgear, midriff tops, skintight bottoms, short skirts and full-length boots -- were a blueprint for more popular Black acts at the time like Earth, Wind & Fire and Parliament-Funkadelic.

It was during this period that LaBelle married her longtime friend and future manager Armstead Edwards, in 1969, giving birth to their son Zuri in 1973. (The couple would later adopt four more children: Stayce and William, LaBelle's niece and nephew, whom she took in after her sister Jackie's death in 1989; and Stanley and Dodd, her neighbor's children, whose mother had also died.) But marriage and motherhood didn't keep LaBelle from her music. The trio's biggest success, the now-iconic ''Lady Marmalade,'' came only a year after her son's birth, with a New Orleans-style swagger that struts like a drunken sailor intent on satiating his desires, if only for the night: ''Voulez-vous coucher avec moi, ce soir?'' That these desires are being expressed by three women, breaking some unspoken social contract of decorum, is what made the song so provocative -- and an inspiration for women in the burgeoning days of the feminist movement.

THE GROUP BROKE UP in 1976, and LaBelle emerged as a breakout R&B singer; since her 1977 solo debut, she's recorded 23 albums. If there's something that could be called a definitive Patti LaBelle album, it's ''I'm in Love Again'' (1983), which produced one of her most successful songs to date as a solo artist, ''If Only You Knew.'' Just as LaBelle says that she knows a Philly song when she hears it, audiences know this is a Patti LaBelle song. ''If Only You Knew'' is a slow, slow burn -- a certified slow drag, as folks would've called it a generation earlier, during those blue-lights-in-the-basement house parties that LaBelle would have come of age attending. At its start, LaBelle sings, ''I must have rehearsed my lines / A thousand times'' with a level of restraint that betrays what audiences had come to expect from her. But it's a setup: She lulls her listeners -- the lyrics rendered as gentle coos and soft murmurs -- until the sudden release, when the song turns into what can only be described as fits of ecstasy.

''Patti LaBelle is a balladeer. I love ballads,'' she told me. Among her signatures are ''Somebody Loves You'' (1991) and ''If You Ask Me To,'' a song that made a minor ripple when she first recorded it in 1989 but became a major pop hit when Celine Dion covered it three years later, using the same arrangements, as LaBelle noted. Though she also admitted, ''She sang so good, and we're friends, so I said, 'I'm happy you did it.''' The pace of ballads allows LaBelle to explore a range of emotion that, when mapped onto feelings of desire, betrayal and even eroticism, speaks so palpably to the lives of everyday folk: Ballads are the comfort food of soul music -- melodies that stick to the bones, sustenance for ***working-class*** communities whose very humanity is challenged on a daily basis. When LaBelle sings ''Somebody Loves You,'' it is a reminder that their lives matter.

Though LaBelle has written songs, she is at heart a stylist, someone who is as known for the songs that were written for her as she is for personalizing songs that were recorded by others. And while there have been many great stylists in the soul and R&B traditions -- Nancy Wilson made a career out of it -- no one takes ownership quite the way LaBelle does. ''You've got to be careful what you cover,'' LaBelle said, noting some of the songs she wanted to sing over the years but decided not to, like Phyllis Hyman's ''Old Friend.'' But then there's ''If You Don't Know Me by Now.'' First recorded in 1972, it was a major pop hit for Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes -- Pendergrass sang lead -- yet it is the best example of a song LaBelle made her own. On the live 1982 recording, she initially sings it straight, but beginning with the first chorus, she extends the notes -- hitting some before and some shortly after they're expected, and shimmying on others. It is classic soul singing, but it is LaBelle's range and her ability to personalize the lyrics that take the song elsewhere. Midway through, she breaks into conversation with the audience. She's letting listeners in, teaching them the lessons of life. The call and response of the exchange is wisdom imparted and messages delivered. With performances like these, LaBelle earned her reputation as a diva -- a term she dismissed, saying, ''I'm a round-the-way girl from Philly. I'm not a diva.''

IT WAS AN auntie showcase this past September when LaBelle and Gladys Knight sat down to do ''Verzuz,'' a virtual artist battle, conceived by the producers Swizz Beatz and Timbaland and launched on Instagram in the early months of the pandemic. ''Verzuz'' quickly became a reprieve from Covid-19 lockdown fatigue and a lifeline for artists who couldn't tour and audiences who weren't able to gather -- ''It was like doing a concert because I hadn't worked in seven months onstage,'' LaBelle said. Though artists initially appeared remotely, LaBelle and Knight chose to appear together on a soundstage in Philadelphia.

Generations of viewers were drawn to the ''Verzuz'' episode with these veterans of soul; it was as if they were sitting across from us at the kitchen table, where so many aunties share secrets. The two dished on lost loves, and peers they would rather not talk about, or to; they knew the words to each other's songs, and even invited another auntie, Dionne Warwick, onstage to join them in a rendition of ''Superwoman,'' a song they first recorded for a Knight album 30 years earlier. ''We have so much great history. We're the O.G.s. The real girls,'' LaBelle recalled of her friendship with Knight of more than 50 years, dating back to their days on the chitlin' circuit and through moments of tragedy, including the deaths of LaBelle's three sisters and Knight's son. ''It was a blessing,'' she said.

''A Philly girl,'' she called herself, and yet she's everywhere now. LaBelle turned to acting in 1984, with her performance as Big Mary in ''A Soldier's Story,'' followed by her memorable role as Adele Wayne on the hit television show ''A Different World'' (1987-93), and in 2015, she appeared on ''Dancing With the Stars.'' In 1999, she expanded into cookbooks -- with recipes like Aunt Hattie's Scrumptious Sweet Tater Bread and Say-My-Name Smothered Chicken and Gravy -- and a line of cakes, pastries and frozen foods called Patti's Good Life, which is sold at Walmart. ''She's entrepreneurial in the most amazing way,'' Dyana Williams said. ''Not very many artists get to do what she's doing at this age and stage of their careers.''

LaBelle's has been a life joyfully lived. ''I'm so happy to be the Black woman with the good food,'' she said, and it was clear she meant it. And with that, she sent me on my way with a plate of her peach cobbler, just as so many of America's aunties would have.

Hair: David Lamar. Makeup: Lona Azami. Manicure: Amanda Nguyen. Production: Prod'n. Digital tech: Willy Lukaitis. Tailoring: Hailey Desjardins. Set assistant: Todd Knopke. Stylist's assistant: Sidney Munch

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/t-magazine/patti-labelle-philadelphia-soul.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/t-magazine/patti-labelle-philadelphia-soul.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Patti LaBelle, photographed at her home in Villanova, Pa., on Oct. 14, 2020. Gucci dress, $3,980, gucci.com, and LaBelle's own earrings, bracelet and ring.

Richard Quinn coat, about $3,409, matchesfashion.com, David Webb earrings, $68,000, davidwebb .com, and Paul Morelli rings, $39,000 each, paulmorelli.com.

The small storage room in LaBelle's house was designed and decorated by Eric Seats and is filled with memorabilia and costumes from the singer's decadeslong career. Dries Van Noten coat, $2,640, jacket, $1,395, and pants, $825, saks.com, David Webb ring, $32,500, and LaBelle's own earrings and shoes. Set design by Jill Nicholls. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HANK WILLIS THOMAS

DEB WILLIS

STYLED BY ALEX HARRINGTON

HAIR: DAVID LAMAR. MAKEUP: LONA AZAMI. MANICURE: AMANDA NGUYEN. PRODUCTION: PROD'N. DIGITAL TECH: WILLY LUKAITIS. TAILORING: HAILEY DESJARDINS. SET ASSISTANT: TODD KNOPKE. STYLIST'S ASSISTANT: SIDNEY MUNCH)

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[***In Their Own Words***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61Y7-H9K1-DXY4-X3F1-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 7; AUDIOBOOKS

**Length:** 894 words

**Byline:** By Jennifer Reese

**Body**

To read or to listen to a book? It can be a tough choice, but when it comes to memoirs of entertainers -- especially those who narrate their own work -- the answer is easy: Listen. These are authors who bring not just insight, but professional chops and innate charisma to the job. You needn't be an ardent fan of the celebrity memoirists below to appreciate hearing their personal stories in their famous voices.

No one could recount the saga of a brooding, introverted Irish actor like Gabriel Byrne with more soul than the brooding, introverted Irish actor Gabriel Byrne. In WALKING WITH GHOSTS (Recorded Books, 6 hours, 57 minutes), Byrne revisits his childhood in hardscrabble, hard-drinking mid-20th-century Dublin, introducing us to formative characters like Mrs. Gordon, an elderly friend of his family's, whose locket held her late husband's whiskers and who used to regale Byrne with tales of banshees, fairies and famine. He discusses his sister's mental illness, his early vocation as a priest (''I can't help but imagine how different my life could have been'') and his struggles with alcoholism (''I started young''). There are Hollywood-era snapshots of his life tucked into the book as well: whiskeys with Richard Burton (''Give it all you got,'' he advises Byrne, ''but never forget it's just a bloody movie, that's all it is. We're not curing cancer''), a harrowing account of the depression that struck after it became clear ''The Usual Suspects'' was going to be a hit, and Byrne a star.

Listening to this book in the car was like taking a road trip with a friend sharing his slightly mournful stories in a soft brogue from the passenger seat.

It's been decades since ''Family Ties'' made him a household name in the 1980s, but at almost 60 -- and having lived with Parkinson's disease for half his life -- Michael J. Fox still has that Alex Keaton buoyancy. Fox's fourth book, NO TIME LIKE THE FUTURE (Macmillan Audio, 5 hours, 59 minutes), delves into his acting career and philanthropy, his improbable passion for golf, and his worsening health. In 2018 (''my annus horribilis,'' he says), Fox underwent surgery for a spinal tumor unrelated to Parkinson's, an ordeal that tested his characteristic optimism and left him struggling to walk. ''Back in the days of carefree ambling, I would have considered the topic of walking to be rather pedestrian,'' Fox jokes. Sometimes the quips seem forced, but Fox's positivity -- rooted in the love of his family -- is hard-won and inspiring. Although Parkinson's has affected his speech, after the first few minutes I stopped noticing as his storytelling, suffused with warmth and emotion, drew me in. And only in the audiobook can you hear him choke up while recounting a tender moment with his wife of more than 30 years, the actress Tracy Pollan.

The rocker Lenny Kravitz never chokes up in LET LOVE RULE (Macmillan Audio, 6 hours, 40 minutes), but he does periodically break into song, making for startlingly lovely interludes in this bighearted autobiography. The son of a white Jewish father and a Black mother, Kravitz grew up spending weekdays with his ***working-class*** maternal grandparents in Brooklyn and weekends at nightclubs with his parents in Manhattan. ''I'd have to call it a golden childhood,'' he says, ever able to find beauty even in bitter experiences. After his mother, Roxie Roker, was cast in ''The Jeffersons,'' the family moved to Los Angeles, where his parents' marriage foundered and Kravitz left home at 16, bunking down in a rented Ford Pinto. His musical career blossomed after he fell in love with the actress Lisa Bonet -- seeing her for the first time on a TV Guide cover, he announced, ''I'm gonna marry that girl'' -- and the songs came pouring out. The memoir, coauthored with David Ritz, ends with the release of his first album in 1989 and the welcome words: ''To be continued.''

Kravitz credits five Black godmothers with helping shape his character -- among them the actress Cicely Tyson, who died last week at 96, days after the publication of her own memoir, JUST AS I AM (HarperAudio, 16 hours, 9 minutes). Tyson reads the introduction to her book, pausing to chuckle at her own anecdotes, before turning the narration over to the brilliant Robin Miles. (The foreword, read by Viola Davis, was intimate and powerful, and piqued my interest in the book before I even got going.) Cowritten with Michelle Burford, Tyson's is a juicy, rags-to-riches opus with an unforgettable, tart-tongued heroine who used her craft to render fully the lives of Black women, ''the most deeply misunderstood human beings in history.''

The daughter of West Indian immigrants, Tyson grew up in Harlem in the 1920s and '30s, became a teenage mother and wife, stumbled into modeling and then acting, becoming an American icon for performances in ''Sounder'' and ''The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman.'' She was friends with Diahann Carroll and Sidney Poitier and Maya Angelou; married and divorced Miles Davis (''He was so full of the Devil, that Miles''); and took stands that were radical at the time, like embracing her natural hair on television. She describes it all with vivid recall, wit and monumental charm. If I hadn't been listening to this book, I would have called it a page-turner.Jennifer Reese's work has appeared in the Book Review and The Washington Post.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/05/books/review/audiobook-memoirs.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/05/books/review/audiobook-memoirs.html)

**Load-Date:** February 7, 2021

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[***Flawed Testing Slows Goal of In-Person Classes***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64HG-RCF1-DXY4-X1WJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

As millions of American students head back to their desks, the virus testing that was supposed to help keep classrooms open safely is itself being tested.

In California, storms over the winter break destroyed a million coronavirus test kits that were meant to help schools screen returning students. In Seattle schools, children waited for hours for virus testing, some in a driving rain. In Florida this month, an attempt to supply tests to teachers in Broward County turned up expired kits.

And in Chicago, a labor dispute, partly over testing, kept students out of school for a week.

As millions of American students head back to their desks -- Los Angeles, the nation's second-largest school district, started classes on Tuesday -- the coronavirus testing that was supposed to help keep classrooms open safely is itself being tested. In much of the country, things are not going well.

Slammed by the ultra-contagious Omicron variant, pressured by political factions, baffled by conflicting federal guidance and hamstrung by a national shortage of rapid-test kits, many districts have struggled to ramp up or effectively establish testing programs. In many areas, schools have already had to close in recent weeks because flawed screenings have allowed infected children and teachers to return to class, putting others at risk.

A vast majority of schools have managed to continue in-person instruction, and in many areas, transmission in classrooms has been lower than in the broader community. But parents' anxieties and confrontations with teachers' unions are jeopardizing the Biden administration's efforts to prevent a return to remote instruction. And even for districts that have working testing programs, high costs are raising questions about their sustainability.

Data from Burbio, a company that audits how schools have operated through the pandemic, shows that more than 5,400 schools have reverted to virtual learning since Jan. 3. The issue, epidemiologists say, is not that testing does not work -- particularly in combination with vaccination, face masks and other precautions. Rather, they say, many districts are bungling the execution or failing to muster the resources necessary to test properly.

''A lot of schools are just testing parts of their population once a week, or not using the tests strategically, or confusing surveillance with testing to suppress outbreaks,'' said Dr. Michael J. Mina, a former Harvard University epidemiologist and a leading expert on rapid testing who is now the chief science officer for eMed, which authenticates at-home test results.

The result, he said, has been the equivalent of an army going to battle without knowing how to use its weapons or understanding its objectives.

''You can throw all the guns and military personnel you want into a war zone, but if you don't go in with strategy you're never going to win,'' Dr. Mina said.

Throughout the pandemic, testing -- subsidized with billions of dollars in federal funding -- has been viewed as a key way to keep children in classrooms and ease the toll of remote learning on emotional health and academic progress. But public health experts say few districts are testing enough, or strategically enough -- particularly in the wake of Omicron.

Screenings meant to detect and isolate outbreaks require broad participation, but many districts have resisted requiring students to take part, fearing political backlash. Many schools also screen with P.C.R. tests, which are useful in diagnosing cases but can open schools to the risk of outbreaks as they wait for results from processing labs.

Newer test-to-stay programs -- which let exposed students remain in class as long as they test negative and do not have symptoms -- also require intensive testing, but they rely on rapid antigen tests, which are in short supply nationally as soaring Omicron infections have spiked demand.

The lack of clear federal guidance on rapid tests has also been an issue, forcing ''every school system to recreate the wheel,'' Dr. Mina said.

The result at many schools, health experts say, has been a hodgepodge of half-measures.

''Asking if school testing works is like asking if a dishwasher works -- yes, it works, but only if you load the dishes,'' said Meagan Fitzpatrick, an assistant professor at the University of Maryland School of Medicine who specializes in infectious disease modeling.

In Seattle, schools canceled classes at the start of last week and held optional pop-up testing events for staff and students, hoping to stave off remote learning by preventing infectious people from entering schools after the holiday break. But only about 14,000 of the district's 50,000 students and 7,800 employees showed up -- with about one in 25 testing positive.

By Monday, two schools were closed because of staff shortages and infections, and the district was contemplating a return to remote classes. David Giugliani, a parent of two, said he was grateful for the effort the district was making to protect schools and the community, but also anxious about in-person learning and the uncertainty of it all. Among other issues, he said, was the four-hour wait to be tested, largely indoors, that he and his children had to endure.

''I'd like greater confidence in what's going to come next, but who has that?'' he said.

In Portland, Ore., where Covid-related staff shortages had shut down two of 12 high schools by the end of the first week back to classes, only 27 percent of students have opted in to regular screenings, said Brenda Martinek, chief of student support services. Vaccinated teachers were not offered school-based tests until last week, when staff members in the district office, from secretaries to people in the I.T. department, were trained to administer P.C.R. tests to employees.

''I was in there, too, with my face shield and my mask and gloves, like, 'OK, swab five times in one nostril, now swab five times in the other,''' she said. ''I never thought I was a health care provider, but apparently I am.''

Some Republican-led states have de-emphasized school testing or lagged in distributing stockpiles. In Florida, Gov. Ron DeSantis said last week that unless their parents wanted it, children ''do not need to be doing any crazy mitigation'' such as wearing masks or testing. In Broward County, school employees that had taken advantage of a giveaway of 75,000 tests by the school district discovered that some were past their expiration date.

Even in some large urban districts in heavily Democratic parts of the country, where leaders have vowed to keep schools open, effective testing has been hobbled. New York's schools announced last week that they were doubling participation in their regular surveillance testing. But union officials noted that even at the expanded level, the optional screenings covered 20 percent of the district's students at most.

In Chicago schools, fewer than a third of 150,000 re-entry home-test kits mailed out over the winter break were returned by families, and among those that were returned, a majority of the results were invalid. The district, which serves more than 300,000 students, shut down last week as teachers' unions demanded more aggressive testing.

And in California, weather disrupted an effort over the winter break by Gov. Gavin Newsom to supply the state's 1,000-plus districts with enough rapid tests to screen all six million-plus K-12 students for re-entry. Of the 10 million rapid tests sent to districts, state health authorities said, a million were destroyed in the rain.

Still, some districts are leaning in.

In Washington, D.C., which serves some 50,000 students, school officials required negative coronavirus tests for every person returning to campus. On Monday, district officials said they would also provide weekly rapid tests to students too young to be vaccinated and add unspecified ''test-to-stay'' provisions. Most district schools were in-person this week.

And in Los Angeles, which since 2020 has had one of the nation's most ambitious testing programs, masked parents with masked children in tow lined up for blocks at school sites for much of last week to undergo another free test, this one required for every student and teacher returning to campus.

''I do the swabs by myself now -- it just feels like something is tickling my nose with a feather,'' said Matthew Prado, 9, standing in line with his mother and little brother outside a school testing clinic in the ***working-class*** community of Wilmington near the Port of Los Angeles. ''It's just normal.''

But the Los Angeles program also underscores the resource intensiveness of effective testing. The Los Angeles Unified School District was among the first in the nation to initiate widespread school-based testing. The initiative -- which encompasses more than 600,000 students and staffers -- relies on P.C.R. tests provided for about $12 apiece by SummerBio, a Bay Area start-up. The company, which has devised an automated system to cut costs and speed processing, is contractually obligated to provide overnight results.

As classrooms reopened in the fall, the district required all returning students and staff to take a baseline test, then to retest weekly regardless of vaccination status as a condition of in-person instruction. The strategy caught thousands of potential outbreaks and mollified labor concerns over workplace safety.

But even at its relatively low cost -- the district's cost per test is about half what the state negotiated for its tests with another vendor -- Los Angeles Unified is spending about $5 million per week on coronavirus testing, said Nick Melvoin, the vice president of the school board.

''We were getting ready in November to pull back on testing because of the cost -- then Omicron hit,'' Mr. Melvoin said, noting that the arrival of vaccines had significantly reduced the number of cases and the risk of severe illness.

With more than 400,000 tests logged in the Los Angeles schools by Monday, the Omicron challenge, at least for the short term, was apparent: Nearly 15 percent were positive.

Mike Baker contributed reporting.Mike Baker contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/11/us/schools-covid-testing.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/11/us/schools-covid-testing.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Students, families and teachers waiting for Covid tests at Gardena High School in California. (A1)

Holly Amos, a teacher, giving her son a Covid test in Gardena, Calif., at one of the Los Angeles school sites with long lines last week. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALLISON ZAUCHA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A10)

**Load-Date:** January 12, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Trump Denounces Oscar Winner 'Parasite'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y8B-W241-DXY4-X54P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 22, 2020 Saturday

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 3

**Length:** 543 words

**Byline:** By Michael Levenson

**Body**

''And the winner is a movie from South Korea,'' the president said at a rally. ''What the hell was that all about?''

President Trump delivered a nationalistic cultural rant at his rally in Colorado on Thursday night, veering off script to attack the Academy Awards for giving the Best Picture Oscar to a South Korean film, ''Parasite.''

''How bad were the Academy Awards this year?'' the president said, throwing up his hands as the crowd roared at his rally in Colorado Springs. ''Did you see? And the winner is a movie from South Korea. What the hell was that all about?''

''Parasite,'' the acclaimed thriller by Bong Joon Ho about class tensions boiling over in a wealthy family's home, this month became the first film not in the English language to win the Academy Award for best picture in the 92-year history of the competition.

The film also won best director, original screenplay and international feature, marking a moment of pride for many Asian-Americans and a turning point in the academy's long history of embracing stories told by white filmmakers.

Mr. Trump, however, was clearly not impressed.

''We've got enough problems with South Korea, with trade,'' he said. ''On top of it, they give them the best movie of the year? Was it good? I don't know.''

Mr. Trump expressed nostalgia for Hollywood films from a bygone era.

''Let's get 'Gone With the Wind.' Can we get, like, 'Gone With the Wind' back, please?'' he said, lauding the 1939 romantic saga set in the South around the Civil War, which won a host of Academy Awards, including best picture.

He also mentioned ''Sunset Boulevard,'' the 1950 Billy Wilder film noir, which was nominated for best picture but did not win. (It won in other categories.)

''So many great movies,'' Mr. Trump said. ''The winner is from South Korea. I thought it was best foreign film, right? Best foreign movie. No. Did this ever happen before?''

Hollywood and the Academy Awards have long been a favorite target for Republicans who decry the film industry as a bastion of liberalism. And the awards ceremony this year featured speeches by celebrities attacking Mr. Trump.

In his rally, Mr. Trump singled out for particular criticism Brad Pitt, who had referred to Mr. Trump's impeachment trial in the Senate when accepting his award this year for best supporting actor for ''Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood.''

''They told me I only have 45 seconds up here, which is 45 seconds more than the Senate gave John Bolton this week,'' Mr. Pitt said in his speech.

Firing back at his rally, Mr. Trump said he was ''never a fan'' of Mr. Pitt and added that the actor ''got up and said a little wiseguy statement.''

''He's a little wiseguy,'' Mr. Trump said.

Mr. Trump's attack on ''Parasite'' prompted a response from the Democratic National Committee.

''Parasite is a foreign movie about how oblivious the ultrarich are about the struggles of the ***working class***, and it requires two hours of reading subtitles,'' the committee wrote on Twitter. ''Of course Trump hates it.''

Neon, the independent film distributor behind ''Parasite,'' also responded to Mr. Trump's broadside with an acid reference to the movie's English subtitles.

''Understandable,'' the company wrote on Twitter. ''He can't read.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/20/us/trump-parasite-academy-oscar-south-korean.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/20/us/trump-parasite-academy-oscar-south-korean.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: President Trump, speaking at a rally in Colorado, criticized the selection of a South Korean film as best picture at the Academy Awards. ''Can we get 'Gone With the Wind' back, please?'' he said. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Doug Mills/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2020

**End of Document**



[***How a Minneapolis Suburb Turned Blue, Despite Trump’s Law-and-Order Pitch***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:619H-2441-DXY4-X0SY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 16, 2020 Monday 15:10 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1749 words

**Byline:** John Eligon

**Highlight:** President Trump comfortably carried Chaska, Minn., in 2016. This time, he lost by nine percentage points — a dramatic shift that similarly played out in suburban counties across the country.

**Body**

President Trump comfortably carried Chaska, Minn., in 2016. This time, he lost by nine percentage points — a dramatic shift that similarly played out in suburban counties across the country.

CHASKA, Minn. — As some protests over police brutality and systemic racism descended into vandalism and looting in Minneapolis over the summer, President Trump insisted that he was the candidate to restore “law and order” to the city. In the nearby suburb of Chaska, Minn., Mike Magusin bristled. In his view, he said, the president had fueled the unrest.

“He’s said plenty of stupid, stupid things that upset people deeply,” Mr. Magusin, 51, said. “That’s what’s dangerous, because people are upset. They’re struggling. And here’s this guy making it even worse with his words.”

Four years ago, Mr. Magusin voted for the Green Party candidate, in part because he assumed the nation would be mostly fine even if Mr. Trump won. This year, he left nothing to chance.

Even though he was not excited about Joseph R. Biden Jr., Mr. Magusin cast his ballot for him, helping the president-elect become the first Democratic presidential candidate to win Chaska in nearly 25 years.

In all, Mr. Trump lost Chaska by nine percentage points — a steep fall from 2016, when he beat Hillary Clinton in that city by six percentage points. And although Mr. Trump captured Carver County, which includes Chaska, he did so by just five percentage points, down from a 14-point margin of victory in 2016.

The shift was so drastic that it helped Mr. Biden easily win Minnesota, by more than 233,000 votes. His performance in Chaska, as well as in other outlying Twin Cities communities, mirrored his success in suburbs across the country, where voters turned out in such significant numbers that they helped fuel Mr. Biden’s rise to the presidency.

Indeed, Mr. Biden improved on Mrs. Clinton’s performance in suburban counties by an average of five percentage points, representing the places with the biggest shift in vote margins from 2016, [*according to a New York Times analysis*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/06/upshot/suburbs-shifted-left-president.html). His gains were largest in traditionally Republican strongholds in battleground states, in the suburbs of Phoenix, Dallas, Jacksonville and Atlanta, to name a few.

As was the case nationally, Mr. Trump got more votes in Chaska this year than in his first presidential run. But he also drove thousands of opponents to the polls.

Some residents said they were repulsed by Mr. Trump’s attitude and his divisive rhetoric on race, leading them to vote for Mr. Biden or a third-party candidate.

Over the past couple of years, the city has grappled with racism after incidents at its high school, which included white students who dressed in blackface. Those episodes, residents said, liberalized some people’s views and fostered a greater understanding of racial justice issues that stands in contrast to Mr. Trump’s denial of systemic racism.

A shift in the city’s demographics, too, seems to have given Mr. Biden a boost. More nonwhite families and professionals who used to live in cities — groups that tend to lean more Democratic — have settled in Chaska, population 27,000, for its affordability and high-performing schools.

And although the occasional acts of vandalism and looting in Minneapolis after the killing of [*George Floyd*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/06/upshot/suburbs-shifted-left-president.html) in police custody might have stoked some anxiety in Chaska, it did not seem to evoke serious concern, even among Mr. Trump’s supporters. In fact, the main takeaway, some residents said, was not that the country was descending into lawlessness, but that systemic racism was a major problem in America.

“That was a huge turning point for me, I think, in general of really understanding the Black Lives Matter movement and just embracing it,” said Amy Olsen-Schoo, a white Chaska resident who voted for Mr. Trump four years ago but for Mr. Biden this time.

Ms. Olsen-Schoo, 45, was raised in the Twin Cities suburbs as a moderate Republican — fiscally conservative but more liberal on social issues. Until this year, she had voted Republican her entire life.

When Mr. Trump campaigned four years ago, Ms. Olsen-Schoo was drawn to his lack of political experience and his pledge to “drain the swamp.” She said she brushed off his most offensive remarks. When he spoke harshly of immigrants, she took it to mean that he was championing immigration reform, which she agreed with, she said.

“I saw him as someone interesting, something different — it was appealing,” she said. “You look past some of those transgressions. I can’t believe I did that. I’m ashamed.”

Once Mr. Trump became president, Ms. Olsen-Schoo quickly saw his rhetoric as inciting hatred, she said. She was horrified by comments that she read from Republicans on social media, she said, such as suggestions that Muslims were going to destroy America.

Although 83 percent of Chaska’s population is white, its racial and ethnic diversity has slightly grown over the past decade. Latinos make up 8.4 percent, Asians 3.5 percent and Black residents 2.2 percent.

The divisiveness of the Trump era hit close to home, residents said, after a [*series of racist incidents*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/06/upshot/suburbs-shifted-left-president.html) at Chaska High School and after critics of a new equity program in the school district argued that it would lead to discrimination against white students.

From those racial tensions, residents formed a racial justice group in Chaska, a city of sprawling subdivisions with single-family homes, surrounded by walking trails and lakes.

Donta Hughes, 38, said that after Mr. Floyd’s killing, support grew for the group and for Black residents like himself. He began receiving supportive messages on Facebook, he said, and more white residents became willing to have difficult conversations about race. The Chaska police chief brought together community members, including Mr. Hughes, to discuss issues surrounding race.

Still, when a group of high school students organized a Black Lives Matter protest in Chaska, there was pushback. Some residents warned that it could spiral out of control like demonstrations elsewhere in the country. Some businesses boarded up their windows in the quaint downtown strip of shops and boutiques housed in low-slung brick buildings.

To ease the tensions, Mr. Hughes, who moved to Chaska eight years ago with his wife and four children for the schools, told residents he would patrol the community during the protest. The protest was peaceful, which helped people to see that Mr. Trump’s law-and-order concerns were overblown.

“I think the voices that we had here just spoke loud enough to combat that,” Mr. Hughes said.

In many ways, the hard left turn in Chaska — and the higher Democratic turnout in Carver County — stemmed from yearslong efforts by local Democrats to increase their visibility in a deeply Republican territory.

When Mary Leizinger became the chair of the Carver County Democrats four years ago, she saw an opportunity to gain support in the eastern part of the county, which is more developed and closer to the Twin Cities relative to the rural western part.

Ms. Leizinger said she focused heavily on combating misinformation on Facebook by posting reputable news articles to the county party’s page. She increased participation of county Democratic Party members in community festivals and parades, carrying large banners bearing the party’s name and signs that addressed specific issues.

“Five or 10 years ago, we’d walk in the parades and it would be stone-cold faces,” Ms. Leizinger, 63, said. But last summer, they marched with signs denouncing the Trump administration’s child separation policy at the Mexican border “and got standing ovations,” she said.

The party also bought space on five billboards in the western part of the county and plastered them with messages attacking Mr. Trump and urging people to vote Democratic.

In some ways, Mr. Trump was his own worst enemy.

Coming from a family of Illinois farmers, Rachel Frances said she was drawn to Mr. Trump as a first-time voter in 2016 because of his pitch to ***working-class*** people. But once he took office, she quickly came to believe that he did not know what he was doing, she said.

“He knows nothing what it means to be the ***working class***,” said Ms. Frances, 22, who moved to Chaska three months ago with her boyfriend and voted for a third-party candidate this election. “It very quickly wore off, his whole allure.”

Though it remains to be seen whether Chaska’s Democratic swing will continue beyond this election, some liberal residents say they have discovered alliances where they least expected them.

Ashley Tike and her husband, Guillaume, represent the demographic change that has made suburbs bluer. They met in Los Angeles, where Ms. Tike moved after attending college in North Dakota, where she was raised in a conservative Catholic household. Her political views became more liberal while living on the West Coast and for a year in France, where her husband is from.

They moved to Minnesota last year when she was pregnant so that they could be closer to her parents, and they chose Chaska because it was quieter and more affordable than a big city.

But for all of its advantages, Ms. Tike, a 26-year-old figure skating coach, felt politically out of place. Still, she thought that the stakes in this election were too high to stay silent, so she nervously planted a Biden sign in their front yard.

“I was just kind of like, ‘Well, I haven’t met any of the neighbors really anyway because of Covid, and so if they hate us, they hate us,’” she said. “I just felt like Trump needed to get out. Every time I saw him on the TV, my fists were clenching.”

Shortly after Ms. Tike put out the sign, a neighbor on one side came to her and said that her own Biden sign was on its way. Then, the neighbor on the other side also approached Ms. Tike: Where could she get her own Biden sign, she asked.

PHOTOS: ASHLEY TIKE: moved to Minnesota with her husband, Guillaume, and their daughter, Lenni, last year. She was surprised her neighbors liked her lawn sign.; MIKE MAGUSIN: voted for Joe Biden this year after a third-party vote in 2016. He said President Trump had fueled racial unrest.; MY OLSEN-SCHOO: said the Black Lives Matter movement had been a “huge turning point” in her swing away from backing Mr. Trump.; DONTA HUGHES: offered to patrol the community during a protest, which ended peacefully, blunting Mr. Trump’s warnings of violence.; Mr. Trump lost Chaska, home to 27,000, by nine percentage points, a steep fall from his six-point 2016 win. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENN ACKERMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Being More Like Athletic Bilbao; Rory Smith On Soccer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YYM-K1N1-JBG3-6558-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 23, 2020 Saturday 00:17 EST

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**Section:** SPORTS; soccer

**Length:** 2191 words

**Byline:** Rory Smith

**Highlight:** By only recruiting local players, the Basque club has not only forged a unique identity, it has generated a mind-set among its fans. It may now be a helpful path for others to tread.

**Body**

By only recruiting local players, the Basque club has not only forged a unique identity, it has generated a mind-set among its fans. It may now be a helpful path for others to tread.

If you are enjoying this newsletter every Friday, please pass it on to a friend (or four) and tell them to sign up at [*nytimes.com/rory*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/rory-smith?smid=rd).

Athletic Bilbao feels on the inside precisely as it appears from the outside. To Aritz Aduriz, the striker [*who retired from the club this week*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/rory-smith?smid=rd), it always had the air of a “neighborhood team taking on the world.” It was a club in which the players shared a background and an outlook, in which the line between the squad and its public was blurred to the point of invisibility, a team that is of a place in a sport that knows no borders.

The roots of that identity are [*well documented*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/rory-smith?smid=rd). Athletic is the rare team in elite soccer that refuses to take advantage of the globalization that has transformed the game — mostly for better, occasionally for worse — in the last two decades or so; it adheres to a strict policy of fielding only players born or raised in the Basque regions of Spain and France.

It is, on the surface, a massive competitive disadvantage. Bilbao’s rivals, after all, can recruit from around the globe. Athletic is reliant on its own youth academy, and on its ability to pluck players from a handful of other teams in the region: Real Sociedad in San Sebastián, Osasuna in Pamplona and, in recent years, Eibar.

Occasionally, a player of Basque heritage will emerge elsewhere: Athletic signed Bixente Lizarazu, a French Basque, from Bordeaux in the 1990s, and added Ander Herrera, born in Bilbao, from Real Zaragoza in 2011. Cristian Ganea, a Romanian international, was able to join the club in 2018 because he had [*spent some of his teenage years in the region*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/rory-smith?smid=rd).

Not all such players, though, meet the criteria. The club reportedly felt Marcos Asensio did not quite fit the bill and turned down the chance to bring him into their ranks as a teenager. He now plays for Real Madrid.

That Athletic remains a force in Spanish soccer — it has never been relegated, and it was slated to feature in the final of the Copa del Rey before the postponement of this season — is something of a minor miracle, then. It helps that the Basque region has been, traditionally, a fertile breeding ground for players. It helps that the club has the [*financial strength*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/rory-smith?smid=rd) to resist all but the most lucrative offers for its stars, enabling it to keep its squad together.

And it helps, of course, that players like Aduriz revel in the feeling the club generates, that they buy in to what it means, that they relish the chance to play for a team that feels as if it stands for something.

Something throughout Aduriz’s career drew him back remorselessly to Bilbao. He signed for the club three times, all told. He could never, really, say no, not even after he was sold for the second time, reduced to tears at the thought of having to leave yet again. Four years later, when Athletic asked him to come back, he could not resist. He wanted to retire there, to “close the circle,” as he put it, at the club of his heart.

Most of all, though, Athletic Bilbao works because of the fans.

Modern soccer conditions its fans to think in a very specific way. What matters, ultimately, are results. Success, for the elite, is weighed in the silver and gold of trophies and medals. For everyone else, it is measured in the league table, an annual review held every weekend. If your team’s position is too low, if it is not meeting expectations, then it is your right to demand immediate change.

Coaches must be fired, players sold — and others bought — and, if necessary, executives dismissed: whichever one applies, but there must be change, and change almost always looks like recruitment of one sort or another.

What is most compelling about Athletic’s model is that it deprives its fans of the chance to think like that. Of course, there are times when San Mamés, the club’s stadium, will roar its disapproval. There are seasons when the club will cycle through coaches, or when players will fall out of favor, or when the board will come under fire.

But written into the unspoken contract between Athletic and its fans is the tacit acceptance that there will be fallow years. There will be seasons when success is a comfortable midtable finish. There will be times when trophies are a distant prospect, and the best that can be hoped for is a single euphoric night against one of La Liga’s giants.

And that has to be tolerated, at least, because the model makes it inevitable. How could it not? Athletic cannot go and replace a player in the transfer market if there is not a Basque player who fits the profile. Athletic cannot spend hundreds of millions of euros on players if those players do not meet its criteria.

To some extent, Athletic has chosen to prioritize its model — still, more than a century on, not actually officially codified — over its ambitions. Success, at Athletic, is in doing as well as a neighborhood team that has to take on the world can do. Some years, that might mean reaching a major final. Many years it will not, and yet still, the overwhelming majority of fans support the policy. There is no yearning for change, big or small.

There is something in this that might, perhaps, be a useful example for clubs far from the Basque region as soccer comes to terms with its new, post-pandemic reality.

Many executives accept that soccer’s 30-year bull market is over, for the time being at least. Clubs will have to spend less, in the short term, and spend better to succeed. Change will not be so easy to effect in an altered marketplace, and problems will have to be solved, at times, by things other than cash.

For fans, too, it may be time to internalize a different idea of what success is, to accept that some years might be better than others, that building slowly and cautiously toward a pinnacle may not only be preferable, but necessary.

The idea that any other team might willingly limit its choices, as Athletic Bilbao has, is fanciful. Its model is not one that might be easily franchised. But the consequences of that model can be international, if we permit them to be. Change does not always have to be seen as a virtue. A team’s worth does not always have to be gauged exclusively by league position. Sometimes, success can just be having a team that is of a place, and has to take on the world.

A Brief Note on Names

There is a mistake in the headline of this column. Worse still, it is a mistake I am fully aware I have made. It is a mistake, essentially, that I have made on purpose. As at least some of you will be aware, Athletic Bilbao is not a thing. The soccer team that is based in Bilbao is called Athletic Club.

It is worth explaining the mistake, I think, because after we published this week’s interview with Aduriz, at least a couple of people got in touch to point it out. The same thing happens when you write about Sporting Lisbon — actually titled Sporting Clube de Portugal — and, occasionally, Inter Milan — properly called Internazionale — too.

In the last few years, it’s got to the stage where we could probably add using Red Star Belgrade instead of Crvena Zvezda to that list. The allegations range from ignorance (understandable) to some form of soccer-based cultural imperialism (a bit of a stretch, if I’m honest).

There is no argument over which of those names is correct. So why make the mistake? Well, my feeling has always been that the point of language is communication. To an English-speaking audience, Athletic Bilbao is much more instantly familiar than Athletic Club; Sporting Lisbon evokes a clearer image than just “Sporting.”

Some fans, I know, find that offensive, but it works the other way, too. Plenty of people talk about Glasgow Celtic and Glasgow Rangers (even in Britain). “Manchester” is used across the world as shorthand for United, which says a lot about City’s global impact until recent years. You will, very occasionally, see references to Arsenal London, too. They’re all wrong, of course. But what matters, deep down, is that people know what you’re talking about.

What Are We Watching For?

There are, as everyone knows, whole oceans between the soccer that is played in the Premier League and that which is offered by, for example, Serie A. Likewise La Liga and the Bundesliga: It is the same sport, of course, but the interpretations of each league are wildly, vastly different.

So different, in fact, that you would assume there would be a material impact on the data each country produces. There would be more crosses in England than in Spain, where delicate, intricate short passing is the thing. There would be more goals in Germany, where nobody can defend, than in Italy, where they are taught the offside trap as infants.

And yet, looked at purely statistically, the outputs across Europe’s four major leagues are startlingly similar. There are minor variations, of course, little points of inflection, but it would take a trained eye to identify each league correctly merely by its basic data.

It has always seemed odd, then, that so many fans — and players and coaches and pundits and journalists — regard themselves as devotees of one league in particular. It is especially prevalent among those who favor the Premier League (and is, in many ways, actively indulged by the Premier League itself). Italian soccer is dismissed as boring, Spain as predictable, Germany as try-hard and hipster. (France, as it happens, is dismissed entirely.)

The approaches are different, of course, but the outcomes are broadly the same. So on some level, logically, if you enjoy watching soccer, you should at least take some pleasure from a game, regardless of where it is being held.

The explanation is obvious: The league that seems most entertaining to a fan is the one that the fan is emotionally invested in. What elevates one competition over another is not its innate quality, but how much we care about it.

This same thought struck me last weekend, watching Borussia Dortmund dismantle Schalke, the first live soccer in any major league since the shutdown. The span of reactions was surprising: some enjoying sport, live and fresh and new; some struggling with the [*eeriness of the empty stadium*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/rory-smith?smid=rd); some so bored that they could not bear to watch more than a few minutes.

Was that, though, as it was assumed to be, because of the absence of fans? Or is it because most of those watching were doing so out of curiosity, and not out of any genuine emotional attachment? Would they have had the same reaction had the stadium been full? Would many of those people even have been watching at all?

The game, after all, is the same. The spectacle is not — the spectacle is, obviously, much worse — but then we do not only watch for the spectacle. If we did, Argentine soccer’s television deals would be through the roof. The crucial difference is not the quality on the field, or the noise off it, but how much any of it means to us.

Correspondence

The return of the Bundesliga, you will have noticed, did not bring about any mass gatherings of fans. Many, in fact, stayed away even from bars that had been permitted to open as lockdown restrictions are gradually lifted. “I think the distrust of fans you speak of is the same generalized distrust of football players that has emerged during the current pandemic,” Lorraine Berry wrote.

“In both cases, I would argue that a certain strata in British society regards the ***working-class*** backgrounds of many players — and the increasing numbers of black and minority ethnic and immigrants among the player elites — as a convenient shorthand for well-worn class assumptions.

“We know that the nadir of that feeling was in the way that the dead at Hillsborough were written off as ***working-class*** yobs who got what they deserved. But despite the Premier League’s ownership comprising despots and oligarchs, it’s still the ***working-class*** lads whose talent commands £250,000 a week who make convenient targets.”

Charles Marro, meanwhile, points out “the irony that sports that are played for love have been canceled, while the sports trying to cobble together ways to resume playing seem to be populated by people more in love with the money than the sport itself.” This is true, I think, but perhaps unavoidable. The sports themselves will survive. The threat is economic, rather than conceptual, and therefore it applies largely to the sports businesses.

All communication on [*Twitter*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/rory-smith?smid=rd) is welcome, and please keep sending ideas, comments and suggestions to [*askrory@nytimes.com*](mailto:askrory@nytimes.com) Do you like getting emails? Then other people probably do, too. Send them   [*here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/rory-smith?smid=rd) to help them fulfill their ambitions. And one programming note:   [*Marcus Rashford*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/rory-smith?smid=rd) features in this week’s   [*Set Piece Menu*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/rory-smith?smid=rd), too.

That’s all for this week. Keep safe.

PHOTOS: Aritz Aduriz and his Athletic Bilbao teammates after scoring last year. Aduriz, like all Athletic players, has ties to the Basque region. (PHOTOGRAPH BY VINCENT WEST/REUTERS); Athletic Bilbao players after they defeated Granada in a Copa del Rey semifinal in March. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JON NAZCA/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** May 23, 2020

**End of Document**



[***When a School Desegregates, Who Gets Left Behind?; Jay caspian kang***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YR-2BT1-DXY4-X0KG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 10, 2022 Thursday 19:52 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1995 words

**Byline:** Jay Caspian Kang

**Highlight:** One district’s attempt to integrate has led to unexpected criticism.

**Body**

School districts that actively desegregate their students are still an anomaly. Only an [*estimated 59 school districts*](https://kappanonline.org/voluntary-integration-in-uncertain-times-anderson-frankenberg/) in the country currently take significant action to do so.

Something of a consensus has formed around these efforts. Almost all people — Democrats and Republicans — say they believe public schools should reflect the racial and economic demographics of the surrounding population. For the most part, no people are willing to do much to accomplish this, even when they say that integration is an unassailable good.

A school desegregation effort in the wealthy city of Piedmont, Calif., both confirms and complicates these assumptions. It is one of those school districts that reflect the racist history of housing in California. There has been some resistance to its integration, but it does not come from the white parents you might expect.

On New Year’s Day in 1924, Julia Davis, a white woman from Canada, purchased a house at 67 Wildwood Avenue in Piedmont, Calif., using her son-in-law’s money. Surrounded on all sides by Oakland, Piedmont had been an island of wealth and racial exclusion since its incorporation in 1907. At that time, Oakland was aggressively trying to annex its adjoining areas. A coalition of writers, artists and wealthy businessmen in the soft hills that would ultimately become Piedmont voted to incorporate their own city as a way to [*ward off residential density*](https://www.kqed.org/news/11737575/why-is-piedmont-a-separate-city-from-oakland-2) and retain the area’s bucolic environs. By the 1920s, when Davis bought 67 Wildwood, Piedmont had [*more millionaires per square mile*](https://www.historyofpiedmont.com/after1907) than any other city in the country.

After paying $10,000 for the home, Davis transferred it to her biracial daughter Irene Dearing and her husband, Sidney Dearing, a Black man whose parents had been enslaved in Texas. Racial covenants meant that the Dearings needed a white proxy to purchase the property. Almost immediately after moving in, [*they became the target of harassment*](https://www.sidneydearing.com/about-sidney) by their neighbors and the nascent local government. The Piedmont police chief — a member of the Ku Klux Klan — had no interest in protecting the Dearings.

An ultimatum was issued by the City Council: The Dearings could accept $8,000 for the property and move out or the city would seize it. Sidney Dearing countered with a price of $15,000 for the value of the home and an additional $10,000 for what he called the surrender of his constitutional rights. The City Council refused his offer.

Just five months after the Dearings moved in, 500 people surrounded the home and demanded they leave. On June 4, 1924, The Santa Rosa Press Democrat reported that a bomb “containing enough dynamite to blow up a large part of Piedmont’s residential section” was found underneath a nearby home. Three days later, a headline in The Oakland Tribune read “Dearing Menaced By Third Bomb” — Sidney Dearing had come across a lit fuse on his lawn and stomped it out. The mob, the city and the police ultimately won: Dearing sold the property in February 1925 and moved his family to Oakland.

You can still see all that history in Piedmont today. As of January of this year, the median sale price for a home in Piedmont was $3.25 million. Only 1.4 percent of the city’s residents were Black as of the 2020 census. This was the dream of the city’s founders: a pastoral, wealthy and exclusive municipality that still feels completely separated from Oakland.

In coastal suburban areas, this combination of wealth and a white and Asian population usually yields high-performing schools. Piedmont is no exception. All of the city’s schools boast a score of 8, 9 or 10 out of 10 on [*greatschools.org*](https://www.greatschools.org/california/piedmont/schools/?gradeLevels%5B%5D=h&amp;view=table), a site that grades a school based on a wide range of factors. Nearly 90 percent of elementary-school kids in Piedmont tested at or above the proficient level in English. By comparison, only 32 percent of elementary-school kids in Oakland hit that mark.

Several years ago, nearly a century after the Dearings were expelled from their home there, Piedmont opened its exclusive school district up to kids who do not live within city limits. Now the district is seeking 200 Oakland students to enroll in its schools. When [*explaining this decision*](https://www.sfchronicle.com/eastbay/article/Why-Piedmont-s-academically-elite-schools-are-16843048.php) to The San Francisco Chronicle, the Piedmont school district’s superintendent, Randall Booker, cited the desire for more diversity in both the student body and the faculty.

Piedmont’s decision is perhaps motivated not only by good will or a desire for desegregation. The reality is that while Piedmont has gotten wealthier — a friend who grew up there and whose parents still live there described the transition as “a town of lawyers that turned into a town of tech C.E.O.s” — it also has gotten significantly older. In the 1990 census, 14.6 percent of Piedmont’s residents were over the age of 65. In 2020, that number had jumped to 21.5 percent.

A generation that normally would have put their kids through school and then retired and eventually moved out of one of Piedmont’s 5,000-square-foot mansions has decided to stay put. And there certainly aren’t high-rise apartments being built all over Piedmont, so young families who may want to move there for the schools tend to get shut out of an absurdly competitive real estate market.

As a result, the overall enrollment in Piedmont’s schools [*dropped*](http://www.ed-data.org/district/Alameda/Piedmont-City-Unified)to 2,464 last year from 2,692 in 2017. Before this school year, school funding in California was largely determined by a school’s attendance. But starting this year, that same funding will rely on a combination of [*enrollment and attendance figures*](https://calmatters.org/education/2022/01/california-schools-budgets/). As a result, a rapidly declining population could lead to fiscal devastation, even in a place like Piedmont. The 200 new Piedmont students, then, solve two problems: lack of diversity and underenrollment.

Piedmont’s situation was created in large part by California’s Proposition 13, the 1978 law that essentially freezes property tax values at the date of purchase. The owners of a house in Piedmont purchased in, say, 1980 for $700,000 will pay only a few thousand dollars a year in taxes, even though their house may now be worth over $4 million. This not only has placed a hard cap on the amount of tax dollars that can be raised for services like public education, but it’s also resulted in neighborhoods that never turn over, especially in wealthy-homeowner areas.

To date, there has been almost no resistance to the plan to open up the district from Piedmont parents, many of whom see the need to boost enrollment and diversify the student body. This certainly is atypical for a city like Piedmont. Recently, the wealthy town of [*Darien, Conn.*](https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1623148860/darienpsorg/pbfuruoswwdj5gr8pohv/2018-12-11_BOE_Enroll_Projections_2018_Update.pdf), floated an idea similar to Piedmont’s, proposing that it allow 16 students from nearby Norwalk, a more diverse, ***working-class*** city, to enroll in the local kindergarten. (The proposal was ultimately voted down.) By comparison, the Piedmont plan is much more ambitious. The 200 students who live outside of the city would constitute roughly 8 percent of the Piedmont student body.

On the surface, it seems like rich white and Asian parents doing what’s been asked of them by diversity and school desegregation advocates while also trying, in their way, to abide by the standard progressive politics of the Bay Area. Plus, nobody really disputes the positive effects that integrated schools have on both white and minority-group students. There’s also the moral imperative for towns that have been built on histories of racist violence and discrimination. They can reckon with their pasts by passing substantive policies that would help share some of their amassed wealth, especially when it comes to public schools.

None of this sounds particularly controversial, and yet, the Piedmont school district has been criticized for this decision by equity-focused advocates who believe that Superintendent Booker and the school board are effectively poaching Black and Latino students from neighboring cities in an effort to shore up their enrollment numbers. And because school enrollment is a zero-sum game, Piedmont’s gains will almost certainly equal Oakland’s loss.

There’s also the question of which Black and Latino students will transfer into Piedmont. Enrolling outside your school district in California is not an easy task. Parents have to petition for their child to be “released,” a lengthy process that usually requires them to prove that some course or service is simply not being offered in the home district. So the students who will be coming to Piedmont will largely be from a self-selected group of families who want their children to attend a prestigious, well-funded and overwhelmingly white school, and who also have the time and resources to ensure their kids actually go there.

I reached out to the district to talk about the transfer program. In lieu of an interview, Booker sent me a lengthy statement that referred to a “false narrative that P.U.S.D. is aggressively poaching students — and specifically B.I.P.O.C. students — from other school districts.” Booker went on to add that while “P.U.S.D. has worked to increase diversity among its students and staff,” the transfer application process was race-blind. (That may be, but with students coming from nearby Oakland, where only [*11.7 percent*](https://www.usnews.com/education/k12/california/districts/oakland-unified-110567#:~:text=Students%20at%20Oakland%20Unified%20School,Hawaiian%20or%20other%20Pacific%20Islander.) of the students in the public school system are white, the outcome is the same.)

What was striking about the statement was how quickly Booker seemed to be backtracking from his former statements about the district’s desire to increase diversity. His office did not grant my repeated requests for an interview, which is unfortunate given the complexity of the questions at hand.

If Piedmont’s superintendent can’t defend his own school integration attempt without falling immediately back on the language of race-blindness, how seriously should we take it in the first place?

Walter Riley, a longtime community activist and civil rights lawyer, believes the framing of integration and desegregation is too abstract. He thinks that the compelling vision of poor Black and Latino Oaklanders going to school with rich white Piedmonters distracts from what’s actually happening in Oakland schools. Charter schools (Oakland has the most charter schools, per capita, of any district in California, which has led to [*tens of millions of dollars in lost funding*](https://www.sfgate.com/education/article/Study-says-Oakland-school-district-lost-57-4-12898930.php)for O.U.S.D.) have placed enormous pressure on small public schools and the district as a whole. Riley, as a result, is skeptical of Piedmont’s integration campaign. “They’ll get their students, and they will help to undermine the public school system here,” he told me.

The Piedmont desegregation controversy highlights the difficulty of school integration in an educational environment ruled by scarcity and the constant threat of defunding and closures. Seemingly easy moral questions like “Should Piedmont open its schools to more Black and Latino students from the surrounding area?” are complicated by the reality that the “surrounding area” has its own need to keep those families who not only will provide invaluable resources to the school in terms of parental involvement, but also whose children boost any school’s crucial attendance figures.

If integration means that one of the wealthiest ZIP codes in the country takes students away from its much more diverse neighbor, thereby harming those schools, does the effort even make sense? Or to put it a bit more simply: Does anyone really want school integration anymore?

In the next edition of the newsletter, I will be writing about the Oakland Unified School District and how the proposed closing of some of the city’s schools, most of which were in Black and Latino communities, led to a prolonged hunger strike. And you will hear from progressive advocates and teachers who believe that the language of desegregation no longer applies to today’s education landscape.

Have feedback? Send a note to [*kang-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:kang-newsletter@nytimes.com).

Jay Caspian Kang ([*@jaycaspiankang*](https://twitter.com/jaycaspiankang?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)), a writer for Opinion and The New York Times Magazine, is the author of “The Loneliest Americans.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alberto Miranda FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Trump Denounces Oscar Winner ‘Parasite’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y84-1M91-DXY4-X38R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 577 words

**Byline:** Michael Levenson

**Highlight:** “And the winner is a movie from South Korea,” the president said at a rally. “What the hell was that all about?”

**Body**

“And the winner is a movie from South Korea,” the president said at a rally. “What the hell was that all about?”

President Trump delivered a nationalistic cultural rant at his rally in Colorado on Thursday night, veering off script to attack the Academy Awards for giving the Best Picture Oscar to a South Korean film, “Parasite.”

“How bad were the Academy Awards this year?” the president [*said*](https://twitter.com/BuzzFeedNews/status/1230660324409274369?s=20), throwing up his hands as the crowd roared at his rally in Colorado Springs. “Did you see? And the winner is a movie from South Korea. What the hell was that all about?”

“Parasite,” the acclaimed thriller by [*Bong Joon Ho*](https://twitter.com/BuzzFeedNews/status/1230660324409274369?s=20) about class tensions boiling over in a wealthy family’s home, this month became the   [*first film not in the English language*](https://twitter.com/BuzzFeedNews/status/1230660324409274369?s=20) to win the   [*Academy Award*](https://twitter.com/BuzzFeedNews/status/1230660324409274369?s=20) for best picture in the 92-year history of the competition.

The film also won best director, original screenplay and international feature, marking a moment of pride for many Asian-Americans and a turning point in the academy’s long history of embracing stories told by white filmmakers.

Mr. Trump, however, was clearly not impressed.

“We’ve got enough problems with South Korea, with trade,” he said. “On top of it, they give them the best movie of the year? Was it good? I don’t know.”

Mr. Trump expressed nostalgia for Hollywood films from a bygone era.

“Let’s get ‘Gone With the Wind.’ Can we get, like, ‘Gone With the Wind’ back, please?” he said, lauding the 1939 romantic saga set in the South around the Civil War, which won a host of Academy Awards, including best picture.

He also mentioned “Sunset Boulevard,” the 1950 Billy Wilder film noir, which was nominated for best picture but did not win. (It won in other categories.)

“So many great movies,” Mr. Trump said. “The winner is from South Korea. I thought it was best foreign film, right? Best foreign movie. No. Did this ever happen before?”

Hollywood and the Academy Awards have long been a favorite target for Republicans who decry the film industry as a bastion of liberalism. And the awards ceremony this year featured speeches by celebrities attacking Mr. Trump.

In his rally, Mr. Trump singled out for particular criticism Brad Pitt, who had referred to Mr. Trump’s impeachment trial in the Senate when accepting his award this year for best supporting actor for “Once Upon a Time … in Hollywood.”

“They told me I only have 45 seconds up here, which is 45 seconds more than the Senate gave John Bolton this week,” Mr. Pitt said in his speech.

Firing back at his rally, Mr. Trump said he was “never a fan” of Mr. Pitt and added that the actor “got up and said a little wiseguy statement.”

“He’s a little wiseguy,” Mr. Trump said.

Mr. Trump’s attack on “Parasite” prompted a response from the Democratic National Committee.

“Parasite is a foreign movie about how oblivious the ultrarich are about the struggles of the ***working class***, and it requires two hours of reading subtitles,” the committee wrote on Twitter. “Of course Trump hates it.”

Neon, the independent film distributor behind “Parasite,” also responded to Mr. Trump’s broadside with an acid reference to the movie’s English subtitles.

“Understandable,” the company wrote on Twitter. “He can’t read.”

PHOTO: President Trump, speaking at a rally in Colorado, criticized the selection of a South Korean film as best picture at the Academy Awards. “Can we get ‘Gone With the Wind’ back, please?” he said. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Doug Mills/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Why Coronavirus Testing Is Falling Short in Many Schools Across the U.S.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64HB-RK91-JBG3-64P1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Shawn Hubler

**Highlight:** As millions of American students head back to their desks, the virus testing that was supposed to help keep classrooms open safely is itself being tested.

**Body**

As millions of American students head back to their desks, the virus testing that was supposed to help keep classrooms open safely is itself being tested.

In California, storms over the winter break destroyed a million coronavirus test kits that were meant to help schools screen returning students. In Seattle schools, children waited for hours for virus testing, some in a driving rain. In Florida this month, an attempt to supply tests to teachers in Broward County turned up expired kits.

And in Chicago, a labor dispute, partly over testing, kept students out of school for a week.

As millions of American students head back to their desks — Los Angeles, the nation’s second-largest school district, started classes on Tuesday — the coronavirus testing that was supposed to help keep classrooms open safely is itself being tested. In much of the country, things are not going well.

Slammed by the ultra-contagious Omicron variant, pressured by political factions, baffled by conflicting federal guidance and hamstrung by a national shortage of rapid-test kits, many districts have struggled to ramp up or effectively establish testing programs. In many areas, schools have already had to close in recent weeks because flawed screenings have allowed infected children and teachers to return to class, putting others at risk.

A vast majority of schools have managed to continue in-person instruction, and in many areas, transmission in classrooms has been lower than in the broader community. But parents’ anxieties and confrontations with teachers’ unions are jeopardizing the Biden administration’s efforts to prevent a return to remote instruction. And even for districts that have working testing programs, high costs are raising questions about their sustainability.

[*Data from Burbio*](https://cai.burbio.com/school-opening-tracker/), a company that audits how schools have operated through the pandemic, shows that more than 5,400 schools have reverted to virtual learning since Jan. 3. The issue, epidemiologists say, is not that testing does not work — particularly in combination with vaccination, face masks and other precautions. Rather, they say, many districts are bungling the execution or failing to muster the resources necessary to test properly.

“A lot of schools are just testing parts of their population once a week, or not using the tests strategically, or confusing surveillance with testing to suppress outbreaks,” said Dr. Michael J. Mina, a former Harvard University epidemiologist and a leading expert on rapid testing who is now the chief science officer for eMed, which authenticates at-home test results.

The result, he said, has been the equivalent of an army going to battle without knowing how to use its weapons or understanding its objectives.

“You can throw all the guns and military personnel you want into a war zone, but if you don’t go in with strategy you’re never going to win,” Dr. Mina said.

Throughout the pandemic, testing — subsidized with billions of dollars in federal funding — has been viewed as a key way to keep children in classrooms and ease the toll of remote learning on [*emotional health*](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7011a1.htm) and academic progress. But public health experts say few districts are testing enough, or strategically enough — particularly in the wake of Omicron.

Screenings meant to detect and isolate outbreaks require broad participation, but many districts have resisted requiring students to take part, fearing political backlash. Many schools also screen with P.C.R. tests, which are useful in diagnosing cases but can open schools to the risk of outbreaks as they wait for results from processing labs.

Newer test-to-stay programs — which let exposed students remain in class as long as they test negative and do not have symptoms — also require intensive testing, but they rely on rapid antigen tests, which are in short supply nationally as soaring Omicron infections have spiked demand.

The lack of clear federal guidance on rapid tests has also been an issue, forcing “every school system to recreate the wheel,” Dr. Mina said.

The result at many schools, health experts say, has been a hodgepodge of half-measures.

“Asking if school testing works is like asking if a dishwasher works — yes, it works, but only if you load the dishes,” said Meagan Fitzpatrick, an assistant professor at the University of Maryland School of Medicine who specializes in infectious disease modeling.

In Seattle, schools canceled classes at the start of last week and held optional pop-up testing events for staff and students, hoping to stave off remote learning by preventing infectious people from entering schools after the holiday break. But only about 14,000 of the district’s 50,000 students and 7,800 employees showed up — with about one in 25 testing positive.

By Monday, [*two schools were closed*](https://www.seattletimes.com/education-lab/two-seattle-schools-cancel-classes-are-students-going-back-to-remote-learning/) because of staff shortages and infections, and the district was contemplating a return to remote classes. David Giugliani, a parent of two, said he was grateful for the effort the district was making to protect schools and the community, but also anxious about in-person learning and the uncertainty of it all. Among other issues, he said, was the four-hour wait to be tested, largely indoors, that he and his children had to endure.

“I’d like greater confidence in what’s going to come next, but who has that?” he said.

In Portland, Ore., where Covid-related staff shortages had shut down two of 12 high schools by the end of the first week back to classes, only 27 percent of students have opted in to regular screenings, said Brenda Martinek, chief of student support services. Vaccinated teachers were not offered school-based tests until last week, when staff members in the district office, from secretaries to people in the I.T. department, were trained to administer P.C.R. tests to employees.

“I was in there, too, with my face shield and my mask and gloves, like, ‘OK, swab five times in one nostril, now swab five times in the other,’” she said. “I never thought I was a health care provider, but apparently I am.”

Some Republican-led states have de-emphasized school testing or lagged in distributing stockpiles. In Florida, Gov. Ron DeSantis said last week that unless their parents wanted it, children “do not need to be doing any crazy mitigation” such as wearing masks or testing. In Broward County, school employees that had taken advantage of a giveaway of 75,000 tests by the school district discovered that some were past their expiration date.

Even in some large urban districts in heavily Democratic parts of the country, where leaders have vowed to keep schools open, effective testing has been hobbled. New York’s schools announced last week that they were doubling participation in their regular surveillance testing. But union officials noted that even at the expanded level, the optional screenings covered 20 percent of the district’s students at most.

In Chicago schools, fewer than a third of 150,000 re-entry home-test kits mailed out over the winter break were returned by families, and among those that were returned, a majority of the results were invalid. The district, which serves more than 300,000 students, shut down last week as teachers’ unions demanded more aggressive testing.

And in California, weather disrupted an effort over the winter break by Gov. Gavin Newsom to supply the state’s 1,000-plus districts with enough rapid tests to screen all six million-plus K-12 students for re-entry. Of the 10 million rapid tests sent to districts, state health authorities said, a million were destroyed in the rain.

Still, some districts are leaning in.

In Washington, D.C., which serves some 50,000 students, school officials required negative coronavirus tests for every person returning to campus. On Monday, district officials said they would also provide weekly rapid tests to students too young to be vaccinated and add unspecified “test-to-stay” provisions. Most district schools were in-person this week.

And in Los Angeles, which since 2020 has had one of the nation’s most ambitious testing programs, masked parents with masked children in tow lined up for blocks at school sites for much of last week to undergo another free test, this one required for every student and teacher returning to campus.

“I do the swabs by myself now — it just feels like something is tickling my nose with a feather,” said Matthew Prado, 9, standing in line with his mother and little brother outside a school testing clinic in the ***working-class*** community of Wilmington near the Port of Los Angeles. “It’s just normal.”

But the Los Angeles program also underscores the resource intensiveness of effective testing. The Los Angeles Unified School District was among the first in the nation to initiate widespread school-based testing. The initiative — which encompasses more than 600,000 students and staffers — relies on P.C.R. tests provided for about $12 apiece by SummerBio, a Bay Area start-up. The company, which has devised an automated system to cut costs and speed processing, is contractually obligated to provide overnight results.

As classrooms reopened in the fall, the district required all returning students and staff to take a baseline test, then to retest weekly regardless of vaccination status as a condition of in-person instruction. The strategy caught thousands of potential outbreaks and mollified labor concerns over workplace safety.

But even at its relatively low cost — the district’s cost per test is about half what the state negotiated for its tests with another vendor — Los Angeles Unified is spending about $5 million per week on coronavirus testing, said Nick Melvoin, the vice president of the school board.

“We were getting ready in November to pull back on testing because of the cost — then Omicron hit,” Mr. Melvoin said, noting that the arrival of vaccines had significantly reduced the number of cases and the risk of severe illness.

With more than 400,000 tests logged in the Los Angeles schools by Monday, the Omicron challenge, at least for the short term, was apparent: Nearly 15 percent were positive.

Mike Baker contributed reporting.

Mike Baker contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Students, families and teachers waiting for Covid tests at Gardena High School in California. (A1); Holly Amos, a teacher, giving her son a Covid test in Gardena, Calif., at one of the Los Angeles school sites with long lines last week. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALLISON ZAUCHA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A10)

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[***How a Minneapolis Suburb Turned Blue***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:619H-1W21-JBG3-60GR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By John Eligon

**Body**

President Trump comfortably carried Chaska, Minn., in 2016. This time, he lost by nine percentage points -- a dramatic shift that similarly played out in suburban counties across the country.

CHASKA, Minn. -- As some protests over police brutality and systemic racism descended into vandalism and looting in Minneapolis over the summer, President Trump insisted that he was the candidate to restore ''law and order'' to the city. In the nearby suburb of Chaska, Minn., Mike Magusin bristled. In his view, he said, the president had fueled the unrest.

''He's said plenty of stupid, stupid things that upset people deeply,'' Mr. Magusin, 51, said. ''That's what's dangerous, because people are upset. They're struggling. And here's this guy making it even worse with his words.''

Four years ago, Mr. Magusin voted for the Green Party candidate, in part because he assumed the nation would be mostly fine even if Mr. Trump won. This year, he left nothing to chance.

Even though he was not excited about Joseph R. Biden Jr., Mr. Magusin cast his ballot for him, helping the president-elect become the first Democratic presidential candidate to win Chaska in nearly 25 years.

In all, Mr. Trump lost Chaska by nine percentage points -- a steep fall from 2016, when he beat Hillary Clinton in that city by six percentage points. And although Mr. Trump captured Carver County, which includes Chaska, he did so by just five percentage points, down from a 14-point margin of victory in 2016.

The shift was so drastic that it helped Mr. Biden easily win Minnesota, by more than 233,000 votes. His performance in Chaska, as well as in other outlying Twin Cities communities, mirrored his success in suburbs across the country, where voters turned out in such significant numbers that they helped fuel Mr. Biden's rise to the presidency.

Indeed, Mr. Biden improved on Mrs. Clinton's performance in suburban counties by an average of five percentage points, representing the places with the biggest shift in vote margins from 2016, according to a New York Times analysis. His gains were largest in traditionally Republican strongholds in battleground states, in the suburbs of Phoenix, Dallas, Jacksonville and Atlanta, to name a few.

As was the case nationally, Mr. Trump got more votes in Chaska this year than in his first presidential run. But he also drove thousands of opponents to the polls.

Some residents said they were repulsed by Mr. Trump's attitude and his divisive rhetoric on race, leading them to vote for Mr. Biden or a third-party candidate.

Over the past couple of years, the city has grappled with racism after incidents at its high school, which included white students who dressed in Black face. Those episodes, residents said, liberalized some people's views and fostered a greater understanding of racial justice issues that stands in contrast to Mr. Trump's denial of systemic racism.

A shift in the city's demographics, too, seems to have given Mr. Biden a boost. More nonwhite families and professionals who used to live in cities -- groups that tend to lean more Democratic -- have settled in Chaska -- population 27,000 -- for its affordability and high-performing schools.

And although the occasional acts of vandalism and looting in Minneapolis after the killing of George Floyd in police custody might have stoked some anxiety in Chaska, it did not seem to evoke serious concern, even among Mr. Trump's supporters. In fact, the main takeaway, some residents said, was not that the country was descending into lawlessness, but that systemic racism was a major problem in America.

''That was a huge turning point for me, I think, in general of really understanding the Black Lives Matter movement and just embracing it,'' said Amy Olsen-Schoo, a white Chaska resident who voted for Mr. Trump four years ago but for Mr. Biden this time.

Ms. Olsen-Schoo, 45, was raised in the Twin Cities suburbs as a moderate Republican -- fiscally conservative but more liberal on social issues. Until this year, she had voted Republican her entire life.

When Mr. Trump campaigned four years ago, Ms. Olsen-Schoo was drawn to his lack of political experience and his pledge to ''drain the swamp.'' She said she brushed off his most offensive remarks. When he spoke harshly of immigrants, she took it to mean that he was championing immigration reform, which she agreed with, she said.

''I saw him as someone interesting, something different -- it was appealing,'' she said. ''You look past some of those transgressions. I can't believe I did that. I'm ashamed.''

Once Mr. Trump became president, Ms. Olsen-Schoo quickly saw his rhetoric as inciting hatred, she said. She was horrified by comments that she read from Republicans on social media, she said, such as suggestions that Muslims were going to destroy America.

Although 83 percent of Chaska's population is white, its racial and ethnic diversity has slightly grown over the past decade. Latinos make up 8.4 percent, Asians 3.5 percent and Black residents 2.2 percent.

The divisiveness of the Trump era hit close to home, residents said, after a series of racist incidents at Chaska High School and after critics of a new equity program in the school district argued that it would lead to discrimination against white students.

From those racial tensions, residents formed a racial justice group in Chaska, a city of sprawling subdivisions with single-family homes, surrounded by walking trails and lakes.

Donta Hughes, 38, said that after Mr. Floyd's killing, support grew for the group and for Black residents like himself. He began receiving supportive messages on Facebook, he said, and more white residents became willing to have difficult conversations about race. The Chaska police chief brought together community members, including Mr. Hughes, to discuss issues surrounding race.

Still, when a group of high school students organized a Black Lives Matter protest in Chaska, there was pushback. Some residents warned that it could spiral out of control like demonstrations elsewhere in the country. Some businesses boarded up their windows in the quaint downtown strip of shops and boutiques housed in low-slung brick buildings.

To ease the tensions, Mr. Hughes, who moved to Chaska eight years ago with his wife and four children for the schools, told residents he would patrol the community during the protest. The protest was peaceful, which helped people to see that Mr. Trump's law-and-order concerns were overblown.

''I think the voices that we had here just spoke loud enough to combat that,'' Mr. Hughes said.

In many ways, the hard left turn in Chaska -- and the higher Democratic turnout in Carver County -- stemmed from yearslong efforts by local Democrats to increase their visibility in a deeply Republican territory.

When Mary Leizinger became the chair of the Carver County Democrats four years ago, she saw an opportunity to gain support in the eastern part of the county, which is more developed and closer to the Twin Cities relative to the rural western part.

Ms. Leizinger said she focused heavily on combating misinformation on Facebook by posting reputable news articles to the county party's page. She increased participation of county Democratic party members in community festivals and parades, carrying large banners bearing the party's name and signs that addressed specific issues.

''Five or 10 years ago, we'd walk in the parades and it would be stone-cold faces,'' Ms. Leizinger, 63, said. But last summer, they marched with signs denouncing the Trump administration's child separation policy at the Mexican border ''and got standing ovations,'' she said.

The party also bought space on five billboards in the western part of the county and plastered them with messages attacking Mr. Trump and urging people to vote Democratic.

In some ways, Mr. Trump was his own worst enemy.

Coming from a family of Illinois farmers, Rachel Frances said she was drawn to Mr. Trump as a first-time voter in 2016 because of his pitch to ***working-class*** people. But once he took office, she quickly came to believe that he did not know what he was doing, she said.

''He knows nothing what it means to be the ***working class***,'' said Ms. Frances, 22, who moved to Chaska three months ago with her boyfriend and voted for a third-party candidate this election. ''It very quickly wore off, his whole allure.''

Though it remains to be seen whether Chaska's Democratic swing will continue beyond this election, some liberal residents say they have discovered alliances where they least expected them.

Ashley Tike and her husband, Guillaume, represent the demographic change that has made suburbs bluer. They met in Los Angeles, where Ms. Tike moved after attending college in North Dakota, where she was raised in a conservative Catholic household. Her political views became more liberal while living on the West Coast and for a year in France, where her husband is from.

They moved to Minnesota last year when she was pregnant so that they could be closer to her parents, and they chose Chaska because it was quieter and more affordable than a big city.

But for all of its advantages, Ms. Tike, a 26-year-old figure skating coach, felt politically out of place. Still, she thought that the stakes in this election were too high to stay silent, so she nervously planted a Biden sign in their front yard.

''I was just kind of like, 'Well, I haven't met any of the neighbors really anyway because of Covid, and so if they hate us, they hate us,''' she said. ''I just felt like Trump needed to get out. Every time I saw him on the TV, my fists were clenching.''

Shortly after Ms. Tike put out the sign, a neighbor on one side came to her and said that her own Biden sign was on its way. Then, the neighbor on the other side also approached Ms. Tike: Where could she get her own Biden sign, she asked.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/15/us/biden-suburbs-blue-minneapolis.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/15/us/biden-suburbs-blue-minneapolis.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: ASHLEY TIKE: moved to Minnesota with her husband, Guillaume, and their daughter, Lenni, last year. She was surprised her neighbors liked her lawn sign.

MIKE MAGUSIN: voted for Joe Biden this year after a third-party vote in 2016. He said President Trump had fueled racial unrest.

MY OLSEN-SCHOO: said the Black Lives Matter movement had been a ''huge turning point'' in her swing away from backing Mr. Trump.

DONTA HUGHES: offered to patrol the community during a protest, which ended peacefully, blunting Mr. Trump's warnings of violence.

Mr. Trump lost Chaska, home to 27,000, by nine percentage points, a steep fall from his six-point 2016 win. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENN ACKERMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Athletic Bilbao Shows the Way to a Local Future***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YYS-1V01-JBG3-613S-00000-00&context=1519360)

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Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Sports Desk; Pg. 11; RORY SMITH ON SOCCER

**Length:** 2154 words

**Byline:** By Rory Smith

**Body**

By only recruiting local players, the Basque club has not only forged a unique identity, it has generated a mind-set among its fans. It may now be a helpful path for others to tread.

If you are enjoying this newsletter every Friday, please pass it on to a friend (or four) and tell them to sign up at nytimes.com/rory.

Athletic Bilbao feels on the inside precisely as it appears from the outside. To Aritz Aduriz, the striker who retired from the club this week, it always had the air of a ''neighborhood team taking on the world.'' It was a club in which the players shared a background and an outlook, in which the line between the squad and its public was blurred to the point of invisibility, a team that is of a place in a sport that knows no borders.

The roots of that identity are well documented. Athletic is the rare team in elite soccer that refuses to take advantage of the globalization that has transformed the game -- mostly for better, occasionally for worse -- in the last two decades or so; it adheres to a strict policy of fielding only players born or raised in the Basque regions of Spain and France.

It is, on the surface, a massive competitive disadvantage. Bilbao's rivals, after all, can recruit from around the globe. Athletic is reliant on its own youth academy, and on its ability to pluck players from a handful of other teams in the region: Real Sociedad in San Sebastián, Osasuna in Pamplona and, in recent years, Eibar.

Occasionally, a player of Basque heritage will emerge elsewhere: Athletic signed Bixente Lizarazu, a French Basque, from Bordeaux in the 1990s, and added Ander Herrera, born in Bilbao, from Real Zaragoza in 2011. Cristian Ganea, a Romanian international, was able to join the club in 2018 because he had spent some of his teenage years in the region.

Not all such players, though, meet the criteria. The club reportedly felt Marcos Asensio did not quite fit the bill and turned down the chance to bring him into their ranks as a teenager. He now plays for Real Madrid.

That Athletic remains a force in Spanish soccer -- it has never been relegated, and it was slated to feature in the final of the Copa del Rey before the postponement of this season -- is something of a minor miracle, then. It helps that the Basque region has been, traditionally, a fertile breeding ground for players. It helps that the club has the financial strength to resist all but the most lucrative offers for its stars, enabling it to keep its squad together.

And it helps, of course, that players like Aduriz revel in the feeling the club generates, that they buy in to what it means, that they relish the chance to play for a team that feels as if it stands for something.

Something throughout Aduriz's career drew him back remorselessly to Bilbao. He signed for the club three times, all told. He could never, really, say no, not even after he was sold for the second time, reduced to tears at the thought of having to leave yet again. Four years later, when Athletic asked him to come back, he could not resist. He wanted to retire there, to ''close the circle,'' as he put it, at the club of his heart.

Most of all, though, Athletic Bilbao works because of the fans.

Modern soccer conditions its fans to think in a very specific way. What matters, ultimately, are results. Success, for the elite, is weighed in the silver and gold of trophies and medals. For everyone else, it is measured in the league table, an annual review held every weekend. If your team's position is too low, if it is not meeting expectations, then it is your right to demand immediate change.

Coaches must be fired, players sold -- and others bought -- and, if necessary, executives dismissed: whichever one applies, but there must be change, and change almost always looks like recruitment of one sort or another.

What is most compelling about Athletic's model is that it deprives its fans of the chance to think like that. Of course, there are times when San Mamés, the club's stadium, will roar its disapproval. There are seasons when the club will cycle through coaches, or when players will fall out of favor, or when the board will come under fire.

But written into the unspoken contract between Athletic and its fans is the tacit acceptance that there will be fallow years. There will be seasons when success is a comfortable midtable finish. There will be times when trophies are a distant prospect, and the best that can be hoped for is a single euphoric night against one of La Liga's giants.

And that has to be tolerated, at least, because the model makes it inevitable. How could it not? Athletic cannot go and replace a player in the transfer market if there is not a Basque player who fits the profile. Athletic cannot spend hundreds of millions of euros on players if those players do not meet its criteria.

To some extent, Athletic has chosen to prioritize its model -- still, more than a century on, not actually officially codified -- over its ambitions. Success, at Athletic, is in doing as well as a neighborhood team that has to take on the world can do. Some years, that might mean reaching a major final. Many years it will not, and yet still, the overwhelming majority of fans support the policy. There is no yearning for change, big or small.

There is something in this that might, perhaps, be a useful example for clubs far from the Basque region as soccer comes to terms with its new, post-pandemic reality.

Many executives accept that soccer's 30-year bull market is over, for the time being at least. Clubs will have to spend less, in the short term, and spend better to succeed. Change will not be so easy to effect in an altered marketplace, and problems will have to be solved, at times, by things other than cash.

For fans, too, it may be time to internalize a different idea of what success is, to accept that some years might be better than others, that building slowly and cautiously toward a pinnacle may not only be preferable, but necessary.

The idea that any other team might willingly limit its choices, as Athletic Bilbao has, is fanciful. Its model is not one that might be easily franchised. But the consequences of that model can be international, if we permit them to be. Change does not always have to be seen as a virtue. A team's worth does not always have to be gauged exclusively by league position. Sometimes, success can just be having a team that is of a place, and has to take on the world.

A Brief Note on Names

There is a mistake in the headline of this column. Worse still, it is a mistake I am fully aware I have made. It is a mistake, essentially, that I have made on purpose. As at least some of you will be aware, Athletic Bilbao is not a thing. The soccer team that is based in Bilbao is called Athletic Club.

It is worth explaining the mistake, I think, because after we published this week's interview with Aduriz, at least a couple of people got in touch to point it out. The same thing happens when you write about Sporting Lisbon -- actually titled Sporting Clube de Portugal -- and, occasionally, Inter Milan -- properly called Internazionale -- too.

In the last few years, it's got to the stage where we could probably add using Red Star Belgrade instead of Crvena Zvezda to that list. The allegations range from ignorance (understandable) to some form of soccer-based cultural imperialism (a bit of a stretch, if I'm honest).

There is no argument over which of those names is correct. So why make the mistake? Well, my feeling has always been that the point of language is communication. To an English-speaking audience, Athletic Bilbao is much more instantly familiar than Athletic Club; Sporting Lisbon evokes a clearer image than just ''Sporting.''

Some fans, I know, find that offensive, but it works the other way, too. Plenty of people talk about Glasgow Celtic and Glasgow Rangers (even in Britain). ''Manchester'' is used across the world as shorthand for United, which says a lot about City's global impact until recent years. You will, very occasionally, see references to Arsenal London, too. They're all wrong, of course. But what matters, deep down, is that people know what you're talking about.

What Are We Watching For?

There are, as everyone knows, whole oceans between the soccer that is played in the Premier League and that which is offered by, for example, Serie A. Likewise La Liga and the Bundesliga: It is the same sport, of course, but the interpretations of each league are wildly, vastly different.

So different, in fact, that you would assume there would be a material impact on the data each country produces. There would be more crosses in England than in Spain, where delicate, intricate short passing is the thing. There would be more goals in Germany, where nobody can defend, than in Italy, where they are taught the offside trap as infants.

And yet, looked at purely statistically, the outputs across Europe's four major leagues are startlingly similar. There are minor variations, of course, little points of inflection, but it would take a trained eye to identify each league correctly merely by its basic data.

It has always seemed odd, then, that so many fans -- and players and coaches and pundits and journalists -- regard themselves as devotees of one league in particular. It is especially prevalent among those who favor the Premier League (and is, in many ways, actively indulged by the Premier League itself). Italian soccer is dismissed as boring, Spain as predictable, Germany as try-hard and hipster. (France, as it happens, is dismissed entirely.)

The approaches are different, of course, but the outcomes are broadly the same. So on some level, logically, if you enjoy watching soccer, you should at least take some pleasure from a game, regardless of where it is being held.

The explanation is obvious: The league that seems most entertaining to a fan is the one that the fan is emotionally invested in. What elevates one competition over another is not its innate quality, but how much we care about it.

This same thought struck me last weekend, watching Borussia Dortmund dismantle Schalke, the first live soccer in any major league since the shutdown. The span of reactions was surprising: some enjoying sport, live and fresh and new; some struggling with the eeriness of the empty stadium; some so bored that they could not bear to watch more than a few minutes.

Was that, though, as it was assumed to be, because of the absence of fans? Or is it because most of those watching were doing so out of curiosity, and not out of any genuine emotional attachment? Would they have had the same reaction had the stadium been full? Would many of those people even have been watching at all?

The game, after all, is the same. The spectacle is not -- the spectacle is, obviously, much worse -- but then we do not only watch for the spectacle. If we did, Argentine soccer's television deals would be through the roof. The crucial difference is not the quality on the field, or the noise off it, but how much any of it means to us.

Correspondence

The return of the Bundesliga, you will have noticed, did not bring about any mass gatherings of fans. Many, in fact, stayed away even from bars that had been permitted to open as lockdown restrictions are gradually lifted. ''I think the distrust of fans you speak of is the same generalized distrust of football players that has emerged during the current pandemic,'' Lorraine Berry wrote.

''In both cases, I would argue that a certain strata in British society regards the ***working-class*** backgrounds of many players -- and the increasing numbers of black and minority ethnic and immigrants among the player elites -- as a convenient shorthand for well-worn class assumptions.

''We know that the nadir of that feeling was in the way that the dead at Hillsborough were written off as ***working-class*** yobs who got what they deserved. But despite the Premier League's ownership comprising despots and oligarchs, it's still the ***working-class*** lads whose talent commands £250,000 a week who make convenient targets.''

Charles Marro, meanwhile, points out ''the irony that sports that are played for love have been canceled, while the sports trying to cobble together ways to resume playing seem to be populated by people more in love with the money than the sport itself.'' This is true, I think, but perhaps unavoidable. The sports themselves will survive. The threat is economic, rather than conceptual, and therefore it applies largely to the sports businesses.

All communication on Twitter is welcome, and please keep sending ideas, comments and suggestions to [*askrory@nytimes.com*](mailto:askrory@nytimes.com) Do you like getting emails? Then other people probably do, too. Send them here to help them fulfill their ambitions. And one programming note: Marcus Rashford features in this week's Set Piece Menu, too.

That's all for this week. Keep safe.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/22/sports/soccer/coronavirus-athletic-bilbao.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/22/sports/soccer/coronavirus-athletic-bilbao.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Aritz Aduriz and his Athletic Bilbao teammates after scoring last year. Aduriz, like all Athletic players, has ties to the Basque region. (PHOTOGRAPH BY VINCENT WEST/REUTERS)

Athletic Bilbao players after they defeated Granada in a Copa del Rey semifinal in March. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JON NAZCA/REUTERS)

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[***Omicron's March Imperils Labor Peace in Schools***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64GW-R391-JBG3-60KC-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1752 words

**Byline:** By Dana Goldstein and Noam Scheiber

**Body**

Chicago teachers have voted to go remote. Other unions are agitating for change. For Democrats, who promised to keep schools open, the tensions are a distinctly unwelcome development.

Few American cities have labor politics as fraught as Chicago's, where the nation's third-largest school system shut down this week after teachers' union members refused to work in person, arguing that classrooms were unsafe amid the Omicron surge.

But in a number of other places, the tenuous labor peace that has allowed most schools to operate normally this year is in danger of collapsing.

While not yet threatening to walk off the job, unions are back at negotiating tables, pushing in some cases for a return to remote learning. They frequently cite understaffing because of illness, and shortages of rapid tests and medical-grade masks. Some teachers, in a rear-guard action, have staged sick outs.

In Milwaukee, schools are remote until Jan. 18, because of staffing issues. But the teachers' union president, Amy Mizialko, doubts that the situation will significantly improve and worries that the school board will resist extending online classes.

''I anticipate it'll be a fight,'' Ms. Mizialko said.

She credited the district for at least delaying in-person schooling to start the year but criticized Democratic officials for placing unrealistic pressure on teachers and schools.

''I think that Joe Biden and Miguel Cardona and the newly elected mayor of New York City and Lori Lightfoot -- they can all declare that schools will be open,'' Ms. Mizialko added, referring to the U.S. education secretary and the mayor of Chicago. ''But unless they have hundreds of thousands of people to step in for educators who are sick in this uncontrolled surge, they won't be.''

For many parents and teachers, the pandemic has become a slog of anxiety over the risk of infection, child care crises, the tedium of school-through-a-screen and, most of all, chronic instability.

And for Democrats, the revival of tensions over remote schooling is a distinctly unwelcome development.

Because they have close ties to the unions, Democrats are concerned that additional closures like those in Chicago could lead to a possible replay of the party's recent loss in Virginia's governor race. Polling showed that school disruptions were an important issue for swing voters who broke Republican -- particularly suburban white women.

''It's a big deal in most state polling we do,'' said Brian Stryker, a partner at the polling firm ALG Research whose work in Virginia indicated that school closures hurt Democrats.

''Anyone who thinks this is a political problem that stops at the Chicago city line is kidding themselves,'' added Mr. Stryker, whose firm polled for President Biden's 2020 campaign. ''This is going to resonate all across Illinois, across the country.''

More than one million of the country's 50 million public school students were affected by districtwide shutdowns in the first week of January, many of which were announced abruptly and triggered a wave of frustration among parents.

''The kids are not the ones that are seriously ill by and large, but we know kids are the ones suffering from remote learning,'' said Dan Kirk, whose son attends Walter Payton College Preparatory High School in Chicago, which was closed amid the district's standoff this week.

Several nonunion charter-school networks and districts temporarily transitioned to remote learning after the holidays. But as has been true throughout the pandemic, most of the temporary districtwide closures -- including in Detroit, Cleveland, Milwaukee -- are taking place in liberal-leaning areas with powerful unions and a more cautious approach to the coronavirus.

The unions' demands echo the ones they have made for nearly two years, despite all that has changed. There are now vaccines and the reassuring knowledge that in-school transmission of the virus has been limited. The Omicron variant, while highly contagious, appears to cause less severe illness than previous iterations of Covid-19.

Most district leaders and many educators say it is imperative for schools to remain open. They cite a large body of research showing that closures harm children, academically and emotionally, and widen income and racial disparities.

But some local union officials are far warier of packed classrooms. In Newark, schools began 2022 with an unexpected stretch of remote learning, set to end on Jan. 18. John Abeigon, the Newark Teachers Union president, said he was hopeful about the return to buildings but that he remained unsure if every school could operate safely. Student vaccination is far from universal, and most parents have not consented to their children taking regular virus tests.

Mr. Abeigon said that if tests remain scarce, he might ask for remote learning at specific schools with low vaccination rates and high case counts. He agreed that online learning was a burden to working parents but argued that educators should not be sacrificed for the good of the economy.

''I'd see the entire city of Newark unemployed before I allowed one single teacher's aide to die needlessly,'' he said.

In Los Angeles, the district has worked closely with the union to keep classrooms open after one of the longest pandemic shutdowns in the country last school year. The vaccination rate for students 12 and older is about 90 percent, with a student vaccine mandate set to kick in this fall. All students and staff are tested for the virus weekly.

Still, the president of the local union, Cecily Myart-Cruz, would not rule out pushing for a districtwide return to remote learning in the coming weeks. ''You know, I want to be honest -- I don't know,'' she said.

The tensions are not limited to liberal states. In Kentucky, teachers' unions and at least one large school district have said they need the flexibility to go remote amid escalating infection rates.

But the Republican-controlled state legislature has granted no more than 10 days for such instruction districtwide, and unions there worry that may be inadequate. Jeni Ward Bolander, a leader of a statewide union, said that teachers may have to walk off the job.

''Frustration is building on teachers,'' Ms. Ward Bolander said. ''I hate to say we'd walk out at that point, but it's absolutely possible.''

National teachers' unions continue to call for classrooms to remain open, but local affiliates hold the most power in negotiations over whether individual districts will close schools.

And over the last decade, some locals, including those in Los Angeles and Chicago, were taken over by activist leaders whose tactics can be more aggressive than those of national leaders like Randi Weingarten of the American Federation of Teachers and Becky Pringle of the National Education Association, both close allies of President Biden.

Complicating matters, some local unions face internal pressure from their own members. In the Bay Area, splinter groups of teachers in both Oakland and San Francisco have planned sick outs, and demanded N95 masks, more virus testing and other safety measures.

Rori Abernethy, a middle-school teacher in San Francisco, organized a sick out there on Thursday. She said the Chicago action had prompted some teachers to ask, ''Why isn't our union doing this?''

In Chicago and San Francisco, ***working-class*** parents of color disproportionately send their children to the public schools, and they have often supported strict safety measures during the pandemic, including periods of remote learning. And in New York, the nation's largest school district, schools are operating in person with increased virus testing, with limited dissent from teachers.

But the politics become more complicated in suburbs, where union leaders may find themselves at odds with public officials at pains to preserve in-person schooling.

In Fairfax County, Virginia's largest district, the superintendent has a plan for switching individual schools to remote learning in the event of many absent teachers.

Kimberly Adams, the president of the local education association, said her union may want stricter measures. And she said that districts should be planning for virus surges by distributing devices for potential short bursts of online schooling.

But Dan Helmer, a Democratic state delegate whose swing district includes part of Fairfax County, said there was little support among his constituents for a return to online education.

Deb Andraca, a Democratic state representative in Wisconsin whose district lies just north of Milwaukee, where schools went remote this past week, said that Republicans have targeted her seat and that she expected schools to be a line of attack.

''Everyone I know wants schools to stay open,'' she said. ''But there's a lot of talk about how teachers' unions don't want schools to stay open.''

Jim Hobart, a partner at Public Opinion Strategies, a polling firm that counts several Republican senators and governors as clients, said the school closure issue created two advantages for G.O.P. candidates. It has helped narrow their margins among a demographic they've traditionally struggled with -- white women between their mid-20s and mid-50s -- and it has generally undermined Democrats' claims to competence.

''A lot of people -- Biden, Mayor Lightfoot in Chicago -- have said schools should be open,'' Mr. Hobart said. ''If they're not able to prevent schools from choosing to close, that shows a weakness on their part.''

Labor officials say that many of their critics are acting in bad faith, exploiting parents' pandemic-related frustrations to advance longstanding political goals, like discrediting unions and expanding private-school vouchers.

Thus far, neither the critiques nor the broader pandemic challenges appear to have significantly hampered unions' public standing, even according to polls conducted by researchers skeptical of teachers' unions.

And if it turns out that Democratic candidates pay a political price for unions' assertiveness, local labor officials do not consider it to be among their top concerns.

If periods of remote learning this winter hurt the Democratic Party, ''that's a question for the consultants and the brain trusts to figure out,'' said Mr. Abeigon, the Newark union president. ''But that it's the right thing to do? There's no question in my mind.''

Holly Secon contributed reporting from San Francisco.Holly Secon contributed reporting from San Francisco.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/08/us/teachers-unions-covid-schools.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/08/us/teachers-unions-covid-schools.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: CHICAGO: Teachers and supporters staged a car caravan protest last week outside City Hall. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ASHLEE REZIN/CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS)

FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA.: The union said districts should prepare for short bursts of online learning. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AMANDA ANDRADE-RHOADES/THE WASHINGTON POST, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

ATLANTA: Schools went remote this past week, with plans to return in person on Monday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DUSTIN CHAMBERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

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[***Sick of It***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6342-W6G1-DXY4-X155-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1342 words

**Byline:** By Janice P. Nimura

**Body**

UNWELL WOMENMisdiagnosis and Myth in a Man-Made WorldBy Elinor Cleghorn

In order to recognize illness, you have to know what health looks like -- what's normal, and what's not. Until recently, medical research generally calibrated ''normal'' on a trim white male. Such a patient, arriving in an emergency room clutching his chest as they do in the movies -- and in the textbooks -- would be immediately evaluated for a heart attack. But heart disease in women, inconveniently, doesn't always come with chest pain. A woman reporting dizziness, nausea and heart-pounding breathlessness in that same E.R. might be sent home with instructions to relax, her distress dismissed as emotional rather than cardiac.

Heart disease has clear markers and proven diagnostic tools. When a woman's symptoms are less legible or quantifiable -- fatigue, vertigo, chronic pain -- the tendency to be dismissive grows. In ''Unwell Women,'' the British scholar Elinor Cleghorn makes the insidious impact of gender bias on women's health starkly and appallingly explicit: ''Medicine has insisted on pathologizing 'femaleness,' and by extension womanhood.''

Cleghorn, framing her argument in terms of Western medicine, starts with Hippocrates, the Greek physician of antiquity who refocused medical science on the imbalances of the body rather than the will of the gods. Hippocrates understood that women's bodies were different from those of men, but in his view, and for millenniums to come, those differences could be reduced to a single organ: the uterus. A woman's purpose was to procreate; if she wasn't well, it was probably her womb that was to blame. One Roman writer described the uterus as ''an animal within an animal,'' with its own appetites and the capacity to wander through the body in search of satisfaction. Most female afflictions could be reduced to ''hysteria,'' from the Greek word for womb. ''The theory that out-of-work wombs made women mad and sad was as old as medicine itself,'' Cleghorn notes. The standard cure was marriage and motherhood. As Hippocratic medicine was refracted through the lens of Christianity, the female anatomy was additionally burdened with the weight of original sin.

Moving steadily through the centuries, Cleghorn lays out the vicious circles of women's health. Taught that their anatomy was a source of shame, women remained in ignorance of their own bodies, unable to identify or articulate their symptoms and therefore powerless to contradict a male medical establishment that wasn't listening anyway. Menstruation and menopause were -- and often still are -- understood as illness rather than aspects of health; a woman's constitution, thus compromised, could hardly sustain the effort required for scholarship or professional life. A woman with the means and the talents to contemplate such ambitions soon bumped up against the rigid shell of the domestic sphere. Her frustration and despair could cause physical symptoms, which her doctor would then chalk up to her unnatural aspirations. Conversely, a perfectly healthy woman who agitated for radical change -- a suffragist, say -- was clearly suffering from ''hysteric morbidity.''

Though hormones eventually replaced wandering wombs as central to understanding women's health, ''old ideas about women's bodies being naturally defective and deficient still pulsed through endocrinological theories,'' Cleghorn writes. The marketing for early forms of hormone replacement therapy to relieve the discomforts of menopause was often directed at men. One horrifying magazine ad showed a radiant older woman laughing alongside male companions, with the tagline ''Help Keep Her This Way.'' Was hormone replacement therapy a way of liberating women from their reproductive biology, or keeping them cheerful for their husbands? And, as questions grew about estrogen and cancer, at what cost?

The intersection of class and race complicates things further. As early as 1847, the Scottish physician James Young Simpson argued in favor of anesthesia during labor and delivery, contradicting the age-old belief that the pain of birth was part of God's judgment. (To this day, women who opt for an epidural instead of ''natural childbirth'' can feel a nagging sense of failure.) But even liberal-minded men like Simpson believed that what he called the ''civilized female'' needed his revolutionary innovation more than her less privileged sisters. Black women were thought to be less sensitive to pain and ***working-class*** women were considered hardier in general; certainly no one worried about whether these women could work while menstruating.

Each scientific advance came with its own shadow. Margaret Sanger may have campaigned for contraception ''as a way for women to reclaim their bodies and lives from medical and social control'' -- but for women of color, birth control was presented more as a duty than a right, a weapon against overpopulation and poverty requiring the policing of women. The postwar advent of the National Health Service in Britain heralded a new era of comprehensive prenatal care for pregnant women, but the N.H.S. ''also inherited the legacy that women were child-bearers, first and foremost, so their health care needs pivoted around their reproductive functions.'' Women saw their doctors when they got pregnant, but illnesses unrelated to reproductive health might go undiagnosed and unchecked.

Especially illnesses with ambiguous symptoms. ''The age-old question of what to do with women's pain, now that diagnoses could be made by biomedical evidence rather than speculations and assumptions, was raising its rather inconvenient head,'' Cleghorn writes. When women of an earlier era might have been subjected to clitoridectomies or ovariectomies to address their mysterious symptoms, 20th-century patients sometimes faced a lobotomy ''when the extent of their pain exceeded their physicians' patience.'' Cleghorn is unsparing in her examples of women suffering unimaginable and unnecessary horror at the hands of doctors who were unwilling either to listen closely or to admit when they were stumped.

It's impossible to read ''Unwell Women'' without grief, frustration and a growing sense of righteous anger. Cleghorn's prose is lively, and she has marshaled an enormous amount of material. But her decision to organize it chronologically rather than thematically can slow her momentum, forcing her to circle back to certain topics repeatedly. There are occasional detours -- into the eugenic implications of abortion and birth control, for example -- that aren't strictly relevant to the thesis of a ''culture of mystification'' that compromises women's health. And Cleghorn's definition of that culture of mystification is tricky. She is rightfully advocating for a better understanding of diseases that disproportionately affect women and a re-examination of clinical norms centered on men. But in this era of ever-increasing medical specialization, byzantine insurance regulations and rushed office visits, women are not the only victims of mystification.

Cleghorn saves for her conclusion her most powerful illustration: her own experience. It started with leg pain and swelling. Her doctor suggested gout, or maybe she was pregnant? ''I can see nothing wrong with you,'' he said. ''It's probably just your hormones.'' Doubting the significance of her own concerns, she endured seven years of pain and tachycardia, finally landing in the emergency room. Even then, her diagnosis was linked to the baby she had just delivered: ''toxic postpartum heart disease.'' An observant rheumatologist at last identified her disease as lupus.

''The lives of unwell women depend on medicine learning to listen,'' Cleghorn concludes. And also on women claiming their right, as Cleghorn has, to speak.Janice P. Nimura is the author, most recently, of ''The Doctors Blackwell: How Two Pioneering Sisters Brought Medicine to Women -- and Women to Medicine.''UNWELL WOMENMisdiagnosis and Myth in a Man-Made WorldBy Elinor Cleghorn386 pp. Dutton. $28.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/08/books/review/unwell-women-elinor-cleghorn.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/08/books/review/unwell-women-elinor-cleghorn.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A drawing of a hysterical woman, from a book by the French physician Paul Regnard, 1884.

**Load-Date:** July 11, 2021

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[***U.S. Arms Sales and the Yemen War; letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YY0-22M1-JBG3-63YT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 20, 2020 Wednesday 01:16 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; letters

**Length:** 614 words

**Highlight:** A foreign policy expert discusses the fiction of arms sales as jobs creator. Also: The future of Christianity.

**Body**

A foreign policy expert discusses the fiction of arms sales as jobs creator. Also: The future of Christianity.

To the Editor:

Re “[*Why U.S. Arms Take Grim Toll in Yemen War*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/16/us/arms-deals-raytheon-yemen.html?searchResultPosition=2)” (front page, May 17):

Jobs tied to arms sales should never be used as an excuse to fuel mass slaughter, as the Trump administration has done with respect to the sale of Raytheon bombs to Saudi Arabia for use in the war in Yemen. But if the president wants to raise jobs as an issue, he should at least get his facts straight.

Arms sales to Saudi Arabia have [*created*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/16/us/arms-deals-raytheon-yemen.html?searchResultPosition=2) 20,000 to 40,000 jobs in recent years, well under one-tenth of 1 percent of total U.S. employment. That’s a far cry from the 500,000 jobs tied to Saudi sales   [*claimed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/16/us/arms-deals-raytheon-yemen.html?searchResultPosition=2) by President Trump. Virtually any other expenditure of the same funds — or any other export — would create   [*far more*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/16/us/arms-deals-raytheon-yemen.html?searchResultPosition=2) jobs than spending on weapons.

Selling arms to repressive regimes is bad foreign policy and bad economic policy. It’s time to end U.S. arms sales to Saudi Arabia, once and for all.

William D. Hartung

New York

The writer is director of the Arms and Security Program at the Center for International Policy.

Directions for Christianity in the Modern World

To the Editor:

Re “[*The Future of Christianity Is Punk*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/16/us/arms-deals-raytheon-yemen.html?searchResultPosition=2),” by Tara Isabella Burton (Sunday Review, May 10), which Ms. Burton calls “a return to old-school forms of worship as a way of escaping from the crisis of modernity”:

She seems to have confused punk with nostalgia. Whose voices are allowed in reconstructing traditionalist worship and whom are we serving by it? I hardly think the point of Mass is to worship a past that never was (read: nostalgia) so that I might find the transcendent for me alone.

Punk is the Gospel, written under Roman oppression to give hope to weary believers. Punk is the Eucharist that has us remember that Jesus died at the hands of those Romans in power only to come back from the dead so that we might confront racism, sexism, homophobia and everything else that separates us from the love of God.

I have no doubts about the beauty of traditionalist liturgies, but punk they are not. If we want punk Christianity, I ask which injustice will we boldly choose to fight against? I can only hope that the answer is many.

Nicole Hanley

Bronx

The writer is a seminarian at the Episcopal Divinity School at Union Theological Seminary.

To the Editor:

Tara Isabella Burton doesn’t address the profoundly problematic aspects of older Christian ritual: its paternalistic privileging, particularly its relegation of women to secondary roles and status, and its homophobia. However beautiful and unusual ancient hymns and rituals may be, they are grounded in sexism and disrespect for gender fluidity.

Moreover, Ms. Burton conflates liberal and conservative perspectives vis-à-vis her claim that both center on individualism. Liberals — who make up a significant majority in the Democratic Party — emphasize the need to care for those less fortunate, while conservatives privilege the individual’s supposed capacity to lift oneself up by the bootstraps (refusing, for example, to extend unemployment benefits for fear that this will disincentivize people to work).

We’ve only to look at the Republicans in the Senate and the White House, whose refusal to extend support for poor and ***working-class*** people during this pandemic (often by allowing wealthy corporations and chief executives to siphon off relief funds) stands in stark contrast to the Democrats’ legislation aimed at helping those most in need.

Harriet Power

Bala Cynwyd, Pa.

PHOTO: Smoke rising from Sana in 2015 after a Saudi-led airstrike killed seven people. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tyler Hicks/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 20, 2020

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[***A Big Florida Poll, Nevada Tightens, Trump on Defense: This Week in the 2020 Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60TM-SJW1-DXY4-X1Y4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 12, 2020 Saturday 17:23 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1735 words

**Byline:** Annie Karni and Astead W. Herndon

**Highlight:** As new polling continues to give clues toward the states in play for the presidential campaign, President Trump was once again at the center of two story lines that consumed the news.

**Body**

As new polling continues to give clues toward the states in play for the presidential campaign, President Trump was once again at the center of two story lines that consumed the news.

Welcome to our weekly analysis of the state of the 2020 campaign. Follow The Times’s daily updates on the [*latest presidential election polls*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/presidential-polls-trump-biden).

The week in numbers

* In good news for President Trump, the [*Cook Political Report made two changes to its elections forecast*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/presidential-polls-trump-biden), moving Florida from “Lean Democrat” to “Toss Up,” and moving Nevada from “Likely Democrat” to “Lean Democrat.” [*Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/presidential-polls-trump-biden) advisers view Florida in particular as must-win. The shifts reflect [*Mr. Biden’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/presidential-polls-trump-biden) potential weakness with Latino voters, and Trump’s [*poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/presidential-polls-trump-biden) numbers stabilizing after months of protests after the killing of George Floyd.
* The Biden campaign continues to dominate the airwaves, spending $32 million on broadcast television over the past week, while the Trump campaign spent only about $10 million. Spending is nearly even on Facebook, as the Biden campaign spent $3.7 million over the past week while the Trump team spent $3.2 million on the platform.

1. A [*Monmouth University poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/presidential-polls-trump-biden) released this week showed Biden holding a seven-point lead over Trump among likely voters nationwide. Among all registered voters, just 37 percent said they were certain they would vote for Trump, versus 43 percent who were sure they would be voting for Biden.
2. But an [*NBC News/Marist College survey*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/presidential-polls-trump-biden) of Florida offered some rare positive news for the president on the polling front: He and Biden were tied at 48 percent each among likely voters in the state, with Trump supported by 50 percent of Latino voters (albeit a particularly hard demographic to accurately poll).

Catch me up

For the president, the week began with him defending himself against a report in The Atlantic and ended with him defending himself against a report by the veteran journalist Bob Woodward.

Both story lines — one about his alleged disrespect for the military, the other, about purposefully playing down the deadly nature of the coronavirus — threatened to undermine his standing with voters whose support he is counting on, especially servicemembers and seniors. Mr. Trump, himself, was once again the story, less than 55 days away from the election — a time when [*veteran political strategists said*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/presidential-polls-trump-biden) the person who the race is a referendum on is frequently the person who is losing.

[*Mr. Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/presidential-polls-trump-biden), the Democratic presidential nominee and former vice president, tried to capitalize on the negative news reports during an appearance in Michigan, where he blamed the president’s handling of the pandemic for the ongoing recession. In contrast, Mr. Trump, also in Michigan, tried to push a message about a great American comeback, complete with the revival of packed, old-school Trump rallies he’s now holding regularly at airport hangars in battleground states.

Nothing sticks to this president, but with just weeks left before Election Day, every negative news cycle counts a little bit more. Here’s how this one played out.

Trump and Woodward

For Mr. Woodward’s first book about the Trump presidency, Mr. Trump did not participate in the project and (are you sitting down?) there was no plan from the White House communications department in 2018 to try to shape the narrative. That left senior officials freelancing, in an effort to preserve their own reputations, and others speaking to Mr. Woodward simply out of fear that they would be the only ones who didn’t.

For Mr. Woodward’s second book, Mr. Trump seems to have overcorrected, this time participating in 18 freewheeling on-the-record sessions with the author. “I gave him some time,” Mr. Trump told Sean Hannity, the Fox News host, earlier this week. “But, as usual, with the books he writes, that didn’t work out too well, perhaps.” Why did he do it?

* Mr. Trump thinks he can charm anyone. His desire to speak at length with Mr. Woodward underscores what has always been the reality of Mr. Trump’s relationship with the news media, despite shouts of “fake news.” Mr. Trump loves talking to journalists — especially famous ones — and is driven, in large part, by his desire to earn positive coverage from the establishment.

1. But he may have been the one charmed, by Mr. Woodward’s status (even if he hasn’t read his books).
2. And he doesn’t seem to care. Unlike other authors who have written unflattering accounts of the Trump White House, Mr. Woodward has yet to receive the book pre-sales bump that typically comes after the president denounces an author and their work on Twitter. Mr. Trump seems resigned to the fact that he got played, perhaps because most of the damaging content appears to come straight from the president’s own mouth. Instead of denouncing Mr. Woodward, Mr. Trump is defending himself.

How Biden’s campaign responds to Trump’s scandals

In recent weeks, Mr. Biden has faced a challenge familiar to Hillary Clinton — how to weaponize Mr. Trump’s scandals. New revelations about the president’s conduct have dominated headlines and cable news chyrons, including his disparaging comments about members of the military reported in The Atlantic, as has the book by Mr. Woodward and another by Michael Cohen, Mr. Trump’s former personal lawyer and confidante.

But making those stories last is hard, and breaking through to voters is even harder. Here’s how Mr. Biden is trying:

* Dispatch surrogates, not the candidate: Following the release of The Atlantic article and highlights from Mr. Woodward’s book, Mr. Biden’s campaign held a media conference call with high-profile surrogates, including Senators Tammy Duckworth of Illinois and Sherrod Brown of Ohio. In doing so, the campaign sought to prolong a news cycle on damaging information to its opponent. Biden advisers also continue a tack they’ve pursued since Mr. Biden became the nominee: While his primary campaign was focused on Mr. Trump and electability, his general election strategy has often left attacking the president to others.

1. Focus on the virus: When Mr. Biden does target Mr. Trump, it has usually been on issues with which he feels most comfortable. He has tried to make this election a referendum on how Mr. Trump has handled the pandemic, and has weaponized new information that bolsters his argument that the administration shirked its responsibility. But the campaign has stayed away from the more gossip-driven elements that animate Mr. Trump’s opponents on social media. Books like the one written by Mr. Trump’s niece, Mary Trump, and Mr. Cohen’s account of his time with the president have rarely found their way into Mr. Biden&#39;s campaign messaging.
2. Presidential contrast: Unlike Mrs. Clinton, who was dealing with the possibility of Mr. Trump becoming president, Mr. Biden is dealing with the reality. And as the scandals have continued into his administration, Democrats believe that voters who were willing to take a chance on Mr. Trump changing in office are now ready for a course correction. This is another element of how the Biden campaign seeks to use Mr. Trump’s words against him, by arguing that Mr. Biden would bring calm and stability to the White House, rather than the stream of norm-busting headlines.

Both campaigns agree: The Midwest is best

With both candidates in Michigan this week, and top surrogates including Donald Trump Jr. and Jill Biden in Minnesota, the travel was a sign of how much attention both campaigns are paying to the Midwest. The intense interest in Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania has dwarfed other regions. There are many ways to get to 270 electoral votes, but here’s why Mr. Trump and Mr. Biden think this campaign will be won in the country’s industrial center.

* White ***working-class***: Mr. Trump and Mr. Biden are both figures who have staked their appeal on having a specific connection with white ***working-class*** voters, a demographic that was not enthusiastic about Mrs. Clinton’s candidacy. Advisers to Mr. Biden believe that’s a population their candidate is better set to succeed with, and states with industrial backgrounds like Wisconsin and Pennsylvania are a good way to test that appeal.

1. Black voters: There are more Latino voters in the general election, but Democrats and Republicans have probably spent more time focusing on Black voters in this election than any other minority group. Mr. Biden has leaned on his personal connection with former President Barack Obama, and Republicans have pitched Democrats as irresponsible stewards of Black urban communities. More than other battleground states like Florida or out West, the industrial states have cities with Black turnout that could determine the statewide totals. These include places like Milwaukee, Philadelphia and Cleveland.
2. Mr. Biden’s campaign is not expanding the map: Early in the race, some Democratic operatives pleaded with the Biden campaign to expand the traditional battleground map and invest in states like Texas and Georgia that have had demographic shifts beneficial to Democrats. However, if the candidate’s travel schedule is any indication, the campaign is focusing efforts on the traditional battlegrounds — for now. Mr. Biden’s campaign just announced another Midwest trip, to Minnesota, in the coming week. It shows a willingness to defend states Mrs. Clinton won in 2016 over expanding the map to new states that have long proved fool’s gold for the party.

What you might have missed

* A week after Mr. Trump suggested that voters in North Carolina should cast two ballots — one by mail and another at the polls — the authorities in Georgia are [*threatening criminal action against 1,000 Georgia voters who did just that*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/presidential-polls-trump-biden).

1. Intentionally voting twice in a federal election could result in a $10,000 fine and up to five years in prison. In the past, few people have done it, [*or have had to pay the full fine*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/presidential-polls-trump-biden).
2. The Trump campaign has spent over $800 million of their $1.1 billion budget since July 2019. Some say the money was blown on small costs, [*like buying $110,000 worth of magnetic pouches*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/presidential-polls-trump-biden) that are used to store cellphones during fund-raisers so that donors could not secretly record Mr. Trump.

Joseph R. Biden Jr., the Democratic nominee, with C. J. Brown, son of Clement Brown, left, owner of a clothing store in Detroit. AMR ALFIKY/THE NEW YORK TIMES President Trump in Jupiter, Fla., on Tuesday after signing an executive order extending a moratorium on offshore drilling. DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

**Load-Date:** September 17, 2020

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[***The Rise of 'Woke Capital' Is Nothing to Celebrate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JG-5K51-DXY4-X2GM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 29, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 23; ELIZABETH BRUENIG

**Length:** 1039 words

**Byline:** By Elizabeth Bruenig

**Body**

Has there ever been a threat so toothless, so risible, so obviously meek as the one issued of late to American businesses by miffed Republican senators?

''My warning, if you will, to corporate America is to stay out of politics,'' Senator Mitch McConnell recently told reporters. ''I'm not talking about political contributions,'' he then clarified, in case anyone had mistaken the bark for bite.

Senator Rick Scott of Florida likewise warned of a ''massive backlash coming'' for ''woke corporate America''; meanwhile, Senator Marco Rubio reckoned that ''the bill is coming due'' for companies that haven't fulfilled their ''patriotic role.''

The lovers' quarrel between big business and the right has been long in the making, but the current tiff emerged from corporations' attempt to veto Georgia's legislative effort to limit voter turnout. As other states, like Texas, consider Georgia-esque legislation, dozens of executives have put their heads together on a conference call to consider how best to turn back the tide of anti-democratic laws.

Liberals have largely embraced this backup from corporations, with more than a note of glee at the turning of the tables. There's something to be said for any port in a storm -- but nobody, least of all liberals, has anything to celebrate in the rise of activist industry.

Remarkably, the possibility that corporate giants won't necessarily come to the rescue of American democracy isn't the only, or even the primary, reason for that. Executives will frame any capital strikes -- that is, threatening to relocate operations or to decline to invest in a particular place in order to pressure politicians -- as business finally rising to its responsibilities as a major power in society.

The reality is less inspiring. In disciplining governments, companies are simply doing what they always have done: shaping the political landscape to suit their interests and preferences, which can and do shift without notice.

And why not? Both protest and support served certain purposes for them -- purposes of their own design, which they have no obligation or incentive to explain to you or me even as they go about organizing the world around us. In the clash between the owners of the assets that supply the means of production and profit (capital, in other words) and government, we are mere collateral.

The corporate defense of democracy is still mostly talk -- none of which means the occupants of America's finest corner offices are misrepresenting their political views. I assume that, like their highly educated and well-heeled peers, a good number of these titans of industry tend to lean blue and earnestly cultivate enlightened views. And yet that, too, is vaguely disconcerting. At a moment when Democrats are attempting to court the ***working class***, publicly marrying their fortunes to those of capital is not only unsavory but unwise.

A reasonable counterpoint: What choice do right-thinking liberals have? American democracy is badly broken -- unresponsive, unaccountable, broadly disconnected from the will of the people. Decades of gerrymandering have fractured many voting districts to favor the right wing, and the results of the 2020 census may well advance Republicans' redistricting strategy even further.

Broad voter suppression laws of the same genus as the latest efforts in Georgia and Texas have opened a gulf between what voters want and what they're even capable of asking for. And over the last decade, 10 wealthy donors alone have poured $1.2 billion into federal elections, while ''super PACs'' and other groups have spent $4.5 billion, with millions in dark money flowing legally and unaccountably into elections nationwide. You can vote for whomever you choose, but your choices are chosen for you by powers beyond your control.

But those powers, too, answer to some authority: capital. Just as workers can marshal the power they have over capital by going on strike, capital can leverage the power it has over governments by using capital strikes.

Occasionally, that kind of intervention can arrive as a welcome relief, especially when turned against countermajoritarian policies promulgated by legislators ensconced in crooked districts carved out to favor them.

So why not a marriage of convenience -- at least a temporary one? For one: Capital is unfaithful. It can, and does, play all sides. Many of the courageous businesses that protested North Carolina's 2016 ''bathroom bill,'' for instance, also donated to political groups that helped fund the candidacies of the very politicians who passed the bill. It isn't possible to cooperate with capital on social matters while fighting them in other theaters; capital can fight you in all theaters at once, all while enjoying public adulation for helping you, as well.

Setting aside the fact that capital can in a single moment be both heroic and diabolical -- Amazon wants you to be able to vote, but it would prefer if you didn't unionize -- it is, incredibly, even less democratic, accountable and responsive than our ramshackle democracy.

Capital rallies to the defense of democracy while aggressively quashing that very thing in the workplaces where its workers labor. It's tempting, perhaps even satisfying, to call the government's boss, but after the dressing down, you're still just a customer, worth only as much as you can pay them or make them. That the jerks who've done their best to enervate our democracy are in the same boat as us is a cold comfort.

I have no idea what to do about this other than know it for what it is. If it were ever the case that knowledge was power, it certainly isn't so anymore: Knowledge is more widely dispersed than ever; power remains notably concentrated. But knowledge confers a certain dignity. It's worse to be powerless and unaware than to be powerless and perfectly clear on where you stand.

Elizabeth Bruenig (@ebruenig) is an Opinion writer.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTIN PARR/MAGNUM PHOTOS)

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[***Let's Honor the True Spirit of Labor Day***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63J6-9D11-DXY4-X3JX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 6, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 17; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1326 words

**Byline:** By Jerome Karabel

**Body**

In the late summer of 1921, an epic but surprisingly little-known confrontation took place between the forces of labor and capital. The battle unfolded not in one of the great industrial cities but in the rural coal country of southern West Virginia. Miners in the region -- angered by life-threatening working conditions, corporate domination of the grim company towns in which they lived, the violent suppression of their attempts at unionization and the murder of a pro-labor local sheriff by company-hired thugs -- took up arms to confront the coal companies in what became known as the Battle of Blair Mountain. It was the largest labor uprising in American history and the biggest armed uprising in the United States since the Civil War.

A veritable proletarian army of about 10,000 miners faced a better-armed force of more than 2,000 men -- law enforcement officers and others -- equipped with high-powered rifles, machine guns and company-provided private planes that dropped shrapnel bombs on union headquarters. Though the miners did not retreat, they ultimately put down their arms when more than 2,000 federal troops arrived to intervene.

That an event of this magnitude remains so obscure reveals how marginal the story of labor's often violent and bloody struggle for human dignity is in standard narratives of American history. This is in striking contrast to the long-overdue, if still unfinished, attempt to reckon with our nation's tortured racial past. There has been no comparable reckoning with our labor history -- the most violent in the Western world -- and there should be. It is a history that, alongside the struggle for racial equality (with which it is complexly entangled), has profoundly shaped the country we live in today.

The miners' defeat at Blair Mountain was the culmination of a long series of major losses for labor dating back to the Great Railroad Strike of 1877. Perhaps the most crushing defeat came in 1894, when the American Railway Union confronted the nation's railroad tycoons with a strike. The New York Tribune called it ''the greatest battle between labor and capital that has ever been inaugurated in the United States.'' The strike, which involved as many as 250,000 workers in 27 states, was defeated when the United States Army made 16,000 troops available to protect the railroads -- a remarkable commitment, given that the entire U.S. Army at the time consisted of roughly 25,000 troops. By the time the strike was over, more than 50 people were dead.

With socialists worldwide already celebrating the first of May -- May Day -- to display labor's strength and to honor its struggle for an eight-hour workday, President Grover Cleveland, troubled by May Day's association with radicalism, pushed for the rapid designation of the first Monday of September as Labor Day. Thus was born an American alternative to May Day.

As early as 1922, workers in most European countries as well as in Australia and New Zealand had organized various mass political parties dedicated to furthering the interests of the ***working class*** -- Labourite, Social Democratic, Socialist, Communist. Yet even though American workers lacked a comparable party to defend their interests, they were to make gains during the Great Depression and the labor-friendly administration of Franklin Roosevelt. Accounting for just 11 percent of the labor force in 1933, union membership more than doubled, to 29 percent, by 1939. (Crucially, the Wagner Act of 1935 enlisted the power of the federal government to enforce the right of workers to form unions and to bargain collectively.)

But it was only through militant actions, including sit-down strikes and bloody battles, that anti-union citadels such as General Motors and United States Steel were finally breached. With the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, which established the eight-hour workday, the 40-hour workweek, the minimum wage and overtime pay, labor's ''golden era,'' which ran roughly from the late 1930s to the early 1970s, began in earnest. By 1953, nearly 18 million workers -- more than one in three -- were enrolled in a union.

A strong union movement delivered many benefits to Americans during that time. In highly unionized industries, workers were able to negotiate generous benefits packages that included health care, paid vacations and pensions, in addition to guaranteed annual wage increases. Taxes during this era were steeply progressive, with the top marginal income tax rate remaining at 90 percent until 1963 and staying at 70 percent through the 1970s. In this regard, the United States of the New Deal era exemplified a broader pattern: Strong labor movements make for higher levels of social well-being. This is a principal reason that highly unionized countries like Norway and Denmark top today's measures of social progress.

After peaking in strength in the mid-1950s, unions began a slow process of decline. Initially, the decline was gradual; while the percentage of unionized workers fell to 27 percent in 1970 from 33 percent in 1958, absolute numbers continued to grow, increasing from 18.1 million in 1958 to 20.8 million in 1970. But after President Ronald Reagan's firing of 13,000 federal aircraft controllers in their ill-fated strike of 1981, union membership began to decline sharply. By 1990, the absolute number of union members had declined by more than three million over the course of the decade. As workers became more insecure, the number of strikes also dropped, to 44 in 1990 from 235 in 1979.

Today the labor movement finds itself in its weakest position since the early 1930s. We have now had ample time to see the effects of labor's decline: stagnating wages, high levels of inequality and a shrinking middle class. Major corporations like Uber and Amazon ferociously oppose unionization. (Uber, along with other ride-share companies, recently spent more than $220 million to defeat a pro-union proposition in California.) As union strength has declined, the pay gap between corporate executives and ordinary workers has reached staggering proportions. In 1965 the ratio of chief executive pay to worker pay was 15 to 1; by 2020, it had risen to 351 to 1.

Yet even as union membership has fallen, there are grounds for hope. Public attitudes toward labor are more positive than they have been in years, and public sentiment toward big business has taken a sharp downturn. Just nine years ago, the labor-funded Fight for $15 campaign fought for the seemingly quixotic goal of raising the minimum hourly wage to $15; since then, eight states have enacted a $15 minimum wage. So political dynamics can change, sometimes with stunning speed.

If the past is any guide to the future, the struggle of labor against concentrated corporate power is likely to be long and difficult. Winning an eight-hour workday took more than half a century, and the labor movement did not succeed in unionizing the steel industry for more than 40 years.

Today, organizing corporate giants such as Walmart and Amazon will require even more than the commitment of dedicated organizers and the combined efforts of the entire labor movement. Successful unionization will also depend on strong support from a public that, though increasingly worried about surging inequality and the decline of the middle class, has yet to recognize the connection between a strong labor movement and the reversal of these corrosive trends.

Jerome Karabel is an emeritus professor of sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, who is working on a book about how the United States differs from other wealthy democratic countries.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/05/opinion/labor-day-us-history.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/05/opinion/labor-day-us-history.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY EDWIN J. MORGAN, VIA BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES)

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**End of Document**



[***Biden Tries to Keep Trump on the Defensive***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60TN-9SH1-JBG3-64RG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1661 words

**Byline:** By Annie Karni and Astead W. Herndon

**Body**

Welcome to our weekly analysis of the state of the 2020 campaign.

The week in numbers

â–  In good news for President Trump, the Cook Political Report made two changes to its elections forecast, moving Florida from ''Lean Democrat'' to ''Toss Up,'' and moving Nevada from ''Likely Democrat'' to ''Lean Democrat.'' Trump advisers view Florida in particular as must-win. The shifts reflect Mr. Biden's potential weakness with Latino voters, and Trump's poll numbers stabilizing after months of protests after the killing of George Floyd.

â–  The Biden campaign continues to dominate the airwaves, spending $32 million on broadcast television over the past week, while the Trump campaign spent only about $10 million. Spending is nearly even on Facebook, as the Biden campaign spent $3.7 million over the past week while the Trump team spent $3.2 million on the platform.

â–  A Monmouth University poll released this week showed Biden holding a seven-point lead over Trump among likely voters nationwide. Among all registered voters, just 37 percent said they were certain they would vote for Trump, versus 43 percent who were sure they would be voting for Biden.

â–  But an NBC News/Marist College survey of Florida offered some rare positive news for the president on the polling front: He and Biden were tied at 48 percent each among likely voters in the state, with Trump supported by 50 percent of Latino voters (albeit a particularly hard demographic to accurately poll).

Catch me up

For the president, the week began with him defending himself against a report in The Atlantic and ended with him defending himself against a report by the veteran journalist Bob Woodward.

Both story lines -- one about his alleged disrespect for the military, the other, about purposefully playing down the deadly nature of the coronavirus -- threatened to undermine his standing with voters whose support he is counting on, especially servicemembers and seniors. Mr. Trump, himself, was once again the story, less than 55 days away from the election -- a time when veteran political strategists said the person who the race is a referendum on is frequently the person who is losing.

Mr. Biden, the Democratic presidential nominee and former vice president, tried to capitalize on the negative news reports during an appearance in Michigan, where he blamed the president's handling of the pandemic for the ongoing recession. In contrast, Mr. Trump, also in Michigan, tried to push a message about a great American comeback, complete with the revival of packed, old-school Trump rallies he's now holding regularly at airport hangars in battleground states.

Nothing sticks to this president, but with just weeks left before Election Day, every negative news cycle counts a little bit more. Here's how this one played out.

Trump and Woodward

For Mr. Woodward's first book about the Trump presidency, Mr. Trump did not participate in the project and (are you sitting down?) there was no plan from the White House communications department in 2018 to try to shape the narrative. That left senior officials freelancing, in an effort to preserve their own reputations, and others speaking to Mr. Woodward simply out of fear that they would be the only ones who didn't.

For Mr. Woodward's second book, Mr. Trump seems to have overcorrected, this time participating in 18 freewheeling on-the-record sessions with the author. ''I gave him some time,'' Mr. Trump told Sean Hannity, the Fox News host, earlier this week. ''But, as usual, with the books he writes, that didn't work out too well, perhaps.'' Why did he do it?

â–  Mr. Trump thinks he can charm anyone. His desire to speak at length with Mr. Woodward underscores what has always been the reality of Mr. Trump's relationship with the news media, despite shouts of ''fake news.'' Mr. Trump loves talking to journalists -- especially famous ones -- and is driven, in large part, by his desire to earn positive coverage from the establishment.

â–  But he may have been the one charmed, by Mr. Woodward's status (even if he hasn't read his books).

â–  And he doesn't seem to care. Unlike other authors who have written unflattering accounts of the Trump White House, Mr. Woodward has yet to receive the book pre-sales bump that typically comes after the president denounces an author and their work on Twitter. Mr. Trump seems resigned to the fact that he got played, perhaps because most of the damaging content appears to come straight from the president's own mouth. Instead of denouncing Mr. Woodward, Mr. Trump is defending himself.

How Biden's campaign responds to Trump's scandals

In recent weeks, Mr. Biden has faced a challenge familiar to Hillary Clinton -- how to weaponize Mr. Trump's scandals. New revelations about the president's conduct have dominated headlines and cable news chyrons, including his disparaging comments about members of the military reported in The Atlantic, as has the book by Mr. Woodward and another by Michael Cohen, Mr. Trump's former personal lawyer and confidante.

But making those stories last is hard, and breaking through to voters is even harder. Here's how Mr. Biden is trying:

â–  Dispatch surrogates, not the candidate: Following the release of The Atlantic article and highlights from Mr. Woodward's book, Mr. Biden's campaign held a media conference call with high-profile surrogates, including Senators Tammy Duckworth of Illinois and Sherrod Brown of Ohio. In doing so, the campaign sought to prolong a news cycle on damaging information to its opponent. Biden advisers also continue a tack they've pursued since Mr. Biden became the nominee: While his primary campaign was focused on Mr. Trump and electability, his general election strategy has often left attacking the president to others.

â–  Focus on the virus: When Mr. Biden does target Mr. Trump, it has usually been on issues with which he feels most comfortable. He has tried to make this election a referendum on how Mr. Trump has handled the pandemic, and has weaponized new information that bolsters his argument that the administration shirked its responsibility. But the campaign has stayed away from the more gossip-driven elements that animate Mr. Trump's opponents on social media. Books like the one written by Mr. Trump's niece, Mary Trump, and Mr. Cohen's account of his time with the president have rarely found their way into Mr. Biden's campaign messaging.

â–  Presidential contrast: Unlike Mrs. Clinton, who was dealing with the possibility of Mr. Trump becoming president, Mr. Biden is dealing with the reality. And as the scandals have continued into his administration, Democrats believe that voters who were willing to take a chance on Mr. Trump changing in office are now ready for a course correction. This is another element of how the Biden campaign seeks to use Mr. Trump's words against him, by arguing that Mr. Biden would bring calm and stability to the White House, rather than the stream of norm-busting headlines.

Both campaigns agree: The Midwest is best

With both candidates in Michigan this week, and top surrogates including Donald Trump Jr. and Jill Biden in Minnesota, the travel was a sign of how much attention both campaigns are paying to the Midwest. The intense interest in Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania has dwarfed other regions. There are many ways to get to 270 electoral votes, but here's why Mr. Trump and Mr. Biden think this campaign will be won in the country's industrial center.

â–  White ***working-class***: Mr. Trump and Mr. Biden are both figures who have staked their appeal on having a specific connection with white ***working-class*** voters, a demographic that was not enthusiastic about Mrs. Clinton's candidacy. Advisers to Mr. Biden believe that's a population their candidate is better set to succeed with, and states with industrial backgrounds like Wisconsin and Pennsylvania are a good way to test that appeal.

â–  Black voters: There are more Latino voters in the general election, but Democrats and Republicans have probably spent more time focusing on Black voters in this election than any other minority group. Mr. Biden has leaned on his personal connection with former President Barack Obama, and Republicans have pitched Democrats as irresponsible stewards of Black urban communities. More than other battleground states like Florida or out West, the industrial states have cities with Black turnout that could determine the statewide totals. These include places like Milwaukee, Philadelphia and Cleveland.

â–  Mr. Biden's campaign is not expanding the map: Early in the race, some Democratic operatives pleaded with the Biden campaign to expand the traditional battleground map and invest in states like Texas and Georgia that have had demographic shifts beneficial to Democrats. However, if the candidate's travel schedule is any indication, the campaign is focusing efforts on the traditional battlegrounds -- for now. Mr. Biden's campaign just announced another Midwest trip, to Minnesota, in the coming week. It shows a willingness to defend states Mrs. Clinton won in 2016 over expanding the map to new states that have long proved fool's gold for the party.

What you might have missed

â–  A week after Mr. Trump suggested that voters in North Carolina should cast two ballots -- one by mail and another at the polls -- the authorities in Georgia are threatening criminal action against 1,000 Georgia voters who did just that.

â–  Intentionally voting twice in a federal election could result in a $10,000 fine and up to five years in prison. In the past, few people have done it, or have had to pay the full fine.

â–  The Trump campaign has spent over $800 million of their $1.1 billion budget since July 2019. Some say the money was blown on small costs, like buying $110,000 worth of magnetic pouches that are used to store cellphones during fund-raisers so that donors could not secretly record Mr. Trump.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/11/pageoneplus/12MOMENTS-REX.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/11/pageoneplus/12MOMENTS-REX.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Joseph R. Biden Jr., the Democratic nominee, with C. J. Brown, son of Clement Brown, left, owner of a clothing store in Detroit. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AMR ALFIKY/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

President Trump in Jupiter, Fla., on Tuesday after signing an executive order extending a moratorium on offshore drilling. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 12, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Colonial-Era Royal Carriage Stirs Up Modern Backlash in Netherlands***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63J7-GYK1-DXY4-X4Y1-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Nina Siegal

**Highlight:** The “Golden Coach,” built for Queen Wilhelmina of Holland in 1896, is emerging as a new focus of debate over slavery, colonialist oppression and history.

**Body**

The “Golden Coach,” built for Queen Wilhelmina of Holland in 1896, is emerging as a new focus of debate over slavery, colonialist oppression and history.

AMSTERDAM — In 1896, the city of Amsterdam decided to build Queen Wilhelmina a very special gift: a carriage covered in gold. The “Golden Coach” was designed to represent the entire kingdom and its resources, with leather from Brabant, cushions filled with flax from Zeeland and teak from the Dutch colony of Java.

A prominent Dutch artist of the era, [*Nicolaas van der Waay*](https://www.askart.com/artist/Nicolaes_Nicolaas_Van_Der_Waay/11140596/Nicolaes_Nicolaas_Van_Der_Waay.aspx), was commissioned to make panel paintings on all four sides. One of them, “Tribute from the Colonies,” depicts a virgin on a throne. On the left, Africans in loin cloths bow down before her. On the right, Southeast Asians in colorful batiks present her with gifts, as representations of the Dutch East Indies colony.

All of these component parts glorifying the empire would have been appreciated by most Dutch people in that era. But it is precisely these elements — reminders of slavery and colonial oppression — that make the carriage a source of pain in the [*Netherlands*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/07/world/europe/dutch-rivers-flood-control.html), particularly for descendants of formerly colonized people.

In the context of the worldwide Black Lives Matter protests, the coach has become a focus of anti-colonialist and antifascist protest. The controversy is an echo of similar debates in the United States over [*Confederate statues*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/09/us/charlottesville-confederate-monuments-lee.html) and [*other monuments*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/21/arts/design/roosevelt-statue-to-be-removed-from-museum-of-natural-history.html), and in Europe over monuments honoring colonialists and [*slave traders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/world/europe/bristol-statue-black-lives-matter.html).

An online [*petition*](https://petities.nl/petitions/de-gouden-koets-hoort-in-een-slavernijmuseum-thuis?locale=nl&amp;fbclid=IwAR0-FYZw1BkVq_wAqOq3ynogmzO60EX9wg1VUt3eJS_l8ktlQYYRuvm7img) to retire the Golden Coach has received more than 9,000 signatures.

The coach was first used in 1898 to carry Queen Wilhelmina to what the Dutch call her “inauguration,” eight years after she became queen at age 10. In recent years, the Golden Coach has been used primarily for the ceremonial opening of the Dutch Parliament in The Hague, and occasionally for weddings and coronations. Since the 1960s, royal trips in the carriage have often been met with street protests.

It was last used in 2015, without incident, after which it underwent a five-year, $1.4 million renovation before it was put on display at the Amsterdam Museum, where it will remain through Feb. 27, 2022.

What will happen to it thereafter — whether to put it back in service to the king and queen; or keep it in the museum with lots of explanatory content; or store it somewhere out of sight; or destroy it — has become a matter of intense public debate. Ultimately, the decision will be made by the royal family.

“We must finally end this practice of parading colonial images as displays of power,” Sylvana Simons, a member of Parliament and the founder and leader of an anti-racist political party, BIJ1, said in June.

Gideon van Meijeren, a lawmaker with the Forum for Democracy, a right-wing populist party, had no patience with that. “We must not allow ourselves to be emotionally blackmailed by a small group of pushy extremists who see racism under every stone,” he said.

His comment echoed the 2020 [*Twitter sentiments*](https://twitter.com/geertwilderspvv/status/1303322174812499968) of a populist Dutch politician, Geert Wilders, who characterized efforts to decommission the coach, known in Dutch as the Gouden Koets, as “left-wing, antiracism terror.” He continued, using a slang term for drop dead: “I say: Don’t bow, don’t kneel, let them all get the rambam!”

Last month, Emile Schrijver, director of the Jewish Cultural Quarter, wrote an opinion piece in the Amsterdam daily [*Het Parool*](https://www.parool.nl/columns-opinie/opinie-overheid-wacht-niet-langer-met-excuus-voor-slavernij~b0242c47/), calling the coach “an outdated and unacceptable glorification of a colonial sense of superiority,” which should be decommissioned and permanently housed in a museum.

On July 16, King Willem-Alexander addressed the subject at a news conference, saying he was “listening” to public forums on the matter organized by the museum. “The discussion is ongoing,” he added. The carriage is scheduled to return to The Hague after the exhibition. “You will hear from us then,” he said.

The Golden Coach was hoisted over the top of the museum by crane in June for the grand opening of the exhibition, attended by the king, and is now displayed in a large glass box in the inner courtyard. The exhibition exploring its history from its 19th-century conception fills six rooms within the museum, with another room devoted to visual responses to the coach by 15 contemporary artists.

Margriet Schavemaker, artistic director of the Amsterdam Museum, said she hoped the exhibition would help inform the public about all the issues related to the coach.

“What I hope this exhibition shows is that there are many different histories and perspectives,” she said in an interview. “I hope that through these many perspectives we can open up and listen to one another. A museum is a perfect place to consider all the different angles in peace and quiet.”

Before the coach’s arrival at the museum, the sculptor Nelson Carrilho, an Amsterdam-based artist from the Dutch Antilles, performed in the courtyard what he called “a ritual to give wisdom to this exhibition.”

Mr. Carrilho’s great-grandmother, an Indian woman who lived in Suriname, was brought to the Netherlands in 1883, and put on display in a human zoo as part of the World Expo, a colonial showcase. During her time in Amsterdam, she was studied and photographed. Mr. Carrilho has made a contemporary art work using the photograph for the museum exhibition.

He has been a critic of the carriage but said it should still remain in use until society is ready for change. “The society has to reach a point to say, ‘We don’t want this Golden Coach anymore,’” he said in an interview. “It must not come from us, because we are just the messengers.”

The exhibition emphasizes that debates about the carriage date back to the time of its creation. To build the coach, royal supporters known as Orangists raised money from ***working-class*** residents of the Amsterdam neighborhood known as the Jordaan. The socialist press of the time argued that poor people should not have to support “the lifestyles of these good-for-nothings.”

Since then, the coach has been a lightning rod for criticism from opponents of the monarchy. In 1966, after the wedding of Queen Beatrix and Claus van Amsberg, a German prince who had been a [*member of the Hitler Youth*](https://www.nytimes.com/2002/10/07/world/claus-von-amsberg-76-popular-dutch-prince.html), activists threw a smoke bomb at the Golden Coach in Amsterdam.

“To me, the carriage represents a lineage, a long history of using these types of symbols to bolster a national identity that the Dutch have a lot of pride in,” said Jennifer Tosch, a cultural historian and founder of Black Heritage Tours in Amsterdam, who was a member of a group of experts convened by the museum to advise the exhibition’s curators. “It’s been in recent years that descendants of the colonized have amplified their objection to continually reproducing this memory in this way.”

If the Royal House does continue to use the coach in the future, she said, it will only inflame national tensions around issues of social justice.

“It would certainly send a very strong message to those who have advocated for its removal from public use that those voices don’t matter,” she said. “We can’t put the genie back into the bottle or unring the bell. The issue is out. The question is, ‘Now, what do we do with it?’”

PHOTO: King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands with the “Golden Coach” at the Amsterdam Museum. The carriage went on display in June in an exhibition that explores its history. (PHOTOGRAPH BY REMKO DE WAAL/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

**Load-Date:** September 11, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Patti LaBelle, the Doyenne of Philadelphia Soul***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61DG-YWB1-JBG3-60B5-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** T-MAGAZINE

**Length:** 3872 words

**Byline:** Mark Anthony Neal, Hank Willis Thomas, Deb Willis and Alex Harrington

**Highlight:** At 76, she is the embodiment of success, the personification of warmth and an artist who changed the landscape of American music.

**Body**

PATTI LABELLE’S superpower is a spellbinding scream — a refined shriek, really — that makes hairs stand at attention, bones shiver and spines twist. It was 1975 when I first heard it. I was 10, in my parents’ South Bronx tenement, where the radio station WBLS — offering “the total Black experience in sound,” as the promos said — was always on during our morning rush to school. That’s when it hit me — “[*Creole Lady*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) [*Marmalaaaaade*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs),” the last word of those titular lyrics, which debuted the year before, filling the air. My first Patti LaBelle moment. There have been many such moments since — like hearing “[*Love, Need and Want You*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (1983), which I put on the very first slow-jam tape I made as a teen — and with each one, the only logical reaction is to throw up your hands, kick off your shoes and, on occasion, break out in a praise dance.

There’s no such thing as a passive response to a Patti LaBelle song — nor should there be. LaBelle came to prominence in the 1970s, a decade that was defined by the greatest generation of divas of soul and gospel music: [*Aretha Franklin*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), [*Diana Ross*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), [*Shirley Caesar*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), [*Gladys Knight*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) and [*Inez Andrews*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), as well as the relative youngsters [*Chaka Khan*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) and [*Natalie Cole*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs). But there was something so relatable about LaBelle, who reminded you of your favorite church soloist or the girl at the high school talent show who could saaang, not just sing. LaBelle has been described as the Godmother of Soul, a master of one of America’s classic art forms, but that moniker ultimately fails to capture the singularity of her musical prowess: Perhaps more than any living performer, LaBelle sits at the intersections of soul and gospel, the former a genre that is indebted to the latter. Gospel is a form of Black religious music that emerged in the 1930s courtesy of [*Thomas A. Dorsey*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), the onetime pianist for the blues legend [*Ma Rainey*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) who also wrote the classic “Take My Hand, Precious Lord.” Soul took shape in the 1950s, in large part because of [*Ray Charles*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), who added secular lyrics to the melodies of familiar gospel songs, most famously with the track “[*I Got a Woman*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (1954), an early remix of sorts of the Southern Tones’ “It Must Be Jesus.” Many Black churchgoers considered Charles’s music blasphemous, but he opened a portal to a generation of gospel singers like [*Sam Cooke*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), [*Johnnie Taylor*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) and Franklin, who became early stars of the new genre.

But LaBelle is more than someone who exhibits a mastery of soul and gospel; she is “church,” a style of singing taken from Black Pentecostal and Baptist musical traditions, where gospel music is unfettered by the business of religion and soul is unfettered by expectations of the music industry. LaBelle’s [*rendition of the ABCs*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) on “[*Sesame Street*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” in 1998 is just one example. She begins in a slow, bluesy style, accompanied by a piano, and as a congregation of Muppets joins in, the song is transformed into a sanctified shout, performed with a fervor no one had ever had for the ABCs — and perhaps never will again. It was church.

IT FELT LIKE the last day of summer on the autumn afternoon that I arrived at LaBelle’s home, just north of Philadelphia — the whir of her family and staff was not unlike that of children during recess. While Tupac Shakur and Dr. Dre’s “[*California Love*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” played in the background at LaBelle’s request, the photographers [*Deb Willis and Hank Willis Thomas*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) went about the work of capturing a woman who is beyond simple impressions. Watching them made me think of [*Roy DeCarava*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)’s classic photos of [*Ornette Coleman, Billie Holiday or John Coltrane*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), or [*Malcolm X taking a photo of Muhammad Ali*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) — one of the most photographed Black Americans of the 20th century taking pictures of one of the most photographed Black Americans of the 20th century. In other words: an alignment of Black brilliance and genius.

At 76, the unwieldy rawness of LaBelle’s youthful instrument has given way to a refined and nuanced power that she summons with the aplomb of a master craftswoman. She’s “truly gotten better,” [*Dyana Williams*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), the longtime Philadelphia radio personality and a friend of LaBelle’s, told me. The singer, she added, “has transcended generations and still remained relevant to each generation of music makers.”

Yet even more significant than her longevity is the context of her staying power. LaBelle is of a generation of Black women who are regularly lauded with the honorific of “auntie” — [*Auntie Phylicia*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), Auntie Gladys, [*Auntie Cicely*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) — a term of affection for women who continue to hold an important place in the culture. These are the women who young Black folks know will always offer support without immediate judgment — who will provide correction and counsel. As I was shown into LaBelle’s living room, the scents of nutmeg and cinnamon [*hanging in the air*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) — there was peach cobbler in the oven — I realized I was no longer in Patti LaBelle’s home but in any number of aunties’ homes, which I’ve come to expect to smell this way. “Oh my,” I thought to myself, sitting on the couch across from a piano covered with dozens of photographs of close family and friends, including the Clintons and Barack Obama, “I’m in Auntie Patti’s house.” And then she appeared: stunning, regal, beautiful.

We later moved to her sitting room, where she keeps a selection of her many awards; she has five certified gold records, the platinum-selling “[*Winner in You*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (1986) and two Grammys, earned for her albums “[*Burnin*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)’” (1991) and “[*Live! One Night Only*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (1998). LaBelle lives by herself, but the assorted family members in the house that day — her two young granddaughters, her son Zuri and his wife (who’s also her personal makeup artist), who all live nearby — were a good indication of how welcoming a space it is: a home, not a way station, an important place for someone who has spent a lifetime on the road (until the recent pandemic, she still toured regularly). “Philadelphia is a place for me to live all my life because it’s quiet enough for me,” LaBelle said of her hometown. “It’s not crazy like New York or L.A. I love Philly. Philly is my home.”

But Philadelphia has also been a musical inspiration for LaBelle and generations of artists from the city and beyond. “It’s the most productive city I know,” LaBelle said, reeling off a string of artists who were either born in the city or made their reputations there: [*Bunny Sigler*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), [*Thom Bell*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), [*Pink*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), [*Jill Scott*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), [*the Roots*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), [*Eve*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), [*Musiq Soulchild*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), her close friend [*Teddy Pendergrass*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), [*Phyllis Hyman*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), [*Billy Paul*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs). Philadelphia sits between and thus in the shadows of America’s cultural capital, New York City, and the seat of American power, Washington, D.C. There’s an underdog quality to the place, something that makes its residents try harder than they might. Indeed, when you listen to LaBelle’s vocals on early covers of “[*Over the Rainbow*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (recorded in 1966) or the Irish hymn “[*Danny Boy*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (in 1964) — the young LaBelle singing as though each note will be her last — there’s a feeling of “I can’t believe she did that with this song,” trampling all conventions in her range and phrasing, making us rethink how these Tin Pan Alley standards were supposed to be sung. The essence of Patti LaBelle the singer is that she is always willing to do that to a song, and it’s one reason she is the exemplar of what has become known as the Philly Sound.

And yet, what is that sound? “You know Philly when you hear it,” LaBelle said coyly. Williams, who’s been based in Philadelphia for the past 40 years, described it as “melodic, harmonic, rhythmic and funky at the same time — the embodiment of multiple genres,” including European classical music: The string arrangements you hear in many of the genre’s songs — like the intro to the O’Jays’ “[*Stairway to Heaven*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (1975) or the proto-disco classic “[*Love Is the Message*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (1973) by MFSB — were often performed by members of the [*Philadelphia Orchestra*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs). Williams is referencing [*Philadelphia International Records*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) specifically, the label founded by [*Kenneth Gamble and Leon Huff*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) in 1971 that is synonymous with Philadelphia Soul. The label’s sound married the earthy vocals of local singers with the pop appeal of Motown. Philadelphia Soul was the embodiment of the aspirations of ***working-class*** Black Americans who wanted the good life for themselves in the post-civil rights era. At its best, the label balanced those aspirations (the lush strings) with a prideful defiance, emboldened by those signature bass lines, which you can hear on a track like LaBelle’s “[*Love Bankrupt*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (1983). Ostensibly a song about losing love, it’s also a subtle analogy for a retreat from the early gains of the civil rights movement: “You changed on me,” LaBelle sings, and you can tell she means it.

BORN PATRICIA HOLTE — her family called her Patsy — on May 24, 1944, LaBelle was raised in the Eastwick neighborhood in southwest Philadelphia, a largely Black ***working-class*** community, by her parents, Henry and Bertha Holte. She was the second youngest of five children: Her brother, Thomas, was the eldest, and she had three sisters, Vivian, Barbara and Jackie. In her memoir, “[*Don’t Block the Blessings*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (1996), LaBelle recounts a doting father, a railroad man and sometime nightclub performer who braided her hair, cooked her breakfast and had a voice like [*Nat King Cole*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs). Her mother worked in food service before becoming a full-time homemaker. When her father became abusive toward her mother, the two divorced. On one occasion following her parents’ split, LaBelle was sexually abused by her mother’s new boyfriend. After that, it was the music of [*Nina Simone*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), [*Gloria Lynne*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), [*Dakota Staton*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) and [*James Moody*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) — introduced to her by her brother — that became LaBelle’s “escape hatch … [and] gave me something to believe when I thought I had lost my faith.” She started singing shortly thereafter, with “the broom as a microphone,” as she recalled. She then moved on to the church choir at Beulah Baptist Church — which was close to her childhood home — at a time when the church played a prominent role in the daily lives of Black Americans. It was the choir director, Harriet Chapman, who forced LaBelle to take a solo. “‘Oh, no, Patsy, you have to come in front and do the lead,’” LaBelle remembered her saying. When she protested, Chapman suggested a duet with her son, Nathan. LaBelle got the bug quickly thereafter, singing “God Specializes,” and received the amen from the whole congregation: “They all stood up saying, ‘Hallelujah!’ That’s when I first realized I had talent.”

The pace of ballads allows LaBelle to explore a range of emotion that speaks so palpably to the lives of everyday folk: Ballads are the comfort food of soul music — melodies that stick to the bones, sustenance for ***working-class*** communities whose very humanity is challenged on a daily basis.

LaBelle began her career in 1960 when she joined a quartet that had originally included Jean Brown, Yvonne Hogen and Johnnie Dawson but would later feature the singers Nona Hendryx, Sarah Dash and Cindy Birdsong. (Birdsong would go on to join the Supremes in 1967, making the quartet a trio.) The Ordettes, as they called themselves, signed with Harold Robinson’s Newtown Records label in 1962 and were rechristened the Bluebelles; their lead singer, “little” Patsy Holte, became Patti LaBelle. But the group was largely overshadowed by others like the Shirelles and [*the Supremes*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), the latter of which became one of the most successful groups ever; their lead singer, Diana Ross, became a global superstar. But Ross was never tied to one place like LaBelle — she moved to Los Angeles in the early 1970s, and later relocated to New York City. LaBelle, on the other hand, remained, becoming synonymous with her hometown. Diana Ross was a pure pop confection; Patti LaBelle is, and has always been, a home-style meal.

During their early years, the Bluebelles, like many of their peers, made their living on the so-called [*chitlin’ circuit*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), a network of clubs and theaters primarily in the eastern and Southern parts of the United States that catered to Black artists and audiences throughout much of the 20th century. Chitlins, short for chitterlings, was a Black American delicacy derived from scraps — pigs’ intestines — so the chitlin’ circuit was a metaphor for the leftover opportunities granted to Black performers in segregated America. Yet it was also a story of resilience, as theaters like the Fox in Detroit, the Howard in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia’s own Uptown and, most famously, [*New York’s Apollo*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) became incubators for Black music. “I’m happy we had a chitlin’ circuit,” LaBelle told me. “It makes me be a better me.” Those things that have made her better included cross-country drives, because the group couldn’t afford airfare, or surviving on a paltry per diem by buying candy bars, cans of tuna and 10-cent sardines. “I have a pantry full of sardines and tuna,” LaBelle half-joked, noting, “That’s what I had yesterday, a nice tuna sandwich, and sardines the other night.” She grinned. “Our good Black was good,” she said, again referring to the circuit — a reminder that Black Americans had long ago established their own criteria of cultural affirmation.

But not everything on the chitlin’ circuit was “good.” It was on one such tour that the singer Jackie Wilson attempted to rape her, as LaBelle recounts in her memoir. Such stories about life on the R&amp;B circuit, or the “Rough and Black” circuit, as the fictional character James (Thunder) Early describes it in the film “[*Dreamgirls*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (2006), rated very little attention in the 1960s. LaBelle’s willingness to share her story about Wilson, who was revered by audiences and whose legendary stage performances were an inspiration for a young [*Michael Jackson*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), was especially brave at the time — 20 years before #MeToo — and highlighted the precarious position of being a young woman, in particular a young Black woman, in the record industry.

Such experiences inspired the music that the group recorded in the 1970s, as women who were taking control of their image, their bodies and their sexuality. When the Bluebelles transformed into Labelle in 1971, they also redefined the very idea of the girl group. Absent were the bouffants and Bob Mackie gowns that the Supremes made so famous. As the scholar Maureen Mahon writes in her book “[*Black Diamond Queens*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (2020), Labelle instead emphasized “individual voices and personalities in vocals, clothing and onstage style.” Girl groups? No, Labelle was about grown-ass Black women who were “bold, brash [and] brazen,” which is how the group’s manager Victoria Wickham imagined them. As LaBelle recalls in her memoir, Wickham believed the trio would be revolutionary: “Three Black women singing about racism, sexism and eroticism.” On their first albums they covered signature songs from the Rolling Stones (“[*Wild Horses*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)”), Gil Scott-Heron (“[*The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)”), the Who (“[*Won’t Get Fooled Again*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)”) and Cat Stevens (“[*Moonshadow*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)”), forcing themselves into a domain dominated by male performers. As Mahon notes, Labelle’s “rebellious performance stances, frank engagement with sexuality and adventurous, high-energy music positioned the group to take a place on the rock stage.” And indeed, their styles, which seemed inspired by the Afrofuturism of Sun Ra — metallic headgear, midriff tops, skintight bottoms, short skirts and full-length boots — were a blueprint for more popular Black acts at the time like [*Earth, Wind &amp; Fire*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) and [*Parliament-Funkadelic*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs).

It was during this period that LaBelle married her longtime friend and future manager Armstead Edwards, in 1969, giving birth to their son Zuri in 1973. (The couple would later adopt four more children: Stayce and William, LaBelle’s niece and nephew, whom she took in after her sister Jackie’s death in 1989; and Stanley and Dodd, her neighbor’s children, whose mother had also died.) But marriage and motherhood didn’t keep LaBelle from her music. The trio’s biggest success, the now-iconic “Lady Marmalade,” came only a year after her son’s birth, with a New Orleans-style swagger that struts like a drunken sailor intent on satiating his desires, if only for the night: “Voulez-vous coucher avec moi, ce soir?” That these desires are being expressed by three women, breaking some unspoken social contract of decorum, is what made the song so provocative — and an inspiration for women in the burgeoning days of the feminist movement.

THE GROUP BROKE UP in 1976, and LaBelle emerged as a breakout R&amp;B singer; since her 1977 solo debut, she’s recorded 23 albums. If there’s something that could be called a definitive Patti LaBelle album, it’s “[*I’m in Love Again*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (1983), which produced one of her most successful songs to date as a solo artist, “[*If Only You Knew*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs).” Just as LaBelle says that she knows a Philly song when she hears it, audiences know this is a Patti LaBelle song. “If Only You Knew” is a slow, slow burn — a certified slow drag, as folks would’ve called it a generation earlier, during those blue-lights-in-the-basement house parties that LaBelle would have come of age attending. At its start, LaBelle sings, “I must have rehearsed my lines / A thousand times” with a level of restraint that betrays what audiences had come to expect from her. But it’s a setup: She lulls her listeners — the lyrics rendered as gentle coos and soft murmurs — until the sudden release, when the song turns into what can only be described as fits of ecstasy.

“Patti LaBelle is a balladeer. I love ballads,” she told me. Among her signatures are “[*Somebody Loves You*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (1991) and “[*If You Ask Me To*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs),” a song that made a minor ripple when she first recorded it in 1989 but became a major pop hit [*when Celine Dion covered it*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) three years later, using the same arrangements, as LaBelle noted. Though she also admitted, “She sang so good, and we’re friends, so I said, ‘I’m happy you did it.’” The pace of ballads allows LaBelle to explore a range of emotion that, when mapped onto feelings of desire, betrayal and even eroticism, speaks so palpably to the lives of everyday folk: Ballads are the comfort food of soul music — melodies that stick to the bones, sustenance for ***working-class*** communities whose very humanity is challenged on a daily basis. When LaBelle sings “Somebody Loves You,” it is a reminder that their lives matter.

Though LaBelle has written songs, she is at heart a stylist, someone who is as known for the songs that were written for her as she is for personalizing songs that were recorded by others. And while there have been many great stylists in the soul and R&amp;B traditions — [*Nancy Wilson*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) made a career out of it — no one takes ownership quite the way LaBelle does. “You’ve got to be careful what you cover,” LaBelle said, noting some of the songs she wanted to sing over the years but decided not to, like Phyllis Hyman’s “[*Old Friend*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs).” But then there’s “[*If You Don’t Know Me by Now*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs).” First recorded in 1972, it was a major pop hit for [*Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs) — Pendergrass sang lead — yet it is the best example of a song LaBelle made her own. On the live 1982 recording, she initially sings it straight, but beginning with the first chorus, she extends the notes — hitting some before and some shortly after they’re expected, and shimmying on others. It is classic soul singing, but it is LaBelle’s range and her ability to personalize the lyrics that take the song elsewhere. Midway through, she breaks into conversation with the audience. She’s letting listeners in, teaching them the lessons of life. The call and response of the exchange is wisdom imparted and messages delivered. With performances like these, LaBelle earned her reputation as a diva — a term she dismissed, saying, “I’m a round-the-way girl from Philly. I’m not a diva.”

IT WAS AN auntie showcase this past September when LaBelle and Gladys Knight sat down to do “[*Verzuz*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs),” a virtual artist battle, conceived by the producers Swizz Beatz and Timbaland and launched on Instagram in the early months of the pandemic. “Verzuz” quickly became a reprieve from Covid-19 lockdown fatigue and a lifeline for artists who couldn’t tour and audiences who weren’t able to gather — “It was like doing a concert because I hadn’t worked in seven months onstage,” LaBelle said. Though artists initially appeared remotely, LaBelle and Knight chose to appear together on a soundstage in Philadelphia.

Generations of viewers were drawn to the “Verzuz” episode with these veterans of soul; it was as if they were sitting across from us at the kitchen table, where so many aunties share secrets. The two dished on lost loves, and peers they would rather not talk about, or to; they knew the words to each other’s songs, and even invited another auntie, [*Dionne Warwick*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), onstage to join them in a rendition of “[*Superwoman*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs),” a song they first recorded for a Knight album 30 years earlier. “We have so much great history. We’re the O.G.s. The real girls,” LaBelle recalled of her friendship with Knight of more than 50 years, dating back to their days on the chitlin’ circuit and through moments of tragedy, including the deaths of LaBelle’s three sisters and Knight’s son. “It was a blessing,” she said.

“A Philly girl,” she called herself, and yet she’s everywhere now. LaBelle turned to acting in 1984, with her performance as Big Mary in “[*A Soldier’s Story*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs),” followed by her memorable role as Adele Wayne on the hit television show “[*A Different World*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs)” (1987-93), and in 2015, she appeared on “[*Dancing With the Stars*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs).” In 1999, she expanded into cookbooks — with recipes like Aunt Hattie’s Scrumptious Sweet Tater Bread and Say-My-Name Smothered Chicken and Gravy — and a line of cakes, pastries and frozen foods called [*Patti’s Good Life*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51WQTGH1ixs), which is sold at Walmart. “She’s entrepreneurial in the most amazing way,” Dyana Williams said. “Not very many artists get to do what she’s doing at this age and stage of their careers.”

LaBelle’s has been a life joyfully lived. “I’m so happy to be the Black woman with the good food,” she said, and it was clear she meant it. And with that, she sent me on my way with a plate of her peach cobbler, just as so many of America’s aunties would have.

Hair: David Lamar. Makeup: Lona Azami. Manicure: Amanda Nguyen. Production: Prod’n. Digital tech: Willy Lukaitis. Tailoring: Hailey Desjardins. Set assistant: Todd Knopke. Stylist’s assistant: Sidney Munch

PHOTOS: Patti LaBelle, photographed at her home in Villanova, Pa., on Oct. 14, 2020. Gucci dress, $3,980, gucci.com, and LaBelle’s own earrings, bracelet and ring.; Richard Quinn coat, about $3,409, matchesfashion.com, David Webb earrings, $68,000, davidwebb .com, and Paul Morelli rings, $39,000 each, paulmorelli.com.; The small storage room in LaBelle’s house was designed and decorated by Eric Seats and is filled with memorabilia and costumes from the singer’s decadeslong career. Dries Van Noten coat, $2,640, jacket, $1,395, and pants, $825, saks.com, David Webb ring, $32,500, and LaBelle’s own earrings and shoes. Set design by Jill Nicholls. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HANK WILLIS THOMAS; DEB WILLIS; STYLED BY ALEX HARRINGTON; HAIR: DAVID LAMAR. MAKEUP: LONA AZAMI. MANICURE: AMANDA NGUYEN. PRODUCTION: PROD’N. DIGITAL TECH: WILLY LUKAITIS. TAILORING: HAILEY DESJARDINS. SET ASSISTANT: TODD KNOPKE. STYLIST’S ASSISTANT: SIDNEY MUNCH)

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[***Beyond 'White Fragility'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:607M-YHY1-JBG3-60C6-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1592 words

**Byline:** By Jamelle Bouie

**Body**

If you want to let freedom ring, hammer on economic injustice.

Since it emerged seven years ago in response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting of Trayvon Martin, the Black Lives Matter movement has produced a sea change in attitudes, politics and policy.

In 2016, 43 percent of Americans supported Black Lives Matter and its claims about the criminal justice system; now, it's up to 67 percent, with 60 percent support among white Americans, compared with 40 percent four years ago. Whereas Democratic politicians once stumbled over the issue, now even Republicans are falling over themselves to say that ''black lives matter.'' And where the policy conversation was formerly focused on body cameras and chokehold bans, now mainstream outlets are debating and taking seriously calls to demilitarize and defund police departments or to abolish them outright.

But the Black Lives Matter platform isn't just about criminal justice. From the start, activists have articulated a broad, inclusive vision for the entire country. This, in fact, has been true of each of the nation's major movements for racial equality. Among black Americans and their Radical Republican allies, Reconstruction -- which was still ongoing as of 150 years ago -- was as much a fight to fundamentally reorder Southern economic life as it was a struggle for political inclusion. The struggle against Jim Crow, likewise, was also a struggle for economic equality and the transformation of society.

''The black revolution is much more than a struggle for the rights of Negroes,'' the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote in ''A Testament of Hope'':

It is forcing America to face all its interrelated flaws -- racism, poverty, militarism and materialism. It is exposing evils that are rooted deeply in the whole structure of our society. It reveals systemic rather than superficial flaws and suggests that radical reconstruction of society itself is the real issue to be faced.

Our society was built on the racial segmentation of personhood. Some people were full humans, guaranteed non-enslavement, secured from expropriation and given the protection of law, and some people -- blacks, Natives and other nonwhites -- were not. That unequal distribution of personhood was an economic reality as well. It shaped your access to employment and capital; determined whether you would be doomed to the margins of labor or given access to its elevated ranks; marked who might share in the bounty of capitalist production and who would most likely be cast out as disposable.

In our society, in other words, the fight for equal personhood can't help but also be a struggle for economic justice. And what we see, past and present, is how that fight against the privileges and distinctions of race can also lay the foundations for a broader assault on the privileges and distinctions of class.

As soon as the Civil War came to a close, it was clear there could be no actual freedom for the formerly enslaved without a fundamental transformation of economic relations. ''We must see that the freedman are established on the soil, and that they may become proprietors,'' Charles Sumner, the Radical Republican senator from Massachusetts, wrote in March 1865. ''The great plantations, which have been so many nurseries of the rebellion, must be broken up, and the freedmen must have the pieces.'' Likewise, said the Radical Republican congressman Thaddeus Stevens in September 1865, ''The whole fabric of Southern society must be changed, and never can it be done if this opportunity is lost.'' The foundations of their institutions, he continued, ''must be broken up and re-laid, or all of our blood and treasure have been spent in vain.''

Presidential Reconstruction under Andrew Johnson, a Democrat, would immediately undermine any means to this end, as he restored defeated Confederates to citizenship and gave them free rein to impose laws, like the Black Codes, which sought to reestablish the economic and social conditions of slavery. But Republicans in Congress were eventually able to wrest control of Reconstruction from the administration, and just as importantly, black Americans were actively taking steps to secure their political freedom against white reactionary opposition. Working through the Union Army, postwar Union Leagues and the Republican Party, freed and free blacks worked toward a common goal of political equality. And once they secured something like it, they set out to try as much as possible to affect that economic transformation.

''Public schools, hospitals, penitentiaries, and asylums for orphans and the insane were established for the first time or received increased funding,'' the historian Eric Foner wrote in ''Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877.'' ''South Carolina funded medical care for poor citizens, and Alabama provided free legal counsel for indigent defendants.''

For blacks and Radical Republicans, Reconstruction was an attempt to secure political rights for the sake transforming the entire society. And its end had as much to do with the reaction of property and capital owners as it did with racist violence. ''The bargain of 1876,'' W.E.B. Du Bois wrote in ''Black Reconstruction in America,''

was essentially an understanding by which the Federal Government ceased to sustain the right to vote of half of the laboring population of the South, and left capital as represented by the old planter class, the new Northern capitalist, and the capitalist that began to rise out of the poor whites, with a control of labor greater than in any modern industrial state in civilized lands.

Out of that, he continued, ''has arisen in the South an exploitation of labor unparalleled in modern times, with a government in which all pretense at party alignment or regard for universal suffrage is given up.''

Du Bois was writing in the 1930s. A quarter-century later, black Americans in the South would launch a movement to unravel Jim Crow repression and economic exploitation. And as that movement progressed and notched victories against segregation, it became clear that the next step was to build a coalition against the privileges of class, since the two were inextricably tied together. The Memphis sanitation workers who asked Martin Luther King Jr. to support their strike in 1968 were black, set against a white power structure in the city. Their oppression as black Americans and subjugation as workers were tied together. Unraveling one could not be accomplished without unraveling the other.

All of this relates back to the relationship between race and capitalism. To end segregation -- of housing, of schools, of workplaces -- is to undo one of the major ways in which labor is exploited, caste established and the ideologies of racial hierarchy sustained. And that, in turn, opens possibilities for new avenues of advancement. The old labor slogan ''Negro and White, Unite and Fight!'' contains more than a little truth about the necessary conditions for economic justice. That this unity is fairly rare in American history is a testament to how often these movements have ''either advocated, capitulated before, or otherwise failed to oppose racism at one or more critical junctures in their history,'' as Robert L. Allen and Pamela P. Allen note in their 1974 study of racism and social reform movements.

Which brings us back to the present. The activists behind the Black Lives Matter movement have always connected its aims to ***working-class***, egalitarian politics. The platform of the Movement for Black Lives, as it is formally known, includes demands for universal health care, affordable housing, living wage employment and access to education and public transportation. Given the extent to which class shapes black exposure to police violence -- it is poor and ***working class*** black Americans who are most likely to live in neighborhoods marked by constant police surveillance -- calls to defund and dismantle existing police departments are a class demand like any other.

But while the movement can't help but be about practical concerns, the predominating discourse of belief and intention overshadows those stakes: too much concern with ''white fragility'' and not enough with wealth inequality. The challenge is to bridge the gap; to show new supporters that there's far more work to do than changing the way we police; to channel their sympathy into a deeper understanding of the problem at hand.

To put a final point of emphasis on the potential of the moment, I'll leave you with this. In a 1963 pamphlet called ''The American Revolution: Pages from a Negro Worker's Notebook,'' the activist and laborer James Boggs argued for the revolutionary potential of the black struggle for civil rights. ''The strength of the Negro cause and its power to shake up the social structure of the nation,'' Boggs wrote, ''comes from the fact that in the Negro struggle all the questions of human rights and human relationships are posed.'' That is because it is a struggle for equality ''in production, in consumption, in the community, in the courts, in the schools, in the universities, in transportation, in social activity, in government, and indeed in every sphere of American life.''

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**Graphic**

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[***Let’s Honor the True Spirit of Labor Day; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63J1-RC11-DXY4-X39K-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** The labor movement’s often bloody struggle for human dignity is neglected in standard accounts of American history.

**Body**

In the late summer of 1921, an epic but surprisingly little-known confrontation took place between the forces of labor and capital. The battle unfolded not in one of the great industrial cities but in the rural coal country of southern West Virginia. Miners in the region — angered by life-threatening working conditions, corporate domination of the grim company towns in which they lived, the violent suppression of their attempts at unionization and the murder of a pro-labor local sheriff by company-hired thugs — took up arms to confront the coal companies in what became known as the Battle of Blair Mountain. It was the largest labor uprising in American history and the biggest armed uprising in the United States since the Civil War.

A veritable proletarian army of about 10,000 miners faced a better-armed force of more than 2,000 men — law enforcement officers and others — equipped with high-powered rifles, machine guns and company-provided private planes that dropped shrapnel bombs on union headquarters. Though the miners did not retreat, they ultimately put down their arms when more than 2,000 federal troops arrived to intervene.

That an event of this magnitude remains so obscure reveals how marginal the story of labor’s often violent and bloody struggle for human dignity is in standard narratives of American history. This is in striking contrast to the long-overdue, if still unfinished, attempt to reckon with our nation’s tortured racial past. There has been no comparable reckoning with our labor history — the [*most violent*](http://www.ditext.com/taft/violence.html) in the Western world — and there should be. It is a history that, alongside the struggle for racial equality (with which it is complexly entangled), has profoundly shaped the country we live in today.

The miners’ defeat at Blair Mountain was the culmination of a long series of major losses for labor dating back to the Great Railroad Strike of 1877. Perhaps the most crushing defeat came in 1894, when the American Railway Union confronted the nation’s railroad tycoons with a strike. The New York Tribune called it “the greatest battle between labor and capital that has ever been inaugurated in the United States.” The strike, which involved as many as 250,000 workers in 27 states, was defeated when the United States Army made 16,000 troops available to protect the railroads — a remarkable commitment, given that the entire U.S. Army at the time consisted of roughly 25,000 troops. By the time the strike was over, more than 50 people were dead.

With socialists worldwide already celebrating the first of May — May Day — to display labor’s strength and to honor its struggle for an eight-hour workday, President Grover Cleveland, troubled by May Day’s association with radicalism, pushed for the rapid designation of the first Monday of September as [*Labor Day*](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/history-labor-day). Thus was born an American alternative to May Day.

As early as 1922, workers in most European countries as well as in Australia and New Zealand had organized various mass political parties dedicated to furthering the interests of the ***working class*** — Labourite, Social Democratic, Socialist, Communist. Yet even though American workers lacked a comparable party to defend their interests, they were to make gains during the Great Depression and the labor-friendly administration of Franklin Roosevelt. Accounting for just 11 percent of the labor force in 1933, union membership more than doubled, to 29 percent, by 1939. (Crucially, the Wagner Act of 1935 enlisted the power of the federal government to enforce the right of workers to form unions and to bargain collectively.)

But it was only through militant actions, including sit-down strikes and bloody battles, that anti-union citadels such as General Motors and United States Steel were finally breached. With the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, which established the eight-hour workday, the 40-hour workweek, the minimum wage and overtime pay, labor’s “golden era,” which ran roughly from the late 1930s to the early 1970s, began in earnest. By 1953, nearly 18 million workers — more than one in three — were enrolled in a union.

A strong union movement delivered many benefits to Americans during that time. In highly unionized industries, workers were able to negotiate generous benefits packages that included health care, paid vacations and pensions, in addition to guaranteed annual wage increases. Taxes during this era were steeply progressive, with the top marginal income tax rate remaining at 90 percent until 1963 and staying at 70 percent through the 1970s. In this regard, the United States of the New Deal era exemplified a broader pattern: Strong labor movements make for higher levels of social well-being. This is a principal reason that highly unionized countries like Norway and Denmark top today’s measures of social progress.

After peaking in strength in the mid-1950s, unions began a slow process of decline. Initially, the decline was gradual; while the percentage of unionized workers fell to 27 percent in 1970 from 33 percent in 1958, absolute numbers continued to grow, increasing from 18.1 million in 1958 to 20.8 million in 1970. But after President Ronald Reagan’s firing of 13,000 federal aircraft controllers in their ill-fated strike of 1981, union membership began to decline sharply. By 1990, the absolute number of union members had declined by more than three million over the course of the decade. As workers became more insecure, the number of strikes also dropped, to 44 in 1990 from 235 in 1979.

Today the labor movement finds itself in its weakest position since the early 1930s. We have now had ample time to see the effects of labor’s decline: stagnating wages, high levels of inequality and a shrinking middle class. Major corporations like Uber and Amazon ferociously oppose unionization. (Uber, along with other ride-share companies, recently spent more than $220 million to support an anti-union proposition in California.) As union strength has declined, the pay gap between corporate executives and ordinary workers has reached staggering proportions. In 1965 the ratio of chief executive pay to worker pay was 15 to 1; by 2020, it had risen to 351 to 1.

Yet even as union membership has fallen, there are grounds for hope. Public attitudes toward labor [*are more positive*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/12751/labor-unions.aspx) than they have been in years, and public sentiment toward big business [*has taken a sharp downturn*](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/may/13/americans-are-more-pro-union-and-anti-big-business-than-at-any-time-in-decades). Just nine years ago, the labor-funded Fight for $15 campaign fought for the seemingly quixotic goal of raising the minimum hourly wage to $15; since then, 11 states have enacted a $15 minimum wage. So political dynamics can change, sometimes with stunning speed.

If the past is any guide to the future, the struggle of labor against concentrated corporate power is likely to be long and difficult. Winning an eight-hour workday took more than half a century, and the labor movement did not succeed in unionizing the steel industry for more than 40 years.

Today, organizing corporate giants such as Walmart and Amazon will require even more than the commitment of dedicated organizers and the combined efforts of the entire labor movement. Successful unionization will also depend on strong support from a public that, though increasingly worried about surging inequality and the decline of the middle class, has yet to recognize the connection between a strong labor movement and the reversal of these corrosive trends.

Jerome Karabel is an emeritus professor of sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, who is working on a book about how the United States differs from other wealthy democratic countries.

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[***Trump's Backup Band Didn't Need Hollywood***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:618P-65R1-JBG3-60SJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 12, 2020 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section D; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 1; NEWS ANALYSIS

**Length:** 1714 words

**Byline:** By Jacob Bernstein

**Body**

Absent connections to the world of celebrity, Donald J. Trump minted his own. His White House wasn't Hollywood, but maybe that was the point.

In August, Kerry Washington, Eva Longoria, Tracee Ellis Ross and Julia Louis-Dreyfus took turns as M.C.s at the Democratic National Convention. They were picked seemingly for their ability to reach different groups of women voters and represented exactly what Hollywood and the party hoped to telegraph about itself: classy, inclusive, empathic.

Donald Trump never had the acceptance of this crowd.

Long after he became a famous developer, there remained about him a face-pressed-against-the-glass quality, at least among the establishment of Park Avenue and the glitziest people of Hollywood. Not for nothing did Fran Lebowitz once describe him as a ''poor person's idea of a rich person.''

He spent much of 1990 trying to get Madonna to perform at the opening of the Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, but the only thing he got was dissed when Interview asked her that year about rumors he was going to run for president and she responded by calling him ''a wimp,'' before adding that America should select someone ''more handsome.''

When a Trump got invited onto the yachts of media and entertainment moguls like Barry Diller, David Geffen and Rupert Murdoch, her name was usually Ivanka.

It wasn't a surprise that even the most apolitical stars in America felt the need to express disgust with Mr. Trump during and after his 2016 presidential run.

Hollywood is, after all, a bastion of liberalism, and the jet fuel of the outgoing president's political career was a racist conspiracy theory he peddled about Barack Obama's birthplace. Having Scott Baio and Antonio Sabato Jr. as supporters doesn't really count as a big win, Janice Min, the former editorial director of The Hollywood Reporter, said in an interview.

But because Mr. Trump's political ascent occurred after his hit reality show, ''The Apprentice''; because he had a flair for the comic insult that is unrivaled in modern politics; and because -- in the absence of real celebrity alliances -- he essentially hatched a bunch of his own while in office, his presidency had an air of infotainment like no other.

More than masterminding the concept of alternative facts, Kellyanne Conway, Jason Miller and Steve Bannon created seemingly alternate realities. Everything was role playing. Even Paul Manafort's hair was a show.

And with conventional, big-league stardom in decline and microcelebrity on ascent -- hastened by Instagram, podcasting, Twitter and reality TV -- Mr. Trump and his backup band of pugilistic pundits were right on schedule.

Jared Kushner and Stephen Miller, who at least in appearance resembled the austere, technocratic types who populated the Obama administration, took on important, but largely behind-the-scenes roles. The outward-facing men of Trumpworld tended to be big, scruffy and full of bluster.

Mr. Bannon, who helped found the right-wing media machine Breitbart and managed much of the first Trump campaign, seemed perpetually enraged. Brad Parscale, who worked on the first and managed much of the second, looked in a suit like a U.F.C. fighter on a job interview.

The women in his orbit, chief among them Ms. Conway -- who described herself in 1998 to Harper's Bazaar as a person whose broad mind and tiny waist never traded places -- more often than not looked like Fox News hosts. And occasionally were.

Mr. Trump's critics derided the men and women of his tribe as D-list. What they often failed to see, said Jose Antonio Vargas, the founder of Define American, a media advocacy organization that works with celebrities on changing the public perception of immigrants, was that this was what made them effective.

In an America filled with people accustomed to being disdained and dismissed, Mr. Vargas argued, voters in red states and swing states for the first time in a long while got to see a White House that was almost entirely devoid of mystique.

''Through the influencers in his orbit, Trump created a parallel reality for people who don't need the validation of The New York Times, who don't listen to NPR, and couldn't give a hoot about the difference between New York magazine and The New Yorker,'' he said.

''Who is on MSNBC?'' Ms. Min said. ''More often than not, it's someone in Georgetown with carefully curated books on American history behind them. The person speaking for Trump on Fox News is loud, brash and may not have read a book in the last year, but it doesn't matter. It's from the gut.''

Twitter, where ideas get winnowed down to sound bites and fights get likes, has proved to be a forum remarkably like reality television, Ms. Min added. Not just because Mr. Trump could smack down enemies without adjudication by journalists, but because his habit of retweeting the most vitriolic attacks on his opponents amplified the voices of those making them, turning them into personalities and building the illusion of a populist uprising around what was mostly a cult of personality.

''It's algorithmic behavior,'' she said. ''People like what you say, you get retweets and validation from the president, so you say more and more of it. It's like in reality television, where you get rewarded for how outrageous your antics are, how bold you are, and also, how aggressively you'll go after the opponent.''

Mr. Trump didn't have to look far to find people who'd do this. His eldest son, Donald Trump Jr., a self-professed ''social media troll'' amassed a following of 6.2 million people by throwing down at people like Robert Mueller, Joe Biden and Elizabeth Warren. That led to a book, ''Triggered,'' a New York Times best seller.

It is dedicated to ''the DEPLORABLES,'' a description Hillary Clinton used during her 2016 presidential campaign to describe many Trump supporters, who reclaimed it as a badge of honor. ''While the elite of the other party look down on you and would rather you stay silent, I salute your work ethic, patriotism and values,'' wrote the younger Mr. Trump, whose girlfriend Kimberly Guilfoyle, a cable news fixture of dubious distinction, became a speaker at the Republican National Convention this year.

Up was down. Down led up.

The gulf between the personalities Mr. Trump minted and the surrogates picked by the Biden campaign to help carry his message mirrors the changing identities of the parties, said Robert George, a right-leaning professor who serves as the McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence and director of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton University. The historically ***working class*** Democratic Party is now increasingly urban and college educated. The historically elite Republican Party, more and more, courts the ***working class***, he noted.

Despite coddling white supremacists, Mr. Trump still sought approval from Black celebrities, including Kanye West and more recently, the rapper Lil Wayne, who said he endorsed Mr. Trump because of his stated intent to introduce a $500 billion ''Platinum Plan'' to help Black entrepreneurs get businesses off the ground.

Among Black activists, there was great skepticism about the plan being anything other than a cynical election ploy -- and the photo op with Lil Wayne being little more than cover for Mr. Trump's history of racist rhetoric and alleged history as a developer of mistreating Black residents at his properties.

It recalled, somewhat, Mr. Trump's photo ops with Lynnette Hardaway and Rochelle Richardson -- two Black conservatives who called themselves Diamond and Silk and uploaded videos of themselves to YouTube, in which they expressed their admiration for Trump and threw shade at Hillary Clinton.

On the surface, said Rashad Robinson, the president of Color of Change, a progressive nonprofit civil rights organization that monitors media and works closely with Hollywood, public appearances by Diamond and Silk gave people who aren't white a degree of permission to vote for Mr. Trump.

But their real function, he argued in an interview, was to provide psychological comfort to those who are, giving them a signal that their sense of persecution at the hands of woke America was rooted not in racism but clearheadedness. They also provided comic relief at rallies that took on a Coachella for Conservatives vibe, complete with crowd surfers like Vernon Jones, a Democratic former member of Georgia's state legislature, who did this maskless at a campaign stop in Macon, Ga., last month, as the pandemic continued to surge.

''Trump created the cult that includes people who serve as court jesters there to entertain the monarch and augment his power,'' Mr. Robinson said. ''The court jester is not the most talented person in the village. It's the clown. It's the person willing to do the 'thing' to serve the monarch, the folks who will say crazy stuff and say it even more crazy than Trump would.''

Of course, he noted, the people who served in this function were not just Black.

Enter Richard Grenell, a telegenic, white, openly gay, right-wing Fox News contributor who in 2017 became the ambassador to Germany after staunchly supporting the president on air. In February he was named the acting director of National Intelligence, a temporary position that nevertheless gave him oversight of the National Security Agency, the C.I.A. and 15 other government agencies.

After the election, Mr. Grennell headed to Las Vegas to help with Mr. Trump's baseless effort to uncover widespread voter fraud. There, he was captured on camera at a news conference dressing down an MSNBC reporter, simply because the reporter asked what evidence exists to back up the president's claims of illegitimate voting. It established him as yet another member of the ever-revolving backup band that refuses to admit a majority of Americans have pulled the plug.

But Mr. Vargas of Define American said the coming end of the Trump presidency will not mark the end of the players within it. ''As much as establishment Republicans recoil at Trump, they are still being very careful about critiquing him, because doing so isn't just a decision to go up against him,'' he said. ''It's a decision to go up against this whole media ecosystem he created that's not going away.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/12/style/the-presidents-backup-band.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/12/style/the-presidents-backup-band.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The reality television star Kim Kardashian West at the White House last year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN LAMARQUE/REUTERS) (D1)

Top left, the actor Scott Baio at a California Trump rally in August. Top right, Kellyanne Conway introducing Melania Trump during a rally last month in Pennsylvania. Above, Lynnette Hardaway, left, and Rochelle Richardson, conservatives who call themselves Diamond and Silk, with Donald J. Trump at a March rally in North Carolina. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY PATRICK T. FALLON/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES

LAURENCE KESTERSON/ASSOCIATED PRESS

DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (D5)

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[***Risking Hospital Bills So They Can Pass Bills***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YK9-GDH1-JBG3-6054-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 4, 2020 Saturday

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**Length:** 1308 words

**Byline:** By Isabella Grullón Paz

**Body**

Uninsured candidates must take extra care to protect their health as they campaign amid the coronavirus outbreak: ''What if something does happen to me?''

In the past week and a half, Cori Bush has been hospitalized twice with shortness of breath, sore throat, fatigue, loss of taste and a headache.

Told at first that she had pneumonia, she was sent home, only to return to the emergency room when her symptoms didn't improve. A coronavirus test came back negative, but she was admitted anyway. She was discharged on Wednesday.

''I'm worried about the bill I'm going to receive,'' she said. ''I drove myself to the emergency room, even though I should have taken an ambulance, but I didn't want that bill. And now the bill from the hospital stay, the bill from being admitted, and the doctor's bill, which is all separate.''

Ms. Bush, 43, doesn't have health insurance. She is also a candidate for Congress, trying for the second time to defeat Representative William Lacy Clay of Missouri, a 10-term incumbent, in a Democratic primary. She is one of several Democratic congressional candidates who gave up their employer-sponsored insurance when they decided to run for office, and whose platforms include expanding access to health care.

The choice between keeping their own health insurance or trying to help others get such coverage wasn't one they made lightly. Now, with the coronavirus outbreak putting electoral politics on pause across the country, they must take extra care to protect their health as they fight to maintain momentum around their campaigns.

''It's a difficult balance, and I have to be real with you, it's a little scary, because I want to be out there,'' said Samelys López, 40, who is running in a crowded Democratic primary in New York's 15th District and is seeking to succeed her former boss, Representative José E. Serrano, who is retiring.

''What if something does happen to me?'' she said. ''I have to be even more vigilant because I don't have health insurance at the moment. And I think that is the reason we need to make the case for universal health care. We should have these things as a human right -- I shouldn't have had to make that choice.''

Nabilah Islam, one of several Democrats running to replace Representative Rob Woodall, a retiring Republican, in a district north of Atlanta, has not had insurance since 2018.

''It was something that I forwent because running for office is cost-prohibitive, and it's expensive to pay for health care,'' she said. ''I can't even qualify for Medicaid, even if I wanted to.''

Georgia is one of 14 states that have not expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, and Ms. Islam is one of more than 100,000 people in her district who are uninsured.

''God forbid I do get the virus,'' Ms. Islam, 30, said. ''I would go into medical debt, and that's not just me, that's over 20 percent of my district.''

As expensive as it can be to run for office, candidates without health insurance face even greater financial risks, since an unexpected ambulance ride or emergency room visit could put them thousands of dollars in debt.

Ms. Islam lost her insurance in 2018, when she left her job as the Southern states finance director at the Democratic National Committee. She bought a flimsy off-market plan the next year, while she was working with local campaigns in Georgia. But now that she's running herself, she has no protections at all.

''When you run for office, you can't do this part time. The deck is stacked against you if you do it part-time,'' she said. ''And if you are a wealthier person, you have the advantages of not really having to worry about health insurance. You're able to run more freely.''

The prospect of going without health insurance, pandemic or not, can deter people from running for office, particularly those who are political outsiders.

''It's one of these additional barriers for candidates who are ***working class***,'' said Hannah Nayowith, who served as campaign manager for Jessica Cisneros, who narrowly lost a primary race last month to unseat Representative Henry Cuellar, Democrat of Texas.

Ms. Cisneros ran a grass-roots campaign while uninsured, even though she provided insurance for her full-time staff. There were times she had to cross the border into Mexico for procedures and medication, because they were more affordable there.

Ms. Nayowith noted that the Democratic Party has often called for greater representation by candidates of color and ***working-class*** people. But many of those people are less likely to have health insurance.

''For folks that look like the kind of candidates that we want in this new era of politics,'' she said, ''it makes it even harder for them to do it.''

''The system wasn't designed to elect people like me: working people, women of color,'' Ms. Islam said. ''And one of those structural barriers is health care.''

When Ms. Bush decided to run for a second time, it was hard for her to leave her job as a nurse in a community health clinic, particularly because she is a single parent of two children. In fact, she had planned to keep working until her campaign got off the ground.

''I was going to work for several months and then take off later in the race. It just didn't end up happening that way,'' she said. ''It's hard to keep a job or find a job when you're running against a Democratic incumbent.''

She is doing her best to keep her campaign going while she recovers from pneumonia, staying present on social media until she feels healthy enough to become more active.

''We structured our campaign to where it continues to roll even when I'm sick,'' Ms. Bush said. ''We will be able to make it day by day. But once I'm back, I'm back.''

Ms. López, who was once homeless herself, left her job at a nonprofit group that builds housing for the homeless in order to run.

She mulled the decision for months, and the prospect of losing her health insurance and her income was one reason it took so long to make up her mind. She had some savings, enabling her to take the leap, but she said that money would run out soon.

Right now, she said, her focus is on helping people in her Bronx district, where many people live in poverty and which has been hit particularly hard by the coronavirus. As her entire campaign operation moved online, she began using her network of volunteers not only to phone and text bank but also to try to get resources and supplies to those who needed them.

She's currently staying isolated, since she knows her health is directly related to the well-being of her campaign.

''I feel like I'm being penalized,'' Ms. López said. ''Just because we make a decision to be in public service and give back, doesn't mean that we should be choosing between life, death and illness.''

Candidates who don't have health care are often unable to provide insurance to their employees as well, leaving multiple layers of their campaigns vulnerable during a pandemic.

''We aren't able to raise the funds to be able to be able to pay a salary and have health insurance,'' Ms. Bush said. ''It was something that we really wanted to be able to do.''

Isra Allison, Ms. Bush's campaign manager, has worked for a string of grass-roots campaigns and, as a result, hasn't had health insurance in four years.

''Having access to universal health care will give people more of the opportunity to plug in to a grass-roots campaign if it's something that they're passionate about,'' she said.

Ms. Islam petitioned the Federal Election Commission in early January to be able to use campaign funds to pay for health insurance, seeking to level the playing field for candidates like her.

''I believe that if you're on the campaign trail, you should be able to have health care,'' Ms. Islam said. ''Especially during a pandemic.''

She said she still hadn't heard back.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/03/us/politics/coronavirus-health-care-candidates.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/03/us/politics/coronavirus-health-care-candidates.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: SAMELYS LÓPEZ, a Democrat running in New York's 15th Congressional District (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARIAN CARRASQUERO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

CORI BUSH, a Democratic House candidate from Missouri who had pneumonia (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT WINKELMEYER/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** April 4, 2020

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[***Beyond ‘White Fragility’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6071-DK51-JBG3-6177-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 28, 2020 Sunday 23:50 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1596 words

**Byline:** Jamelle Bouie

**Highlight:** If you want to let freedom ring, hammer on economic injustice.

**Body**

If you want to let freedom ring, hammer on economic injustice.

Since it emerged [*seven years ago*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/) in response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting of Trayvon Martin, the Black Lives Matter movement has produced a sea change in attitudes, politics and policy.

[*In 2016*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/), 43 percent of Americans supported Black Lives Matter and its claims about the criminal justice system; [*now*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/), it’s up to 67 percent, with 60 percent support among white Americans, compared with 40 percent four years ago. Whereas Democratic politicians once [*stumbled*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/) over the issue, now even Republicans are [*falling over themselves*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/) to say that “black lives matter.” And where the policy conversation was formerly focused on body cameras and chokehold bans, now mainstream outlets are debating and taking seriously calls to demilitarize and [*defund*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/) police departments or to [*abolish*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/) them outright.

But the Black Lives Matter platform isn’t just about criminal justice. From the start, activists have articulated a [*broad, inclusive vision*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/) for the entire country. This, in fact, has been true of each of the nation’s major movements for racial equality. Among black Americans and their Radical Republican allies, Reconstruction — which was still ongoing as of 150 years ago — was as much a fight to fundamentally reorder Southern economic life as it was a struggle for political inclusion. The struggle against Jim Crow, likewise, was also a struggle for economic equality and the transformation of society.

“The black revolution is much more than a struggle for the rights of Negroes,” the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote in “A Testament of Hope”:

It is forcing America to face all its interrelated flaws — racism, poverty, militarism and materialism. It is exposing evils that are rooted deeply in the whole structure of our society. It reveals systemic rather than superficial flaws and suggests that radical reconstruction of society itself is the real issue to be faced.

Our society was built on the racial segmentation of personhood. Some people were full humans, guaranteed non-enslavement, secured from expropriation and given the protection of law, and some people — blacks, Natives and other nonwhites — were not. That unequal distribution of personhood was an economic reality as well. It shaped your access to employment and capital; determined whether you would be doomed to the margins of labor or given access to its elevated ranks; marked who might share in the bounty of capitalist production and who would most likely be cast out as disposable.

In our society, in other words, the fight for equal personhood can’t help but also be a struggle for economic justice. And what we see, past and present, is how that fight against the privileges and distinctions of race can also lay the foundations for a broader assault on the privileges and distinctions of class.

As soon as the Civil War came to a close, it was clear there could be no actual freedom for the formerly enslaved without a fundamental transformation of economic relations. “We must see that the freedman are established on the soil, and that they may become proprietors,” Charles Sumner, the Radical Republican senator from Massachusetts, [*wrote*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/) in March 1865. “The great plantations, which have been so many nurseries of the rebellion, must be broken up, and the freedmen must have the pieces.” Likewise, [*said*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/) the Radical Republican congressman Thaddeus Stevens in September 1865, “The whole fabric of Southern society must be changed, and never can it be done if this opportunity is lost.” The foundations of their institutions, he continued, “must be broken up and re-laid, or all of our blood and treasure have been spent in vain.”

Presidential Reconstruction under Andrew Johnson, a Democrat, would immediately undermine any means to this end, as he restored defeated Confederates to citizenship and gave them free rein to impose laws, like the Black Codes, which sought to reestablish the economic and social conditions of slavery. But Republicans in Congress were eventually able to wrest control of Reconstruction from the administration, and just as importantly, black Americans were actively taking steps to secure their political freedom against white reactionary opposition. Working through the Union Army, postwar Union Leagues and the Republican Party, freed and free blacks worked toward a common goal of political equality. And once they secured something like it, they set out to try as much as possible to affect that economic transformation.

“Public schools, hospitals, penitentiaries, and asylums for orphans and the insane were established for the first time or received increased funding,” the historian Eric Foner wrote in “[*Reconstruction*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/): America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877.” “South Carolina funded medical care for poor citizens, and Alabama provided free legal counsel for indigent defendants.”

For blacks and Radical Republicans, Reconstruction was an attempt to secure political rights for the sake transforming the entire society. And its end had as much to do with the reaction of property and capital owners as it did with racist violence. “The bargain of 1876,” W.E.B. Du Bois [*wrote*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/) in “Black Reconstruction in America,”

was essentially an understanding by which the Federal Government ceased to sustain the right to vote of half of the laboring population of the South, and left capital as represented by the old planter class, the new Northern capitalist, and the capitalist that began to rise out of the poor whites, with a control of labor greater than in any modern industrial state in civilized lands.

Out of that, he continued, “has arisen in the South an exploitation of labor unparalleled in modern times, with a government in which all pretense at party alignment or regard for universal suffrage is given up.”

Du Bois was writing in the 1930s. A quarter-century later, black Americans in the South would launch a movement to unravel Jim Crow repression and economic exploitation. And as that movement progressed and notched victories against segregation, it became clear that the next step was to build a coalition against the privileges of class, since the two were inextricably tied together. The Memphis sanitation workers who [*asked*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/) Martin Luther King Jr. to support their strike in 1968 were black, set against a white power structure in the city. Their oppression as black Americans and subjugation as workers were tied together. Unraveling one could not be accomplished without unraveling the other.

All of this relates back to the relationship between race and capitalism. To end segregation — of housing, of schools, of workplaces — is to undo one of the major ways in which labor is exploited, caste established and the ideologies of racial hierarchy sustained. And that, in turn, opens possibilities for new avenues of advancement. The old labor slogan “[*Negro and White, Unite and Fight!*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/)” contains more than a little truth about the necessary conditions for economic justice. That this unity is fairly rare in American history is a testament to how often these movements have “either advocated, capitulated before, or otherwise failed to oppose racism at one or more critical junctures in their history,” as Robert L. Allen and Pamela P. Allen note in their [*1974 study*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/) of racism and social reform movements.

Which brings us back to the present. The activists behind the Black Lives Matter movement have always connected its aims to ***working-class***, egalitarian politics. The platform of the Movement for Black Lives, as it is formally known, includes demands for universal health care, affordable housing, living wage employment and access to education and public transportation. Given the extent to which class shapes black exposure to police violence — it is poor and ***working class*** black Americans who are most likely to live in neighborhoods marked by constant police surveillance — calls to defund and dismantle existing police departments are a class demand like any other.

But while the movement can’t help but be about practical concerns, the predominating discourse of belief and intention overshadows those stakes: too much concern with “white fragility” and not enough with wealth inequality. The challenge is to bridge the gap; to show new supporters that there’s far more work to do than changing the way we police; to channel their sympathy into a deeper understanding of the problem at hand.

To put a final point of emphasis on the potential of the moment, I’ll leave you with this. In a 1963 pamphlet called “[*The American Revolution*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/): Pages from a Negro Worker’s Notebook,” the activist and laborer James Boggs argued for the revolutionary potential of the black struggle for civil rights. “The strength of the Negro cause and its power to shake up the social structure of the nation,” Boggs wrote, “comes from the fact that in the Negro struggle all the questions of human rights and human relationships are posed.” That is because it is a struggle for equality “in production, in consumption, in the community, in the courts, in the schools, in the universities, in transportation, in social activity, in government, and indeed in every sphere of American life.”

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/). And here&#39;s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/).

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PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GABRIELA BHASKAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; ALYSSA SCHUKAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Among Haitians in the U.S. and Canada, Mixed Emotions, and Fear of the Future***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:633D-67K1-DXY4-X24B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 8, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6

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**Byline:** By Dan Bilefsky

**Body**

Both opponents and supporters of the Haitian president saw his assassination as a worrisome sign that the already fragile country was descending into greater turmoil.

Many Haitians in the diaspora feared the worst on Wednesday, following the assassination of Haiti's president, Jovenel Moïse, an act of violence viewed by many as a potent symbol of the impoverished Caribbean nation's descent into mayhem in recent months.

Rodney Saint-Éloi, a celebrated Haitian-Canadian poet and publisher in Montreal, said the assassination of Mr. Moïse was a blow to democracy in Haiti. ''It turns all Haitians into assassins because he was, like it or not, the president of all Haitians,'' he said. ''It is the failure of a society and of an elite who helped get us to this point.''

Mr. Moïse, killed in an attack early Wednesday on the outskirts of the capital, Port-au-Prince, had presided over a country buffeted by instability, endemic corruption and gang violence, and his refusal to cede power had angered Haitians the world over. Many in the diaspora had put off trips home for the past year, as kidnappings and other acts of violence became more commonplace.

Frantz André, a leading Haitian human rights advocate in Montreal, organized a protest in March in which dozens of Haitians demonstrated against what they called Mr. Moise's political repression. He said that Mr. Moïse was a deeply polarizing figure and that he and other Haitians abroad on Wednesday were feeling ''mixed emotions.''

''I don't think it would be wise to scream victory at his assassination because we don't know what will come after and the situation could be even more precarious,'' Mr. André said. ''Educated people saw him as a threat to democracy and others have been protesting against him because they have nothing to eat.''

But Mr. André added that a sizable minority had also supported Mr. Moïse and saw him as a catalyst for change because he had been promoting the idea of giving Haitians outside the country the right to vote, and was pushing to change the Constitution.

On Wednesday, in New York, Montreal and Miami, Haitians of all political stripes expressed frustration with the state of the country, where a majority of the population earns less than $2.41 a day and which was ranked 170 out of 180 for perceived corruption in 2020 -- tied with North Korea -- by Transparency International, the anti-corruption watchdog.

Conspiracy theories were swirling as to who had killed Mr. Moïse, a man with many enemies. Mr. André said one theory circulating in the Haitian community was that the killers, who were heard speaking Spanish, could have been hired assassins from the Dominican Republic.

Because of its chronic instability, Haiti has a large diaspora, with some of the largest communities based in the United States, Canada, France and the Dominican Republic. There are about 1.2 million Haitians or people of Haitian origin in the United States, according to 2018 data from the U.S. Census Bureau. But the figure is thought to be higher because of a sizable number of immigrants who are in the country without documentation.

More than two centuries ago, Haitians fought to throw off the yoke of colonial France and bring an end to to one of the world's most brutal slave colonies, which had brought France great wealth. What started as a slave uprising toward the end of the 18th century eventually led to the stunning defeat of Napoleon's forces and a declaration of independence in 1804.

But the suffering of the Haitians did not end with the ouster of the French.

The tail end of a brutal, three-decade-long dictatorship under Papa Doc Duvalier and his son, Baby Doc, sent a wave of Haitians to the United States in the 1980s. After the Haiti earthquake in 2010, the United States granted temporary protected statuses to more than 55,000 Haitians, according to the Migration Policy Institute.

On Wednesday, not all were upset by the news of the assassination. In New York, home of a vibrant Haitian expatriate community, Dahoud André, a Haitian radio host from Brooklyn, said he was overjoyed.

''There will be celebrations on the streets of New York,'' he said, stressing that Mr. Moïse had won the 2016 elections with just under 600,000 votes in a country of 11 million people.

''We believe it is a good thing for the Haitian people that Jovenel Moïse is dead,'' he said. ''He was a criminal, who never had any legitimacy and under his leadership, there have been massacres, and corruption, and the arming and financing of street gangs. The only people mourning will be those who were helping him to steal.''

Anthonine Pierre, a community organizer in Brooklyn who works for a group developing Black social justice leadership, said the assassination was her generation's moment to grapple with upheaval in Haiti. ''I think that every Haitian person alive has lived through a lot of instability in the Haitian government and this is just a different moment,'' she said ''This is our generation's moment.''

The opposition in Haiti said that Mr. Moïse's five-year term should have ended in February. Mr. Moïse insisted he had one more year to serve, because his term did not begin until a year after the presidential election, amid accusations of voting fraud.

Garry Pierre-Pierre, publisher of The Haitian Times in New York, said the assassination had seemed a step too far, even for Haiti. ''I didn't see this coming, because this is something I thought we had put behind us,'' he said. ''Despite the shakiness of our democracy, assassination was not a stage we'd go.''

In South Florida, so many Haitians have flocked to the region over the past decades a neighborhood in Miami is known as ''Little Haiti.'' In recent years, a thriving middle class has emerged and is gaining political influence.

Leonie Hermantin, a Haitian community leader in Miami, said Mr. Moïse took on many projects in the northwest of Haiti, where he is from, and enjoyed support there, particularly from the ***working class***. He also received some support in South Florida, she said.

''To some he was a corrupt leader, but to others he was a reformer. He was a man who was trying to change the power dynamics, particularly when it came to money and who had control over electricity contracts,'' Ms. Hermantin said.

In Canada, many members of the diaspora had expressed concern in recent months at the deteriorating situation in Haiti and what they saw as Mr. Moïse's authoritarian leadership.

Frantz Benjamin, a Haitian-Canadian member of the provincial Parliament for the Quebec Liberal Party, said the assassination underlined the utter lack of public safety in Haiti. He said he feared the assassination would undermine economic and political development and deter foreign investment in a country dependent on foreign aid.

''Whether you supported him or not, no one is a winner from this, there is no joy,'' he said. ''If you can kill a president, you can kill anyone.''

Reporting was contributed by Pierre-Antoine Louis and Kimiko de Freytas-Tamura from New York, Vjosa Isai from Toronto, Frances Robles from Miami and Markendy Simon from Montreal.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/world/americas/haitian-diaspora-assassination-reaction.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/world/americas/haitian-diaspora-assassination-reaction.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: An anti-Moïse protest in March at Montreal's Haitian Consulate. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NASUNA STUART-ULIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 8, 2021

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[***The President’s Backup Band; News Analysis***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:618N-5K71-DXY4-X420-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Jacob Bernstein

**Highlight:** Absent connections to the world of celebrity, Donald J. Trump minted his own. His White House wasn’t Hollywood, but maybe that was the point.

**Body**

Absent connections to the world of celebrity, Donald J. Trump minted his own. His White House wasn’t Hollywood, but maybe that was the point.

In August, Kerry Washington, Eva Longoria, Tracee Ellis Ross and Julia Louis-Dreyfus took turns as M.C.s at the Democratic National Convention. They were picked seemingly for their ability to reach different groups of women voters and represented exactly what Hollywood and the party hoped to telegraph about itself: classy, inclusive, empathic.

Donald Trump never had the acceptance of this crowd.

Long after he became a famous developer, there remained about him a face-pressed-against-the-glass quality, at least among the establishment of Park Avenue and the glitziest people of Hollywood. Not for nothing did Fran Lebowitz [*once describe him as*](https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2016/10/fran-lebowitz-trump-clinton-election) a “poor person’s idea of a rich person.”

He spent much of 1990 trying to get Madonna to perform at the opening of the Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, but the only thing he got was [*dissed*](https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2016/10/fran-lebowitz-trump-clinton-election) when Interview asked her that year about rumors he was going to run for president and she responded by calling him “a wimp,” before adding that America should select someone “more handsome.”

When a Trump got invited onto the yachts of media and entertainment moguls like Barry Diller, David Geffen and Rupert Murdoch, her name was usually Ivanka.

It wasn’t a surprise that even the most apolitical stars in America felt the need to express disgust with Mr. Trump during and after his 2016 presidential run.

Hollywood is, after all, a bastion of liberalism, and the jet fuel of the outgoing president’s political career was a racist conspiracy theory he peddled about Barack Obama’s birthplace. Having Scott Baio and Antonio Sabato Jr. as supporters doesn’t really count as a big win, Janice Min, the former editorial director of The Hollywood Reporter, said in an interview.

But because Mr. Trump’s political ascent occurred after his hit reality show, “The Apprentice”; because he had a flair for the comic insult that is unrivaled in modern politics; and because — in the absence of real celebrity alliances — he essentially hatched a bunch of his own while in office, his presidency had an air of infotainment like no other.

More than masterminding the concept of alternative facts, Kellyanne Conway, Jason Miller and Steve Bannon created seemingly alternate realities. Everything was role playing. Even Paul Manafort’s hair was a show.

And with conventional, big-league stardom in decline and microcelebrity on ascent — hastened by Instagram, podcasting, Twitter and reality TV — Mr. Trump and his backup band of pugilistic pundits were right on schedule.

Jared Kushner and Stephen Miller, who at least in appearance resembled the austere, technocratic types who populated the Obama administration, took on important, but largely behind-the-scenes roles. The outward-facing men of Trumpworld tended to be big, scruffy and full of bluster.

Mr. Bannon, who helped found the right-wing media machine Breitbart and managed much of the first Trump campaign, seemed perpetually enraged. Brad Parscale, who worked on the first and managed much of the second, looked in a suit like a U.F.C. fighter on a job interview.

The women in his orbit, chief among them Ms. Conway — who [*described herself*](https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2016/10/fran-lebowitz-trump-clinton-election) in 1998 to Harper’s Bazaar as a person whose broad mind and tiny waist never traded places — more often than not looked like Fox News hosts. And occasionally were.

Mr. Trump’s critics derided the men and women of his tribe as D-list. What they often failed to see, said Jose Antonio Vargas, the founder of Define American, a media advocacy organization that works with celebrities on changing the public perception of immigrants, was that this was what made them effective.

In an America filled with people accustomed to being disdained and dismissed, Mr. Vargas argued, voters in red states and swing states for the first time in a long while got to see a White House that was almost entirely devoid of mystique.

“Through the influencers in his orbit, Trump created a parallel reality for people who don’t need the validation of The New York Times, who don’t listen to NPR, and couldn’t give a hoot about the difference between New York magazine and The New Yorker,” he said.

“Who is on MSNBC?” Ms. Min said. “More often than not, it’s someone in Georgetown with carefully curated books on American history behind them. The person speaking for Trump on Fox News is loud, brash and may not have read a book in the last year, but it doesn’t matter. It’s from the gut.”

Twitter, where ideas get winnowed down to sound bites and fights get likes, has proved to be a forum remarkably like reality television, Ms. Min added. Not just because Mr. Trump could smack down enemies without adjudication by journalists, but because his habit of retweeting the most vitriolic attacks on his opponents amplified the voices of those making them, turning them into personalities and building the illusion of a populist uprising around what was mostly a cult of personality.

“It’s algorithmic behavior,” she said. “People like what you say, you get retweets and validation from the president, so you say more and more of it. It’s like in reality television, where you get rewarded for how outrageous your antics are, how bold you are, and also, how aggressively you’ll go after the opponent.”

Mr. Trump didn’t have to look far to find people who’d do this. His eldest son, Donald Trump Jr., a [*self-professed*](https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2016/10/fran-lebowitz-trump-clinton-election) “social media troll” amassed a following of 6.2 million people by throwing down at people like Robert Mueller, Joe Biden and Elizabeth Warren. That led to a book, “Triggered,” a New York Times best seller.

It is dedicated to “the DEPLORABLES,” a description Hillary Clinton used during her 2016 presidential campaign to describe many Trump supporters, who reclaimed it as a badge of honor. “While the elite of the other party look down on you and would rather you stay silent, I salute your work ethic, patriotism and values,” wrote the younger Mr. Trump, whose girlfriend Kimberly Guilfoyle, a cable news fixture of dubious distinction, became a speaker at the Republican National Convention this year.

Up was down. Down led up.

The gulf between the personalities Mr. Trump minted and the surrogates picked by the Biden campaign to help carry his message mirrors the changing identities of the parties, said Robert George, a right-leaning professor who serves as the McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence and director of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton University. The historically ***working class*** Democratic Party is now increasingly urban and college educated. The historically elite Republican Party, more and more, courts the ***working class***, he noted.

Despite coddling white supremacists, Mr. Trump still sought approval from Black celebrities, including Kanye West and more recently, [*the rapper Lil Wayne*](https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2016/10/fran-lebowitz-trump-clinton-election), who said he endorsed Mr. Trump because of his stated intent to introduce a $500 billion “Platinum Plan” to help Black entrepreneurs get businesses off the ground.

Among Black activists, there was great skepticism about the plan being anything other than a cynical election ploy — and the photo op with Lil Wayne being little more than cover for Mr. Trump’s history of racist rhetoric and alleged history as a developer of mistreating Black residents at his properties.

It recalled, somewhat, Mr. Trump’s photo ops with Lynnette Hardaway and Rochelle Richardson — two Black conservatives who called themselves [*Diamond and Silk*](https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2016/10/fran-lebowitz-trump-clinton-election) and uploaded videos of themselves to YouTube, in which they expressed their admiration for Trump and threw shade at Hillary Clinton.

On the surface, said Rashad Robinson, the president of Color of Change, a progressive nonprofit civil rights organization that monitors media and works closely with Hollywood, public appearances by Diamond and Silk gave people who aren’t white a degree of permission to vote for Mr. Trump.

But their real function, he argued in an interview, was to provide psychological comfort to those who are, giving them a signal that their sense of persecution at the hands of woke America was rooted not in racism but clearheadedness. They also provided comic relief at rallies that took on a Coachella for Conservatives vibe, complete with crowd surfers like Vernon Jones, a Democratic former member of Georgia’s state legislature, who did this maskless at a campaign stop in Macon, Ga., last month, as the pandemic continued to surge.

“Trump created the cult that includes people who serve as court jesters there to entertain the monarch and augment his power,” Mr. Robinson said. “The court jester is not the most talented person in the village. It’s the clown. It’s the person willing to do the ‘thing’ to serve the monarch, the folks who will say crazy stuff and say it even more crazy than Trump would.”

Of course, he noted, the people who served in this function were not just Black.

Enter Richard Grenell, a telegenic, white, openly gay, right-wing Fox News contributor who in 2017 became the ambassador to Germany after staunchly supporting the president on air. In February he was [*named*](https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2016/10/fran-lebowitz-trump-clinton-election) the acting director of National Intelligence, a temporary position that nevertheless gave him oversight of the National Security Agency, the C.I.A. and 15 other government agencies.

After the election, Mr. Grennell headed to Las Vegas to help with Mr. Trump’s baseless effort to uncover widespread voter fraud. There, he was captured on camera at a news conference dressing down an MSNBC reporter, simply because the reporter asked what evidence exists to back up the president’s claims of illegitimate voting. It established him as yet another member of the ever-revolving backup band that refuses to admit a majority of Americans have pulled the plug.

But Mr. Vargas of Define American said the coming end of the Trump presidency will not mark the end of the players within it. “As much as establishment Republicans recoil at Trump, they are still being very careful about critiquing him, because doing so isn’t just a decision to go up against him,” he said. “It’s a decision to go up against this whole media ecosystem he created that’s not going away.”

PHOTOS: The reality television star Kim Kardashian West at the White House last year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN LAMARQUE/REUTERS) (D1); Top left, the actor Scott Baio at a California Trump rally in August. Top right, Kellyanne Conway introducing Melania Trump during a rally last month in Pennsylvania. Above, Lynnette Hardaway, left, and Rochelle Richardson, conservatives who call themselves Diamond and Silk, with Donald J. Trump at a March rally in North Carolina. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY PATRICK T. FALLON/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES; LAURENCE KESTERSON/ASSOCIATED PRESS; DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (D5)

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[***What It’s Like to Run for Congress Without Health Insurance During a Pandemic***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YK3-V0R1-DXY4-X1CS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Isabella Grullón Paz

**Highlight:** Uninsured candidates must take extra care to protect their health as they campaign amid the coronavirus outbreak: “What if something does happen to me?”

**Body**

Uninsured candidates must take extra care to protect their health as they campaign amid the coronavirus outbreak: “What if something does happen to me?”

In the past week and a half, [*Cori Bush*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/04/us/politics/cori-bush-eviction-moratorium.html) has been hospitalized twice with shortness of breath, sore throat, fatigue, loss of taste and a headache.

Told at first that she had pneumonia, she was sent home, only to return to the emergency room when her symptoms didn’t improve. A coronavirus test came back negative, but she was admitted anyway. She was discharged on Wednesday.

“I’m worried about the bill I’m going to receive,” she said. “I drove myself to the emergency room, even though I should have taken an ambulance, but I didn’t want that bill. And now the bill from the hospital stay, the bill from being admitted, and the doctor’s bill, which is all separate.”

Ms. Bush, 43, doesn’t have health insurance. She is also a candidate for Congress, trying for the second time to defeat Representative William Lacy Clay of Missouri, a 10-term incumbent, in a Democratic primary. She is one of several Democratic congressional candidates who gave up their employer-sponsored insurance when they decided to run for office, and whose platforms include expanding access to health care.

The choice between keeping their own health insurance or trying to help others get such coverage wasn’t one they made lightly. Now, with the coronavirus outbreak putting electoral politics on pause across the country, they must take extra care to protect their health as they fight to maintain momentum around their campaigns.

“It’s a difficult balance, and I have to be real with you, it’s a little scary, because I want to be out there,” said Samelys López, 40, who is running in a crowded Democratic primary in New York’s 15th District and is seeking to succeed her former boss, Representative José E. Serrano, who is retiring.

“What if something does happen to me?” she said. “I have to be even more vigilant because I don’t have health insurance at the moment. And I think that is the reason we need to make the case for universal health care. We should have these things as a human right — I shouldn’t have had to make that choice.”

Nabilah Islam, one of several Democrats running to replace Representative Rob Woodall, a retiring Republican, in a district north of Atlanta, has not had insurance since 2018.

“It was something that I forwent because running for office is cost-prohibitive, and it’s expensive to pay for health care,” she said. “I can’t even qualify for Medicaid, even if I wanted to.”

Georgia is one of 14 states that have not expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, and Ms. Islam is one of [*more than 100,000 people in her district*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/04/us/politics/cori-bush-eviction-moratorium.html) who are uninsured.

“God forbid I do get the virus,” Ms. Islam, 30, said. “I would go into medical debt, and that’s not just me, that’s over 20 percent of my district.”

As expensive as it can be to run for office, candidates without health insurance face even greater financial risks, since an unexpected ambulance ride or emergency room visit could put them thousands of dollars in debt.

Ms. Islam lost her insurance in 2018, when she left her job as the Southern states finance director at the Democratic National Committee. She bought a flimsy off-market plan the next year, while she was working with local campaigns in Georgia. But now that she’s running herself, she has no protections at all.

“When you run for office, you can’t do this part time. The deck is stacked against you if you do it part-time,” she said. “And if you are a wealthier person, you have the advantages of not really having to worry about health insurance. You’re able to run more freely.”

The prospect of going without health insurance, pandemic or not, can deter people from running for office, particularly those who are political outsiders.

“It’s one of these additional barriers for candidates who are ***working class***,” said Hannah Nayowith, who served as campaign manager for Jessica Cisneros, who narrowly lost a primary race last month to unseat Representative Henry Cuellar, Democrat of Texas.

Ms. Cisneros ran a grass-roots campaign while uninsured, even though she provided insurance for her full-time staff. There were times she had to cross the border into Mexico for procedures and medication, because they were more affordable there.

Ms. Nayowith noted that the Democratic Party has often called for greater representation by candidates of color and ***working-class*** people. But many of those people are less likely to have health insurance.

“For folks that look like the kind of candidates that we want in this new era of politics,” she said, “it makes it even harder for them to do it.”

“The system wasn’t designed to elect people like me: working people, women of color,” Ms. Islam said. “And one of those structural barriers is health care.”

When Ms. Bush decided to run for a second time, it was hard for her to leave her job as a nurse in a community health clinic, particularly because she is a single parent of two children. In fact, she had planned to keep working until her campaign got off the ground.

“I was going to work for several months and then take off later in the race. It just didn’t end up happening that way,” she said. “It’s hard to keep a job or find a job when you’re running against a Democratic incumbent.”

She is doing her best to keep her campaign going while she recovers from pneumonia, staying present on social media until she feels healthy enough to become more active.

“We structured our campaign to where it continues to roll even when I’m sick,” Ms. Bush said. “We will be able to make it day by day. But once I’m back, I’m back.”

Ms. López, who was once homeless herself, left her job at a nonprofit group that builds housing for the homeless in order to run.

She mulled the decision for months, and the prospect of losing her health insurance and her income was one reason it took so long to make up her mind. She had some savings, enabling her to take the leap, but she said that money would run out soon.

Right now, she said, her focus is on helping people in her Bronx district, where many people live in poverty and [*which has been hit particularly hard by the coronavirus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/04/us/politics/cori-bush-eviction-moratorium.html). As her entire campaign operation moved online, she began using her network of volunteers not only to phone and text bank but also to try to get resources and supplies to those who needed them.

She’s currently staying isolated, since she knows her health is directly related to the well-being of her campaign.

“I feel like I’m being penalized,” Ms. López said. “Just because we make a decision to be in public service and give back, doesn’t mean that we should be choosing between life, death and illness.”

Candidates who don’t have health care are often unable to provide insurance to their employees as well, leaving multiple layers of their campaigns vulnerable during a pandemic.

“We aren’t able to raise the funds to be able to be able to pay a salary and have health insurance,” Ms. Bush said. “It was something that we really wanted to be able to do.”

Isra Allison, Ms. Bush’s campaign manager, has worked for a string of grass-roots campaigns and, as a result, hasn’t had health insurance in four years.

“Having access to universal health care will give people more of the opportunity to plug in to a grass-roots campaign if it’s something that they’re passionate about,” she said.

Ms. Islam petitioned the Federal Election Commission in early January to be able to use [*campaign funds to pay for health insurance,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/04/us/politics/cori-bush-eviction-moratorium.html) seeking to level the playing field for candidates like her.

“I believe that if you’re on the campaign trail, you should be able to have health care,” Ms. Islam said. “Especially during a pandemic.”

She said she still hadn’t heard back.

PHOTOS: SAMELYS LÓPEZ, a Democrat running in New York’s 15th Congressional District (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARIAN CARRASQUERO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); CORI BUSH, a Democratic House candidate from Missouri who had pneumonia (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT WINKELMEYER/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** August 4, 2021

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[***The Rise of ‘Woke Capital’ Is Nothing to Celebrate; Elizabeth Bruenig***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62J8-FN91-JBG3-63NV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 28, 2021 Wednesday 00:14 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1036 words

**Byline:** Elizabeth Bruenig

**Highlight:** Nobody, least of all people on the left, has anything to celebrate in the rise of activist industry.

**Body**

Has there ever been a threat so toothless, so risible, so obviously meek as the one issued of late to American businesses by miffed Republican senators?

“My warning, if you will, to corporate America is to stay out of politics,” Senator Mitch McConnell recently [*told reporters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html). “I’m not talking about political contributions,” he then clarified, in case anyone had mistaken the bark for bite.

Senator Rick Scott of Florida likewise [*warned*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html) of a “massive backlash coming” for “woke corporate America”; meanwhile, Senator Marco Rubio [*reckoned*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html) that “the bill is coming due” for companies that haven’t fulfilled their “patriotic role.”

The lovers’ quarrel between big business and the right has been long in the [*making*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html), but the current tiff emerged from corporations’ attempt to veto Georgia’s [*legislative*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html) effort to [*limit voter turnout*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html). As other states, like Texas, consider Georgia-esque legislation, dozens of executives have put their heads together on a conference [*call*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html)to consider how best to turn back the tide of anti-democratic laws.

Liberals have largely embraced this backup from corporations, with more than a note of glee at the turning of the tables. There’s something to be said for any port in a storm — but nobody, least of all liberals, has anything to celebrate in the rise of activist industry.

Remarkably, the possibility that corporate giants won’t necessarily come to the rescue of American democracy isn’t the only, or even the primary, reason for that. Executives will frame any capital strikes — that is, threatening to relocate operations or to decline to invest in a particular place in order to pressure politicians — as business finally rising to its responsibilities as a major power in society.

The reality is less inspiring. In disciplining governments, companies are simply doing what they always have done: shaping the political landscape to suit their interests and preferences, which can and do shift without notice.

And why not? Both protest and support served certain purposes for them — purposes of their own design, which they have no obligation or incentive to explain to you or me even as they go about organizing the world around us. In the clash between the owners of the assets that supply the means of production and profit (capital, in other words) and government, we are mere collateral.

The corporate defense of democracy is still [*mostly talk*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html) — none of which means the occupants of America’s finest corner offices are misrepresenting their political views. I assume that, like their [*highly educated*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html) and well-heeled peers, a good number of these titans of industry tend to lean blue and earnestly cultivate enlightened views. And yet that, too, is vaguely disconcerting. At a moment when Democrats are attempting to court the ***working class***, publicly marrying their fortunes to those of capital is not only unsavory but unwise.

A reasonable counterpoint: What choice do right-thinking liberals have? American democracy is badly broken — unresponsive, unaccountable, broadly disconnected from the will of the people. Decades of gerrymandering have fractured many voting districts to favor the [*right wing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html), and the results of the 2020 census may well advance Republicans’ [*redistricting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html) strategy even further.

Broad voter [*suppression laws*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html) of the same genus as the latest efforts in Georgia and Texas have opened a gulf between what voters want and what they’re even capable of asking for. And [*over the last decade*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html), 10 wealthy donors alone have poured $1.2 billion into federal elections, while “super PACs” and other groups have spent $4.5 billion, with millions in dark money flowing legally and unaccountably into elections nationwide. You can vote for whomever you choose, but your choices are chosen for you by powers beyond your control.

But those powers, too, answer to some authority: capital. Just as workers can marshal the power they have over capital by going on strike, capital can leverage the power it has over governments by using [*capital strikes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html).

Occasionally, that kind of intervention can arrive as a welcome relief, especially when turned against countermajoritarian policies promulgated by legislators ensconced in crooked districts carved out to favor them.

So why not a marriage of convenience — at least a temporary one? For one: Capital is unfaithful. It can, and does, play all sides. Many of the courageous businesses that protested North Carolina’s 2016 “bathroom bill,” for instance, also[*donated*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html) to political groups that helped fund the candidacies of the very politicians who passed the bill. It isn’t possible to cooperate with capital on social matters while fighting them in other theaters; capital can fight you in all theaters at once, all while enjoying public adulation for helping you, as well.

Setting aside the fact that capital can in a single moment be both heroic and diabolical — Amazon wants you to be able to [*vote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html), but it would prefer if you didn’t [*unionize*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html) — it is, incredibly, even less democratic, accountable and responsive than our ramshackle democracy.

Capital rallies to the defense of democracy while aggressively quashing that very thing in the workplaces where its workers labor. It’s tempting, perhaps even satisfying, to call the government’s boss, but after the dressing down, you’re still just a customer, worth only as much as you can pay them or make them. That the jerks who’ve done their best to enervate our democracy are in the same boat as us is a cold comfort.

I have no idea what to do about this other than know it for what it is. If it were ever the case that knowledge was power, it certainly isn’t so anymore: Knowledge is more widely dispersed than ever; power remains notably concentrated. But knowledge confers a certain dignity. It’s worse to be powerless and unaware than to be powerless and perfectly clear on where you stand.

Elizabeth Bruenig (@ebruenig) is an Opinion writer.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/us/politics/mitch-mcconnell-voting-rights.html).

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTIN PARR/MAGNUM PHOTOS)

**Load-Date:** April 29, 2021

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[***In the Haitian Diaspora: Shock, Sadness and a Fear of What Comes Next***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6338-H731-DXY4-X1X1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 7, 2021 Wednesday 08:46 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; americas

**Length:** 1199 words

**Byline:** Dan Bilefsky

**Highlight:** Both opponents and supporters of the Haitian president saw his assassination as a worrisome sign that the already fragile country was descending into greater turmoil.

**Body**

Both opponents and supporters of the Haitian president saw his assassination as a worrisome sign that the already fragile country was descending into greater turmoil.

Many Haitians in the diaspora feared the worst on Wednesday, following the [*assassination*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/world/americas/haiti-president-assassination.html) of [*Haiti’s president*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/world/americas/haiti-president-assassination.html), Jovenel Moïse, an act of violence viewed by many as a potent symbol of the impoverished Caribbean nation’s descent into mayhem in recent months.

Rodney Saint-Éloi, a celebrated Haitian-Canadian poet and publisher in Montreal, said the [*assassination*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/world/americas/haiti-president-assassination.html) of Mr. [*Moïse*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/world/americas/haiti-president-assassination.html) was a blow to democracy in [*Haiti*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/world/americas/haiti-president-assassination.html). “It turns all Haitians into assassins because he was, like it or not, the president of all Haitians,” he said. “It is the failure of a society and of an elite who helped get us to this point.”

[*Mr. Moïse,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/world/americas/haiti-president-assassination.html) [*killed in an attack*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/world/americas/haiti-president-assassination.html) early Wednesday on the outskirts of the capital, Port-au-Prince, had presided over a country buffeted by instability, endemic corruption and gang violence, and [*his refusal to cede power*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/world/americas/haiti-president-assassination.html) had angered Haitians the world over. Many in the diaspora had put off trips home for the past year, as kidnappings and other acts of violence became more commonplace.

Frantz André, a leading Haitian human rights advocate in Montreal, organized a protest in March in which dozens of Haitians demonstrated against what they called Mr. Moise’s political repression. He said that Mr. Moïse was a deeply polarizing figure and that he and other Haitians abroad on Wednesday were feeling “mixed emotions.”

“I don’t think it would be wise to scream victory at his assassination because we don’t know what will come after and the situation could be even more precarious,” Mr. André said. “Educated people saw him as a threat to democracy and others have been protesting against him because they have nothing to eat.”

But Mr. André added that a sizable minority had also supported Mr. Moïse and saw him as a catalyst for change because he had been promoting the idea of giving Haitians outside the country the right to vote, and was pushing to change the Constitution.

On Wednesday, in New York, Montreal and Miami, Haitians of all political stripes expressed frustration with the state of the country, where a majority of the population earns less than $2.41 a day and which was ranked 170 out of 180 for perceived corruption in 2020 — tied with North Korea — by Transparency International, the anti-corruption watchdog.

Conspiracy theories were swirling as to who had killed Mr. Moïse, a man with many enemies. Mr. André said one theory circulating in the Haitian community was that the killers, who were heard speaking Spanish, could have been hired assassins from the Dominican Republic.

Because of its chronic instability, Haiti has a large diaspora, with some of the largest communities based in the [*United States*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/world/americas/haiti-president-assassination.html), Canada, France and the Dominican Republic. There are about 1.2 million Haitians or people of Haitian origin in the United States, according to 2018 data from the U.S. Census Bureau. But the figure is thought to be higher because of a sizable number of immigrants who are in the country without documentation.

More than two centuries ago, Haitians fought to throw off the yoke of colonial France and bring an end to to one of the world’s most brutal slave colonies, which had brought France great wealth. What started as a slave uprising toward the end of the 18th century eventually led to the stunning defeat of Napoleon’s forces and a declaration of independence in 1804.

But the suffering of the Haitians did not end with the ouster of the French.

The tail end of a brutal, three-decade-long dictatorship under Papa Doc Duvalier and his son, Baby Doc, sent a wave of Haitians to the United States in the 1980s. After the Haiti earthquake in 2010, the United States granted temporary protected statuses to more than 55,000 Haitians, according to the Migration Policy Institute.

On Wednesday, not all were upset by the news of the assassination. In New York, home of a vibrant Haitian expatriate community, Dahoud André, a Haitian radio host from Brooklyn, said he was overjoyed.

“There will be celebrations on the streets of New York,” he said, stressing that Mr. Moïse had won the 2016 elections with just under 600,000 votes in a country of 11 million people.

“We believe it is a good thing for the Haitian people that Jovenel Moïse is dead,” he said. “He was a criminal, who never had any legitimacy and under his leadership, there have been massacres, and corruption, and the arming and financing of street gangs. The only people mourning will be those who were helping him to steal.”

Anthonine Pierre, a community organizer in Brooklyn who works for a group developing Black social justice leadership, said the assassination was her generation’s moment to grapple with upheaval in Haiti. “I think that every Haitian person alive has lived through a lot of instability in the Haitian government and this is just a different moment,” she said “This is our generation’s moment.”

The opposition in Haiti said that Mr. Moïse’s five-year term should have ended in February. Mr. Moïse insisted he had one more year to serve, because his term did not begin until a year after the presidential election, amid accusations of voting fraud.

Garry Pierre-Pierre, publisher of The Haitian Times in New York, said the assassination had seemed a step too far, even for Haiti. “I didn’t see this coming, because this is something I thought we had put behind us,” he said. “Despite the shakiness of our democracy, assassination was not a stage we’d ​go.”

In South Florida, so many Haitians have flocked to the region over the past decades a neighborhood in Miami is known as “Little Haiti.” In recent years, a thriving middle class has emerged and is gaining political influence.

Leonie Hermantin, a Haitian community leader in Miami, said Mr. Moïse took on many projects in the northwest of Haiti, where he is from, and enjoyed support there, particularly from the ***working class***. He also received some support in South Florida, she said.

“To some he was a corrupt leader, but to others he was a reformer. He was a man who was trying to change the power dynamics, particularly when it came to money and who had control over electricity contracts,” Ms. Hermantin said.

In Canada, many members of the diaspora had expressed concern in recent months at the deteriorating situation in Haiti and what they saw as Mr. Moïse’s authoritarian leadership.

Frantz Benjamin, a Haitian-Canadian member of the provincial Parliament for the Quebec Liberal Party, said the assassination underlined the utter lack of public safety in Haiti. He said he feared the assassination would undermine economic and political development and deter foreign investment in a country dependent on foreign aid.

“Whether you supported him or not, no one is a winner from this, there is no joy,” he said. “If you can kill a president, you can kill anyone.”

Reporting was contributed by Pierre-Antoine Louis and Kimiko de Freytas-Tamura from New York, Vjosa Isai from Toronto, Frances Robles from Miami and Markendy Simon from Montreal.

PHOTO: An anti-Moïse protest in March at Montreal’s Haitian Consulate. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NASUNA STUART-ULIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 15, 2021

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[***Walking Through Wuhan***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y5C-81F1-JBG3-60D0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 8, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 8

**Length:** 553 words

**Byline:** By Chris Buckley

**Body**

The mood was tense two weeks ago as I headed to Wuhan, China1, where the coronavirus outbreak began. But not panicked. As one train passenger2 told me, if you're the panicky type, you're not on this train.

I came to see how people were coping with one of the world's worst epidemics in decades. They are cordoned off by a government lockdown and discouraged from going outside.

The scale of Wuhan is breathtaking. This modern-day epidemic has a suitably modern-day setting. But it feels like a ghost town. Nearly all shops are shut. Restaurants are closed. Driving is mostly banned.

Walking around, I can hear birdsong. Dogs bark in chorus. Little ones on the street, hurrying somewhere.3

The market where the outbreak is believed to have started is boarded up.4 It's big, and exotic animals were apparently just a small part.

A government poster5 tells people how to cope: Don't go outside or gather in crowds. Wash your hands. Don't believe rumors or spread them. Have faith, this hardship is temporary.

Wuhan is a city in fear. But it's far from a city in famine.6

This little restaurant stayed open, selling noodles in a wonderful, peppery fish broth. Nearly everyone buys takeout and rushes home with the food.

But masks and thermometers are scarce. ''No masks.'' ''Currently no masks for sale.'' In the signs, you can almost hear the voices of exasperated pharmacy workers who don't have the basic defenses against the virus.

The hospitals are packed.

People crowded at Wuhan Union Hospital for diagnoses, and for prescriptions for fevers, sniffles and coughs. Many are surely wondering: What if it's the coronavirus?

Medical workers rush in and out to receive people from ambulances.7

As the number of cases in Wuhan grew into the thousands, hospitals ran out of beds. Some people have gone from hospital to hospital, only to be turned away.

Medical workers told me they are still seriously short of the gowns and masks that may keep them safer.8 One told me that they have been buying their own masks, and using them longer than they should.

Chinese people often believe IV drips are the best cure for fevers. This man was setting up his drip on the street outside the Red Cross Hospital. It was too crowded inside the hospital, he explained.

One resident set up an isolation unit in a car.

Wuhan is surviving and staying relatively orderly thanks in large part to its ***working class***: people sent out to collect trash, clean streets,9 work in supermarkets -- when every instinct tells residents that they should hole up at home.

It is unclear if the city can get the outbreak under control. A new hospital in Wuhan for coronavirus patients was built in less than two weeks. But there are still not enough beds.

People find ways to cope. This man10 believes exercise will keep him healthy and ward off the virus.

Bowing to public demand, some cigarette and liquor stores stay open.

I met Qiu Dongjun,11 a building worker in Wuhan from rural Hubei. He's living on instant noodles and tinned porridge.

After we spoke, he walked off, then ran back shouting. Did I want one of his tins of porridge?

Xu Shaoqiu,12 a cafe owner, told me he thought questions of who was responsible could be settled later. Get through this first, he said.Chris Buckley is a New York Times correspondent based in China.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/08/world/how-to-survive-in-an-outbreak.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/08/world/how-to-survive-in-an-outbreak.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS BUCKLEY)

**Load-Date:** February 8, 2020

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[***Go See These Black Operas — Several Times; John McWhorter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63WF-6401-DXY4-X481-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 19, 2021 Tuesday 16:21 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1399 words

**Byline:** John McWhorter

**Highlight:** Acquired taste is often richer than, as it were, the easy score.

**Body**

In one of my first newsletters, I discussed an opera about Black people [*written by white men*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/20/opinion/black-english-blues-opera.html) and suggested that we attend, as well, to operas written by Black people. I’ve experienced two of them lately. They, like “Blues Opera,” put me in mind of our current discussion about cultural appropriation — but not in the way some might think.

I refer to Terence Blanchard’s music for the Metropolitan Opera’s premiere piece of the season, the new “[*Fire Shut Up in My Bones*](https://www.metopera.org/season/2021-22-season/fire-shut-up-in-my-bones/),” and “[*Highway 1, U.S.A.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/28/arts/music/william-grant-still-opera-st-louis.html)” by William Grant Still — the “dean” of Black classical composers — which the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis streamed until a few weeks ago.

Both operas are couched in the lush, and even dense, language of 20th-century modern opera. With busy, intricate scoring for a classical orchestra, the harmonic language in both pieces takes us, of course, far beyond the ordinary [*I-IV-V*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqY7ZbgU25I) kinds of progressions of popular song, and beyond that, both challenge their audiences by withholding the easy pleasures of celebrated, hummable arias such as “[*La donna è mobile*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8-vZJNY10k)” from “Rigoletto.”

Instead, they require their audiences to adjust to Black American characters, leading contemporary, everyday lives, who sing in a musical language developed mainly by Europeans. Both pieces seek to take classical music a step beyond what sits most easily on the ear — in relative disregard of whether today’s listeners find it relatable. It’s bold, but the results leave me with mixed feelings.

“Highway 1,” for example, is gorgeous in its orchestral richness. What Still does with a pair of bassoons is a master class. But most of the music minutely tracks characters’ shifts of feeling, impulse and intent in a way that allows little sense of predictable song. “Highway 1” is about texture, not set pieces such as “[*Sì, mi chiamano Mimì*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XacspEL_3Zk)” in “La Bohème.” It is a one-hour rendering of a domestic drama in which there are no [*arias*](https://sfopera.com/contentassets/1e61ab24770e4c34abce87aaf6a3e39d/opera-vocabulary.pdf), per se — no moments of catharsis when a certain type stands up and yells “Bravo!” (remember the “La Traviata” [*scene*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vXcKk6R8vhg) in “Pretty Woman”?) at least until the end.

In a way, this is naturalistic: Real conversation doesn’t usually include breaking out into speeches with a beginning, a middle, an end and rests for applause. But then, neither does real life entail an orchestra limning the contours of our subtle shifts in feeling. Music like Still’s, in other words, requires us to, as we say these days, “do the work.”

As does “Fire Shut Up in My Bones.” This is a welcome work in all ways: It is the first opera by a Black American to play the Met, and the premiere piece at the post-pandemic reopening, with Blanchard blending the achingly beautiful kind of instrumental music he’s composed for cinema with lyrics and libretto.

The challenge here is to adjust to hearing the intricacy of film-scoring music sung to. Most of us have passively accepted the dense and even discordant harmonies and sounds of modern classical music in the background music of film and television shows, including Blanchard’s music for several Spike Lee films, such as last year’s “[*Da 5 Bloods*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNsAcQUliBQ).” But “Fire” is a work in which similar music is rendered in song.

The result is an opera in which music rarely resolves, not settling down into the home chord where it started. Or if it does, the score of “Fire” does so in a harmonically intricate way many will find difficult to reach on one hearing. “Fire” has arias, but to most listeners they will sound like they don’t quite end, which is what Blanchard intends: Like many modern opera composers, he wants to portray continuing experience rather than a succession of set pieces.

But this requires, again, doing the work. The story, based on the best-selling memoir of my New York Times colleague, the columnist Charles Blow, is indeed “[*arresting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/30/books/fire-shut-up-in-my-bones-by-charles-m-blow.html).” The [*fraternity step-show sequence*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5GP_wou17B4) is as electrifying as the word around town has noted. But even though Blanchard infuses the music with aspects of blues and jazz in spots, overall, the music is not only unparallel to how actual people express themselves — as in all opera — but is written in a modern classical language that requires the ear to reach even further than, say, “[*Don Giovanni*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hnd5ULYG2no)” does.

We are asked, then, to process ***working-class*** Black people expressing themselves in a musical language most of which a composer such as Paul Hindemith would have found familiar. The dissociation reminds me of a moment in “[*Emperor Norton*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fi5hsZsgfG4&amp;t=515s),” a modern opera I saw in which a character describes the power of the railroad in musical language that mimics trains not at all and sounds more like someone saying he’s dizzy and needs to lie down. I took this as a challenge but was glad I had had a lot of coffee before the performance.

In a sense, both “Fire Shut Up in My Bones” and “Highway 1, U.S.A.” can be seen as cultural appropriation of music typically thought of as white — [*a good thing in itself*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/opinion/cultural-appropriation-opera.html).

However, the tradition being appropriated here is based on a philosophy of composition and audience reception hardly inevitable. Only in the late 19th century did the custom settle in, as ordinary among Western music patrons, that one sit politely through pieces of considerable length that didn’t occasionally, and deliberately, dazzle audiences with virtuoso feats.

As such, “Highway 1” and “Fire” are, like most modern classical music works, best appreciated via multiple viewings or listenings. If memory serves, one of the Black chorus members in Virgil Thomson’s 1928 “[*Four Saints in Three Acts*](https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/98/05/03/specials/stein-opera.html)” recalled later in life that the elliptical lyrics Gertrude Stein wrote for that opera started to make a kind of sense after you sang them night after night. But suppose you get to see the piece only once? That is the kind of challenge that pieces like these two operas present: I have already bought a recording of “Highway 1” to listen to while I cook and to allow the music, over time, to get under my skin. But I worry most people who saw this piece recently are unlikely to do that. A part of me wishes it had been easier to “get” more on first viewing.

I respect operas like these, am elated that they exist and am always up for sampling others. But the two pieces I have just seen leave me with a guilty feeling I suspect many share: a desire that they appropriated from white music a little less!

In Black music that’s fused with white music, I am more excited when the musical language is more viscerally embraceable beyond sheer beauty of texture. Give me quirky melody and dense harmony, yes, but with beginnings and endings that can be gleaned and appreciated in real time, not just after close study, and jazz and blues language (as well as, perhaps, composition from other Black musical traditions) not necessarily foregrounded, but not elusive either. A workout, yes, but one that leaves me with exercise-bike euphoria.

There was once a sorry tradition among white critics of condemning any Black music beyond the hot or bluesy as inauthentic, expecting Black composers and lyricists to stay in their supposedly prescribed place. I am in no sense trying to echo them; I salute Still and Blanchard. But the alternate music I am thinking of — that I want — includes the acidic chordings of Ellington’s “[*Far East Suite*](https://music.youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy_nb6yZ_s_SVRqU4YJWUFLK5zoezMaOSLQc),” the smart plushness of Wynton Marsalis’s “[*In This House, On This Morning*](https://music.youtube.com/watch?v=4PYevmDSIKY&amp;list=OLAK5uy_kRzrBOdMPL2We8Qh2HK-IV89DSHdnRJVw)” or Bill Lee’s [*grand, eclectic score*](https://music.amazon.com/albums/B0013AUYHK?do=play&amp;ref=dm_ws_dp_ald_bb_phfa_xx_xx_xx) for his son’s film “Do the Right Thing.” None of these glorious selections are confined artistically, and all infuse elements of both Black and non-Black traditions.

And they connect.

I am saying neither that I wish Still and Blanchard would simply “heat up” their work (especially as Still infused, for example, his orchestral pieces with plenty of Black folk and jazz influence, as has Blanchard in other work of his), nor do I support a notion that classical forms are burdened by a “[*white racial frame*](https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.20.26.2/mto.20.26.2.ewell.html).” Nevertheless, I feel like these two operas leave one with work to do that reviews do not always prepare readers for. I intend to keep revisiting them to fully take them in. I hope others do as well. Acquired taste is often richer than, as it were, the easy score.

Have feedback? Send a note to [*McWhorter-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:McWhorter-newsletter@nytimes.com).

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[***Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Reihan Salam; The Ezra Klein Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65KV-4DK1-JBG3-63JW-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, like today’s episode with Reihan Salam. Listen [*wherever you get your podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/how-to-listen-ezra-klein-show-nyt.html).

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[MUSIC]

EZRA KLEIN: I’m Ezra Klein. This is “The Ezra Klein Show.”

So we are wrapping up our series on “The Rising Right” at least for now. But before I get into today’s episode, I want to talk through what I’ve been trying to do in these episodes and answer some questions I’ve gotten from a number of you.

The point of all of these has been to explore one of the central stories in American politics right now, the fight over what the Republican Party will become. Because it isn’t just that Democrats didn’t anticipate Donald Trump. Republicans didn’t either. It’s their party he took over.

But Trump was and is too contradictory and erratic and narcissistic a figure to answer the question he posed. The main constant in his view of what the Republican Party should be is that it should be his party, and that’s left a wide open field to contest everything else — what the Republican Party believes, where it goes for votes, what it is actually trying to achieve.

My intention in these shows has been to explore some of the answers that I see or that I’ve heard are gaining strength. And I really want to underscore that word, explore. The value of these episodes, for me, and I hope for you, is if they help me understand these ideas and strategies and thinkers well enough to think about what they mean for American politics, to recognize them when they’re being played out.

And then also, it’s in seeing enough of them close enough together so the right doesn’t look like a monolith, that it isn’t. So the first episode of Matt Continetti was about this long conflict between the establishment of populist right, which kind of implicitly and explicitly I’m saying is moving towards the populist right, right now. The last two episodes with Patrick Deneen and Erika Bachiochi have been about the populist right and the way in particular a kind of Catholic right critique and thinking is informing it.

I think politicians like JD Vance are sounding a lot like Patrick Deneen lately. The Supreme Court majority that looks likely to overturn Roe v. Wade reflects and works with a lot of the thinking that Bachiochi is drawing on. But today’s episode tracks a pretty different project. Reihan Salam is the president of the Manhattan Institute, a conservative think tank that has long tried to shape a conservatism responsive to the problems and possibilities of cities.

And his view is that Democrats have made this very fundamental mistake, that in trying to build a truly multi-ethnic coalition, they’ve alienated the exact voters they’re trying to secure. Latino voters swung by about eight to 10 points towards Trump in the 2020 election, to take just one example, and recent polls show the Democrats are continuing to lose their support leading up to the midterms. Salam thinks that Democratic positions on race and gender and public safety have put the left at odds with a lot of Black and Hispanic and Asian voters who are quite a lot more conservative on those issues than white liberals are.

And at the same time, he thinks failures of Democratic governance in blue cities, particularly around housing and education and crime, have created an opening for a new conservative agenda. And I should say this isn’t just theory. People at his think tank, at his institution, like Chris Rufo in particular, are trying to weaponize these divides, deepen these cleavages, and they’re doing so in ways that I find deeply harmful, but that are really having an undeniable effect on American politics and the fights we’re having in the ones we’re going to have. So I wanted to spend some time trying to understand the theory behind all of it. As always, my email is [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com)

Reihan Salam, welcome to the show.

REIHAN SALAM: Ezra Klein, thank you so much for having me.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to read something you said recently that I found interesting. You said, quote, “There’s definitely a contest for the future of the center right. My sense is that there’s an emerging right of center politics that is deeply pessimistic about the prospect of a diversifying America, explicitly anti-urban and increasingly willing to embrace redistribution and centralized power.” So give me your critique of that right and what you think the alternative could and should look like.

REIHAN SALAM: Yes. So populism is an affect, it’s a style, it is oftentimes something that is used by parties out of power, parties in opposition, you know, by out groups in general. When you feel like you’re locked out of power, it is critique, but it’s not always something that represents a kind of constructive political program.

So I would argue that this rival politics that I’m describing could have populist elements, could have populist moments, particularly when it’s in opposition, but more broadly, my thesis is that when you’re looking at the changing center right coalition, when I’m looking at how I think it might change in the future, what I’m seeing is a coalition that is, broadly speaking, ambitious, opportunity-oriented. It’s heavily non-college but it’s a coalition that is rooted in areas that are economically stagnant, and therefore, not as exercised about inequality as they are about stagnation. I think that there is a real appetite for a growth.

So again, this isn’t to say that it’s classic Boomer, Reagan era politics, but I think that some aspects of that normie conservatism actually resonate a lot with these people that I believe are people who can be incorporated into the coalition. And by that I mean second generation Americans, for example. When you look at second generation Hispanics, people of Asian origin, I think that the politics for these groups are very much in flux, particularly for those who are not operating in elite contexts.

And I think more broadly, there’s the sense that something is badly wrong, something is broken in American life, but that the particular prescriptions of the post-liberal or anti-liberal right are not really all that responsive to the concrete quality of life challenges that people are facing. So I guess that would be my big picture. And there are a lot of different ways to kind of cut at this, but I think that there has on some corners on the right been this idea that state power is going to be something that will deliver us from the cultural triumph of the left and I don’t think that’s quite right. I think that when you embrace centralized state power in that way, it can have all kinds of unintended consequences, including consequences that would not be especially attractive to a more pluralistic right.

EZRA KLEIN: Let me ask you about two levels of that that came up there. So what is the level of affect? You described this coalition, this tendency on the right as anti-urban, which I think is true. I think if you listen to how cities, many cities are described by Republican politicians, you think we all lived in Mad Max hell holes, and that doesn’t feel true to my experience, even though of course, there are problems in a lot of these cities.

But there’s an anti-urban affect that then is married increasingly and differently than it has been in some recent years to an openness to redistribution, an openness to using the power of the state to act on behalf of your own constituency, a frustration that Republicans over decades in the voice of this critique put the market ahead of communities, ahead of families, ahead of the ***working class***. And you’re pushing against both of those ideas simultaneously. So can you talk a bit about the anti-urban and redistributive tendencies that you think are maybe over-correcting here?”

REIHAN SALAM: Well, I think that urban is a capacious concept, understood loosely something like 80 percent of Americans live in urbanized areas. So in a way, the kind of anti-urbanism that I was invoking in that earlier conversation is really focused on these big, expensive, cosmopolitan Metropolitan areas that have become so monolithically left that they are a kind of boogeyman for some on the right.

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah, New York, S.F., L.A., Seattle.

REIHAN SALAM: Exactly. And also, part of it is that you see this generational tension that’s mapped onto geography as well. This is a much larger subject, but if you look at America and our experience of immigration, what you see is immigration levels that are not unusually high, but by the standards of American history, they are very high relative to native birth rates, because native birth rates have collapsed. And so what you see is this huge generational disconnect where there are people in aging, in many cases depopulating regions of the country, who look at these big, diverse, immigrant-rich cities and communities and they see something that is not entirely familiar to them, they see something that is very culturally ascendant.

In some ways that, by the way, could even be unrepresentative, but that are culturally ascendant and that feel foreign, and that feel alien, and that feel hostile. So I think that this anti-urban tendency is connected to a variety of other demographic developments and that’s why I think that there are folks on the right who don’t recognize that actually you have an awful lot of potential allies in these places, more than you might think, and it’s one reason why I think a broader breakdown in American politics on both sides of the aisle is what I see as this breakdown of entrepreneurial coalition building, this idea that I actually want to grow my party. You know, when I think about the rival party, I’m not thinking about permanent enemies, I am thinking about a collection of constituencies, some of which might be one over, which is why I ought to be careful about the level of partisan enmity. I ought to be careful about how binary I’m making my agenda.

EZRA KLEIN: You’ve mentioned a few times here and in other interviews that you think there is a turn in the Republican Party towards these antagonisms, this culture war, and we’ll talk about that, but away from what you call “quality of life issues.” What are those quality of life issues, you think, that the Republican Party has been neglecting?

REIHAN SALAM: Well, if you’re talking about the very near term, I think the biggest, most essential, most important quality of life issue has not been neglected, and that issue is crime and public safety. Now, one could argue about how much it is that politicians at the federal level can really do about that. How constructive can they be? But I really believe that the increase in urban violence over the last two or three years is the essential quality of life issue.

To even call it a quality of life issue almost seems to diminish it, but I think it’s incredibly important. And then, of course, there are other issues that are related to questions of practical management about some things that are intrinsically or especially likely to be public sector functions.

This is something you thought a lot about, Ezra, but think about traffic fatalities and how much we take for granted. It’s incredible just the basics of how our cities and communities work.

The housing affordability crisis is so profound that it’s not a boutique issue. I actually think it’s an everything issue. It’s totally essential to the brokenness of American life and of our politics. That’s a quality of life issue where I do think that conservatives have traditionally not had a ton to say about it.

So I think that those issues where public policy management, getting things right, getting public sector incentives right is really essential. Those are things that I think have been discounted, have been underplayed to some degree. I wonder what you think about that, because you’re someone who’s obviously wrestling a lot with these quality of life questions. You’re living in a state that by rights should be a progressive utopia, but where there obviously really profound quality of life challenges.

EZRA KLEIN: I think one of the interesting things about Democratic Party politics right now in California is that you are seeing a lot of politicians who are trying to reckon with why the governance of their own party didn’t work out better. But at the same time, something I do see in the Democratic party is a lot of politicians, thinkers, writers, et cetera, who really are doing that reckoning.

I mean, you look at a Scott Wiener, you look at Congressman Ro Khanna, you look at a Mayor London Breed, you look at a Matt Iglesias on something like housing. And I could kind of go down this list, work I’m hopefully doing on sort of supply-side progressivism, and I do think that there is a real wrestling happening with why a lot of blue state governance hasn’t worked out better. And at the same time, I’ve heard honestly a lot less of it from the right. One of the things that is striking to me is the vagueness of a lot of right-wing prescriptions at this point.

I mean, something I’ve been noting even just doing this series. I think this is coming from not the part of the party that you necessarily represent, but a lot of pro-family conservatism ends up sounding kind of banally center left in its policy prescriptions. They’re just proposing things that in some form or another Joe Biden is already proposing. I think a lot of Republican thinking that housing is actually behind a lot of liberal thinking at this point.

Even on crime, it’s something that people point out a lot there’s obviously a very big fight at the level of almost meta politics over things like defund the police. But because of the right’s budgetary politics, if you really looked at things like the Trump budgets, they were defunding the police. And if you looked at Democratic budgets, they were adding a lot of money into safety and policing. So something I do see when I look at the two coalitions is a genuine divergence between their brands, maybe we’ll say, particularly their social media brands, particularly where the activist energy is seen as being, and they’re serious pragmatic practical thinking about what to do about the problems people are actually having.

REIHAN SALAM: This is very exciting to me because you are vindicating my thesis about the Manhattan Institute, who we are and what we do. Because when it comes to public safety, for example, we have a really sharp dynamic team of people who are doing incredibly, of course I’m biased, compelling work on these issues. Charles Lehman and Ralph Manuel, for example, are squarely focused on the idea that there is a certain strain of progressivism, not yours, but there’s a certain strain of progressivism that is pursued a starve the beast politics as it pertains to the criminal justice system.

And when you starve the criminal justice system of resources, what you wind up seeing is dysfunction that would be avoidable if it were adequately funded. So you know, we are certainly not of the view that government in every imaginable domain should be shrunk to the size where we can drown it in the bathtub. Certainly when it comes to law and order, when it comes to proactive policing, when it comes to thinking about the carceral system, investing in it to make sure that it is humane and also has the necessary capacity to deal with violent repeat offenders.

This is work that we’ve been doing actively at the Institute. And when it comes to housing policy and a range of other issues, Some of that work is particularly focused on New York City, other work is more national in scope, but we have people who are doing really nitty-gritty work also on what the coalitions for constructive change in those domains might look like. So I think, in some ways you and I are approaching a similar set of problems. And of course, we travel in different cliques and different circles, but I think that what we’re trying to do at MI is build a community of scholars, journalists, activists who are very focused on those concrete, material challenges.

EZRA KLEIN: Well let me open up then, some of our divisions before this becomes too agreeable of a podcast.

REIHAN SALAM: Let’s do it.

EZRA KLEIN: Because I think Manhattan has a bit of a split identity at the moment. I followed the work there for a very long time. I know a lot of the very wonky people there working on social insurance, or budget, or crime. But I think most people coming into contact with the Manhattan Institute right now are coming into contact with it because a lot of the anti-critical race theory push is being driven by Chris Rufo over there, and he’s been pushing very hard and very explosively in support of Don’t Say Gay laws and this narrative that Democrats are, quote, “groomers.”

And so I understand at this point you all as having this sort of dual theory. On the one hand, a deeper focus maybe on urban quality of life issues, that really is there, but on the other hand, believing that there is a political opportunity for the Republican Party in splitting open divisions that he sees, that you see inside the Democratic Party or inside the Democratic party’s coalition around race and culture issues. So do you want to talk a bit about that view of the Democratic Party and that fissure they’re trying to exploit?

REIHAN SALAM: Well gosh, that’s certainly one way to put it. My view is that there is a phenomenon that I think of as race essentialism. There are many generally bright, well-meaning people who believe that the way to address the challenge of entrenched racial disadvantage is to raise the salience of race to basically embrace race consciousness in public policy and culture. And my own view is that this kind of race essentialism is polarizing, but also just analytically, I don’t think that it gives us a really accurate view of the rich complexity of American life, of American ethnic life.

I believe that we’re going through a period of a lot of ethnic change. I believe that there is what a lot of folks call a societal mainstream, basically this kind of portion of society, a portion of society that sometimes mistakes itself for the whole, but it is a significant portion in which your ethnicity or race doesn’t really determine your fate. This is, you know, a subject of great interest to me because I think that it reflects the life experience of a lot of the people I grew up around. I feel in some ways, it captures aspects of my own life experience as a second generation American of color.

And in a way, when I think about the hyper race consciousness that I see, particularly in elite discourse, I see it more as a reflection of the internal politics of elite institutions and how they operate, than as something that is really a perfect and complete distillation of American life. Race matters in particularly when you’re looking at the Black experience. There are many aspects of it that are really, really distinctive and important and worthy of our attention. But this whole idea of a Rainbow Coalition, this whole idea of using the lens of race to understand not just Black, non-Black divides, but to understand the experience of immigrants from Paraguay, immigrants from Bangladesh, I think that it’s really limiting.

And when you look at the ways in which immigration-driven demographic and cultural change are working, this universe of people who are not of European descent, who are also not the multi-generational descendants of enslaved African-Americans, you’re dealing with a big, big group of people.

And so in a way, this push against race essentialism, I see it almost as this group of post 1965 Americans, call them new stock Americans. They’re asserting themselves in the conversation. They’re actually saying, hey, wait a second, American life is a little bit more complicated than the kind of race-conscious, race-essentialist thesis allows.

And there are problems, but it’s to some degree a matter of how we conceive of those problems. Everyone agrees there’s a race problem, but if you disagree about the nature of that problem, you could feel really frustrated because you could wind up pushing in very different directions. And both sides are thinking, hey, this is what progress looks like. What’s going on here? It’s, in that sense, kind of a wicked problem.

EZRA KLEIN: You make a distinction in your work between anti-racism and what you call ‘anti-racialism.’ Can you unpack that a bit?

REIHAN SALAM: Yes. So anti-racism, here I’m just invoking a familiar idea and I’m oversimplifying, but I think that part of the idea is that racial disparities are themselves Prima facie evidence of racism. When you talk about institutional or structural racism, you are in some ways not talking about racist behavior or explicitly racist institutions in the moment. What you are talking about is the cumulative, multidimensional legacy of past racism and the disparities themselves as a kind of racism that is basically compounding, reinforcing over time. So that’s anti-racism.

Racialism is just a term that is not an uncommon one, referring to this idea that race should be highly salient.

We should heighten our consciousness of race. My kid’s in preschool and that the kids at that age should really use a kind of racialized vocabulary for understanding themselves and their relationships to their community, their communities, and what have you. And there are a lot of, again, thoughtful, serious, well-meaning people who believe that this kind of racialism is a good and effective tool for positive cultural and institutional change. Anti racialism is the belief that in general, it would be better for us to look at the world through the lens of ethnicity rather than race per se. It would be better if we looked at the world more through the context of individuals, family networks, recognizing the complexity that exists within so-called racial groups.

EZRA KLEIN: I think that the way people discuss anything outside of politics is always more complex and nuanced than the way they discuss it inside of politics. But the way I in general understand the sort of anti-racist and, as you had put it, anti-racialist discourse is that the anti-racist discourse, right, which I think you actually described it quite well and I would sort of simply add to that description that I understand it as being a pretty laser-like focus on the question of racial inequality, rather than racial intent. And so the question of, what is the motivation now, is less important than the question of, are we making measurable progress towards equality on whatever basket of measures you might choose?

But the place where I do think this goes is that you bridled a little bit when I suggested that this was a divide that you or the people around you are looking to exploit the Democratic party, and I thought that was actually a fairly neutral description of the way I think you see the world. Because as I understand it, and one of the things I think is provocative in your thinking, is that there is certainly a strain of Democratic thinking that argues the way you build, keep, expand, excite a multiracial coalition is by being very, very attentive to the differing experiences of the groups within it and really kind of embracing anti-racism. And I understand you were saying that where the Democratic party has gone on race does not represent a lot of people of color themselves, and that in many ways it is by highlighting where the Democratic party has gone on race, that Republicans can create space to build a more multiracial coalition of their own. Did I describe that right or which point am I missing?

REIHAN SALAM: So I guess I’ll just say that, and perhaps this is me being overly sensitive, but I just don’t think of it as cynical. I really do think of it as, and not to say that you were suggesting it, but when you think about wedge politics and what have you. I mean, for me it really is, and I think for my colleagues too, just a really earnest attempt to grapple with the state of the country and insofar as there is a partisan political dimension, which of course is, we’re a think tank and we work happily with people on both sides of the partisan aisle.

But yeah, I mean, just thinking about the kind of larger political scene, yeah, I think that you’re totally onto something. When you have a kind of racialized understanding of your coalition as a rainbow coalition, you’re missing the fact that there are many people within that coalition who don’t think of themselves in terms of panethnic categories. Maybe they want to be addressed as citizens. Maybe they want to be addressed in terms of larger categories or even smaller, more specific categories.

There’s just a way in which these big, panethnic racial categories have taken on so much meaning. They were created by some combination of census bureaucrats and basically marketers who are trying to kind of aggregate a lot of different groups. You know what I mean? And they just don’t really describe the texture of life for people, particularly people outside of elite institutions.

Now, I’ve mentioned that before, but and I do want to elaborate on this. So if you were someone who is participating in an elite institution where racial representativeness is an imperative, diversity is an imperative, there is this weird vibe. Because it’s almost as though, hey, you are part of this institution and part of your obligation is to be a teacher, part of your obligation is to be authentically a spokesperson for group X. And so you have this aggregation of these different groups.

These are the environments in which something like Asian-American identity takes hold and takes meaning. It takes hold because there’s literally an Ethnic Studies Department in which you could take classes in Asian-American studies. So something that does not necessarily reflect the complexity and texture of your life does mean something in that environment.

And so when I look at ethnic politics, a big divide for me is between basically these people who’ve engaged with these elite institutions, particularly people of color, who’ve engaged these elite institutions and where leading this particular kind of structured, integrated life where you are supposed to be authentic, you’re supposed to be a spokesperson for X, Y or Z, is something that has a big effect on your wider worldview.

And that’s one reason why I think there’s a huge disconnect between people of color who have been socialized into these elite institutions and the racialized discourse that is so essential to those institutions and people of color who exist outside of those institutions. So if you’re someone who is second or third-generation Mexican-American who went to a good public university but that was not selective, and you’re someone who is middle, upper-middle class, but you did not navigate that world, your subjective experience is really, really different from someone who went to Yale.

And I think that that is a really interesting divide, because the people who do our jobs, people who are basically paid to be decently articulate spokespeople who generate ideas, are very disproportionately drawn from people who’ve operated within these highly racialized contexts in which this certain idea of diversity is really important. And I think that has been a real challenge for Democratic politics. I think that Republican politics has all sorts of challenges, but I think that it is kind of relevant to some of the challenges that Democrats are experiencing in connecting with a diversifying electorate.

[MUSIC]

EZRA KLEIN: One of the complexities of this, I think, is that on the one hand, I think there’s very much something to the idea that there is an intertwining of educational effects, class effects, the people who rise up to the top of various kinds of elite institutions and the way they become unrepresentative and that leads in all kinds of ways to divergence between the elite of a party and the base. I mean, you would see it in the Republican Party with the high level of attention to the needs of very rich people and the people who run corporations when the base of the party tends to be much more economically populist if you look at polling. So I take that as an ongoing struggle in both coalitions, but it, as you say, I think a specific one with specific dynamics in the Democratic coalition.

But I also think something that is not to be discounted here is a substantive grappling with a feeling, and in many ways the fact, that we are not making the progress we hoped to. And I take the Obama era as being a real catalyst for this, because on the one hand, you have the election of the first Black president, you have this real moment of hope. People talk about us becoming a post-racial country. And then not only does it activate a lot of racial animus and a lot of racialization in our politics, but you also just don’t see as much progress as people were hoping to and it begins to focus people on that.

So I’ll give an example here, that to take the racial inequality lens, the Black-white wealth gap grew. Mass incarceration really wrecked Black communities in a way that I think people look back on correctly as being quite racist. And then when the drug war came to opioid addiction in white communities, all of a sudden it got a whole lot more compassionate. So at the same time that there’s an elite and educational dynamic to this, I also think there’s a grappling with the view that having an overly colorblind or melting pot-ish lens has allowed a lot of racial inequality to fester and that people have put forward that lens sort of failed to solve it and people are trying to grapple for ways to do better in the future. How do you think about or respond to that more substantive analysis of the racial inequality problem?

REIHAN SALAM: So I will say, I just need to register a bit of a disagreement. When you look at the sharp crime decline that took place through the ’90s and the 2000s, you know, it was really quite extraordinary because the burden of homicide, the burden of shootings was so heavily borne by Black Americans, it actually yielded an increase in the life expectancy of Black men in the U.S. that would be the equivalent of eliminating obesity and the harms stemming from obesity, diabetes and what have you. So if I recall correctly, it was about an increase of about a year in life expectancy, quite dramatic. So we can, of course, litigate the question of, to what extent did increases incarceration did some increase and how punitive the criminal justice system was contribute to that? But I really do think that, that was a really dramatic human advance.

EZRA KLEIN: Right, the disagreement is over whether or not mass incarceration is the driver of that.

REIHAN SALAM: Right, indeed, indeed. And certainly, one of my colleagues has a book coming out later this summer that we can talk about later that I think will be a useful intervention in that debate. One thing I will note when we talk about disparities, certainly in income, disparities in wealth are a little bit harder to come by when you’re looking at Americans by ancestry, but it is really quite remarkable when you look at the dispersion of income by non-Hispanic white groups. It really is quite dramatic.

And so when you look at disparities across racial groups, this is something that people like you and I, we fixate on because these numbers are tractable, these numbers are visible. I actually believe, and this is a policy view that I hold, that we need much richer data on income differences. I would like to see more data on wealth differences, which again, is hard to come by, on Americans based on ethnic ancestry, based on a variety of other characteristics. There is some really interesting research that’s being done now looking at outcomes among African-Americans and trying to tie it to which county of origin did they come from the Deep South?

And it does appear as though you see meaningful differences across groups. It really does seem as though reducing these things to race, part of the problem is that it could be that we find interesting bits of information. Why were the outcomes of people from this county who moved to Chicago versus these people who moved to Minneapolis or these people who moved to Oakland, why were they different? There’s a way in which the racialization of our understanding of these issues flattens distinctions that could really enrich our perspective and that could actually be really helpful strategies for thinking about what upward mobility might look like.

That’s something that I think is actually pretty sad and I think that there is an industry that has emerged around these big, broad panethnic categories that embodies a kind of disparity fallacy. One thing that happens when you ask Americans — and the political scientist Zach Goldberg has done some work on this. When you ask Americans what they think about disparities across racial groups, they’ll tell you one thing about whether or not they think they’re rooted in racism, et cetera.

When you also inform them, when you give them accurate information about the dispersion within racial groups, then they are somewhat less inclined to think that it’s simply racism that’s at work. So again, that’s a much bigger, more complex question. And again, I’m not saying here, oh, well, immigrants do well. Why don’t these people do well?

No, I’m actually literally talking within groups, when you compare Black movers to non-movers, when you compare people who came from one region versus another. And I think that stuff is just so flattened by the fact that we have these really reductive, simplistic views of the challenges facing disadvantaged minority groups.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to think about how I absorb that for a minute, because on the one hand, I always think and believe we can have richer, deeper, more interesting data. And so the fact that you can see different trends for people who moved and didn’t move, it’s useful stuff and we should have it. I think it would be a very strange argument to try to mount.

REIHAN SALAM: It would definitely be strange. I 100 percent agree that it would be strange.

EZRA KLEIN: And this is looking specifically at the Black-white experience in America. To say that Black and white are overly reductive categories and that policy has not been in many places, at many times, in many ways, for extended periods of time tuned to increasing, perpetuating and protecting that particular disparity and the persistence of that disparity across the regimes or administrations. A lot of different politicians from a lot of different parties who prefer a sort of anti racialist, colorblind, melting pot lens is, in my view, the frustration out of which a lot of this emerges.

So you can always do better in your analysis, but at the same time, sometimes I think that big, blunt, persistent facts with a lot of different kinds of validation have a kind of explanatory power that trying to go narrower and narrower you often lose. I mean, just in part because of the numbers of people you’re dealing with when you do that. I think the criticism of the view that you take here is that the anti-racialist lens, whatever its politics, is to many people a convenient way to try to sort of wipe away the question of racial inequality and they worry. And this is, I think particularly true on the Democratic side, they worry that it becomes an excuse to not actually go deeper and not try to intervene more fully in some of these ongoing very, very long running in America problems.

REIHAN SALAM: So I strongly disagree about one point and I want to be very clear here. When you’re looking at multi-generational Black Americans were descended from enslaved African-Americans, this is a group with group characteristics. This is a group that has faced a cumulative disadvantage and a lot of racist oppression historically. That is really important. Also, when you’re looking at the Black American population right now, it is a more plural population than it was before.

It is a population that includes a not inconsiderable number of people who are first and second generation. I believe it’s as high as close to a fifth when you include both first and second generation. And when you’re looking at people who are part of that multi-generational group, I think that, that group is catastrophically underrepresented and I also think that some of the strategies that anti-racist and anti-racist orientation has been associated with. I think when you’re looking at race preferences in lead higher education, for example, I think that they’re pretty darn unresponsive to the particular challenges facing that group.

So when I talk about the flattening here, that is not to say that I believe that people who are the descendants of African-Americans who were enslaved is unimportant or not meriting are concerned. I think that there are some people for whom the flattening of these categories allows for an evasion of, what are the kind of appropriate strategies? Are there strategies that exist outside of racially engineering elite professions and what have you? This could be an honest disagreement within two of us.

I do think that broad strategies that are not explicitly racial in character can actually do a lot of good, but I understand that this is a pretty deep disagreement. But yeah, I certainly think that is certainly something that I think anyone, including any conservative, needs to reckon with. The question is, does the kind of way that we approach race consciousness flatten the experience of this particular group? And I do think sometimes it’s a group within a group because of the dramatic differences you see between Black movers and non-movers and other kind of categories within that group. I want to basically address, what are the most kind of pronounced, persistent problems?

EZRA KLEIN: And I think on the point of symbolic politics, we probably have a lot of agreement, I’m actually somebody who finds a lot of value in the rigor of the anti-racist perspective, really centering questions of inequality, really centering what you can measure and what effect your policies have on them. And to a large degree my criticism in this space is that people don’t always follow that where it goes or not. I think as consequentialist in their analysis as that would imply.

And if people want to go back to it, I think had a very interesting discussion on the show last year with Ibram X. Kendi around a bunch of these issues. But I want to make sure we continue sort of exploring your work here as opposed to mainly my views here. I get plenty of time to talk on the show. And the Manhattan Institute, practically Chris Rufo but not only, has really helped name the idea of critical race theory as the umbrella under which a lot of these ideological changes and ideas in the Democratic Party are being expressed, has really worked very hard to find examples of it happening across the country and raise their salience, has tried to make this a much more central question in American politics than some of it otherwise would be or maybe it would be. You’ve had a very, I think, interesting view on what it is you’re trying to achieve with that. So do you want to talk through the way you see the C.R.T. fight and what the goals of it are on your end?

REIHAN SALAM: I think that I gave you a pretty good sense of it when I was talking about race essentialism and why I think that it is pretty counterproductive. We use different vocabulary about this. There are a lot of folks at the Manhattan Institute, Glenn Loury is one of our lead scholars who works on these questions of race and identity as well, he uses a different kind of language and he talks a lot about the development narrative versus the biased narrative. But I think that all of us in various ways are trying to think about, how can we genuinely approach the problem of racial disadvantage? And also, how can we prevent a world in which we divide Americans into rival racialized camps? There’s an essay that Chris wrote that I thought was very valuable. It was on what he called prison gang politics, and as you know, in California and many places around the country, when you look at people who are incarcerated, particularly in larger prisons, they are oftentimes organized into racial prison gangs. Basically the idea is that your skin color is a kind of credible indicator of whether you’re going to be on this side of the divide or that side of the divide. And I think it’s a pretty scary, nightmarish outcome.

And I think one way that Chris thinks about his work, and you’d have to ask him directly about it, is this idea, how can we avoid that fate? How can we avoid this racialized discourse exacerbating any tendency towards a white identity politics? How can emphasizing other categories, other categories that are cross-cutting across lines of ethnicity and race, be things that can actually help foster integration, ethnic fluidity, things that we think would help us move towards a healthier society? Some of the battles over critical race theory are really centered on school curricula. And here the big challenge is whether or not you have public institutions that are advancing curricula and ideas that are basically going against freedom of conscience. Do we have situations in which people are being compelled to adhere to certain ideas, certain controversial ideas? And I think that that’s something where it is good and healthy to have transparency in school curricula. I think it is good and legitimate to believe that parents should have access to good, reliable information about what is being taught and about the ideological content of what is being taught. This is obviously a very contentious issue, but I think that it goes part and parcel with our general belief and educational pluralism. That is the idea that schools tend to work best when they’re broadly aligned with the values and sensibilities of families.

EZRA KLEIN: That sounds more, when we talk about it, I guess it sounds more pluralistic than it feels to me it is playing out on the ground. So I think one question that is in my mind on all this is a point you make sometimes is that it’s not good for American politics to be too focused on questions of racial difference. And I guess I question whether then trying to find all the most controversial racial curriculum in local school districts around the country is really taking energy away from a toxic conversation that you’re worried about or adding energy, making it more divisive, making it more electric?

And when I look around and see schools and states putting forward laws censoring how teachers talk about, quote, “divisive concepts,” I think I get a little uncomfortable. And not because I don’t see the Reihan Salam view, that there’s a political argument for a more melting pot-ish approach to politics, but that I worry about the energies that are actually powering some of these backlashes being non-controllable, that what they are in the end is I think sort of what you fear, which is a lot of conflict and confrontation, And ultimately, I think censoring. I mean, when you talk about being forced to teach something, I think being disallowed from teaching something and then there’s also the issue of the “Don’t Say Gay” laws, which have been advocated by people at Manhattan. It feels like it’s going into a weird place to me and I’m curious how you see it.

REIHAN SALAM: I would strongly urge listeners to check out the work of Leor Sapir on the Florida law, the Parental Rights and Education Law. I think that he has a really thoughtful approach. Of course, Chris has written quite a bit about it too, and they’ve, obviously, given this a lot of deep, serious consideration. Honestly, I really do think that it comes down to the idea that school choice is really important.

In the absence of school choice, fundamentally, public schools are creatures of the public sector. They are accountable to Democratic legislatures. There is some degree to which curricula are zero-sum. You are deciding to include some things and not include others.

And I think that this has always been a subject of Democratic contestation and the thing that is really interesting is the idea that it shouldn’t be subject of Democratic contestation. I think the discourse around this issue has, in my view, been a little bit confused. Because there are some people who are saying that, well, how dare you advance transparency legislation because there’s already transparency. Versus others who say, how dare you advance this legislation because it’s going to lead to censorship.

I mean, it really is odd. I personally think that this is a fairly minimal expectation, the idea that actually the relationship in the classroom is not meant to be one in which parents and families are not a part of it, they’re not a part of the conversation. And I do think that things would probably be healthier if we had a more genuinely pluralistic educational system, that is a system in which the charter sector represented a bigger component of public education.

And of course, you will not be surprised to learn that I’m someone who is supportive of vouchers and other strategies for ensuring that we have more entry into education. And I think that that’s something that would be really helpful in terms of dealing with the fact that in a big, diverse society that has deep disagreements about the content of curriculum, that one way to help resolve that dilemma is to have a different kind of education system that is not so rigidly centralized. Because I think you’re right, that there actually can be a certain brittleness that stems from that when you do have deep disagreement.

[MUSIC]

EZRA KLEIN: I think you and I are going to pretty fundamentally disagree over whether Chris Rufus’s project is actually making these tendencies you’re talking about a whole lot worse. But I also understand you’re not him. And so I do want to return to the political layer of your analysis, because I think it’s really interesting.

Your view, as I understand it, is that this broader divergence we’ve been talking about on questions of racial essentialism causes the Democratic party to misunderstand its own base in pretty fundamental ways. So tell me about that. What do you think Democrats get wrong about their own voters?

REIHAN SALAM: Because Democrats have been so incredibly successful with educated, affluent people, because that has become a kind of mass constituency, I think that there is a failure to reckon with the fact that there are many, many ***working class*** Democrats, particularly urban voters, voters of color, who don’t think of themselves as being Republicans, who basically are pretty moralistic when it comes to the welfare state. There are people who are actually quite allergic to the idea of a welfare state that is overly permissive, that is overly generous. When it comes to policing, they have instincts that I think left scholars would call authoritarian. They really believe in proactive policing.

They believe in harsh punishment. And I think that this is a constituency that Democrats benefit from the fact that it’s kind of stranded. They benefit from the fact that Republicans, for a variety of reasons, a lot of it’s their own limitations about who it is they think they can speak to or who they’re willing to speak to, but there is this big group of people who adhere to what you might call traditional values. When it comes to family, they are people who just are not part of this kind of elite discourse and they are people who in other contexts might be more conservative.

They’re also, by the way, not people who are anti-government. They are people for whom their rejection of welfare liberalism is selective and that’s something that had historically been a struggle for the Republican Party. But I think that that’s a really big constituency and if Republicans actually figured out how to engage that group of people, how to overcome the sense that this is a kind of culturally narrow if not chauvinistic group of people, then Democrats would be in much more trouble than they are.

And as you know, from 2020 to midterm polling, there are certainly some indications that there’s a really, really big shift with people of Latin American origin. There are even some indications of a meaningful shift among Black Americans as well. So I think it’s because there is this group of people who are traditionalists along many of these different dimensions, including hard policy questions.

EZRA KLEIN: Let me try out an interesting word you said, which is moralistic, which I think is an insightful word to use. Because there’s a conventional version of this story you’ll hear, which is that a lot of the Democratic base, and particularly its non-white base, particularly its Black base and Hispanic base, are churchgoing, are religious, have more traditional views on things like abortion, gay marriage, gender expression than the Democratic elite level. But I think something you’re drawing out there with your point about moralism and your point about this expressing itself also in other kinds of policy issues is that it’s not just a religious divergence. There’s a kind of assumption that tracks into economic and other kinds of policy here that is, I think it would be quite fair to say, underrepresented at high Democratic levels.

REIHAN SALAM: So one way to distill it is the idea of conditional reciprocity, that government will do for you when you are in need, but it is important that you play by the rules and that you do your part. There’s a term that the historian Fred Siegel, storied, long-time “City Journal” contributor, dubbed dependent individualism, the idea that individuals ought to be freed from their obligations to family and community through the largess of a generous welfare system. Now, you are someone who is, I think, an exceptionally thoughtful technocrat and you’re someone who is a great, if not someone who is an adherent to the idea of an unconditional basic income, you’re someone who has thought deeply and seriously about the idea, and I think that those are ideas that need to be reckoned with and need to be taken seriously.

But this moralistic tendency that I’m describing is something that finds that idea really dangerous, if not offensive.

It’s this idea, and Fred clearly has a stake in this, right? When he calls it dependent individualism, he’s not saying that as a way of indicating his approval. And I think that is really interesting, this idea that there are some lower, middle class, ***working class*** people for whom the idea that, hey, I paid off my kid’s student loans. That involved a lot of sacrifice on my part.

It was a choice. It was hard and I actually do believe that choice and that effort should be held in esteem. And to be told that we’re just going to wipe out student debt for people because that would be a good thing to do, for people that if through this moralistic frame don’t necessarily seem to be the most deserving, I think that is a deep, deep difference between a certain kind of left egalitarian, technocratic tendency that, by the way, has really compelling moral arguments behind it. These are serious people.

These are people who have been my interlocutors, people I respect, but it just doesn’t jive with that other tendency. And the problem for the right is that other tendency, it’s kind of under theorized. It’s something where thinking about, how does policy intersect with that?

How does policy reflect those values? What does it look like to try to compromise on these things? I think that there hasn’t been enough thinking about that and it’s one of the reasons why that’s an area where I want to make an investment.

EZRA KLEIN: It’s interesting to me that you say it’s under theorized, because it actually picks up on another word that came in there, which is individualism. And when I think about some of the line you’re tracing and where people that say in my cohort really do diverge, I’m not a big universal basic income guy, personally, for a bunch of different reasons that are a good subject for another podcast, but what I’m very much not is an individualist. I’m very much a structuralist.

I tend to see people’s life outcomes is much more driven by the structures that surround them, that they were born into. Not to say there is no space for individual work in my cosmology of human achievement, but it’s smaller, and that really does change what I think of as just desserts, how much of what you make would be moral or immoral to tax. How we should understand you if you fall off the straight and narrow path.

Even just thinking about the different cognitive resources that many of us end up having in the world, people with a lot of traumatic childhood experiences have a lot more impulsivity issues. That then leads to running afoul of the law. How much do I get credit for not being traumatized repeatedly as a child? It seems relatively low. But whatever my arguments on these points are, I think this is a genuine place where people who hold my kind of position tend to be pretty different than a lot of the public, where I think people have much more individualistic intuitions and that includes a lot of the Democratic voter base.

REIHAN SALAM: This is really interesting and thorny. When I talk about dependent individualism, it’s not necessarily an endorsement. And I don’t think Siegel meant it to be an endorsement of individualism per se, because it is also the idea that community, networks of family, and other kinds of informal affiliation, those things should matter. But it is a question of, are these structured through the state?

You know what I mean? I think that it’s this question of liberty, equality, fraternity. This idea that fraternity is the piece that’s really interesting and how do we think about that domain and how should people on the right think about that domain? But I think you’re totally right about this idea that you have these different moral intuitions.

So one moral intuition is the just world hypothesis, that basically work effort is rewarded. It is a very, very widespread belief and that goes against another view that you describe as more structural. I guess I’d personally describe myself as being kind of somewhere in between these polls, but I do think that sensibility is important and it’s something that is not going to be banished from the face of the Earth. It’s very, very deep.

My mother, for example, I think of her as someone who is very much someone who is quite moralistic about these ideas and issues. It’s something that reflects her hard-won experience and I think that it’s something that is definitely systematically underrepresented in elite discourse. Partly because it’s almost like, it’s not a matter of IQ, it’s not a matter of educational attainment.

There are certain people who gravitate to education and elite education partly because they have certain moral sensibilities. You know what I mean? So it is interesting. And I think that for Democrats it is kind of a challenge, because these are people who are part of your coalition and how do you reconcile that moralistic sensibility with the one that is, as you put it, more structural?

And for Republicans, how do you take that moralistic sensibility and guide it in a direction that can lead to good, constructive policy? And that also reckons with the fact that, hey, there are people who need an ambulance from time to time. There are people who find themselves in emergencies. There are people where the by the bootstraps thesis isn’t going to be enough for them.

So yeah, I mean, I think that it’s one of these challenges that also goes back to entrepreneurial coalition politics, because you’re never going to rid the world of liberal cosmopolitans. You’re never going to rid the world of moralistic traditionalists. And so in a way, for me, the big question for America and America’s future as a multi-ethnic democracy is, can we build institutions that are capacious enough to accommodate this deep moral pluralism? And I see that as a big part of what I and my colleagues want to work on and think about in our various ways.

EZRA KLEIN: Let’s talk about what it would take to actually build that kind of coalition. So in 2008, you wrote “Grand New Party” with my colleague, Ross Douthat, and the book is a push for the Republican Party to become a more ***working class*** party, and at least compared to where it was then, embrace more ***working class*** redistribution. But I’ve heard you say more recently that you think the right is now overestimating what redistribution can do and that you want to see a supply side conservatism that it isn’t just the old supply side conservatism of tax cuts. So as somebody who’s been thinking about a supply side progressivism, I’d be curious to hear how you think about that agenda. What does the modern supply side conservatism look like?

REIHAN SALAM: Well, honestly, there’s a lot of overlap with your agenda. Certainly when it comes to housing abundance, it’s been a real focus of our work at the Manhattan Institute. I believe that it’s really essential. An area where we might disagree is that I’m a big believer in the idea that the potential return of fiscal constraints, of fiscal limits will mean that there’s going to, again, be a big trade between maintaining low, middle class taxes and having an expansive or targeted welfare state.

And so for me, middle class wealth creation, the idea of increasing savings, there’s this idea some years ago by Joe Gyourko, professor at the University of Pennsylvania, in which he said, let’s replace subsidized F.H.A. loans with a subsidized savings program to help low-income people build up a down payment so that they don’t have negative equity so that homeownership does not become a source of financial risk, but rather becomes a source of wealth building. And then beyond that, Canada, the U.K., they have these very large tax-free savings accounts, something where Republicans have actually been strangely, in my view, reluctant to really pursue that.

I mean, that represents a big revenue loss, but my view is that rather than pursuing further top marginal tax rate cuts, that’s the kind of thing, the idea of middle class wealth creation so that our welfare state can be more targeted.

I think that would be a good and healthy thing. My colleague Chris Pope at MI is doing really brilliant work on the evolution of the welfare state. And one of his biggest observations is that there’s a big difference between the post-war era when there was this huge surfeit of revenue partly because of the fact that tax brackets weren’t being indexed to what happened after that. And once those tax revenues went down somewhat, what you see is that the welfare state did become more targeted.

People on the left and people on the right worked together to reduce Medicare growth, to invest more in programs like S-CHIP. And I think that targeting was actually a really good and healthy thing. And I think that now for creative policy thinkers on the right, I think that there’s a lot of value and thinking, hey, if we’re back to an era of fiscal constraint, which I believe we will be, let’s think about countering calls for increased social insurance, drastic expansion of government with something that is, in our view, more in tune with the American grain and that’s more fiscally realistic and that will yield better outcomes for lower income people.

EZRA KLEIN: So I want to dejargon a bit of this because I think it’s very important. So one, when you talk about the period where tax brackets weren’t indexed, what you’re saying, there been a long period in American politics where the tax brackets did not change with inflation. And so just by the nature of inflation and growth, people kept moving into higher and higher tax brackets at a much faster rate than they did later, which created more tax revenue, and I guess in this analysis, created the conditions under which the welfare state, the social insurance state could grow more rapidly. Is that the argument?

REIHAN SALAM: And Ezra, just to give you an illustration here, between 1945-1980, average tax rates stayed the same on the richest 10 percent of households, but increased steadily on the poorest 50 percent. But that’s something that when you look at the backlash era, if you look at Howard Jarvis, if you look at Supply Side 1.0, a lot of that came out of bracket creep.

EZRA KLEIN: Talk a bit about what you mean when you say the return of fiscal constraint. Because I don’t disagree, but I think this is actually, if you believe this, a much bigger change in where politics is about to go than people realize. And before I hand it to you, I’ll ramble for one second and say, I think that it is a very underappreciated dimension of Donald Trump’s presidency, that it takes place in this period of very, very low interest rates, the kind of discrediting for a while of deficit hawk concerns, including very much on the right of very, very little fear over inflation.

And so Trump, among other things, is a very, very big spender. Spending goes up a lot under him, but he is very stimulative to the economy. There was a very accommodative Fed policy and a lot of fiscal stimulus at a time when the economy’s doing pretty well, which for that period is very good for employment and ultimately then for wage gains. When the coronavirus hits, he more or less signs on with Steve Mnuchin to this gigantic largely Democratic fiscal stimulus plan.

Trumpism without that kind of fiscal space I think looks very, very different. So why do you think the fiscal constraint is coming back? What do you mean when you say that? And how do you think it’ll change or should change Republican Party politics? Because this won’t just change where Democrats have gone.

REIHAN SALAM: You have spoken to brilliant, brilliant people like Larry Summers and others who’ve been really thinking about the larger macro environment. And Summers and Jason Furman, they’ve done some writing about basically why they believe that we have some fiscal space. What they don’t oftentimes underscore is that, where they didn’t underscore, I think Summers has been pretty hawkish, is that if you see a significant increase in interest rates, this world starts looking really, really different.

So I’m not the best person to kind of establish why fiscal limits are on the way back, but I think there are a lot of thoughtful credible people who believe they are. And if they are, to the second half of your question, the implications are profound for Republican and Democratic politicians. You could argue that the extent to which our politics have centered on cultural controversies is a product of fiscal slack or at least the perception of fiscal slack. And if fiscal constraints come back, you suddenly have to start thinking very rigorously about priorities and choices.

So President Trump, a big part of his political formula was the idea that we are going to take Medicare and Social Security off the table. Well gosh, that is incredibly, incredibly powerful for Republican politicians for all sorts of reasons that are, I imagine, very familiar to you and your listeners. There’s a universe of culturally conservative voters who are more pro redistribution, more egalitarian, for whom that puts them into play. And if you believe that fiscal constraints are on their way back, then suddenly the really tricky politics of saying, well, if we want any new social spending, if we want to invest more in children, for example, you know, that’s going to potentially have to come out of old age, social insurance programs.

And beyond making those choices, you need to think potentially really radically about the big entitlement programs. I’m kind of obsessed about the way that cooperative federalism contributes to some of our fiscal bloat, but just fundamentally, those entitlement programs that were Paul Ryan’s big bete noire, kind of his big cause was trying to fix them and make them more sustainable. Suddenly they come back to the center of our politics and Ryan’s particular approach is no more attractive now than it was then, in fact, arguably is less attractive given the rapid aging of society. So there is a real need for creative thinking about how it is you’re going to approach those problems.

And I think I’m proud to say that at the Manhattan Institute, we’re doing a lot of that thinking, but it’s pulling teeth. And certainly politicians don’t want to think about that and there is that deep asymmetry with the fact that Republican politicians, Republican elected officials as a general matter are just less policy oriented, especially when it comes to fiscal politics. And that is going to be a big, big problem if Summers and Olivier Blanchard and others are right, that we’re headed for an era of fiscal constraints.

EZRA KLEIN: I mean, this is a place where it does seem to me that you and Manhattan are very much swimming upstream with the conservative tide at the moment. Because when I think about some things you’ve talked about just in this show, I would say what I’m hearing from people on the, I just don’t have a great term for it, populist right, the sort of like neo-Trumpian right. You know your JD Vances, your Patrick Deneens, your et cetera. When I look at what they’re saying, when I talk to them or the people around them, I’m hearing a lot more openness to unions, I’m hearing a lot more talk about how to spend money.

There’s talk about child allowances and a fair amount of just discussion of, how would you redistribute money to families. Very few people are excited about messing with Social Security and Medicare after Rick Scott, the Senator from Florida, brought out this 11-point plan to rescue America, which was very much within the context of fiscal constraint kind of plan and included raising a fair amount of taxes on poor people.

McConnell said, “If we’re fortunate enough to have the majority next year, I’ll be the Majority Leader. I’ll decide in consultation with my members what to put on the floor and let me tell you what will not be part of our agenda.

We will not have as part of our agenda a bill that raises taxes on half the American people and sunsets Social Security and Medicare within five years.” So can you talk a bit about how you see the trend in the Republican Party on this? Because sort of distinctively within, I think my lifetime, economic policy for them feels like a much more open field. I think there’s much more agreement on social policy, which there traditionally wasn’t, and a belief that they need to really crack open their economic assumptions, and that seems to be pushing many of them in a much more big government direction.

REIHAN SALAM: Here, I believe that I’m necessarily being speculative, but I think a large number of Americans, if not a majority of Americans, embrace the idea that the role of government is to serve as a safety net. The role of government is to be, as Bob Woodson put it, ‘an ambulance, not a transportation system for people who fall into poverty.’ And so this idea that a program like S-CHIP is targeted, there’s some spending discipline, it really is focused on those of the greatest needs.

EZRA KLEIN: S-CHIP being a health insurance program for children?

REIHAN SALAM: Yes. Rather than programs that are encompassing large numbers of middle income and more affluent people who potentially could provide for themselves, provided we have the right institutions to allow them to do that. So my big picture view is that for many middle income, upper middle income people, we do have a lot of scope to improve the workings of private insurance markets, of retirement savings and what have you.

I think that there are many ways in which big data is changing the landscape in a way that kind of early social insurance programs, if you at the days of Bismarck, this was a moment when we did not have very good granular information about risk, about who is going to have chronic ailments, who is going to need sustained safety net support and who would not.

And I think that when you look at some market democracies, Australia is one example of this and there are others besides, where you essentially have a more private system that is built on basically savings. You have universal providers who are kind of serving you in a kind of more or less market like arrangement, and then you have well-designed, targeted safety net systems. If you look at how the Affordable Care Act has evolved, I think it’s not unreasonable to say that in many states, the exchanges have evolved into something akin to high risk pools.

Should those high risk pools be well designed and well-funded to therefore allow a wider insurance market that can be more market-like, and should we endeavor to limit crowd out, particularly major fiscal constraints? Those are ideas that our scholars are exploring and that I think are good and valuable, and I actually don’t think would be that terrifying or awful. Because I think that actually there are a lot of people who are broadly satisfied with their private sector solutions.

The question is whether or not we have regulations that allow good business models to thrive and expand or not, and also, are we adequately targeting resources on the needy so that needy folks are actually getting good services?

And I think that, that’s another big struggle. So you have to get both pieces of that right and I think that requires a lot of careful thought. But I do think that it goes with the American grain rather than against it.

EZRA KLEIN: Let me try and fit this into your broader political theory that we’ve been tracing here. So as I understand you, I think you believe that on a lot of what they call cultural issues, although I don’t always love the term, but issues around race and its role in American life, I think issues around probably gender, issues of what kinds of things are important in American politics, you believe the Democratic Party is out of step with many of the people who it claims to represent and those are tensions that create opportunity for Republicans. Do you think that’s true here?

When I hear that critique inside the Democratic party, which I associate with people like David Shor and others, the diagnosis is often for Democrats to really emphasize their economically populist roots, their attention to redistribution, their desire to pass programs that will make the structure of the American government, I guess, more of a transport for people who are in poverty or people who are in trouble. Do you see the same dynamics here or do you think this is a place where it’s actually Republicans who have a pretty tough persuasion job ahead of them?

REIHAN SALAM: This is very multidimensional. I will broadly say that if I were someone who was a Democrat with fundamentally egalitarian instincts and that’s my kind of flavor of politics, I think the Shor thesis is pretty compelling and would make a lot of sense and the idea of building a majority where there’s more pluralism in terms of cultural sensibilities and issuing of race essentialism, et cetera, I think that sounds roughly right. When it comes to this kind of other politics which rests on the idea of a welfare state that is Lincolnian.

We will do what you can’t do for yourself and we will endeavor to kind of help you become someone who is less dependent, more economically capable of standing on your own feet, that kind of thing.

I think that ethic also is broadly popular, but I think that the bigger thing is that for any big picture change when it comes to certainly the social safety net, any big legislative change, you need some middle ground. And I think that for me the thing that I really hope for and the reason why I kind of find the Shor thesis important and appealing is because it’s like, he has a vision of Republicans that doesn’t anathematize people who voted for Donald Trump or Mitt Romney or what have you. But it’s like, hey, how can we win some of those people so that we can build this big coalition for our vision?

And I want a Republican Party that is similarly not saying, hey, let’s do what we can to make sure that we dominate forever and we prevent these people from participating in the political system or whatever because we’re so afraid of the future, we’re so afraid of a diversifying future.

I want a Republican Party that says, yeah, we want to peel off elements of the Democratic party. And when it comes to the politics of social insurance, the welfare state, et cetera, I mean, again, if you really believe that there are constraints, man, just eventually you’re going to need to get to some modus vivendi.

And it might not be 100 percent of what I wanted to look like. But if you look at that post-1980 experience, I certainly think going the direction of targeted programs like S-CHIP rather than programs that spend a ton of money on upper middle income people, I’d much rather have that. And I think that was a product of that bipartisan contestation and the need to reach some settlements.

EZRA KLEIN: Who do you think are the Republicans? And I’m not asking here about just the ones who are looking at a 2024. They get talked about a lot, although it could be them, too. But who are the Republicans who you see as most in line with this vision, who are trying to peel off, who are worried about the quality of life issues you worry about, who have a view of the problems and possibilities that you consider modern and reflective of urban politics and a changing America? Who do you look to and you think, huh, they’re doing something interesting?

REIHAN SALAM: That’s a tough one for me to answer partly because MI — we’re based in New York. We’re not really a kind of truly inside the Beltway kind of institution. The truth is that I think that we’re in a moment when among Republican politicians, there seems to be a suspension of a lot of these domestic policy debates. I think that there are people who are afraid of their own shadow.

They feel so deeply insecure and anxious about the base, what does the base actually think? I think there’s real uncertainty about that and I think it stems from the fact that whereas the Democratic Party has these cohesive policy commanders, like public sector workers, the Republicans don’t really have anchoring groups like that. There are gun rights organizations, certainly pro-life organizations fit in that category.

You can debate the defense sector or other sectors where they by necessity play both sides of the street, but it’s a big struggle. It means that you don’t have something that really more’s the party. So I’m sorry to be evasive, but yeah, there are people that I think are bright, capable people. I think that have to be cautious as someone who leads a nonpartisan organization. I don’t want to be electioneering.

EZRA KLEIN: You can like people. I’ve been in 501(c)(3)s. You can think some people are doing interesting work.

REIHAN SALAM: I will say that Senator Tom Cotton is someone who has talked about crime and urban violence in a way that I think is very farsighted. I’m sure that he would disagree with me on some issues here and there, but I think that he is someone who has a clarity of purpose. And I think that he’s the kind of person who does have a long term orientation. We haven’t talked about foreign and defense policy because that’s not what the Manhattan Institute does, but I really believe that he’s someone who is farsighted on those issues as well.

So he’s certainly someone that I think is someone with a lot of intellectual heft. And I think that there are many governors who I think have good political instincts, but one thing we do is we really try to focus on people regardless of partisan affiliation, who will listen to us on 3 issues out of 10. And so I don’t have a great answer for you on the national scene.

EZRA KLEIN: Then I think it’s a good place to go to what is always our final question, which is what are three books you would recommend to the audience?

REIHAN SALAM: You know, I’m really struggling, Ezra, because I want to give you four books.

EZRA KLEIN: You can give me four.

REIHAN SALAM: Oh, well. You are far too kind.

EZRA KLEIN: I’ll make an exception. We’ve known each other a long time.

REIHAN SALAM: So David E. Bernstein has a book coming out in July called “Classified: The Untold Story of Racial Classification in America” that I highly recommend. He also has a kind of forward looking agenda about how we ought to think about racial classification going forward. But it’s just really a neat treatment of all of the ironies and weirdnesses of how it is we seek to categorize people by race and ethnicity.

My brilliant colleague, Ralph Manuel, has a book coming out in late July called “Criminal Injustice: What The Push For Decarceration and Depolicing Gets Wrong and Who It Hurts Most.” In addition to being just a superb writer, and thinker, and scholar, Ralph is someone who, I think, writes with great compassion and moral urgency and he’s someone that I hope you’ll be hearing from in the future. For book number three, I just want to shout out one of my favorite books of all time, published in 1998, called “Sir Vidia’s Shadow Shadow” by Paul Theroux and it’s about his decades long friendship with the novelist, essayist, memoirist V.S. Naipaul, and it’s just a really weird, strange, incredibly beautiful book.

There is a biography of Naipaul by Patrick French that is more scholarly and aligns and doesn’t align in some interesting ways, but Theroux’s book, as someone who has always cared a lot about friendship and the art of friendship and stuff like that, it just is really a beautiful and funny and biting book. And the fourth one, because I’m cheating, is a book by a former housemaid of mine, Elbridge Colby, called “The Strategy of Denial,” which is essentially about this new age of great power competition and the challenge to U.S. global leadership that China poses, what we ought to do about it and why we ought to prioritize it. So thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much, Ezra, for letting me squeeze in four.

EZRA KLEIN: Reihan Salam, thank you very much.

[MUSIC]

“The Ezra Klein Show” is produced by Annie Galvin, Jeff Geld and Rogé Karma. Fact checking by Michelle Harris, Rollin Hu and Mary Marge Locker. Original music by Isaac Jones.Mixing and engineering by Jeff Geld. Audience strategy by Shannon Busta. Our executive producer is Irene Noguchi, and special thanks to Kristin Lin and Kristina Samulewski.

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[***The Case Against ‘Excellence’ at Universities; Jay Caspian Kang***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63KS-5DF1-DXY4-X2MM-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2872 words

**Byline:** Jay Caspian Kang

**Highlight:** As long as schools brag about their low admission rates, campus diversity initiatives will always be about tweaking around the edges.

**Body**

In the [*first part of this look at the SATs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/09/opinion/sat-standardized-tests-ucs.html), I focused on the 10 schools that make up the University of California system and how the stated rationale for abandoning the SAT and ACT might not always match up with reality, in particular when it comes to test preparation courses.

I want to stick with the U.C.s but first want to look at a bit of history. The U.C.s weren’t the first schools to end their relationship with the SAT and ACT. There have long been schools that gave students the option to not submit their standardized test scores. Most of these were liberal arts colleges that might have seen it as a marketing opportunity or a way to distinguish themselves from their virtually identical competitors.

Bowdoin College, my alma mater, stopped requiring the SAT in 1970. In the years that followed, the number of applicants went up. Schools tend to copy one another’s policies, especially when they’re in direct competition with one another, and Bates College, which, like Bowdoin, is an exclusive, small liberal arts college in Maine, followed suit in 1984; Bates, too, saw an increase in total applicants, as well as an increase in the geographic and racial diversity of its students. Holy Cross, another small college in New England, went test-optional in 2006 and saw similar effects.

These might seem like encouraging signs that dropping the SAT could lead to an increase in diversity, but there are still a couple of crucial follow-up questions to ask.

● Which students are benefiting from the test-optional policy?

● If a school that dropped the SAT/ACT reported a rise in underrepresented minority enrollment, how did this compare to underrepresented minority enrollment at similar schools that kept the test?

The answer to the first question can be found in a 2014 paper, “Defining Promise: Optional Standardized Testing Policies in American College and University Admissions,” by Valerie Franks and William Hiss, two former Bates admissions deans. (I’ll avoid too much commentary here, but it does feel like a bit of a conflict of interest to have two of the people who helped pioneer test-optional admissions write a defining study about the topic. It’s a bit like having Phil Jackson, the apostle of the triangle offense, conduct a study on the efficiency of the triangle offense.) What Franks and Hiss found in a study of 28 schools was that underrepresented minorities were more likely to withhold their test scores and that there was no difference in the academic performance of these students once enrolled.

The latter part isn’t surprising. There’s a host of studies and conversations about how well the SAT predicts student performance in college. (If you’re interested, you can read about some of them [*here*](https://dailybruin.com/2021/01/26/uc-considers-alternatives-to-standardized-testing-in-admissions-process), [*here*](https://ir.ucsd.edu/_files/publications/air-2008.pdf), and [*here*](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/01/26/new-research-suggests-sat-under-or-overpredicts-first-year-grades-hundreds-thousands). For a lively analysis of predictiveness in general, read [*this*](https://freddiedeboer.substack.com/p/please-think-critically-about-college?utm_medium=email&amp;utm_campaign=cta).) I have decided to table the discussion about what’s predictive and what’s not because this newsletter is about whether dropping the SAT and the ACT leads to increased diversity on campuses. How those students do in their classes is an important but somewhat unrelated concern.

It seems most people agree that going test-optional leads to a temporary burst in total applications and that many underrepresented minority students may see the dropping of an SAT/ACT requirement as a pathway to admission at more exclusive schools. But does this actually increase diversity? The most comprehensive study on this question was published in a 2018 book, “[*Measuring Success*](https://jhupbooks.press.jhu.edu/title/measuring-success),” and asked the second question posed above: How do gains in underrepresented minority diversity compare to those at similar schools that kept the test?

Kyle Sweitzer, A. Emiko Blalock and Dhruv B. Sharma, the authors of the study, wrote:

In terms of racial diversity, the percentage of freshmen students of color did not change in either direction for liberal arts colleges after making the switch to test-optional admissions. In fact, we find that test-requiring institutions increased student diversity to the same degree as that of test-optional institutions. This result contradicts one of the often stated justifications institutions provide for implementing a test-optional policy, which is to diversify the student body. Our analysis suggests that institutions should not rely on a test-optional approach to admissions as a means to increasing the racial diversity of the student body. … Furthermore, this result suggests that the motivation for adopting a test-optional policy is not to diversify the student body, since student diversification appears to be related more to an institution’s desire to do so.

In short, when every school is trying to recruit more underrepresented minority students and touting gains in their enrollment, it’s wishful thinking to attribute those numbers to one change in standardized test policy, especially when competitors that kept the test are reporting more or less the same gains.

There are a number of differences between liberal arts colleges in New England and the U.C.s. in terms of size, admissions goals, the students they attract, etc. But over the past year, we’ve gotten a preview of what a post-standardized-test U.C. system might look like, and it has shown that the lessons of Bowdoin and Bates might have some relevance.

This past January — to great fanfare — the U.C. system announced that it had received a record number of applications from Latino and Black students at their campuses, which in turn led to a record number of underrepresented minority freshmen in the incoming class of 2021-22. “These remarkable numbers are a testament to the hard work and resiliency of students and their families across California,” Michael Drake, the president of the U.C. system, wrote in a statement. “I am particularly heartened by the social and economic diversity of those offered a place at U.C. Fall will be an exciting time on our campuses.”

At first glance, these numbers do seem impressive. According to [*preliminary findings*](https://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/_files/factsheets/2021/fall-2021-admission-table-2-1.pdf) on California applicants released by the U.C.s, the number of Black freshmen admitted systemwide rose from 3,987 in 2020 to 4,608 in 2021. But these record numbers should be considered in the proper context: Applications, in general, [*hit record highs in 2021*](https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/all-time-record-high-number-applicants-apply-uc-chicanolatino-students-comprising-largest). The percentages of Black and Latino applicants [*stayed almost exactly the same*](https://ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/_files/factsheets/2021/table-2.1-california-freshman-applications-by-campus-and-race-ethnicity.pdf). In 2019, Black students made up 5 percent of admitted students at U.C.s. In 2020, they made up 5 percent. In 2021 they once again made up 5 percent. With Latino students, the increase was marginal — 34 percent in 2019, 36 percent in 2020 and 37 percent in 2021. If dropping the SAT and ACT had any effect on income inequality, it didn’t show up this year. The percentage of California freshman applicants with low family income fell from [*43.5 percent in 2020 to 41.5 percent in 2021*](https://ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/_files/factsheets/2021/fall-2021-information-summary.pdf).

The U.C.s did admit a record number of students for this year, but they also rejected more students than ever before. At U.C.L.A., the admission rate went from 14.4 percent to 10.8 percent, which should be seen as a problem for a public university in the second-biggest city in the country but, of course, is not. Instead of reflecting on what amounts to decreased opportunities for all students in the state to attend U.C.L.A., the school declared victory. “I’m over the moon,” a U.C.L.A. official told [*The Los Angeles Times*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-07-19/uc-admissions-new-diversity-record-but-harder-to-get-in), referring to the increase in minority students. “The years of hard work … bore fruit for us, and it’s a good feeling.”

But Black enrollment at U.C.L.A. went from 6 percent in 2020 to just 7 percent in 2021. Latino enrollment went from 23 percent to 26 percent. Asian American enrollment, for what it’s worth, fell from 42 percent to 39 percent. At Berkeley, Black enrollment numbers fell slightly, while white enrollment went up. Meanwhile, at U.C. Merced, one of the least selective U.C.s, Latino enrollment numbers fell from 54 percent of the incoming freshman class to 50 percent; so did the total percentage of underrepresented minority students entering the freshman class.

It should surprise nobody that when choosing to spin this news, the U.C.s chose to talk about what happened at U.C.L.A. and not at U.C. Merced which is, by far, the most diverse campus in the system. Why? According to [*The Upshot*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/college-mobility/university-of-california-merced), the median annual family income of a student at Merced is [*$59,100*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/college-mobility/university-of-california-merced). At UCLA? [*$104,900*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/college-mobility/university-of-california-los-angeles). Berkeley? $[*119,900*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/college-mobility/university-of-california-berkeley). That’s the entire game: The elite schools with wealthy students and alumni tout minuscule increases in diversity, while schools with more ***working-class*** students like Merced, where over [*57 percent of students come from underrepresented minority groups*](https://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/_files/factsheets/2021/fall-2021-admission-table-2-1.pdf), don’t matter.

At elite schools, diversity is for rich kids. In his [*opinion*](https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/438/265) in Regents of the University of California v. Bakke, the landmark Supreme Court case regarding affirmative action in college admissions, Justice Lewis Powell wrote about something called the Harvard plan, which came to define the benefits of diversity. “A farm boy from Idaho can bring something to Harvard College that a Bostonian cannot offer. Similarly, a Black student can usually bring something that a white person cannot offer.” Powell’s logic is why Merced’s falling diversity rate does not get discussed and why we never hear about the underrepresented minority populations at large state schools that admit most of their applicants. First and most important, those schools don’t have problems with diversity. Second, if you take Powell’s logic to its natural conclusion, the “farm boy from Idaho” or “Black student” is on campus to broaden the perspective of the Boston Brahmin and, perhaps, teach him a few lessons about tolerance. Maybe this is a cynical read, but it’s driven by an even more cynical way of thinking that reduces young people into data points and waxes philosophical about what their backgrounds might add to a campus.

“We have admitted a class almost identical to the record-breaking class of last year,” Olufemi Ogundele, the dean of undergraduate admissions at U.C. Berkeley, told [*Inside Higher Ed*](https://www.insidehighered.com/admissions/article/2021/07/26/u-california-admits-more-diverse-freshman-class-without-sats). “Faced with a pandemic and a 28 percent increase in freshman applications, we remained focused on our values of access, excellence and diversity.”

If you’re facing a 28 percent increase in applications, admitting an identical class to the year before means Berkeley has become far less accessible, not more. The actual impediment to access, of course, is what Ogundele called “excellence.” As long as schools brag about their low admission rates, diversity will always be a matter of adjusting numbers to yield tiny gains. You never hear about diversity issues, for example, in the Cal State system, which educates more than twice as many students as the U.C.s. That’s because the Cal State schools charge lower tuition and accept most of their applicants, and as a result, [*nearly half of their students come from underrepresented minority backgrounds.*](https://www2.calstate.edu/impact-of-the-csu/diversity) In fact, you never really hear about Cal State schools because the conversation in the media about higher education in this country will always be about places like Harvard and U.C.L.A.

If you believe, as I do, that state education should be well funded, deeply rooted in community colleges, extremely cheap and accessible to all without any of the harmful privilege engineering found in the Ivy Leagues, the progressive case for keeping standardized tests, in public schools at least, is relatively simple: The admissions process for state schools should be transparent and more or less automated. If administrators and admissions officers want to regain the public’s trust after [*the Varsity Blues scandal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/12/us/college-admissions-cheating-scandal.html) and decades of escalating tuition costs, the last thing they should do is make the process even more ornate, inexact and prone to bizarre machinations. Standardized tests are deeply flawed, but as long as we insist on a higher education system that sorts students into separate tracks, they remain a tool for increased transparency.

Private institutions like Bates and Bowdoin can do whatever they please, but state school systems have a responsibility to the public. Changing admissions standards that have been in place for decades without any clear rationale only consolidates the power these institutions have over the lives of students. Before they made the decision to drop the standardized test requirement, the U.C. regents requested a full report from a task force. As was detailed in [*The Atlantic*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/07/why-university-california-dropping-sat/619522/), that 225-page report found that standardized testing did a better job than high school G.P.A. of predicting student performance at the U.C.s and did not harm the chances of underrepresented minority candidates. The report then suggested the U.C.s keep the SAT and ACT requirements while working on a replacement, U.C.-specific test. The regents, none of whom are elected, disagreed and voted 23-0 to phase out the tests. In doing so, the regents went against the suggestions of the report they commissioned. (According to a U.C. official, the regents have decided to postpone the development of their own test but are considering a version of the Smarter Balanced exam, which is already given to California school kids. But the same disparities exist with that test as with the SAT and ACT, and there has been significant [*pushback*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2019-11-23/uc-officials-recommend-dropping-sat-admission-requirement) against the introduction of any standardized test from administrators, students and faculty members. As of this writing, there has been no decision. The official also noted that the fall 2021 incoming class was the largest in U.C. history.)

I don’t see anything progressive about any of this. The fight for higher education should be about major shifts in affordability and accessibility and the quick dismantling of those networks of privilege that force one student to study all hours of the day while allowing wealthy legacies to take their spot. We should not allow the narrative of equity in higher education to be dominated by elite institutions that are proud that their Black student population went from 6 percent to 7 percent while obfuscating losses at their poorest campus.

What’s particularly frustrating about all the focus on standardized testing is that the U.C.s [*already have a system in place*](https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/admission-requirements/transfer-requirements/) that expands access to kids who may not have had the stability, surroundings or opportunity to put up a 4.0 G.P.A. or pad their résumés with “interesting” extracurricular activities: the community college transfer pipeline. To its credit, the state of California has [*taken steps to expand this program*](https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uc-and-ccc-sign-agreement-boost-transfers-increase-academic-preparation) over the past three years: Six U.C. campuses now guarantee admission to community college students who meet minimum G.P.A. requirements; neither Berkeley nor U.C.L.A. is among them. (In a statement about whether the system had plans to expand the transfer program, a U.C. official wrote that this year, “the University admitted the largest-ever class of California Community College transfer students, notching up to 28,453 from 28,074, a year-over-year increase of 1.35 percent,” but did not indicate any plans beyond that.)

In California’s community colleges, you will find students of all ages, ethnicities and political leanings. They will likely have one thing in common: ***Working-class*** backgrounds. In [*2020*](https://diversity.berkeley.edu/news/uc-admission-california-students-all-time-record-high) the U.C. system admitted 119,054 freshmen and 28,074 community college transfers. If those numbers were split even a bit more evenly, especially at the flagship schools that currently do not guarantee admission for community college transfers, no public university in California would ever have to start a diversity initiative, because there would be no diversity problems.

State schools that are committed to social justice should make the community college transfer program the first and final word when it comes to diversity, rather than celebrate tiny shifts in minority enrollment while driving down admission rates. Instead of adjusting scores and engaging in the careful engineering that ends with one student being declared more “holistic” than another, they should make the community-college-to-four-year-university-pathway as easy and as normalized as possible. Students would be able to take on less debt, orient themselves in their chosen fields of study and stay in their hometowns.

All this seems obvious. And yet you’ll rarely see mention of community colleges in the broader discussion about diversity on college campuses because, again, when it comes to elite college admissions, diversity is for rich kids. Letting in more community college students would make these schools less exclusive and upend the doomed game of balancing elite credentials with some imagined baseline of acceptable minority enrollment.

Actual diversity — not just the stray farm kid from Idaho regaling his roommates with stories about backhoes and corn palaces — should be a central goal for any institution of higher learning. We should stop affording these institutions the benefit of the doubt when they implement undemocratic, wide-ranging measures that affect the lives of hundreds of thousands of students and ask that they take their values as seriously as they ask us to take them.

Have feedback? Send a note to [*kang-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:kang-newsletter@nytimes.com).

Jay Caspian Kang ([*@jaycaspiankang*](https://twitter.com/jaycaspiankang?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)) writes for Opinion and The New York Times Magazine. He is the author of the forthcoming “The Loneliest Americans.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alberto Miranda FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Laverne Cox on the Red Carpet, Politics and What to Expect on Oscars Night***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62HD-JY71-JBG3-632H-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 913 words

**Byline:** Vanessa Friedman

**Highlight:** The actor and advocate thinks it’s time to make fashion statements.

**Body**

The actor and advocate thinks it’s time to make fashion statements.

Ever since she appeared at the [*Golden Globes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/01/style/golden-globes-red-carpet-fashion.html)via remote camera in a regal red gown by Thai Nguyen, because “we should have a fashion moment,” Laverne Cox has been a pioneer of the virtual [*red carpet*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/01/style/golden-globes-red-carpet-fashion.html). Here, she explains why she believes in the power of dressing up even in a pandemic — and why a statement gown can say be a lot more than just “glam.”

You recently hosted the Essence Black Women in Hollywood Awards, and even though it was pretaped, you wore not one but three outfits. Why?

I think it’s become de rigueur when you host award shows to change clothes a few times. I wore all Black designers. And I have to credit my stylist Christina Pacelli for coming up with that idea.

Why did you decide to make that statement with your clothes?

A lot of it is about access. It is about elevating talent. I think when we change the material conditions of Black people’s lives, we lift everyone up. I think about my own journey in fashion. For many years not so many people wanted to dress me. I’ve never been sample size. I’m a Black woman, and we know certain houses don’t tend to dress Black women.

But then the dresses were also just amazing. We wanted to do a lot of color and print because after the year that we had, we wanted to do something optimistic and hopeful and said that we are coming out of all of this into something new.

Some people may feel that after this traumatic year, getting dressed up seems inappropriate. How do you respond to that?

I think we have to be able to hold two contradicting ideas. We have been through hell, and we are deeply traumatized collectively, globally. I know I’ve needed escape from that. And red carpets and fashion are an escape. They are a fantasy. I think that is what people need: beauty and art and whimsy.

We’re coming out of a period of questioning about the purpose of the red carpet. Should it be about big brand marketing, or should it be about personal style and politics? Do you think we are going to start a new era in red carpet dressing, or do you think things are going to revert to form?

I don’t think we can go back. I think this past year has forever changed us. The red carpet has always been an opportunity for me to talk about issues that are important in the world. In 2019, there was a really important case that was going to the Supreme Court that affected L.G.B.T.Q. rights in employment. And we used the red carpet as an opportunity to let everyone know. I am political, but I love fashion, and I love fun, and bringing all these things together is really, really important in terms of me being all of who I am.

Do you get any pressure to wear big names because they’re offering you money?

No, not me. Maybe other folks. I’m not a sample size, and most of the times that I’ve done red carpets I’ve had to wear custom pieces. And there weren’t a lot of designers who had the bandwidth to make custom pieces for us. But we’ve gotten to work with incredible designers who saw something in us, like Marc Bouwer and Michael Costello, Christian Siriano.

Do you ever get nervous about wearing a dress that could be seen as risky?

I don’t think you get anywhere playing it safe in life. And I certainly don’t think you get anywhere in fashion playing it safe. So I think it’s about taking risk and having fun. If it doesn’t work, it doesn’t work. It’s just clothes. Right? If you make the worst dress list, that’s OK. I’ve had moments when I looked back, and what was I thinking? But we learn from it.

The [*Oscars*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/01/style/golden-globes-red-carpet-fashion.html) are coming up. Do you think people are going to take risks on the red carpet?

I think folks are going to go for it. I think it’s going to be fun. But I think we have to understand now that we have to be engaged. And when we engage, we can actually make change. We’ve seen it. And so in every aspect of life, we can have fun, but we can also be inspired, and we can lift everyone up.

“Promising Young Woman,” a movie you were in, is nominated for five Oscars, including Best Picture. Can you give us a clue about what you might be wearing? I know you are attending from home since Covid rules say only the person nominated can go, but are you getting dressed up?

It’s my first [*Oscars*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/01/style/golden-globes-red-carpet-fashion.html), so I’m excited to do my at home glam. I’m wearing a piece that was just used in a designers runway show. I had a fitting a couple of days ago. If I’m not gasping when I put it on, it’s not something I should wear. But I put the dress on, and I was gasping.

Do you think we should stop asking about what designer an actor is wearing on the red carpet?

There’s so, so much work that goes into a look. This is the sad thing about there not being red carpets. It’s a whole cottage industry of stylists and hair and makeup people. I think we can celebrate that and also do something else. I can shout out the designers that I’m wearing and also talk about something that is important to me.

It’s a really important historical moment, in terms of civil rights, voting rights, ***working class*** people having some dignity and being able to make a living wage. At this point I think we need the whimsy and fantasy, but we also need the grounding of not forgetting what is at stake in the world.

This interview, part of the [*@nytimesfashion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/01/style/golden-globes-red-carpet-fashion.html) On the Runway series of Instagram Live conversations, has been edited for clarity and condensed.

PHOTO: Laverne Cox at the Essence Black Women in Hollywood Awards. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Randy Shropshire/Getty Images for Essence FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 26, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Nothing Provokes Like a Turner Prize***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6463-GKP1-DXY4-X36K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 28, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section AR; Column 0; Arts and Leisure Desk; Pg. 17

**Length:** 1574 words

**Byline:** By Elizabeth Fullerton

**Body**

Although the British award stirs less debate than in its heyday, the decision to choose among activist collectives has revived disputes about its future.

LONDON -- People are always arguing about the Turner Prize.

For decades since it was founded in 1984, the annual British visual arts award offered up big characters and outlandish works, whose merits were debated in newspaper editorials, in pubs and at dinner parties. By 2001, when Britain's art scene seemed like the coolest in the world, a prime time audience was tuning in to watch Madonna give out the prize on live television.

Now the prize is a much less buzzy affair, perhaps because the public here is less easily shocked by contemporary art. Where once the tabloid press fulminated against the prize's nominees, these days much art world discussion takes place in more specialized publications and on social media.

For most of its life, the Turner Prize was a battle between individual artists -- or occasionally a duo, like Gilbert and George, who won in 1986 -- from a shortlist of four nominees, chosen by a jury in recognition of an outstanding recent show.

But for three years now, there has been no single winner. In 2019, the four finalists rebelled against the rules and, in a surprise announcement at the award ceremony, said they would share the honor and 40,000 pounds in prize money, around $54,000, equally. The following year, after coronavirus lockdowns in Britain shuttered most exhibitions in the country for months, the Tate museum group, which organizes the prize, canceled the award and instead distributed £100,000 as grants among 10 artists.

This year, the judges also decided against anointing a lone figure: The winner, which will be announced in a ceremony on Dec. 1, will be drawn from a shortlist of five collectives, each of whose work has as much to do with social activism as art. The groups' aims range from developing more climate-friendly eating habits to building solidarity among queer people of color through organizing club nights and workshops.

The nomination of these collectives underlines the quandary for the Turner Prize today: Is its role to capture the zeitgeist, or to reward excellence?

In an interview, Alex Farquharson, the Tate official who selects and oversees the Turner Prize's four-person jury, insisted that the award was still relevant, whatever its role. ''The very fact that the Turner Prize can divide critical opinion, I think, reflects the fact that there is actually a lot of interest,'' he said. ''It attracts that commentary, it attracts that engagement.''

Yet there is no question that there is less interest than in the 1990s and early 2000s, when the winners' list was virtually a roll call of the ''Young British Artists,'' or Y.B.A.s, an entrepreneurial group, spearheaded by Damien Hirst, who upended London's elitist art scene by staging their own shows in alternative spaces. Some of those artists' greatest hits include pickled animals, sex dolls and an unmade bed.

Back then, a group of figurative painters calling themselves the Stuckists would gather regularly on the steps of the Tate Gallery to demonstrate against the conceptual art on show inside; in the Stuckists' eyes, those works weren't art at all. But over the years, the scandalous offerings of the Y.B.A. generation have been assimilated into the artistic mainstream, and might even seem old-fashioned now.

The shortlists from the prize's early days were dominated by white men, an imbalance that has only recently started to be redressed. The Black British artists Chris Ofili and Steve McQueen scooped up the award in 1998 and 1999, but it took 18 more years for another Black person to win, when Lubaina Himid became the first Black female winner, in 2017.

The jury's decision to shortlist only socially engaged collectives prompted complaints that it is putting politics over aesthetics. In an interview, Jake Chapman, one half of the Chapman Brothers duo that was nominated in 2003, said that a lot of art these days served a ''very defined and performative sense of social responsibility,'' limiting its ability to be experimental and open-ended.

''The explosive, neoliberal individualism of the Young British Artists has given way to the notion of art serving a social purpose,'' he said. ''I'm just wondering at what point will it merge with Social Services.''

And it's not just social engagement in vogue among artists right now; collectives are also taking some of the art world's highest honors. The Indonesian artist group ruangrupa, for example, will oversee the 2022 edition of the Documenta mega-exhibition, a once-every-five-years event regarded as the most important statement about the direction of contemporary art.

The work of the Turner Prize's nominated collectives is on show this year at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum in Coventry, England, as part of a drive by Tate to broaden engagement outside London. The exhibition, which runs through Jan. 12, 2022, includes a recreation of a cozy pub adorned with hand-sewn protest banners, created by the Belfast-based group Array, which champions human rights through carnivalesque civic actions; a working studio run by the group Project Art Works, in which ''neurodivergent'' members of that collective are making art throughout the exhibition's run; and films by Gentle/Radical, a community of artists, faith ministers, youth workers and activists.

Cooking Sections, another nominee, is presenting an audiovisual installation about the negative environmental effects of intensive salmon farming. Those artists, whose practice investigates the political systems behind the food we eat, have persuaded many museums -- including the Herbert, where the show is taking place -- to take salmon off their cafe menus as part of their project, ''Climavore.''

There's also an immersive nightclub-like installation by B.O.S.S., a group of Black queer, trans and nonbinary people who build sound systems and organize D.J. sets, performances and other events.

Anish Kapoor, who won the award in 1991, said in an interview that he welcomed the Turner Prize's political turn in the context of an art world ''obsessed with money.''

''I dare to think of it as an anticapitalist move in miniature,'' Kapoor said, adding that all the nominees were ''very clear that theirs is a social agenda, that art can make deep and real psychic change.''

Such arguments ring hollow to the Turner Prize's long-term critics. Michael Sandle, a self-described ''radical traditionalist'' who has never been nominated for the award, said, ''It's all well and good having these views, which are probably genuine -- but where is the bloody art?''

''That's what I want to see, expressed powerfully through an artist,'' he said: The prize's organizers should stop trying to ''get on any fashionable bandwagon.''

But artists working together isn't such a break with the past, said Iwona Blazwick, the artistic director of the Whitechapel Gallery, a London museum. ''One hundred years ago, the avant-garde was defined by groups,'' she said. ''The jury was absolutely correct in recognizing that this is a very powerful, artistic impulse. It doesn't mean that we will never see a prize for painting or a single practitioner.''

Even some of the nominated artists, however, have criticized Tate for trying to boost its credibility by embracing social justice trends. Just days after B.O.S.S.'s nomination was announced, in May, the group posted a message on Instagram accusing arts institutions of ''exploitative practices in prize culture.'' The statement added that, for award organizers, ''Black, brown, ***working class***, disabled, queer bodies are desirable, quickly dispensable, but never sustainably cared for.''

Those concerns are shared by other emerging artists, including Larry Achiampong, a rising British star, who said in an interview that a competitive, single-winner Turner Prize did not contribute to a ''good ecosystem'' for art. ''This kind of thing where people get placed into an almost gladiatorial arena, is played out,'' he said. ''It's not healthy. It builds and creates a natural animosity over time amongst practitioners.''

Achiampong added that Tate needs to rethink the prize so that it offers long-term support to its nominated artists and ''does not treat people who deserve awards as tokens.''

''What opportunities will be afforded for them afterward?'' he said. ''Let it not just be that the artist is used for a moment, but that they get given their dues.''

Yet Farquharson, the Tate official, said it would be ''condescending to suggest that there would be some sort of aftercare,'' adding that some of the shortlisted collectives had been working successfully for years before their nomination. The Turner Prize was already ''a very supportive project,'' he said.

Whatever the jury's decision this year, it is unlikely to cause a stir with the British public; bookmakers are not even taking bets on the outcome, unlike in the prize's heyday. But within Britain's art world, more is at stake.

Anthea Hamilton, an artist who was nominated in 2016, said this year's award was an invitation for Tate and other institutions to build on the conversation started by the nominees, ''to be more outward looking'' and ''less focused on the sensational; the formal; the pretty; the material; the traditional accepted, comfortable ways of looking.'' Will Tate take it up?

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/25/arts/design/turner-prize.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/25/arts/design/turner-prize.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, ''Salmon: Traces of Escapees'' by the group Cooking Sections, at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum. Above left, ''Self Portrait, 2105,'' by Jack Denness, of the Project Arts Collective. Above, ''The Druithaib's Ball,'' a re-creation of a pub adorned with protest banners, by the group Array and at the Herbert. Below left is ''Mother and Child Divided'' by Damien Hirst. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DOUG PETERS/PRESS ASSOCIATION

DAVID LEVENE

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TATE)

**Load-Date:** November 28, 2021

**End of Document**



[***As Manchin Rejects Key Climate Provision, Carbon Tax Gains Support***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63W0-1441-DXY4-X51N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 17, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1374 words

**Byline:** By Coral Davenport and Luke Broadwater

**Body**

Faced with the likely demise of a central pillar of President Biden's agenda, the White House and outraged lawmakers are scrambling to find alternatives.

WASHINGTON -- Some House and Senate Democrats, smarting from a move by Senator Joe Manchin III, Democrat of West Virginia, to kill a major element of President Biden's climate plan, are switching to Plan B: a tax on carbon dioxide pollution.

A carbon tax, in which polluting industries would pay a fee for every ton of carbon dioxide they emit, is seen by economists as the most effective way to cut the fossil fuel emissions that are heating the planet.

The almost certain demise of the clean electricity program at the heart of Mr. Biden's agenda -- which comes as scientists say forceful policies are needed to avert climate change's most devastating impacts -- has prompted outrage among many Democrats and has led several to say now is the moment for a carbon tax.

''I've had a carbon pricing bill in my desk for the last three years just waiting for the time,'' said Senator Ron Wyden, Democrat of Oregon, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee.

''What has been striking is the number of senators who've come to me about this since early fall -- after Louisiana got clobbered with storms, the East Coast flooding, the Bootleg wildfires here in my own state,'' said Mr. Wyden, speaking by telephone on Saturday from Oregon. ''Now there are a number of senators, key moderate senators, who've said they're open to this. And a lot of House folks who have said they would support it if the Senate sends it over.''

But a carbon tax can be politically explosive. Industries could pass along their higher costs, leaving President Biden and fellow Democrats vulnerable to claims that they are raising taxes on the middle class, at a moment when inflation and energy prices are rising. Environmental justice advocates say a carbon tax permits companies to continue polluting, albeit at a higher cost, which disproportionately harms low-income communities. And it is unclear if Mr. Manchin, whose vote is crucial to Mr. Biden's legislative agenda, would support a carbon tax.

As a result, the White House is scrambling to come up with alternatives to replace the $150 billion clean electricity program that had been the centerpiece of Mr. Biden's climate agenda until just days ago, when Mr. Manchin indicated he strongly opposed it. That program would have rewarded utilities that stopped burning fossil fuels in favor of wind, solar and nuclear energy, and penalized those that did not. It was intended to push the nation's electricity sector to generate 80 percent of its power from clean energy sources by 2030, from 40 percent now.

As they seek alternatives, White House officials are also weighing a voluntary version of a cap-and-trade program, which would create a market for polluters to buy and sell allowances for a certain amount of emissions. They are also considering adding to the $300 billion in clean energy tax incentives and credits that remain in the bill, while looking for ways to salvage some parts of the clean electricity program.

A White House official said on Saturday that staff members were still engaging with members of Congress and had not yet agreed to a final version of climate provisions.

The cut to the climate change program could be among the first consequential decisions in what will very likely be a painful process for Democrats as they pare their ambitious $3.5 trillion domestic policy package. Mr. Manchin and another Democrat, Senator Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, have said they cannot support that spending level. Over the next two weeks, the White House will negotiate with Democrats over cuts to dozens of programs, as lawmakers try to whittle the original bill to about $2 trillion.

Mr. Biden suggested on Friday that one of his agenda's signature items -- two years of free community college -- was also on the chopping block, and progressive lawmakers worried about whether plans to provide paid family leave and expand Medicare to include vision, dental and hearing benefits could survive.

Mr. Biden and Democratic leaders on Capitol Hill have set a deadline of Oct. 31 for a deal that would enable Democrats to pass the bill with their razor-thin majorities in both chambers of Congress.

In recent days, as White House officials were trying to forge a deal, Mr. Manchin told them he would not support any legislation that includes a clean electricity program. Mr. Manchin, whose state is a major coal producer and who has financial ties to the coal industry, has said that abandoning fossil fuels will harm the country's energy independence and would make climate change worse.

Once his opposition to the clean electricity program became public on Friday, several fellow Democrats expressed outrage.

''We have a moral obligation and a governing mandate to pass policy that addresses climate change,'' the 96-member Congressional Progressive Caucus wrote on Twitter. ''Inaction is not an option.'' For weeks, progressive Democrats have been holding rallies chanting, ''No climate, no deal!'' to pressure the White House to include strong climate provisions. Several of those rallies focused on the importance of the clean electricity program.

Congress ''cannot afford to gut'' the climate provisions in the bill, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Democrat of New York, wrote on Twitter. ''This issue is bigger than ideology. It is a moral imperative for humanity and our planet's future to reduce and eventually eliminate emissions,'' she wrote. ''There are many ways to do it, but we can't afford to give up.''

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Mr. Wyden's staff, which is drafting the carbon tax language, is considering a domestic carbon tax that could start at $15 to $18 per ton, and that would increase over time, according to two people familiar with the matter who were not authorized to speak on the record.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/16/climate/democrats-carbon-tax-climate.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/16/climate/democrats-carbon-tax-climate.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Senator Ron Wyden, Democrat of Oregon, said a number of ''key moderate senators'' would support adding a carbon tax. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

President Biden's staff is working to trim about $1.5 trillion from his domestic policy package. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**End of Document**



[***Democrats Weigh Carbon Tax After Manchin Rejects Key Climate Provision***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63VT-R5M1-JBG3-646P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 16, 2021 Saturday 08:41 EST

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**Section:** CLIMATE

**Length:** 1410 words

**Byline:** Coral Davenport and Luke Broadwater

**Highlight:** Faced with the likely demise of a central pillar of President Biden’s agenda, the White House and outraged lawmakers are scrambling to find alternatives.

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PHOTOS: Senator Ron Wyden, Democrat of Oregon, said a number of “key moderate senators” would support adding a carbon tax. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES); President Biden’s staff is working to trim about $1.5 trillion from his domestic policy package. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 9, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Émigrés and Exiles***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61D9-JFF1-JBG3-638F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Rayyan Al-Shawaf

**Body**

THE THIRTY NAMES OF NIGHTBy Zeyn Joukhadar291 pp. Atria. $27.

''As long as my body was not for myself, I stopped allowing myself the luxury of wanting,'' reveals the anguished narrator of Joukhadar's ''The Thirty Names of Night.''

The 28-year-old inhabitant of that body was born a woman but feels otherwise, and eventually adopts the male name Nadir (Arabic for ''rare''). Nadir, who lives in Brooklyn, is falling in love with a man while trying to solve the absorbing mystery of a long-vanished Syrian immigrant painter named Laila Z, whose diary reveals an intimate connection to Nadir's still-living maternal grandmother. ''Her disappearance coincided with the city's destruction of Little Syria,'' he observes, referring to the 1946 razing of much of Lower Manhattan's Washington Street, historically a Syrian-American hub, to make way for the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel.

In another narrative thread, one that at times proves distracting, Nadir is haunted by the possibility that the fire that claimed his mother's life a few years earlier was arson. To avert the demolition of a Syrian cultural heritage building in Manhattan, she had campaigned to turn it into an Islamic community center, drawing death threats.

The author, a Syrian-American who previously published under a different name and has since transitioned to male, embellishes his novel with tinges of magic realism and beautifully rendered descriptions of birds flitting in and out of characters' lives. Despite a languid pace and a transparent substitution of story lines for plot, ''The Thirty Names of Night'' stands out for its lyrical quality, its filmic peek into the early-20th-century Syro-Lebanese communities of Manhattan and Dearborn, Mich., and a contemporary protagonist whose self-abnegation stems from an unrelenting sense of bodily imprisonment.

YOU EXIST TOO MUCHBy Zaina Arafat261 pp. Catapult. $26.

''When I saw a cute girl, the feeling in my stomach, the wave that seemed to take shape there, excited and inspired me,'' recounts the young Palestinian-American woman who narrates Arafat's debut novel, ''You Exist Too Much.'' ''But mostly,'' she adds, ''the feeling terrified me.''

Arafat begins her book in promising fashion, with an unnamed 20-something bisexual protagonist finally revealing to her mother, Laila, who is visiting her in New York from Washington, D.C., that her housemate is her girlfriend. But the author then mires the ensuing drama in a prosaic and thoroughly middle-class tale of maternal imperiousness and filial resentment.

The novel derives its memorable title from Laila's admonition that the narrator efface her idiosyncrasies, the better to morph into a version of her mother. What may surprise readers with preconceived notions of Arab women is that Laila cares little for cultivating demureness. As a socialite with class biases, she wants her daughter to land the right kind of boyfriend. The moderately engaging conceit here is that the narrator's complex regarding her demanding and irascible mother causes her to sabotage romantic relationships with men and women alike.

And in an intriguing but underexploited aspect of the story, her ethnicity is viewed by many as something between a security risk and a demographic challenge. Arafat's protagonist experiences firsthand Israel's occupation of the West Bank when she visits Nablus and other Palestinian cities; back in the United States, she encounters numerous Americans ''who lump all Arabs and Muslims into one large, threatening category.''

A COUNTRY FOR DYINGBy Abdellah TaïaTranslated by Emma Ramadan 136 pp. Seven Stories. Paper, $16.95.

Taïa's novels often feature a semi-autobiographical gay protagonist negotiating a sex life in a ***working-class*** Moroccan milieu. The novella-length ''A Country for Dying'' is quite different; out of a polyphonic onslaught, Taïa fashions a globe-trotting yet tenuous story.

The author, who grew up in Morocco and lives in France, excels when contrasting the dreams of two of his three main characters, all of whom are North African prostitutes, with the grimness of demimonde Paris. (Taïa writes in French; ''A Country for Dying'' was translated into appropriately gritty English by Ramadan.) Zahira, one of the protagonists, repeatedly witnesses her male Arab clients being ''used by this city that mistreats them with no remorse, and by their white French bosses who exploit them under the table without a hint of guilt.'' The other Parisian prostitute, Aziz, insists that he wants to ''become the girl I had always been, long before I came into the world,'' yet finds himself wrestling with the finality of gender reassignment surgery.

Taïa's third main character is Zineb, Zahira's paternal aunt, who strayed from her village in French-ruled Morocco as a teenager and was raped by a French police chief. Thus ''dishonored,'' she embarked on a life of prostitution. Zineb's tale is set in 1950s French Indochina, where she tells a client about her fateful past as well as her piteous fantasy of becoming a film star in India. It jars with the stories of Zahira and Aziz, owing to its brevity and altogether different time and place. Nevertheless, Taïa adroitly conveys the sobering message that, whether in the mid-20th century or in the early 21st, sexual stigma is often irremovable, and can even foreclose the possibility of a return home.Rayyan Al-Shawaf is a writer and book critic in Malta. His debut novel is ''When All Else Fails.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/books/review/joukhadar-arafat-taia.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/books/review/joukhadar-arafat-taia.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** November 29, 2020

**End of Document**



[***He Wants To Talk About Bill Cosby***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64NJ-5VD1-JBG3-614N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 31, 2022 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1650 words

**Byline:** By Graham Bowley

**Body**

The comic and commentator discusses his new documentary, ''We Need to Talk About Cosby,'' and what Cosby's story reveals about the ''two runaway forces of oppression in America.''

When W. Kamau Bell was growing up, Bill Cosby was the ''wallpaper of Black America'' and an inspiration, Bell said in a recent interview. Bell's new documentary, ''We Need to Talk About Cosby,'' surveys the star's long career and cultural impact, as well as the accusations of sexual assault that culminated in his conviction, on three counts of aggravated indecent assault, in 2018. Cosby was freed from prison in June 2021 after an appeals court ruled that his due process rights had been violated.

The four-part documentary -- which premieres on Showtime on Sunday -- consists of clips from his shows and standup act, conversations with women who accused Cosby and a parade of other interviewees who try to process the Cosby story and his legacy.

As a comedian and host of shows like CNN's ''United Shades of America,'' Bell said he has become known as a guy who is willing to have difficult conversations. But the one about Cosby was tougher than most, generating criticism from both sides: Some Cosby accusers didn't talk to him because they didn't want to be part of a project that includes Cosby's achievements. At the same time, Bell said, he has been accused of tearing down a Black role model when he could be examining white transgressors instead.

Last week, Cosby criticized the project through his spokesman, Andrew Wyatt, who added that Cosby continues to deny all allegations against him. Wyatt also praised Cosby's work in the entertainment industry. ''Mr. Cosby has spent more than 50 years standing with the excluded,'' he said in a statement.

As a reporter who covered Bill Cosby's trials for The New York Times, I am familiar with the accusations against him. But the documentary sets those accusations in a deep context of American culture and Cosby's career.

Recently I spoke to Bell by video call about making the series, and about his belief that Cosby's story is a story about America. These are edited excerpts from the conversation.

Hi Kamau. How are you doing?

[Laughs.] You've covered this story a lot, so I think you probably have some sense of how I'm doing. And then add Black into it.

You've described to me the trepidation you felt about getting involved in something that had the potential to be ''toxic.'' What do you mean by that?

We reached out to people, and we got so many ''no''s so quickly. At the time, he was still in prison, and I thought, Oh maybe we can finally have the productive Bill Cosby conversation. But with every note I got from people who were really doing well in show business, what I'm hearing is, ''This is a bad idea.'' Not that they would say that outright, but the feeling was, No, I don't want to touch that. Maybe they didn't want to touch it with me, but I think generally they don't want to touch it.

Why would they say that?

I mean specifically for Black people, whether you were involved indirectly or not, it's hard to have a productive conversation about Bill Cosby without frustrating some of your audience who still wants to support him, whether they believe he did these things or not.

How did the idea for the documentary come about?

The idea came very naturally in a conversation with [Boardwalk Pictures Production]. I liked their work, they liked my work, and we started talking about comedian documentaries. Generally, there are not enough great comedian documentaries, and then through that conversation it was, ''Could you do one about a comedian who has fallen?'' There are any number to hold up, but Bill Cosby was the one we talked about. And I've been thinking about this Bill Cosby conversation for years.

What did you hope to achieve?

When I started making it, as we say in the doc, he was in prison. It sort of felt like the Bill Cosby story was, in large part, over. So maybe now we can have the conversation, and it's a conversation I was already having in my head and with other people. Seeing people online trying to have it, the conversation wasn't happening in a productive way.

We have to learn something from this. If we don't have the conversation, I don't think we're going to learn. The guy that I believed he was when I was growing up and when I was a young adult -- that guy would want me to learn something from this.

So on some level, your example, Bill Cosby, led me to try to figure this out.

So what did you figure out?

[Kierna Mayo, the former editor in chief of Ebony magazine] said something to the effect of, ''Bill Cosby is key to understanding America.'' To me, that's what this is about.

There are two runaway forces of oppression in America: One, how we treat nonwhite people. The other is how we have treated women through the history of this country. And if you look at Bill Cosby's career, you can see things he did that makes this better and makes this worse. I believe there's a lot to learn there.

You use a timeline device in a powerful way that allows you to talk about the highlights of his career and also locate the timing of the accusations against him.

I don't like when documentaries tell some personal story but they don't connect to history. Because you want to know what was happening when that happened -- that helps give us the sense of why this is even more interesting.

It doesn't make sense to talk about Bill Cosby as if he was a solo man in the world. You have to really see how the boys-will-be-boys culture of Hollywood, specifically in the '60s, invites a kind of behavior that allows predators to hide.

It also lays this timeline of his career, the timeline of America and the timeline of the accusations on top of each other, which helps you see them in a new way.

You raise the question about who else knew at the time about the accusations against Cosby, but you don't come up with many specific answers. Did you try to talk to senior figures in the industry?

Yeah. but we didn't have access to any of those people. And I'm not an investigative journalist, so there's a point at which I have to accept that I'm here to take all that we know and start to figure out what were the circumstances through which this went down.

Ultimately, the bigger thing is it's clear that the industry overall is not doing a good job, and the people who run the industry are probably still not doing the best job they can do. That's the bigger issue to me.

At times, it seems that the ''We'' in ''We need to talk about Cosby'' refers mainly to a Black audience. Are there some complexities of the Cosby case that are particular to Black people?

I would say the ''We'' is those of us who feel connected to Bill Cosby. Now it just so happens that a lot of those people are Black people. But let's be clear: He was America's dad, not Black America's dad. He was universal. Everybody who worked on this, no matter what their race was, if they were of a certain generation, they were like, ''Yeah, I watched that show and felt like I was part of that family, too.''

Even this interview is complicated: For a lot of people, I will be tearing down a Black man in a white newspaper in front of a white man. And the question is, why isn't this interview about Harvey Weinstein, or Trump, or other people who have had allegations of sexual assault? Those are the questions that are coming at me now on social media -- like, why this man?

What do you say to your detractors?

I learned long ago you can't win those battles on social media, so I'm sort of allowing them to happen. I'm going to handle it by talking to you and other outlets, and by making sure I talk to Black press outlets, places where maybe those people will go. But I don't think there's any resolving it. If those people watch it, they will learn it is a more nuanced conversation than I think they believe it is.

This is another trite thing to say, but we have to be on the right side of history here. Can this be an opportunity for a large percentage of this country to actually work to make the system and structures better, from the highest levels of show business and corporate America, through ***working-class*** America, all the way down to how sex education is taught in schools? There are so many levels of this -- those of us who want to be on the right side of history have to do the work to rebuild these systems.

You ask many times in the documentary, ''Who is Bill Cosby now?'' Did you come to a conclusion yourself?

Somebody who has always taught us about America and is still teaching us about America, even if it's in ways he does not want to. And it is very important for us to learn all of the lessons of Bill Cosby if we're actually going to be a better society.

Also embedded in that, and it's hard to say it, but in the greater context: [Cosby is] one of the key figures for Black America and America in the 20th century. And one of the greatest standup comedians of all time. And the creator of one of the best sitcoms of all time. And, throughout a lot of his career, an advocate for Black excellence. But if you want to engage with that, you have to engage with the other stuff.

Cosby was released from prison before you finished the documentary. How did his release change things?

I didn't want this, but it gave it a more immediate feel -- this is an active situation again. He's out in the world again, which means all the defenders are out there in the world again and feel emboldened. So it feels both more important to tell this story and scary to tell this story, because people are invested in protecting him.

The most valuable conversation to me isn't the film -- it's the conversation that we all have after we watch the film. No matter what you think about Bill Cosby's story, it is critical that we create a society that treats survivors of sexual assault better.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/28/arts/television/bill-cosby-kamau-bell.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/28/arts/television/bill-cosby-kamau-bell.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: W. Kamau Bell's new Showtime documentary is ''We Need to Talk About Cosby.'' Bell is known for having difficult conversations, but the one about Bill Cosby was tougher than most. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AUNDRE LARROW) (C6)

**Load-Date:** January 31, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Here’s What America’s Covid-Era Classrooms Look Like***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60P8-NVD1-JBG3-6185-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** EDUCATION

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**Byline:** Hannah Wise

**Highlight:** We asked educators to show us how they were preparing to teach amid the coronavirus.

**Body**

We asked educators to show us how they were preparing to teach amid the coronavirus.

This will be a school year unlike any other, that much is clear. Educators, parents and students across the country are returning to in-person and virtual classrooms shaped by the [*coronavirus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/29/nyregion/ps9-brooklyn-teacher-death-coronavirus.html) pandemic.

There is no one-size-fits-all answer for educators in 2020. Decisions on reopening are largely being made at the local level, leaving administrators to rely on conflicting guidelines from [*federal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/29/nyregion/ps9-brooklyn-teacher-death-coronavirus.html) and state agencies or from public health experts. In some cases, the details about how to reopen are being ironed out days before students are scheduled to arrive.

Amid this confusion, [*teachers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/29/nyregion/ps9-brooklyn-teacher-death-coronavirus.html) are doing their best to prepare in-person and virtual classrooms to keep students safe and engaged. We asked educators across the U.S. to tell us how [*the coronavirus is changing their classrooms*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/29/nyregion/ps9-brooklyn-teacher-death-coronavirus.html).

We heard from preschool and kindergarten teachers, a middle-school principal, a choir teacher and more. Those who have started classes are excited to be back with students, but worry for their safety and their school communities.

What follows is a picture of what it is like to be an American teacher in the Covid era. The responses have been edited for clarity and length.

‘Our school is not safely prepared to reopen’

I bought plastic clear shower curtains from Dollar Tree and used shower hooks to hang them from the ceiling to separate students at a table. I will be requiring masks all day for my students. I’m in a portable classroom with a back door, so I can send students out one at a time for a “mask break” if they need one.

Our school administration has been very supportive of various teachers setting up their classrooms in whatever way they feel safest. But even in teacher preplanning, it has been clear that our school is not safely prepared to reopen. Teachers and administrators are doing everything we can, but our hallways, cafeteria and classrooms are not big enough for true social distancing.

‘Will their child be afraid of me in the classroom?’

My students are 3 to 5 years old with autism, and one of my biggest worries has been, “Will they be afraid of the P.P.E. that my district is recommending me to wear?” I hadn’t heard much discussion within our district about how our youngest learners would process seeing their teachers like this. I felt a need to show my students the smiling face behind the face mask and shield.

After I shared the video with my students’ families, one family said I looked like a doctor with the P.P.E. and their child is afraid of the doctor. Will their child be afraid of me in the classroom? It would break my heart if one of my students was afraid of me because of the P.P.E., but I know that it is the best way for me to stay safe in my classroom.

‘I have spent over $2,000 of my own money’

I’ve made several changes to my choir and handbell classes for social distancing. Since we cannot have shared materials, I’ve added 10 extra tables with foam for the bells and each student will have their own materials.

In choir, students are singing with masks on. We are following a protocol for [*singing during Covid:*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/29/nyregion/ps9-brooklyn-teacher-death-coronavirus.html) We can sing as long as we have masks on, are spaced six feet from front to back and side to side, only sing for 30 minutes, and have the HVAC unit circulate the indoor and outdoor air at least once before the next class sings.

I have spent over $2,000 of my own money to get things for my classroom to make it safe for me and my students. I had been saving money for my choirs for uniforms, but instead had to use it for Covid changes.

‘We’ll just have to see how it goes’

This is an attempt at a socially distanced setup in my classroom, but I’ve already realized I will have to change it to try and accommodate more students. Our district is following a hybrid model of part in-person, part remote instruction, and the cohorts in my classroom are different sizes depending on the day. Ideally, I’d be able to have one student at each paired desk location.

We’ll just have to see how it goes. I’m really conflicted about the whole hybrid situation. I really want it to work. I want to be in school with the kids, all of them. You feed off their energy, you get to be goofy with them and get excited. But I’m also a little terrified, for myself and my co-workers. I’m also overwhelmed.

‘It all feels like guesswork’

Our school is requiring six feet of social distancing and providing hand sanitizer. Face shields are required for teachers, but a mask requirement in the classroom is up to the teacher’s discretion. We also open our windows and use a disinfecting spray.

To protect my students, I’ve added fans to increase ventilation, HEPA air purifiers in my classroom and plastic dividers. I’m providing as much E.P.A.-approved sanitizer and disinfectant as I can get my hands on, and I have a disinfecting mister for desks. It all feels like guesswork, but whatever has seemed to work for others, I try to get for my classroom.

‘It’s hard to teach for two and a half hours with a mask on’Between a rock and a hard place’

The school has provided me with a bottle of sanitizer, disinfectant spray and a box of gloves. I’ve been told more supplies are on their way. I wear double-layer, 100-percent cotton masks I have sewn myself. It’s hard to teach for two and a half hours with a mask on.

It’s hard to hear the soft-spoken students. I have to bend and put my ear close to them. It’s hard to manage activities when I have to wipe down all the shared equipment or tell the students to be extra mindful about not touching their faces until the activity is over and I can pass sanitizer around. It’s challenging to be told to “teach bell-to-bell” without breaks and keep students hydrated in this 115-degree heat.

‘Nothing replaces hands-on learning’

My school is online until November, so I have set up my virtual classroom in my basement.

Key to my classroom is the document camera that allows students to watch me cut, paste, sort and glue during lessons. I can show my students how I form my letters with a pencil or marker and how to write on paper. While I will be using different programs to enhance their learning, nothing replaces real-time application and hands-on learning.

I have tried to incorporate different learning modalities throughout my lessons when in my regular classroom. With virtual teaching, it is very important to include music, movement, visual cues and tactile activities to address each child’s learning style and keep them engaged.

‘All of the classroom materials I scavenged from somewhere’

While I recently decided to leave my teaching position, this is the outdoor classroom I designed. Beneath the shade of a tree, each child will have their own wooden pallet, a cloth covered hay bale with a hard drawing board for a desk, a soft mat and buckwheat pillow for seating.

The pallets and hay bales, besides giving the children clear spatial boundaries, also allow movement — like jumping during counting or mimicking animals in stories — to be integrated into our classes. There will be an outdoor hand-washing station nearby for regular hygiene practice. All of the classroom materials I scavenged from somewhere, including pallets from beverage distributors.

‘It’s a matter of time before we go back to remote only’

So far I have only purchased extra writing utensils since students won’t be able to share pencils or use the sharpener. Any precautions I would take, other than starting full remote, are required for us anyway, such as wearing masks, frequently sanitizing and maintaining distance when possible. I considered not teaching this year, but reluctantly decided to come back.

Teachers have been understanding about the health guidelines, but it can be frustrating trying to teach with them. The masks make it difficult to see students’ facial expressions. Students can collaborate with Chromebooks and Google Apps, but can’t work in close groups like they have in the past.

The consensus among our teachers is that it’s a matter of time before we go back to remote only.

‘I wanted to create a space that felt welcoming’

While I am able to use my actual classroom if needed, I plan on using my corner classroom for most of my remote learning. Therefore I wanted to create a space that felt welcoming and included items from my classroom that would be familiar, to make a future transition back to the classroom easier.

From my classroom, I brought home any activity that can be done with me holding items up to the screen for students to view and respond to, like cards for sorting words based on vowel sounds, flashcards for math and language arts, a large clock and three dimensional shapes. I also brought home multiple picture books to use for reading aloud. These will be read throughout the school day, live and recorded.

‘All of our students come from ***working-class*** homes’

We are strongly advising our families to stay home and practice distance learning. However, we know that is not an option for all students. That is why we spent our summer making changes to our [*classrooms*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/29/nyregion/ps9-brooklyn-teacher-death-coronavirus.html), procedures and technology to make our school as safe and engaging as possible for those choosing in-person instruction.

All of our students come from ***working-class*** homes. At least half of them do not have a parent at home during the day, so if we shut down, they would be put in day care. We strongly believe that it is better for students to be with us than in day care, given the tremendous amount of thought we’ve put into children’s safety and education.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Matt Roll FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 29, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Still Fighting Over the Turner Prize***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6458-G031-JBG3-60YV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 1640 words

**Byline:** Elizabeth Fullerton

**Highlight:** Although the British award stirs less debate than in its heyday, the decision to choose among activist collectives has revived disputes about its future.

**Body**

Although the British award stirs less debate than in its heyday, the decision to choose among activist collectives has revived disputes about its future.

LONDON — People are always arguing about the Turner Prize.

For decades since it was founded in 1984, the annual British visual arts award offered up big characters and outlandish works, whose merits were debated in newspaper editorials, in pubs and at dinner parties. By 2001, when Britain’s art scene seemed like the coolest in the world, a prime time audience was tuning in [*to watch Madonna give out the prize on live television*](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/1698032.stm).

Now the prize is a much less buzzy affair, perhaps because the public here is less easily shocked by contemporary art. Where once the tabloid press fulminated against the prize’s nominees, these days much art world discussion takes place in more specialized publications and on social media.

For most of its life, the Turner Prize was a battle between individual artists — or occasionally a duo, like Gilbert and George, [*who won in 1986*](https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/turner-prize-1986/turner-prize-1986-shortlist-gilbert-george) — from a shortlist of four nominees, chosen by a jury in recognition of an outstanding recent show.

But for three years now, there has been no single winner. In 2019, [*the four finalists rebelled against the rules*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/03/arts/turner-prize-winners.html) and, in a surprise announcement at the award ceremony, said they would share the honor and 40,000 pounds in prize money, around $54,000, equally. The following year, after coronavirus lockdowns in Britain shuttered most exhibitions in the country for months, the Tate museum group, which organizes the prize, [*canceled the award and instead distributed £100,000*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/02/arts/design/turner-prize-coronavirus-bursaries.html) as grants among 10 artists.

This year, [*the judges also decided against anointing a lone figure*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/07/arts/design/turner-prize-shortlist.html): The winner, which will be announced in a ceremony on Dec. 1, will be drawn from a shortlist of five collectives, each of whose work has as much to do with social activism as art. The groups’ aims range from developing more climate-friendly eating habits to building solidarity among queer people of color through organizing club nights and workshops.

The nomination of these collectives underlines the quandary for the Turner Prize today: Is its role to capture the zeitgeist, or to reward excellence?

In an interview, Alex Farquharson, the Tate official who selects and oversees the Turner Prize’s four-person jury, insisted that the award was still relevant, whatever its role. “The very fact that the Turner Prize can divide critical opinion, I think, reflects the fact that there is actually a lot of interest,” he said. “It attracts that commentary, it attracts that engagement.”

Yet there is no question that there is less interest than in the 1990s and early 2000s, when the winners’ list was virtually a roll call of the “Young British Artists,” or Y.B.A.s, an entrepreneurial group, spearheaded by Damien Hirst, who upended London’s elitist art scene by staging their own shows in alternative spaces. Some of those artists’ greatest hits include [*pickled animals*](https://www.damienhirst.com/the-physical-impossibility-of), [*sex dolls*](https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/turner-prize-2003/turner-prize-2003-artists-jake-and-dinos-chapman) and [*an unmade bed*](https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/emin-my-bed-l03662).

Back then, [*a group of figurative painters calling themselves the Stuckists*](https://www.stuckism.com/info.html) would gather regularly on the steps of the Tate Gallery to demonstrate against the conceptual art on show inside; in the Stuckists’ eyes, those works weren’t art at all. But over the years, the scandalous offerings of the Y.B.A. generation have been assimilated into the artistic mainstream, and might even seem old-fashioned now.

The shortlists from the prize’s early days were dominated by white men, an imbalance that has only recently started to be redressed. The Black British artists [*Chris Ofili*](https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/turner-prize-1998/turner-prize-1998-artists-chris-ofili) and [*Steve McQueen*](https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/turner-prize-1999) scooped up the award in 1998 and 1999, but it took 18 more years for another Black person to win, [*when Lubaina Himid became the first Black female winner*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/05/arts/design/turner-prize-lubaina-himid.html), in 2017.

The jury’s decision to shortlist only socially engaged collectives prompted complaints that it is putting politics over aesthetics. In an interview, Jake Chapman, one half of the Chapman Brothers duo that was nominated in 2003, said that a lot of art these days served a “very defined and performative sense of social responsibility,” limiting its ability to be experimental and open-ended.

“The explosive, neoliberal individualism of the Young British Artists has given way to the notion of art serving a social purpose,” he said. “I’m just wondering at what point will it merge with Social Services.”

And it’s not just social engagement in vogue among artists right now; collectives are also taking some of the art world’s highest honors. The Indonesian artist group ruangrupa, for example, [*will oversee the 2022 edition of the Documenta mega-exhibition*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/22/arts/design/documenta-curator-ruangrupa-2022.html), a once-every-five-years event regarded as the most important statement about the direction of contemporary art.

The work of the Turner Prize’s nominated collectives is [*on show this year at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum*](https://www.theherbert.org/whats_on/1560/turner_prize_2021) in Coventry, England, as part of a drive by Tate to broaden engagement outside London. The exhibition, which runs through Jan. 12, 2022, includes a recreation of a cozy pub adorned with hand-sewn protest banners, created by the Belfast-based group Array, which champions human rights through carnivalesque civic actions; a working studio run by the group Project Art Works, in which “neurodivergent” members of that collective are making art throughout the exhibition’s run; and films by Gentle/Radical, a community of artists, faith ministers, youth workers and activists.

Cooking Sections, another nominee, is presenting an audiovisual installation about the negative environmental effects of intensive salmon farming. Those artists, whose practice investigates the political systems behind the food we eat, have persuaded many museums — including the Herbert, where the show is taking place — to take salmon off their cafe menus as part of their project, “Climavore.”

There’s also an immersive nightclub-like installation by B.O.S.S., a group of Black queer, trans and nonbinary people who build sound systems and organize D.J. sets, performances and other events.

Anish Kapoor, [*who won the award in 1991*](https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/turner-prize-1991/turner-prize-1991-artists-anish-kapoor), said in an interview that he welcomed the Turner Prize’s political turn in the context of an art world “obsessed with money.”

“I dare to think of it as an anticapitalist move in miniature,” Kapoor said, adding that all the nominees were “very clear that theirs is a social agenda, that art can make deep and real psychic change.”

Such arguments ring hollow to the Turner Prize’s long-term critics. Michael Sandle, a self-described “radical traditionalist” who has never been nominated for the award, said, “It’s all well and good having these views, which are probably genuine — but where is the bloody art?”

“That’s what I want to see, expressed powerfully through an artist,” he said: The prize’s organizers should stop trying to “get on any fashionable bandwagon.”

But artists working together isn’t such a break with the past, said Iwona Blazwick, the artistic director of the Whitechapel Gallery, a London museum. “One hundred years ago, the avant-garde was defined by groups,” she said. “The jury was absolutely correct in recognizing that this is a very powerful, artistic impulse. It doesn’t mean that we will never see a prize for painting or a single practitioner.”

Even some of the nominated artists, however, have criticized Tate for trying to boost its credibility by embracing social justice trends. Just days after B.O.S.S.’s nomination was announced, in May, [*the group posted a message on Instagram*](https://www.instagram.com/p/COsDjydFubV/?hl=en) accusing arts institutions of “exploitative practices in prize culture.” The statement added that, for award organizers, “Black, brown, ***working class***, disabled, queer bodies are desirable, quickly dispensable, but never sustainably cared for.”

Those concerns are shared by other emerging artists, including Larry Achiampong, a rising British star, who said in an interview that a competitive, single-winner Turner Prize did not contribute to a “good ecosystem” for art. “This kind of thing where people get placed into an almost gladiatorial arena, is played out,” he said. “It’s not healthy. It builds and creates a natural animosity over time amongst practitioners.”

Achiampong added that Tate needs to rethink the prize so that it offers long-term support to its nominated artists and “does not treat people who deserve awards as tokens.”

“What opportunities will be afforded for them afterward?” he said. “Let it not just be that the artist is used for a moment, but that they get given their dues.”

Yet Farquharson, the Tate official, said it would be “condescending to suggest that there would be some sort of aftercare,” adding that some of the shortlisted collectives had been working successfully for years before their nomination. The Turner Prize was already “a very supportive project,” he said.

Whatever the jury’s decision this year, it is unlikely to cause a stir with the British public; bookmakers are not even taking bets on the outcome, unlike in the prize’s heyday. But within Britain’s art world, more is at stake.

Anthea Hamilton, an artist who was nominated in 2016, said this year’s award was an invitation for Tate and other institutions to build on the conversation started by the nominees, “to be more outward looking” and “less focused on the sensational; the formal; the pretty; the material; the traditional accepted, comfortable ways of looking.” Will Tate take it up?

PHOTOS: Top, “Salmon: Traces of Escapees” by the group Cooking Sections, at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum. Above left, “Self Portrait, 2105,” by Jack Denness, of the Project Arts Collective. Above, “The Druithaib’s Ball,” a re-creation of a pub adorned with protest banners, by the group Array and at the Herbert. Below left is “Mother and Child Divided” by Damien Hirst. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DOUG PETERS/PRESS ASSOCIATION; DAVID LEVENE; DAMIEN HIRST AND SCIENCE LTD. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED/ DACS, LONDON/ARS, NY; TATE)

**Load-Date:** November 25, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Rental Aid Funds Remain Unused Ahead of Court Decision***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63FW-6JR1-DXY4-X41F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 26, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1341 words

**Byline:** By Glenn Thrush and Alan Rappeport

**Body**

Just $1.7 billion in funds intended to prevent eviction were disbursed in July as the White House braces for a Supreme Court decision that could strike down its eviction moratorium.

The $46.5 billion rental aid program created to pay rent accrued during the pandemic continues to disburse money at a slow pace, as the White House braces for a Supreme Court order that could strike down a new national moratorium on evictions.

The Emergency Rental Assistance Program, funded in the two federal pandemic relief packages passed over the last year, sputtered along in July, with just $1.7 billion being distributed by state and local governments, according to the Treasury Department, which oversees the program.

The money meted out was a modest increase from the prior month, bringing the total aid disbursed to about $5.1 billion, figures released early Wednesday showed, or roughly 11 percent of the cash allocated by Congress to avoid an eviction crisis that many housing experts now see as increasingly likely.

That cash was slated to be spent over three years, but White House officials -- who have spent months pressuring local officials and tweaking the program to make access easier -- had hoped states would have spent much more by now.

''About a million payments have now gone out to pay back rent for families -- it is starting to help a meaningful number of families,'' said Gene Sperling, who oversees the operation of federal pandemic relief programs for President Biden.

''It's just not close to enough in an emergency like this to protect all the families who need and deserve to be protected. So there is still way more to do and to do fast,'' he added.

Data released by the Census Bureau on Wednesday illustrated the magnitude of the eviction risk.

An estimated 1.2 million households are very likely to face eviction for nonpayment of rent over the next two months, according to the bureau's periodic Pulse survey, which extrapolated national totals from a pool of about 70,000 respondents who answered a survey this month.

Of the roughly 2.8 million households that have applied for aid, only about 500,000 reported receiving assistance -- another 1.5 million are waiting for approvals, while nearly 700,000 have been rejected, according to the estimates.

And those are just the tenants who have tried to get access to the program: Over 60 percent of vulnerable renters have not even applied.

To speed things up, Treasury announced another round of changes to the program, including a directive to local officials that they allow tenants to use self-reported financial information on aid applications as a first, rather than a last, resort, while granting permission for states to send out bulk payments to landlords and utility companies in anticipation of federal payouts to tenants.

They are also expanding existing initiatives to prevent evictions at properties funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Agriculture Department and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Mr. Biden's domestic policy staff has mapped out policy contingencies if the Supreme Court strikes down the moratorium, which is the administration's principal safeguard for hundreds of thousands of low-income and ***working-class*** tenants hit hardest by the pandemic. White House lawyers expect a court decision this week.

Mostly, the response will entail doubling down on existing efforts to speed up flow of the aid. But officials are likely to switch to a triage model, focusing on a handful of states and cities that have weak tenant protections, high backlogs of unpaid rent and low use of the federal rental assistance fund.

The moratorium was initially put into effect by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in September under President Donald J. Trump. Mr. Biden extended it several times this year, but allowed it to briefly expire earlier this month. He reinstated it, in a slightly modified form, on Aug. 3 under pressure from congressional Democrats.

That final 60-day extension, enacted over the objection of White House lawyers, was intended to buy more time to distribute the emergency rental assistance.

The program is administered by the federal government, but it is up to states to build out a system to deliver aid to struggling renters and landlords, and that has been the main source of its problems.

Treasury Department and White House officials acknowledged on a conference call Tuesday evening that the program was not ramping up fast enough to entirely prevent a wave of evictions, even if the justices allow it to remain in place until its scheduled expiration on Oct. 2.

[Read more on why it's been so challenging getting aid to renters.]

But they also cited progress. State and local agencies have begun to steadily increase payments to hundreds of thousands of households that were at risk of eviction, with most of those going to low-income tenants. They also believe the pace of payments has continued to accelerate in August.

Administration officials continue to blame the program's struggles on local officials, many of whom are reluctant to take advantage of the new fast-track application process, which allows tenants to self-certify on applications, freeing them from the need to provide detailed documentation.

The new guidance emphasized that applicants can ''self-attest'' to declare their eligibility for rental aid without the need for additional documentation. The Treasury Department believes that this will expedite the process by reducing cumbersome paperwork requirements.

The Treasury Department also took action to empower nonprofit organizations to more quickly provide relief to tenants who are facing eviction.

In recent weeks, local officials have complained that moving too fast on aid applications could lead to errors, fraud and audits; the White House has countered by telling them that those risks are insignificant compared with a wave of evictions hitting tenants who did not get their aid quickly enough to keep a roof over their heads.

''They can and should use simpler applications, speedier processes and a self-attestation option without needless delays,'' Mr. Sperling said.

Several states, including Texas, have been particularly effective in ramping up their aid distribution systems, officials said. But many others -- especially New York, Florida, Tennessee, Ohio and South Carolina -- have been sluggish, making tenants especially vulnerable to displacement once the moratorium is lifted, they said.

But there are signs that things might be changing: New York released only a minuscule portion of its funding by Aug. 1, but has spent about $200 million in the last few weeks, according to a spokesman for the state agency that disburses the aid.

Gov. Kathy Hochul of New York, who was sworn in this week, has said speeding up the system is one of her top priorities.

States that have not used much of their money by the end of September could see their funds reallocated to other states that have been able to distribute it more effectively.

It will take local housing courts weeks to clear the backlog of eviction cases delayed by the moratorium. But many owners, especially small landlords, have rejected the federal aid, arguing that evicting nonpaying tenants is not only their right but the most effective way of ensuring their revenue is not interrupted in the future.

Last week, Wally Adeyemo, deputy Treasury secretary, traveled to Hyattsville, Md., to talk to landlords, tenants and administrators of a rental assistance program that has had success by using self-reported applications and census data to determine eligibility.

Administration officials, worried that a new moratorium could be struck down at any time, are also turning to state courts -- which adjudicate tenant-landlord disputes -- to help deliver aid, by pressuring landlords to accept federal payments instead of proceeding with evictions, and educating tenants, who often have no legal representation in court, on their right to apply for assistance.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/25/us/politics/eviction-rental-assistance.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/25/us/politics/eviction-rental-assistance.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: As of July, only 11 percent of the rent funds allocated by Congress had been disbursed to tenants facing eviction. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSE A. ALVARADO JR. FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 26, 2021

**End of Document**



[***About 89% of Rental Assistance Funds Have Not Been Distributed, Figures Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63FN-MW41-JBG3-61M1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 25, 2021 Wednesday 14:35 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1358 words

**Byline:** Glenn Thrush and Alan Rappeport

**Highlight:** Just $1.7 billion in funds intended to prevent eviction were disbursed in July as the White House braces for a Supreme Court decision that could strike down its eviction moratorium.

**Body**

Just $1.7 billion in funds intended to prevent eviction were disbursed in July as the White House braces for a Supreme Court decision that could strike down its eviction moratorium.

The $46.5 billion [*rental aid*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/24/us/politics/eviction-aid.html) program created to pay rent accrued during the pandemic continues to disburse money [*at a slow pace*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/25/us/politics/rental-assistance-pandemic.html), as the White House braces for a [*Supreme Court order*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/20/us/politics/biden-evictions-ban-appeals-court.html) that could strike down a new national [*moratorium on evictions*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/01/nyregion/new-york-eviction-moratorium.html).

The Emergency [*Rental Assistance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/10/business/evictions-rental-assistance.html) Program, funded in the two federal pandemic relief packages passed over the last year, sputtered along in July, with just $1.7 billion being distributed by state and local governments, according to the Treasury Department, which oversees the program.

The money meted out was a modest increase from the prior month, bringing the total aid disbursed to about $5.1 billion, figures released early Wednesday showed, or roughly 11 percent of the cash allocated by Congress to avoid [*an eviction crisis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/06/your-money/rental-assistance-eviction-coronavirus.html) that many housing experts now see as increasingly likely.

That cash was slated to be spent over three years, but White House officials — who have spent months pressuring local officials and tweaking the program to make access easier — had hoped states would have spent much more by now.

“About a million payments have now gone out to pay back rent for families — it is starting to help a meaningful number of families,” said Gene Sperling, who oversees the operation of federal pandemic relief programs for President Biden.

“It’s just not close to enough in an emergency like this to protect all the families who need and deserve to be protected. So there is still way more to do and to do fast,” he added.

[*Data*](https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2021/demo/hhp/hhp35.html) released by the Census Bureau on Wednesday illustrated the magnitude of the [*eviction*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/01/nyregion/eviction-moratorium-new-york.html) risk.

An estimated 1.2 million households are very likely to face [*eviction*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/18/us/eviction-rising-rent-cost.html) for nonpayment of rent over the next two months, according to the bureau’s periodic Pulse survey, which extrapolated national totals from a pool of about 70,000 respondents who answered a survey this month.

Of the roughly 2.8 million households that have applied for aid, only about 500,000 reported receiving assistance — another 1.5 million are waiting for approvals, while nearly 700,000 have been rejected, according to the estimates.

And those are just the tenants who have tried to get access to the program: Over 60 percent of vulnerable renters have not even applied.

To speed things up, Treasury announced another round of changes to the program, including a directive to local officials that they allow tenants to use self-reported financial information on aid applications as a first, rather than a last, resort, while granting permission for states to send out bulk payments to landlords and utility companies in anticipation of federal payouts to tenants.

They are also expanding existing initiatives to prevent evictions at properties funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Agriculture Department and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Mr. Biden’s domestic policy staff has mapped out policy contingencies if the Supreme Court strikes down the moratorium, which is the [*administration’s principal safeguard*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/04/us/politics/biden-eviction-moratorium.html) for hundreds of thousands of low-income and ***working-class*** tenants hit hardest by the pandemic. White House lawyers expect a court decision this week.

Mostly, the response will entail doubling down on existing efforts to speed up flow of the aid. But officials are likely to switch to a triage model, focusing on a handful of states and cities that have weak tenant protections, high backlogs of unpaid rent and low use of the federal rental assistance fund.

The moratorium was initially put into effect by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in September under President Donald J. Trump. Mr. Biden extended it several times this year, but allowed it to briefly expire earlier this month. He reinstated it, in a slightly modified form, on Aug. 3 [*under pressure from congressional Democrats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/07/us/politics/biden-congress-eviction-moratorium.html).

That final 60-day extension, [*enacted over the objection of White House lawyers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/07/us/politics/biden-congress-eviction-moratorium.html), was intended to buy more time to distribute the emergency rental assistance.

The program is administered by the federal government, but it is up to states to build out a system to deliver aid to struggling renters and landlords, and that has been the main source of its problems.

Treasury Department and White House officials acknowledged on a conference call Tuesday evening that the program was not ramping up fast enough to entirely prevent a wave of evictions, even if the justices allow it to remain in place until its scheduled expiration on Oct. 2.

[*[Read more on why it’s been so challenging getting aid to renters.]*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/business/economy/rental-aid.html)

But they also cited progress. State and local agencies have begun to steadily increase payments to hundreds of thousands of households that were at risk of eviction, with most of those going to low-income tenants. They also believe the pace of payments has continued to accelerate in August.

Administration officials continue to blame the program’s struggles on local officials, many of whom are reluctant to take advantage of the new fast-track application process, which allows tenants to self-certify on applications, freeing them from the need to provide detailed documentation.

The new guidance emphasized that applicants can “self-attest” to declare their eligibility for rental aid without the need for additional documentation. The Treasury Department believes that this will expedite the process by reducing cumbersome paperwork requirements.

The Treasury Department also took action to empower nonprofit organizations to more quickly provide relief to tenants who are facing eviction.

In recent weeks, local officials have complained that moving too fast on aid applications could lead to errors, fraud and audits; the White House has countered by telling them that those risks are insignificant compared with a wave of evictions hitting tenants who did not get their aid quickly enough to keep a roof over their heads.

“They can and should use simpler applications, speedier processes and a self-attestation option without needless delays,” Mr. Sperling said.

Several states, including Texas, have been particularly effective in ramping up their aid distribution systems, officials said. But many others — [*especially New York*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/25/nyregion/new-york-city-rent-relief.html), Florida, Tennessee, Ohio and South Carolina — have been sluggish, making tenants especially vulnerable to displacement once the moratorium is lifted, they said.

But there are signs that things might be changing: New York released only a minuscule portion of its funding by Aug. 1, but has spent about $200 million in the last few weeks, according to a spokesman for the state agency that disburses the aid.

Gov. Kathy Hochul of New York, who was sworn in this week, has said speeding up the system is [*one of her top priorities.*](https://www.amny.com/politics/gov-hochul-vows-speedier-rent-and-excluded-workers-relief/)

States that have not used much of their money by the end of September could see their funds reallocated to other states that have been able to distribute it more effectively.

It will take local housing courts weeks to clear the backlog of eviction cases delayed by the moratorium. But many owners, especially small landlords, have rejected the federal aid, arguing that evicting nonpaying tenants is not only their right but the most effective way of ensuring their revenue is not interrupted in the future.

Last week, Wally Adeyemo, deputy Treasury secretary, traveled to Hyattsville, Md., to talk to landlords, tenants and administrators of a rental assistance program that has had success by using self-reported applications and census data to determine eligibility.

Administration officials, worried that a new moratorium could be struck down at any time, are also [*turning to state courts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/12/us/politics/garland-judges-eviction-moratorium.html) — which adjudicate tenant-landlord disputes — to help deliver aid, by pressuring landlords to accept federal payments instead of proceeding with evictions, and educating tenants, who often have no legal representation in court, on their right to apply for assistance.

PHOTO: As of July, only 11 percent of the rent funds allocated by Congress had been disbursed to tenants facing eviction. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSE A. ALVARADO JR. FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 18, 2021

**End of Document**



[***How a Bronx Basement Highlights One of New York City’s Biggest Problems***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63V3-JGY1-JBG3-6418-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 13, 2021 Wednesday 12:18 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1320 words

**Byline:** Mihir Zaveri

**Highlight:** The devastation wrought by Ida underscored the need for a better way to legalize basement homes. But one woman’s experience shows the difficulties of finding a solution.

**Body**

The devastation wrought by Ida underscored the need for a better way to legalize basement homes. But one woman’s experience shows the difficulties of finding a solution.

When Mildred Velez was looking for her first home in 1965, she settled on a modest place in the Bronx because it had a basement unit for her mother-in-law. Years later, after her mother-in-law died, Mrs. Velez rented the unit to a disabled woman and then to a retired law enforcement officer.

The spacious apartment — with several windows and three ways in and out, including to a backyard — felt like an ideal space for anyone looking for an affordable home in one of the most expensive cities in the country.

But one day in 2018, a city inspector showed up at Mrs. Velez’s front door and delivered some startling news: City regulations prohibited anyone from living in the basement. She was breaking the law.

The violations have plunged Mrs. Velez, 90 — who is still renting out her basement — into a yearslong morass of fines and bureaucracy. It has also made her an emblem of one of New York’s most urgent housing problems: how to deal with the tens of thousands of illegal basement homes that remain an intractable feature of the city’s housing stock.

Those problems were put on stark display in September, when the remnants of [*Hurricane Ida*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/sports/grand-isle-cross-country.html) [*killed 11 people in basement homes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/02/nyregion/basement-apartment-floods-deaths.html), most of them illegal, prompting calls for a better way to legalize and regulate the homes.

There is no reliable data on basements and cellars that are being illegally rented out across New York City. Some may pose deadly threats to the people who live in them — as illustrated by the deaths during Ida where people drowned and had no way to escape because there were not enough exits. But others may only be illegal because they run afoul of a tangle of technical and possibly outdated city regulations.

The homes are not just important sources of income for ***working-class*** or lower income New Yorkers like Mrs. Velez. They are also crucial to addressing the city’s affordable housing shortage.

Yet the case of Mrs. Velez shows how challenging it can be, under existing law, to find a solution.

Her violations, which stemmed from an anonymous complaint, appear to center on paperwork filed more than 50 years ago that incorrectly classified the unit as a cellar. Cellars are underground units where at least half the unit is below curb level, and can never be legally rented. But Mrs. Velez’s unit is only a fraction of a foot below curb level.

Getting the paperwork fixed would, according to one estimate provided to Mrs. Velez, involve at least $6,500 for an architect and thousands more in engineering and other work, which Mrs. Velez said she cannot afford. Even if she could, she would then would not be likely to meet other requirements for basement units, like having enough parking space.

Mrs. Velez said her only other income is Social Security, and she needs the rental income from the basement — she charges $800 a month — to support herself. So she continues to accumulate fines on what she maintains has been a livable apartment for decades. City records show, that as of Oct. 6, she faced $18,000 in fines.

“If it wasn’t working in 52 years, you don’t think something would have gone wrong?” she said. “I’m not asking for them to give me anything. I’m just asking them to give me some peace of mind.”

But the city’s Buildings Department maintains that Mrs. Velez needs to stop renting the basement unit or get the permits to amend her paperwork and legalize the apartment. Those permits would be necessary for the city to ensure that qualified people had done any construction work on the unit and that it was a safe place to live.

Andrew Rudansky, a spokesman for the agency, said Mrs. Velez has “been repeatedly provided with detailed guidance” by the department “on how to correct the violating conditions in her cellar.”

“To date, the owner has failed to take the necessary steps to correct the violations,” he said.

Jessica Katz, executive director of the Citizens Housing and Planning Council, a nonprofit housing group, said Mrs. Velez was “caught in this web of all the regulations around basements.”

Ms. Katz has been trying to help Mrs. Velez find a solution, but she said her situation shows the need to ease city requirements for some homes and to offer financial support for legalization.

“We fail to provide homeowners with a tool kit on how to know and understand what their obligations are, and the tools and the resources to comply with those obligations,” she said.

There are some efforts to address those issues. A [*bill in the State Legislature*](https://legislation.nysenate.gov/pdf/bills/2021/S4547) would allow basement units to evade some cumbersome regulations, including by eliminating parking requirements, and would direct the state to find a way to help pay for renovations.

Mrs. Velez’s case does not reflect all the issues with illegal basement and cellar homes. Several of the apartments where people died in Ida, for example, only had one way in or out.

Still, city officials have been grappling with the problem for decades: The number of low-income New Yorkers far exceeds the number of affordable homes, prompting many to seek refuge in cheaper basements. And for many lower-income or older New Yorkers, basements are a crucial source of income.

Mayor Bill de Blasio, who has estimated that there are at least 50,000 illegal units, had pledged to find a way to legalize them. But the city’s one serious attempt, a pilot program in Brooklyn, has [*largely fallen short*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/14/nyregion/legalize-basement-apartments-nyc.html) amid pandemic-related budget cuts, and Mr. de Blasio last month expressed skepticism that a realistic solution was possible.

Mrs. Velez, who used to rent an apartment in another part of the Bronx, said she never would have moved to Throgs Neck with her husband if it had not been for the basement unit. And she remains adamant that for decades there has been no reason to believe that it is not a safe place to live.

The first tenant in the mid 1990s after her mother-in-law died was a disabled woman who relied on Section 8 housing vouchers, she said. Federal officials had inspected the basement and found it to be an acceptable home, Mrs. Velez said.

The current tenant, who has been living in the apartment since 2005, declined to speak on the record because he is a retired law enforcement officer who said he feared retaliation from criminals he once apprehended.

But he said he has had no problems with Mrs. Velez or the apartment other than a few inches of water that flooded the basement during Ida. He said he first heard about the basement from Mrs. Velez’s neighbors across the street who used to babysit his brother’s children and thought it would be affordable and convenient.

He has grown close to Mrs. Velez and plays dominoes with her every Saturday. He said he has thought about moving out because of the problems with the city, but the basement is comfortable and he and Mrs. Velez have come to depend on each other.

Mrs. Velez, who no longer has any family living nearby, agrees that the living situation has been harmonious. The rent payments are crucial, but the tenant also helps her with chores and groceries.

“My tenant downstairs is as if I had a son downstairs,” she said.

But the unpaid fines could lead to the placement of a lien on her property, and the fear of losing her home has Mrs. Velez feeling stressed.

Every 90 days, she receives a letter reminding her of her failure to address the violations stemming from the 2018 complaint. And last month, a fresh complaint was anonymously filed against her.

PHOTOS: Mildred Velez, 90, at left, had been renting out her basement unit for decades when a building inspector showed up three years ago and told her it was illegal. (MB1); Mildred Velez’s basement apartment has several windows and three ways in and out. “If it wasn’t working in 52 years, you don’t think something would have gone wrong?” she said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DESIREE RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB8)

**Load-Date:** November 9, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Possible Paths To the Presidency***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60XM-BX81-JBG3-62DW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 26, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section F; Column 0; SpecialSections; Pg. 5

**Length:** 851 words

**Byline:** By Josh Holder, Alexander Burns and Eleanor Lutz

**Body**

The 2020 presidential race will be decided by voters in more than a dozen competitive states, where President Trump and Joseph R. Biden Jr. will focus their efforts to win the 270 electoral votes needed to reach the White House.

SOLID REPUBLICAN Alabama, Arkansas, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nebraska 1st and 3rd Districts, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, West Virginia, Wyoming

LIKELY REPUBLICAN Alaska, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, South Carolina and Utah

The Battlegrounds

LEAN REPUBLICAN

Iowa (2016 margin: Repub. +9.4) Iowa is a rural, conservative-leaning state where Republicans have grown more dominant in recent years by consolidating support from ***working-class*** white voters.

Ohio (R +8.1) Donald J. Trump easily won Ohio in 2016. Democrats need a big turnout from Black voters in the cities to have a chance.

Texas (R +9.0) Texas has become politically competitive because of its growing Hispanic, Black and Asian-American communities, and because the white suburbs have grown more moderate.

TOSSUP

Maine 2nd District (R +10.3) A conservative, sparsely populated rural district in Maine that voted for Mr. Trump in 2016 even as Hillary Clinton carried the state.

North Carolina (R +3.7) North Carolina is split between cities with large communities of moderate professionals, Black voters and college students, and big stretches of the state that are more rural, whiter and conservative.

Georgia (R +5.1) A traditionally Republican-leaning state, Georgia has become more diverse and politically competitive with the growth of Atlanta and its suburbs.

Florida (R +1.2) Diverse but conservative-leaning, Florida is almost always close in presidential elections.

LEAN DEMOCRATIC

Nebraska 2nd District (R +2.2) An Omaha-based district that typically votes Republican but supported Barack Obama in 2008.

New Hampshire (Dem. +0.4) One of the country's most volatile swing states, New Hampshire has large populations of white suburban professionals and more conservative rural voters.

Nevada (D +2.4) Mrs. Clinton won Nevada by two percentage points in 2016.

Minnesota (D +1.5) Minnesota has a combination of liberal cities, moderate suburbs and populist rural communities that have moved swiftly to the right in recent years.

Wisconsin (R +0.8) Wisconsin's politics is shaped by the liberal cities of Milwaukee and Madison, the rural north and west of the state, and the affluent white suburbs that lie in between.

Arizona (R +3.5) One of the fastest-changing states on the electoral map, Arizona has gone from being a Republican stronghold to a true battleground.

Michigan (R +0.2) Mr. Trump narrowly won Michigan, historically Democratic, in 2016. It has large communities of white suburban voters, union members and Black voters.

Pennsylvania (R +0.7) In 2016, Mr. Trump narrowly won Pennsylvania, which has two huge Democratic cities, big swaths of formerly Republican suburbs and a deeply conservative rural middle.

LIKELY DEMOCRATIC

Colorado, Maine and Virginia

SOLID DEMOCRATIC

California, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine 1st District, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington

Source: Most recent race ratings from the Cook Political Report as of 12 p.m. Sept. 24

Four Possible Scenarios

Trump Wins

In these first two scenarios, President Trump wins these highlighted states to gain a second term.

Scenario 1: Near-repeat of 2016

White voters rally around Mr. Trump in the end, and he pulls together enough support to win by a hair in just enough states, losing only Michigan from his 2016 map.

Scenario 2: Trump ekes it out

A desperate, successful scramble. Mr. Trump loses significant ground from his 2016 map but throws enough money at small states where he lost to Hillary Clinton to pull out a minuscule victory in the Electoral College.

Biden Wins

In these two scenarios, Joseph R. Biden Jr. wins these highlighted states to reach the presidency.

Scenario 1: Biden dominates

It's a landslide. Mr. Trump's support is weakened among white voters, and turnout from white liberals and voters of color is massive.

Scenario 2: Biden wins the leans

A tight victory in a polarized country. Mr. Biden marries solid support from white voters with strong turnout among voters of color, even as Mr. Trump holds on to an energetic base of his own.

Build Your Own Scenario

Use the game board here to try your own election predictions

How to Play

This black rectangle is your game board. The height of the box represents the 270 electoral votes needed to win the presidency. Mix and match the different states to try your own scenarios.

Step 1

Cut out the strip of colored state boxes on the right side of this page. The height of each state box represents its electoral votes.

Step 2

Cut up the state boxes you want, and arrange the pieces inside this box. If the pieces stretch outside the white area, your candidate has won!

Play this online

Scan the QR tag on your smartphone to play this interactive online.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/24/us/politics/the-paths-to-win-the-white-house.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/24/us/politics/the-paths-to-win-the-white-house.html)

**Load-Date:** September 26, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Far-Right Pundit Stirs Up French Politics***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63V3-73B1-DXY4-X3F3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 13, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1395 words

**Byline:** By Norimitsu Onishi

**Body**

Éric Zemmour, an anti-immigrant writer and TV commentator, is surging in opinion polls before presidential elections next year -- and he is not yet a candidate.

PARIS -- He is the anti-immigration son of parents from Algeria. He styles himself as the great defender of France's Christian civilization, though he himself is Jewish. He channels Donald J. Trump in an anti-establishment campaign. And he is now scrambling the battle lines before France's presidential election in April.

The meteoric rise of Éric Zemmour, a far-right author and TV pundit, has turned France'spolitics upside down.

Until a few weeks ago, most had expected France's next presidential elections to be a predictable rematch between President Emmanuel Macron and the far-right Marine Le Pen that, polls showed, left voters who wanted alternatives deeply dissatisfied.

Though still not a declared candidate, Mr. Zemmour, 63, shot to No. 2 in a poll of likely voters last week, disrupting campaign strategies across the board, even beyond those of Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen.

''The French want to upset a political order that hasn't won them over, and Éric Zemmour appears to be the bowling ball that's going to knock down all the pins,'' said Pascal Perrineau, a political scientist at Sciences Po University specializing in elections and the right.

Mr. Perrineau warned that voters were not seriously focused yet on the elections and that polls could be volatile.

Yet candidates are not taking any chances.

Mr. Macron's campaign has focused on winning support on the right and forcing a showdown with Ms. Le Pen, in the belief that the French would reject her party in the second round of voting, as they have for decades.

Now it is far less clear whom he would meet in a runoff: A strong showing in the first round could propel Mr. Zemmour into the second one, or it could split the far-right electorate to allow a center-right candidate to qualify for the finals.

After weeks of ignoring Mr. Zemmour, Mr. Macron is now criticizing him, though not by name, while government ministers and other Macron allies have unleashed a barrage of attacks.

Mr. Zemmour's rise has been most unsettling for Ms. Le Pen, who is plummeting in the polls -- so much so that her own father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, the party founder, said that he would support Mr. Zemmour if the writer were in a stronger position.

Ms. Le Pen has for years tried to broaden her base with a so-called un-demonizing strategy of moving her nationalist, anti-immigrant party from the most extreme xenophobic positions that it was known for under her father. Now she finds herself in the unusual position of being outflanked on the right.

Mr. Zemmour became one of France's best-selling authors in the past decade by writing books on the nation's decline -- fueled, he said, by the loss of traditional French and Christian values, the immigration of Muslim Africans bent on a reverse colonization of France, the rise of feminism and the loss of virility, and a ''great replacement'' of white people, a conspiracy theory that has been cited by gunmen in multiple mass shootings.

As the child of Algerians who settled in metropolitan France, he has presented himself as the embodiment of France's successful system of assimilation.

He has said that the failure to integrate recent generations of Muslim immigrants lies with the new arrivals, who hate France, and not with a system that others say has not kept up with the times.

Mr. Zemmour's influence rose to an entirely new level in the past two years after he became the star of CNews, a new Fox-style news network that gave him a platform to expound on his views every evening.

His supporters include voters most deeply shaken by the social forces that have roiled French society more recently and that they now lump into ''wokisme'' -- a #MeToo movement that has led to the fall of powerful men; a racial awakening challenging France's image of itself as a colorblind society; the emergence of a new generation questioning the principles of the French Republic; and the perceived growing threat of an American-inspired vision of society.

''In its history, France has always had a strong cultural identity, but now there's deep anxiety about that identity,'' Mr. Perrineau said. ''People feel that their culture, their way of life and their political system, all is being changed. It's enough.''

''Éric Zemmour plays on that very well, on this nostalgia for the past, and this fear of no longer being a great power, of dissolving in a conglomerate that we don't understand, whether it's Europe or globalization or the Americanization of culture,'' he added.

In the 2017 election, Mr. Macron was the new face who overturned the existing political order. But during his presidency, ''the new world of Emmanuel Macron has come to look a lot like the old world,'' disillusioning voters, Mr. Perrineau said.

Philippe Olivier, a close aide to Ms. Le Pen and a member of the European Parliament, said that French voters seek a larger-than-life figure in their president.

''In the United States, a president could be a movie actor like Reagan or a carnival performer like Trump,'' said Mr. Olivier, who is also Ms. Le Pen's brother-in-law. ''In France, we elect the king.''

But the two-round system compels much of the electorate to vote in the runoffs against candidates -- and not for someone of their liking.

''In the second round, the point is who is more repulsive,'' Mr. Olivier said. ''I believe Macron would be more rejected than Marine, but Zemmour would be much more rejected than Macron.''

As France has grown more conservative in recent years, Mr. Macron has tacked right on many issues to try to grab a bigger electoral slice, especially among voters in the traditional center-right Republicans party.

The Republicans, who have yet to select their presidential candidate, are now facing a new threat themselves, because Mr. Zemmour draws support from them as well as from the far right.

In their own bid to attract far-right voters, many leaders on the traditional right have flirted with Mr. Zemmour in recent years, excusing or overlooking the fact that the writer has been sanctioned for inciting racial hatred.

''The traditional right made a serious mistake that is now exploding in their face,'' said Jean-Yves Camus, director of the Observatory of Radical Politics. ''Because it's long been in competition against the far right on issues like national identity, immigration and sovereignty, it kept winking at Zemmour.''

Now the traditional right is looking for ways to distance itself from the TV star without alienating his supporters.

Patrick Stefanini, a Republican who ran President Jacques Chirac's successful 1995 campaign, said Mr. Zemmour was benefiting from divisions within the traditional right on issues like immigration.

''Mr. Zemmour has turned immigration into the single key to understanding the difficulties facing French society,'' said Mr. Stefanini, who is now leading the presidential bid of Valérie Pécresse, the head of the Paris region. ''The Republicans are having a little trouble positioning themselves because the tendencies aren't the same within the Republicans.''

Mr. Stefanini attributed Mr. Zemmour's rise partly to the traditional right's failure to quickly decide on a candidate, and said he felt confident that the TV star's ratings would peter out.

But for now, many voters appear to be taking a look at Mr. Zemmour, who has been attracting huge crowds at campaign-like events across France as he promotes his latest book, ''France Has Not Said Its Last Word Yet.''

Last week, three residents of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, a wealthy suburb of Paris, came together to attend an event with Mr. Zemmour in the capital.

Françoise Torneberg, who said she was in her 70s, said she liked Mr. Zemmour because ''he gives a kick in the anthill,'' she said.

Her friend Andrée Chalmandrier, 69, said, ''We love France but not the France of today.''

''We're not at home,'' Ms. Chalmandrier said, adding that often when she shops in her suburb, ''I'm the only French representative. There are four or five veiled women around me, who furthermore are extremely arrogant.''

''And yet it's a good neighborhood,'' Ms. Torneberg said. ''It's not at all a ***working-class*** neighborhood.''

Léontine Gallois contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/world/europe/eric-zemmour-macron-france-election.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/world/europe/eric-zemmour-macron-france-election.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Éric Zemmour promoting his latest book, ''France Has Not Said Its Last Word Yet.'' His writings dwell on what he sees as the decline of France. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICOLAS TUCAT/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES

VALERY HACHE/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** October 13, 2021

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[***‘Are We Human?’ Modi’s Use of Antiterror Law Draws Scrutiny From Courts***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63TX-94C1-JBG3-63C4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Emily Schmall and Sameer Yasir

**Highlight:** India’s government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has jailed thousands of people through a statute that critics say is aimed at silencing dissent.

**Body**

India’s government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has jailed thousands of people through a statute that critics say is aimed at silencing dissent.

NEW DELHI — The two women walked through the gate of India’s notorious Tihar prison raising their fists and chanting protest slogans.

Their release on bail in June after spending a year in custody was unusual given the accusations they face: They have been charged with terrorism.

[*Natasha Narwal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/19/world/asia/india-activists-arrests-riots-coronavirus.html) and Devangana Kalita, student activists, were imprisoned under an antiterror law with roots in the British colonial era that critics say the [*Indian*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/world/asia/india-hospital-fire.html) government is increasingly using to silence dissent.

Under [*Prime Minister Narendra Modi*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/01/world/asia/modi-india-cop26-renewable-energy.html), those charged through the antiterrorism law, called the [*Unlawful Activities Prevention Act*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/05/world/asia/india-jailed-priest-dies.html), have typically spent years languishing in jail before their trials have even begun. Thousands of people — including poets, political organizers and even a Catholic priest — have been jailed. The law is increasingly being challenged by the courts, which say it is an abuse of power.

The law “makes you guilty unless and until you are able to prove yourself innocent,” said Ms. Narwal, a founder of the women’s student collective Pinjra Tod, or Break the Cage.

“Coming out of jail in one year,” she added, “is a miracle.”

Mr. [*Modi*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/01/world/asia/modi-india-cop26-renewable-energy.html)’s government has developed a playbook to police dissent and free speech, criminal justice experts have said. Since taking office in 2014, Mr. Modi has increasingly relied on laws that give the authorities greater powers to detain people and act against those accused of inciting hatred against the government.

The Modi government in 2019 gave itself greater [*access to people’s online data*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/10/technology/on-data-privacy-india-charts-its-own-path.html). Last year, it proposed a law that would make encrypted messages “traceable,” [*prompting a lawsuit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/25/technology/whatsapp-india-lawsuit.html) from the messaging service WhatsApp, which said it violated Indians’ constitutional right to privacy.

Officials have succeeded in persuading social media giants like Facebook and Twitter to shut down millions of accounts in India for a wide range of perceived offenses against citizens and the government. The authorities also routinely turn off internet services during protests, pushing India to the [*top of a list of global offenders*](https://www.accessnow.org/keepiton-report-a-year-in-the-fight/) tracked by the watchdog group Access Now.

The antiterror law, which gives judges the right to extend pretrial detention almost indefinitely, has been among Mr. Modi’s most repressive tools.

During the prime minister’s tenure, the number of cases filed under the antiterror law has surged. More than 8,300 people have been arrested and jailed in the last five years, according to official data. There are no reliable official statistics about the use of the law before 2014, but legal experts say the number of cases was negligible.

The government told Parliament in August that only about 2 percent of cases registered under the law from 2016 to 2019 resulted in a conviction. But even without a conviction, people detained under the law can be jailed for years before their cases go to trial.

“It appears that in its anxiety to suppress dissent and in the morbid fear that matters may get out of hand, the state has blurred the line between the constitutionally guaranteed right to protest and terrorist activity,” the Delhi High Court said in a hearing in June that resulted in the release on bail of Ms. Narwal and two fellow activists.

“If such blurring gains traction,” the court continued, “democracy would be in peril.”

Kanchan Gupta, a government spokesman, defended the law, saying it helps the government ensure the “security of its citizens and protect them from adversaries of the nation.”

Of the people detained under the antiterror law, the case of [*the Rev. Stan Swamy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/05/world/asia/india-jailed-priest-dies.html) has stoked particular outrage. Father Swamy, a Jesuit priest and activist with Parkinson’s disease, died in July at 84 while in custody. He was accused of using inflammatory speech and supporting a [*Maoist rebel insurgency that has been active in India*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/04/world/asia/india-maoist-insurgents-ambush.html) for decades. He was the oldest person in India accused of terrorism.

Father Swamy’s death came after his repeated requests for bail on medical grounds were denied. An independent investigation by a digital forensics firm suggested that his computer, which Indian investigators had seized, had been [*hacked*](https://scroll.in/article/992857/in-bhima-koregaon-case-new-forensic-report-shows-how-hacker-planted-key-files-on-accuseds-computer) and planted with files. But neither his poor health nor the conclusions of that report was enough to win him bail.

After Father Swamy’s death, Justice Deepak Gupta, a former Supreme Court judge, said that the antiterrorism law was being misused, and that courts should draw up clear guidelines.

“Are we human?” he asked. “The U.A.P.A. should not remain in this form.”

The various iterations of the law have been contentious for more than a century. Officers under the British Raj introduced a precursor to it in 1908 to quell independence movements. In 1967, when India was fresh from wars with Pakistan and China, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi introduced the U.A.P.A. to punish groups for “sowing discord.” It prompted an uproar among lawmakers, and a watered-down version was passed.

Over the decades, the law has been amended to address terrorist activity. Investigators relied on it in 2008 to arrest people suspected in the Mumbai terror attack.

In 2019, Mr. Modi’s government further amended the law to give officials more power to make arrests on terrorism charges.

“It strikes at individual liberty and grants government powers to name all and sundry as terrorists,” said Dushyant Dave, an Indian lawyer. “There is evidence to suggest that those arrested under the law have been targeted for their political beliefs.”

The students’ release on bail in June signaled growing scrutiny of the government’s use of the law.

Ms. Narwal and 18 others face charges for their roles in [*protests*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/11/world/asia/india-muslims-citizenship-narendra-modi.html) against a divisive [*citizenship law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/11/world/asia/india-muslims-citizenship-narendra-modi.html) pushed through by the Modi government that excludes Muslims from a program offering South Asian migrants in India a fast track to citizenship. One [*protest against the law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/25/world/asia/new-delhi-hindu-muslim-violence.html) last year in a ***working-class*** neighborhood of New Delhi descended into clashes between Hindus and Muslims. [*More than two dozen people*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/26/world/asia/delhi-riots-kapil-mishra.html) were killed.

The police arrested more than 1,800 people who they say played a role in the riots. No one has yet been convicted. During court hearings, judges have criticized the quality of the police’s witness testimony and evidence.

“It is further painful to note that in a large number of cases of riots, the standard of investigation is very poor,” Justice Vinod Yadav, a Delhi high court judge, said in August.

In the order granting Ms. Narwal bail in June, a judge [*questioned the validity*](https://www.livelaw.in/pdf_upload/natasha-narwal-bail-order-delhi-high-court-395020.pdf) of the police force’s case.

India’s clogged court system means the wheels of justice turn slowly. The antiterrorism law slows things down further.

In May 2020, Ms. Narwal and the two fellow student activists were taken into custody. Because of pandemic restrictions, each spent the first 10 days in solitary confinement.

A judge quickly ruled that Ms. Narwal had been exercising her democratic rights when she participated in protests earlier that year.

But shortly after, the police [*announced fresh charges*](https://scroll.in/latest/963353/delhi-violence-pinjra-tod-member-natasha-narwal-booked-under-uapa): attempted murder, terrorism and organizing protests that instigated [*deadly religious violence*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/25/world/asia/new-delhi-hindu-muslim-violence.html). Ms. Narwal, 32, who has said she is innocent, was returned to her cell.

Ms. Narwal waited in Tihar, a maximum-security prison, for six months before she was granted her first bail hearing. Prosecutors filed an 18,000-page charge sheet, which took the high court another six months and 30 hearings to process, according to her lawyer, Adit Pujari.

“In a sense, the government had a victory,” Mr. Pujari said. “If she was outside, she could have been involved with more protests and spearheaded more issues.”

For now, Ms. Narwal has returned to her doctoral studies in Delhi, but the case against her could continue for years. The Supreme Court is considering a petition to revoke her bail.

“We ourselves are prepared for the long haul because the law itself is so stringent,” Ms. Narwal said. “You are almost rendered powerless until your trial completes.”

Sameer Yasir reported from Srinagar, Kashmir.

Sameer Yasir reported from Srinagar, Kashmir.

PHOTOS: Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India, above, has increasingly relied on laws giving the authorities more power to detain activists like Devangana Kalita, center left, and Natasha Narwal, who were imprisoned for a year. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MANISH SWARUP/ASSOCIATED PRESS; XAVIER GALIANA/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

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[***Rise of a Far-Right Pundit Is Scrambling French Politics***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63TX-SNR1-DXY4-X2BC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

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**Byline:** Norimitsu Onishi

**Highlight:** Éric Zemmour, an anti-immigrant writer and TV commentator, is surging in opinion polls before presidential elections next year — and he is not yet a candidate.

**Body**

Éric Zemmour, an anti-immigrant writer and TV commentator, is surging in opinion polls before presidential elections next year — and he is not yet a candidate.

PARIS — He is the anti-immigration son of parents from Algeria. He styles himself as the great defender of France’s Christian civilization, though he himself is Jewish. He channels Donald J. Trump in an anti-establishment campaign. And he is now scrambling the battle lines before France’s presidential election in April.

The meteoric rise of [*Éric Zemmour*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/17/world/europe/zemmour-france-presidency-trump.html), a far-right author and [*TV pundit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/14/world/europe/france-cnews-fox-far-right.html), has turned France’s politics upside down.

Until a few weeks ago, most had expected France’s next presidential elections to be a predictable rematch between President Emmanuel Macron and the far-right Marine Le Pen that, polls showed, left voters who wanted alternatives deeply dissatisfied.

Though still not a declared candidate, Mr. Zemmour, 63, shot to No. 2 in a [*poll*](https://www.challenges.fr/top-news/zemmour-en-position-de-se-qualifier-au-2nd-tour-selon-un-sondage-harris-interactive-challenges_783607) of likely voters last week, disrupting campaign strategies across the board, even beyond those of Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen.

“The French want to upset a political order that hasn’t won them over, and Éric Zemmour appears to be the bowling ball that’s going to knock down all the pins,” said [*Pascal Perrineau*](https://www.sciencespo.fr/cevipof/fr/chercheur/pascal-perrineau.html), a political scientist at Sciences Po University specializing in elections and the right.

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Yet candidates are not taking any chances.

Mr. Macron’s campaign has focused on winning support on the right and forcing a showdown with Ms. Le Pen, in the belief that the French would reject her party in the second round of voting, as they have for decades.

Now it is far less clear whom he would meet in a runoff: A strong showing in the first round could propel Mr. Zemmour into the second one, or it could split the [*far-right*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/13/us/politics/france-far-right-extremists-qanon.html) electorate to allow a center-right candidate to qualify for the finals.

After weeks of ignoring Mr. Zemmour, Mr. Macron is now criticizing him, though not by name, while government ministers and other Macron allies have unleashed a barrage of attacks.

Mr. Zemmour’s rise has been most unsettling for Ms. Le Pen, who is plummeting in the polls — so much so that her own father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, the party founder, [*said*](https://www.lemonde.fr/election-presidentielle-2022/article/2021/10/02/jean-marie-le-pen-soutiendra-eric-zemmour-s-il-est-mieux-place-que-marine-le-pen_6096818_6059010.html) that he would support Mr. Zemmour if the writer were in a stronger position.

Ms. Le Pen has for years tried to broaden her base with a so-called [*un-demonizing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/13/world/europe/france-far-right-national-rally-le-pen-macron.html) strategy of moving her nationalist, anti-immigrant party from the most extreme xenophobic positions that it was known for under her father. Now she finds herself in the unusual position of being outflanked on the right.

Mr. Zemmour became one of France’s best-selling authors in the past decade by writing books on the nation’s decline — fueled, he said, by the loss of traditional French and Christian values, the immigration of Muslim Africans bent on a reverse colonization of France, the rise of feminism and the loss of virility, and a “[*great replacement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/20/world/europe/renaud-camus-great-replacement.html)” of white people, a conspiracy theory that has been cited by gunmen in [*multiple*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/18/technology/replacement-theory.html) [*mass shootings*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/06/us/politics/grand-replacement-explainer.html).

As the child of Algerians who settled in metropolitan France, he has presented himself as the embodiment of France’s successful system of assimilation.

He has said that the failure to integrate recent generations of Muslim immigrants lies with the new arrivals, who hate France, and not with a system that others say has not kept up with the times.

Mr. Zemmour’s influence rose to an entirely new level in the past two years after he became the star of [*CNews*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/14/world/europe/france-cnews-fox-far-right.html), a new Fox-style news network that gave him a platform to expound on his views every evening.

His supporters include voters most deeply shaken by the social forces that have roiled French society more recently and that they now lump into “wokisme” — a #MeToo movement that has led to the [*fall of powerful men*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/08/world/europe/france-metoo-sandra-muller.html); a [*racial awakening*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/14/world/europe/france-racism-universalism.html)challenging France’s image of itself as a colorblind society; the emergence of a [*new generation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/04/world/europe/france-student-union-unef-racism.html) questioning the principles of the French Republic; and the perceived growing threat of an[*American-inspired*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/09/world/europe/france-threat-american-universities.html)vision of society.

“In its history, France has always had a strong cultural identity, but now there’s deep anxiety about that identity,” Mr. Perrineau said. “People feel that their culture, their way of life and their political system, all is being changed. It’s enough.”

“Éric Zemmour plays on that very well, on this nostalgia for the past, and this fear of no longer being a great power, of dissolving in a conglomerate that we don’t understand, whether it’s Europe or globalization or the Americanization of culture,” he added.

In the 2017 election, Mr. Macron was the new face who overturned the existing political order. But during his presidency, “the new world of Emmanuel Macron has come to look a lot like the old world,” disillusioning voters, Mr. Perrineau said.

Philippe Olivier, a close aide to Ms. Le Pen and a member of the European Parliament, said that French voters seek a larger-than-life figure in their president.

“In the United States, a president could be a movie actor like Reagan or a carnival performer like Trump,” said Mr. Olivier, who is also Ms. Le Pen’s brother-in-law. “In France, we elect the king.”

But the two-round system compels much of the electorate to vote in the runoffs against candidates — and not for someone of their liking.

“In the second round, the point is who is more repulsive,” Mr. Olivier said. “I believe Macron would be more rejected than Marine, but Zemmour would be much more rejected than Macron.”

As France has grown more conservative in recent years, Mr. Macron has tacked right on many issues to try to grab a bigger electoral slice, especially among voters in the traditional center-right Republicans party.

The Republicans, who have yet to select their presidential candidate, are now facing a new threat themselves, because Mr. Zemmour draws support from them as well as from the far right.

In their own bid to attract far-right voters, many leaders on the traditional right have flirted with Mr. Zemmour in recent years, excusing or overlooking the fact that the writer has been sanctioned for inciting racial hatred.

“The traditional right made a serious mistake that is now exploding in their face,” said Jean-Yves Camus, director of the Observatory of Radical Politics. “Because it’s long been in competition against the far right on issues like national identity, immigration and sovereignty, it kept winking at Zemmour.”

Now the traditional right is looking for ways to distance itself from the TV star without alienating his supporters.

Patrick Stefanini, a Republican who ran President Jacques Chirac’s successful 1995 campaign, said Mr. Zemmour was benefiting from divisions within the traditional right on issues like immigration.

“Mr. Zemmour has turned immigration into the single key to understanding the difficulties facing French society,” said Mr. Stefanini, who is now leading the presidential bid of Valérie Pécresse, the head of the Paris region. “The Republicans are having a little trouble positioning themselves because the tendencies aren’t the same within the Republicans.”

Mr. Stefanini attributed Mr. Zemmour’s rise partly to the traditional right’s failure to quickly decide on a candidate, and said he felt confident that the TV star’s ratings would peter out.

But for now, many voters appear to be taking a look at Mr. Zemmour, who has been attracting huge crowds at campaign-like events across France as he promotes his latest book, “France Has Not Said Its Last Word Yet.”

Last week, three residents of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, a wealthy suburb of Paris, came together to attend an event with Mr. Zemmour in the capital.

Françoise Torneberg, who said she was in her 70s, said she liked Mr. Zemmour because “he gives a kick in the anthill,” she said.

Her friend Andrée Chalmandrier, 69, said, “We love France but not the France of today.”

“We’re not at home,” Ms. Chalmandrier said, adding that often when she shops in her suburb, “I’m the only French representative. There are four or five veiled women around me, who furthermore are extremely arrogant.”

“And yet it’s a good neighborhood,” Ms. Torneberg said. “It’s not at all a ***working-class*** neighborhood.”

Léontine Gallois contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Éric Zemmour promoting his latest book, “France Has Not Said Its Last Word Yet.” His writings dwell on what he sees as the decline of France. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICOLAS TUCAT/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES; VALERY HACHE/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

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**End of Document**



[***Kamau Bell: Bill Cosby Is Key to Understanding America***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64N0-6JG1-DXY4-X2BK-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Graham Bowley

**Highlight:** The comic and commentator discusses his new documentary, “We Need to Talk About Cosby,” and what Cosby’s story reveals about the “two runaway forces of oppression in America.”

**Body**

The comic and commentator discusses his new documentary, “We Need to Talk About Cosby,” and what Cosby’s story reveals about the “two runaway forces of oppression in America.”

When W. Kamau Bell was growing up, Bill Cosby was the “wallpaper of Black America” and an inspiration, Bell said in a recent interview. Bell’s new documentary, “We Need to Talk About Cosby,” surveys the star’s long career and cultural impact, as well as the accusations of sexual assault that culminated in his conviction, on three counts of aggravated indecent assault, in 2018. Cosby was [*freed from prison*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/arts/television/bill-cosby-release-conviction.html) in June 2021 after an appeals court ruled that his due process rights had been violated.

The four-part documentary — which premieres on Showtime on Sunday — consists of clips from his shows and standup act, conversations with women who accused Cosby and a parade of other interviewees who try to process the Cosby story and his legacy.

As a comedian and host of shows like CNN’s “United Shades of America,” Bell said he has become known as a guy who is willing to have difficult conversations. But the one about Cosby was tougher than most, generating criticism from both sides: Some Cosby accusers didn’t talk to him because they didn’t want to be part of a project that includes Cosby’s achievements. At the same time, Bell said, he has been accused of tearing down a Black role model when he could be examining white transgressors instead.

Last week, Cosby criticized the project through his spokesman, Andrew Wyatt, who added that Cosby continues to deny all allegations against him. Wyatt also praised Cosby’s work in the entertainment industry. “Mr. Cosby has spent more than 50 years standing with the excluded,” he said in a statement.

As a reporter who covered Bill Cosby’s trials for The New York Times, I am familiar with the accusations against him. But the documentary sets those accusations in a deep context of American culture and Cosby’s career.

Recently I spoke to Bell by video call about making the series, and about his belief that Cosby’s story is a story about America. These are edited excerpts from the conversation.

Hi Kamau. How are you doing?

[Laughs.] You’ve covered this story a lot, so I think you probably have some sense of how I’m doing. And then add Black into it.

You’ve described to me the trepidation you felt about getting involved in something that had the potential to be “toxic.” What do you mean by that?

We reached out to people, and we got so many “no”s so quickly. At the time, he was still in prison, and I thought, Oh maybe we can finally have the productive Bill Cosby conversation. But with every note I got from people who were really doing well in show business, what I’m hearing is, “This is a bad idea.” Not that they would say that outright, but the feeling was, No, I don’t want to touch that. Maybe they didn’t want to touch it with me, but I think generally they don’t want to touch it.

Why would they say that?

I mean specifically for Black people, whether you were involved indirectly or not, it’s hard to have a productive conversation about Bill Cosby without frustrating some of your audience who still wants to support him, whether they believe he did these things or not.

How did the idea for the documentary come about?

The idea came very naturally in a conversation with [Boardwalk Pictures Production]. I liked their work, they liked my work, and we started talking about comedian documentaries. Generally, there are not enough great comedian documentaries, and then through that conversation it was, “Could you do one about a comedian who has fallen?” There are any number to hold up, but Bill Cosby was the one we talked about. And I’ve been thinking about this Bill Cosby conversation for years.

What did you hope to achieve?

When I started making it, as we say in the doc, he was in prison. It sort of felt like the Bill Cosby story was, in large part, over. So maybe now we can have the conversation, and it’s a conversation I was already having in my head and with other people. Seeing people online trying to have it, the conversation wasn’t happening in a productive way.

We have to learn something from this. If we don’t have the conversation, I don’t think we’re going to learn. The guy that I believed he was when I was growing up and when I was a young adult — that guy would want me to learn something from this.

So on some level, your example, Bill Cosby, led me to try to figure this out.

So what did you figure out?

[Kierna Mayo, the former editor in chief of Ebony magazine] said something to the effect of, “Bill Cosby is key to understanding America.” To me, that’s what this is about.

There are two runaway forces of oppression in America: One, how we treat nonwhite people. The other is how we have treated women through the history of this country. And if you look at Bill Cosby’s career, you can see things he did that makes this better and makes this worse. I believe there’s a lot to learn there.

You use a timeline device in a powerful way that allows you to talk about the highlights of his career and also locate the timing of the accusations against him.

I don’t like when documentaries tell some personal story but they don’t connect to history. Because you want to know what was happening when that happened — that helps give us the sense of why this is even more interesting.

It doesn’t make sense to talk about Bill Cosby as if he was a solo man in the world. You have to really see how the boys-will-be-boys culture of Hollywood, specifically in the ’60s, invites a kind of behavior that allows predators to hide.

It also lays this timeline of his career, the timeline of America and the timeline of the accusations on top of each other, which helps you see them in a new way.

You raise the question about who else knew at the time about the accusations against Cosby, but you don’t come up with many specific answers. Did you try to talk to senior figures in the industry?

Yeah. but we didn’t have access to any of those people. And I’m not an investigative journalist, so there’s a point at which I have to accept that I’m here to take all that we know and start to figure out what were the circumstances through which this went down.

Ultimately, the bigger thing is it’s clear that the industry overall is not doing a good job, and the people who run the industry are probably still not doing the best job they can do. That’s the bigger issue to me.

At times, it seems that the “We” in “We need to talk about Cosby” refers mainly to a Black audience. Are there some complexities of the Cosby case that are particular to Black people?

I would say the “We” is those of us who feel connected to Bill Cosby. Now it just so happens that a lot of those people are Black people. But let’s be clear: He was America’s dad, not Black America’s dad. He was universal. Everybody who worked on this, no matter what their race was, if they were of a certain generation, they were like, “Yeah, I watched that show and felt like I was part of that family, too.”

Even this interview is complicated: For a lot of people, I will be tearing down a Black man in a white newspaper in front of a white man. And the question is, why isn’t this interview about Harvey Weinstein, or Trump, or other people who have had allegations of sexual assault? Those are the questions that are coming at me now on social media — like, why this man?

What do you say to your detractors?

I learned long ago you can’t win those battles on social media, so I’m sort of allowing them to happen. I’m going to handle it by talking to you and other outlets, and by making sure I talk to Black press outlets, places where maybe those people will go. But I don’t think there’s any resolving it. If those people watch it, they will learn it is a more nuanced conversation than I think they believe it is.

This is another trite thing to say, but we have to be on the right side of history here. Can this be an opportunity for a large percentage of this country to actually work to make the system and structures better, from the highest levels of show business and corporate America, through ***working-class*** America, all the way down to how sex education is taught in schools? There are so many levels of this — those of us who want to be on the right side of history have to do the work to rebuild these systems.

You ask many times in the documentary, “Who is Bill Cosby now?” Did you come to a conclusion yourself?

Somebody who has always taught us about America and is still teaching us about America, even if it’s in ways he does not want to. And it is very important for us to learn all of the lessons of Bill Cosby if we’re actually going to be a better society.

Also embedded in that, and it’s hard to say it, but in the greater context: [Cosby is] one of the key figures for Black America and America in the 20th century. And one of the greatest standup comedians of all time. And the creator of one of the best sitcoms of all time. And, throughout a lot of his career, an advocate for Black excellence. But if you want to engage with that, you have to engage with the other stuff.

Cosby was released from prison before you finished the documentary. How did his release change things?

I didn’t want this, but it gave it a more immediate feel — this is an active situation again. He’s out in the world again, which means all the defenders are out there in the world again and feel emboldened. So it feels both more important to tell this story and scary to tell this story, because people are invested in protecting him.

The most valuable conversation to me isn’t the film — it’s the conversation that we all have after we watch the film. No matter what you think about Bill Cosby’s story, it is critical that we create a society that treats survivors of sexual assault better.

PHOTO: W. Kamau Bell’s new Showtime documentary is “We Need to Talk About Cosby.” Bell is known for having difficult conversations, but the one about Bill Cosby was tougher than most. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AUNDRE LARROW) (C6)

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**End of Document**



[***Tools for Living***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63F1-MVT1-DXY4-X0TN-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Michael Snyder and Pia Riverola

**Body**

In his colorful Guadalajara work space, Fabien Cappello collects and creates pieces he calls ''prototypes of the future.''

EVERY AFTERNOON, YOLANDA González Murillo passes by the open front door of the French industrial designer Fabien Cappello's studio in the Mexican city of Guadalajara selling icy paletas that she pulls from frost-slicked molds. The flavors change with the seasons: walnut and vanilla in the winter, mango in the spring and prickly pear in the summer, all made from produce that González purchases from a market in the ***working-class*** neighborhood of Alcalde Barranquitas. The ice pops are delicious, Cappello says, but he's more drawn to their molds: long, tapered wands of stainless steel made for decades by a family of metalworkers in the lakeside town of Chapala, an hour away.

''We're always talking about the product rather than the tool, but the guys who make these molds allow these other businesses to thrive,'' says Cappello, 37, standing among a riotous collection of mismatched objects that crowd his 900-square-foot studio. Some are his own creations -- candlesticks fashioned from corrugated metal tubing in fluorescent shades of pink and gold; decorative plates made from off-cuts of opaque, candy-colored glass -- and others, like plastic jugs and metal bird cages, he's picked up at markets and neighborhood shops since moving to Mexico in 2016.

Cappello had previously lived in London, first while earning a graduate degree at the Royal College of Art, then as the director of his namesake design studio, which he founded in 2010. But his move to Mexico was inspired in no small part by these quotidian objects, basic necessities like broomsticks and tortilla presses made in urban workshops and suspended halfway between craft and industry -- items so ordinary, Cappello says, that most people don't consider them designed at all. Still, each one represents part of Mexico's vast lexicon of diseño popular, or ''popular design,'' a concept as central to Cappello's practice as it is to the country's cultural, economic and political universe.

The word itself -- ''popular'' -- is difficult to translate: It's not entirely like its English homograph, in the sense of ''well liked,'' and bears only a passing resemblance to ''folk,'' often used as its stand-in (as in ''artes populares,'' or ''folk arts''). Closer to the Latin root ''popularis,'' meaning ''of the people,'' Mexico's ''popular'' can describe the music, food and neighborhoods -- like Alcalde Barranquitas -- that the aspirational middle and upper classes typically shun. Used from within the communities to which it applies, the word carries a whiff of the English ''proletariat,'' with its proudly political implications; spoken by outsiders, it displays traces of the classism that organizes Mexican society.

Born and raised in the Le Pierrier housing development in the Parisian banlieue, or suburb, of Plessis-Robinson, Cappello is a product of his city's own barrios populares. He describes the items that fill his studio as ''objetos de resistencia,'' or ''objects of resistance'' -- the title of his current exhibition at Zaventem Ateliers outside Brussels, consisting of 340 pieces gathered from around central Mexico. Like the areas that tend to produce them, these objects, Cappello says, ''resist the material homogenization that's accelerated through the beginning of this century.''

A creator and collector of objects, Cappello gathers these artifacts (along with short videos of how they're made) as an informal catalog of techniques and solutions to draw upon as design challenges present themselves. Some of those ideas will yield goods for the home; others may eventually scale up into public furniture and lighting design. Taken together, they form a map of central Mexico's complex microeconomies. ''I don't look at these things as archaic or cute,'' he says. ''I see them as prototypes for the future.''

CAPPELLO HAS BEEN interested in urban resourcefulness since the beginning of his career. During his time in London, he worked with small-scale manufacturers across Europe, creating, among other projects, a fountain of glass watering cans in Venice, desks that conjure the Memphis Group made from colorful sheets of perforated metal in Paris and, in London, a series of stools from discarded Christmas trees.

By late 2015, Cappello had decided to leave London (''the most constraining place imaginable,'' he says), but other opportunities on the European continent seemed similarly stultifying, in part because the region's great artisans were now virtually inaccessible to anyone but the big luxury conglomerates. Unsure of where to go next, he visited Mexico City at the invitation of a friend from design school who'd moved there several years before. He spent days perusing the historic center's hangarlike markets and countless workshops, many of them tucked into crumbling colonial houses and crooked functionalist apartment blocks. The next year, he moved to Mexico City, though he found himself increasingly drawn north to Guadalajara. In 2020, he relocated there to join his partner, Andrés Treviño, 28, who advances trans and queer rights as the director of sexual diversity for the state government of Jalisco.

Cappello had long admired Guadalajara, a burgeoning design capital filled with workshops dedicated to trades like carpentry and metalwork. And then there was the studio itself: a modest corner building, its concrete facade painted pear green, its corrugated metal doors the color of turmeric, owned by the Treviños since the 1970s but left unoccupied for nearly two decades after the family's tannery-supply business moved elsewhere.

Over the last year, Cappello and his boyfriend have made modest adjustments to the space. They transformed a pair of mildewed offices into a receiving gallery for clients and collaborators, decorating it with delirious planes of contrasting color -- a constant in much of Cappello's work, despite his colorblindness. An electric blue shelf, originally designed as a book display for an art fair, backs up against a canary yellow wall. Round resin door handles in pink, orange, white and blue crowd its upper shelf, gathered around the base of a table lamp fashioned from a jicara, the dried gourd used for millenniums across Mesoamerica to collect water and serve drinks. A small patio lush with hanging succulents connects the front office to a warehouselike workshop where Cappello plans to install a folding glass door in order to bring his own artes y oficios -- his ''art and vocation'' -- back into the street.

''I'm not a designer who works with craft,'' Cappello says. It's a defiant remark in a country replete with makers, both local and foreign, who collaborate with artisans in an effort to preserve (or simply capitalize on) ancient traditions before they disappear, often treating clay casseroles and wooden spoons, early iterations of diseño popular, as holy relics rather than household wares. But Cappello is ''more interested in looking at objects from the side of production or function rather than aesthetic or symbolic value,'' he says. ''I want to speak to a more diverse understanding of a place's material culture.''

His own work is no less informed by place; it just happens that the regions animating his practice are not picturesque villages nestled among cactus-studded hills but the city itself. The pieces that emerge from Cappello's studio -- steampunk flower vases made in workshops that specialize in folding sheets of tin into cake molds; geometric wall sconces that resemble TV antennas fashioned from broomsticks -- translate the vitality of those barrios populares into products that are themselves objects of resistance against uniformity and pious good taste: each one a prototype for an uncertain future.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/19/t-magazine/fabien-cappello-guadalajara-studio.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/19/t-magazine/fabien-cappello-guadalajara-studio.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above: original works in Fabien Cappello's Guadalajara, Mexico, studio, including ''Las Macetas'' (2021), a planter and pedestal in colored fiberglass, and ''Los Floreros de Hojalata'' (2021), a tin vase. Right: a table and bench made for a 2020 art fair, and vintage chairs surrounded by Cappello's ''Offcuts'' plates for Hem (2021), a ceiling lamp of his own design (2018) and found objects. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY PIA RIVEROLA

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**End of Document**



[***Captive State***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YS1-R571-DXY4-X4KT-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Dina Nayeri

**Body**

THEN THE FISH SWALLOWED HIM By Amir Ahmadi Arian

''Crime is something relative,'' Mohamedou Ould Slahi writes in ''Guantánamo Diary,'' his memoir of imprisonment at Guantánamo Bay, where he was held for 14 years. ''It's something the government defines and redefines whenever it pleases.''

Such whispered warnings drive the tension in ''Then the Fish Swallowed Him,'' a story of entrapment and torture in Tehran's notorious Evin Prison, and the first novel written in English by Amir Ahmadi Arian, an Iranian-born former journalist who now lives in New York. In 2005, a lonely Tehrani bus driver named Yunus (after the prophet Jonah,who is swallowed by a big fish) attends a union strike. Shaken by a changing Tehran and worsening conditions for the ***working class***, he has read Foucault, Al-e Ahmad, Marx, Engels and other political writers.After the bus drivers' strike turns violent, Yunus becomes a scapegoat for the whole operation. In prison, he isn't a simple man who stumbled into a movement; he is its doomed architect.

The strangeness and physicality with which Arian depicts Yunus's prison life makes for a convincing, unnerving read. He invites us to notice the taste of prison tea, the heightening and dulling of sensation after torture, the bliss of a power outage that offers prisoners a few hours of night. When Yunus begins to unravel, befriending a fly, reliving the death of his parents and walking around his cell as if it's the city, he is poignant and tragic.

Arian offers straightforward and astute observations about Iran's attitude toward Western powers and about the social history of modern Tehran. His insights into the lives of the city's poor at a time of mounting inequality, and on the effects of sanctions and Western media on average Iranians, are gripping. I was struck by his description of a car ride during which prison guards discuss smuggling Western medicine to a sick child and the appeal of becoming refugees themselves.

But Arian's talents are primarily journalistic; too frequently his novel reads like a political lecture. If his eye is keen, his ear -- for poetic English, at least -- is not, and he often produces off-key prose garbled by mixed metaphors: ''The cacophony I had lived in my whole life came to me in strands of sound tangled like yarn. ... The noises snaked in from all sides, scarring the air, snarling into knots in my head, forming balls of hum and whir.'' He sometimes transitions awkwardly between the literal and figurative, not trusting the reader's imagination to complete images. Special guards are ''like mutated beetles escaped from a lab.'' The prison is ''a coffin made especially for the buried-alive.'' Tehran in the 1990s is bloated ''like a balloon attached to an air pump that never turned off.'' Aren't ''beetles,'' ''coffin'' and ''balloon'' enough?

Arian's publisher compares this novel to ''1984'' -- which is ironic, since Orwell was obsessed with linguistic precision and the decline of English. And yet, as Big Brother, Yunus's prison interrogator is perfectly chilling, especially in his moments of calculated grace. We know what he wants: for Yunus to believe him, to love him, to miss him. ''The system is not afraid of you,'' he says.

Before Yunus lands in Evin, an activist warns a group of strikers, ''Your interrogators are trained to make you contradict yourself.'' Then those same guards get into a car and discuss fleeing abroad, forgetting that every country has its interrogators, its gatekeepers, its tricks. ''Thousands of people have done it,'' one guard says about being smuggled to Australia by plane and boat. ''When you get there, you're fine.''

This novel is an uncomfortable deep dive into the belly of a beast that swims in every sea. In prisons like Evin or Guantánamo, ordinary people are broken, then blamed. If one day they arrive in safer, freer countries, they might find that their torturers have followed them, the same accusations on their lips. After a beating, a prison worker says of Yunus's injuries, ''Look what you have done to yourself.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/26/pageoneplus/26rex4.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/26/pageoneplus/26rex4.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Amir Ahmadi Arian (PHOTOGRAPH BY JASON KEITH)

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**End of Document**



[***A Lost Album Finds the Light***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:644F-55P1-JBG3-62J0-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

In the 1970s, Nocentelli recorded a folk album drastically different from his band's funk music. Barely anyone heard it -- until it ended up at a swap meet.

Leo Nocentelli decided to record a solo album just once, in the early 1970s. Though he was the guitarist and primary songwriter of the Meters -- the epochal house band of New Orleans funk -- he had a different palette in mind for his own LP: James Taylor and Elton John. He made ''Another Side,'' what he has referred to as his ''country-and-western album,'' and then it disappeared.

''I completely forgot about it,'' Nocentelli, 75, said on a video call, wearing a newsboy cap and shades at his home in New Orleans, noting that he didn't even have a copy of the record. ''It was like a distant memory. I didn't remember the songs.''

The quarter-inch master tapes of ''Another Side,'' out Friday in various formats after a 50-year delay, sat unreleased in storage for decades at Allen Toussaint's Sea-Saint Recording Studio in New Orleans. When Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005, Sea-Saint -- which housed numerous landmark recordings -- was destroyed by floodwater, and its archives were reasonably presumed to have perished along with it.

But about a quarter of the tapes at the facility were spared. And eventually the surviving material made its way to Los Angeles, where Bill Valenziano, who bought Sea-Saint in 1995, had it put into storage. After some missed payments and an auction in 2018, 16 boxes of master tapes bearing the Sea-Saint name landed at a swap meet in Torrance, Calif. When they were brought out for sale, a collector and D.J. named Mike Nishita was called over to take a look, and his eyes widened at the sight of the names: the Meters, Dr. John, Irma Thomas.

''I didn't really know about that studio at all,'' Nishita, a soft-spoken individual known by some as ''Hawaiian Mike,'' said in a recent interview. (His brother is ''Money Mark'' Nishita, a keyboardist often referred to as the unofficial fourth member of the Beastie Boys.) ''I just Googled 'Sea-Saint,' and was like, 'Holy [expletive].''' He bought the lot for $100 a box, and got out of there before the seller could change his mind. Sifting through the music, he quickly found his favorite reel of the bunch: Nocentelli's lost solo album, which no one else in the world seemed to know existed.

''I immediately wanted to shut it off -- like, someone has to hear this besides me,'' he said, remembering when he hit play for the first time. ''It kind of wasn't fair that I get to listen to it.''

Nishita was well aware of Nocentelli -- as a member of the Meters, a group that made its name with infectious semi-instrumentals like ''Cissy Strut'' and ''Look-Ka Py Py,'' seven of which charted on the Billboard Hot 100 between 1969 and 1970. With Art Neville on keyboard, George Porter Jr. on bass, Zigaboo Modeliste on drums and Nocentelli on guitar, the Meters were just as busy behind the scenes, regularly playing as session musicians on a variety of Toussaint productions, such as Dr. John's ''Right Place, Wrong Time'' and Labelle's ''Lady Marmalade.''

But according to Nocentelli, his path might very well have gone in a completely different direction. ''The Meters kind of happened by accident,'' he said, noting that, growing up in New Orleans, he was more interested in becoming a jazz guitarist in the vein of Wes Montgomery. That was before he found himself scooped into the world of R&B, playing on Lee Dorsey's Top 10 hit ''Ya Ya'' when he was 15, and supporting Otis Redding on tour at 16.

Just as quickly as the Meters took off, though, there were problems that threatened their future. What the group has described as an unfavorable publishing and managerial arrangement with Toussaint and his business partner, Marshall Sehorn, limited the band's royalties, and in 1971, the group's label, Josie Records, went out of business. Around that point, the Meters went on a hiatus -- and at home in the Seventh Ward, Nocentelli began noodling around with a nylon-string guitar.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

He was inspired by the sounds and stories of James Taylor's 1970 album, ''Sweet Baby James,'' and wanted to craft his own take on the style: Catchy songs like ''Pretty Mittie,'' about a farmer's plans to move to the city, and ''Riverfront,'' a ***working-class*** anthem inspired by the real life of Aaron Neville, Art's brother. There were also somber songs about love and loss -- and about the question of what success really means in the entertainment industry. ''Reaching high but not getting nowhere,'' he sings on ''Getting Nowhere,'' his trademark propulsive riffing replaced with understated strumming. ''I must have gotten on the wrong cloud.''

Initially, Nocentelli didn't have any intention to record his solo music, which he didn't tell anyone about. But being around the elegant and confident Toussaint ultimately changed his mind. ''I really admired him,'' Nocentelli said, clearly sentimental about their long, complicated friendship. ''He was a huge influence on me with recording aspects of the business.''

Snagging any opening he could at Cosimo Matassa's Jazz City, the pre-eminent New Orleans recording studio before Sea-Saint opened in 1973, Nocentelli began recording his album, tapping those around him to play supporting parts: Toussaint on piano, Porter on bass, Modeliste and the highly regarded jazz player James Black on drums. All said, Nocentelli laid down nine originals and a cover of the Elton John single ''Your Song,'' which had then just been released.

''We would be in the studio recording, not knowing what or who we were recording for,'' Porter, 73, said on the phone from New Orleans of how swamped with sessions the band was during those years. ''When Leo was reminding me that I'm playing on this record, I said, 'Really?'''

The pieces had started to come together, but the album never went further than the rough recordings, which Nocentelli essentially viewed as demos at the time. The way he remembers it, his money was drying up, and the Meters were soon back together and busier than ever after signing to Warner Bros., leaving ''Another Side'' to pick up cobwebs. But Porter has a less charitable view of why he and his bandmates weren't encouraged to branch out on their own and how a record like this could be left behind: ''My gut feeling was that Marshall Sehorn did not at all want us to become so big that we weren't under his thumb,'' he said. ''So him sitting on that project and making that disappear is not a surprise.''

Either way, the Meters carried on into their major-label period, subsequently embracing songs with more traditional singing parts. Yet Nocentelli almost never took lead vocals while in the band, despite having proven more than capable during his solo foray. ''I was always the shy guy,'' he said. If you look, it's hard to even find pictures of Nocentelli by himself in the Meters' original run.

As time has gone on, the main narratives of this era of New Orleans music have solidified, and some of the chapters have started to close; Sehorn died in 2006, Matassa in 2014, Toussaint in 2015 and Art Neville in 2019. (The Meters broke up in 1977; since the late '80s, they have reunited off and on in various forms.) But when a new wrinkle in the timeline opened at that swap meet in Torrance, it offered a sideways glimpse at an alternate reality in which Nocentelli became a star in his own right.

''There's a certain spirituality about this that I feel,'' Nocentelli said. ''Things like this are very rare. It wasn't supposed to happen.''

In terms of finally giving ''Another Side'' the industry attention it previously missed, it was not difficult to find an interested party. Nishita is close friends with Mario Caldato Jr., a producer and engineer who's worked with the Beastie Boys and knows Matt Sullivan, the founder of Light in the Attic Records. Sullivan was one of the first people invited to check out the collection, and soon set up the Nocentelli release. Right place, right time.

''Every time I listen to this record, it's like, how was this never released?'' Sullivan said, speaking from Austin, Texas. ''This should have been on the radio in the '70s.''

There are still approximately 3,000 more hours of Sea-Saint-related music sitting in Nishita's garage, which he says includes an unreleased Meters album from their early days. The prospect of that particular one ever being released is far more precarious from a legal perspective than Nocentelli's solo album, but if all principal parties can get on board, it could happen.

For now, Nocentelli is giving his new role a try, embracing a spotlight that had flickered near him for so long. He's even beginning to accept the imperfections of ''Another Side'' that still stick out when he listens, 50 years later. ''I was hearing much more than what was there,'' he said, explaining that he planned for the album to have horns, as well as additional instrumentation. ''But that doesn't mean that what was there wasn't sufficient. Evidently it was. And it is.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/18/arts/music/the-meters-leo-nocentelli-solo-album.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/18/arts/music/the-meters-leo-nocentelli-solo-album.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, Leo Nocentelli, whose solo release is ''Another Side.'' Above, clockwise from left: Zigaboo Modeliste, Art Neville, George Porter Jr. and Nocentelli back in the Meters' heyday (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AKASHA RABUT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

GILLES PETARD/REDFERNS, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** November 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A Crisis For Women Of Color***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61S9-M401-DXY4-X11B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 15, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 23

**Length:** 884 words

**Byline:** By Diane Coyle

**Body**

Those hard-won gains were never guaranteed to last. Now we're seeing just how precarious they were all along.

For years, the story of working women in the United States has been one of slow but steady progress. Against this backdrop, the latest monthly employment figures from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics delivered an acute shock.

A net total of 144,00 jobs were lost in December, the clear effect of the continuing economic downturn. But while male employment increased slightly, 156,000 women lost their jobs, mainly in pandemic-hit sectors such as hospitality and education. And since the employment of white women actually increased, on net these losses fell on women of color.

This is the scourge of the pandemic: It is landing multiple blows on those least able to bear them, widening inequalities stemming from gender, class and race.

In recent decades, women in the work force have been on the ascent. In the late 1980s, women's pay rose, on average, from about 62 cents for every dollar made by men to 81 cents. Their participation in the work force rose to just over 50 percent by the start of 2020, from 44 percent in 1972. Fifty-nine percent of Black women work, up from about 49 percent at the start of the 1970s. Similarly, 58 percent of Hispanic women work, up from 41 percent in 1972.

But a sense of precarity always threatened these gains.

To understand why, Americans must reckon with the heavily gendered nature of the work force. Even in more stable times, jobs typically held by women were among the lowest-status and worst-paid work. Women, for example, account for about three-quarters of workers in education and a majority in food services. The December numbers for these sectors were stunning: Educational services employment was down by 62,500, while food services lost a whopping 372,000 jobs.

These losses are unlikely to abate. Meanwhile, nearly three-quarters of those working at or below minimum wage in 2019 worked in services, mainly in food preparation and food service, which have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic.

Many of those who lost their jobs last month are trapped in a downward spiral. Research shows that workers of color are far more likely to be paid poverty-level wages than white workers, and they are more likely to have debts than to have savings. They may be at risk of eviction.

While this slow-moving crisis is not unique to the United States, the absence of universal health care and a sound safety net has made its American manifestation particularly grotesque. Those earning low or middle incomes in precarious jobs have experienced scant improvement in their living standards since the financial crisis of the early 2000s.

For ***working-class*** women of color, enduring economic security is rarely available. In the years to come, those with advanced education will thrive as software engineers or finance professionals in increasingly knowledge-based economies. This largely white, largely male minority will cluster in major urban centers, enjoying what economists call ''superstar'' earnings: the disproportionately higher rewards that come to those with a modest advantage in abilities.

If access to higher education presages stability, the prospects for women are dire. Although women in the United States now account for just over half of all bachelor's degrees in all ethnic groups, Black women made up just 6 percent of graduates.

In the United States and other rich economies, social scientists describe this phenomenon as an example of the ''Matthew effect,'' named for Matthew 25:29 in the Bible: ''For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.''

The economy, then, has delivered some into a virtuous circle of prosperity and others into a vicious cycle of decline.

In the months ahead, mass inoculation against the coronavirus may well spark an economic revival and usher a gradual return to social normalcy. But for nearly a year, the virus has widened the chasm between rich and poor, men and women, and white people and people of color. Those working in essential sectors, like hospitals and transportation, have been sentimentalized but treated as replaceable widgets by an economy that takes them from granted.

It is unwise, of course, to read too much into data from a single month. Still: The slow but steady improvement for working women appears to have ground to a halt -- and even more so for Black and Latina women.

How thin can the fabric of a society be stretched before it tears? To build ''back,'' even if ''better'' than before, is no ambition at all. If even longstanding progress such as the advance of women at work has gone into reverse, it is time to think about building in a different way in the future.

Diane Coyle (@DianeCoyle1859) is a professor of public policy at the University of Cambridge and the author of ''Markets, State and People: Economics for Public Policy.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/14/opinion/minority-women-unemployment-covid.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/14/opinion/minority-women-unemployment-covid.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The pandemic has widened existing inequalities of gender, class and race. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Joe Raedle/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 15, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Working Women of Color Were Making Progress. Then the Coronavirus Hit.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61S5-GVF1-JBG3-64GP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 14, 2021 Thursday 15:29 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 900 words

**Byline:** Diane Coyle

**Highlight:** Those hard-won gains were never guaranteed to last. Now we’re seeing just how precarious they were all along.

**Body**

Those hard-won gains were never guaranteed to last. Now we’re seeing just how precarious they were all along.

For years, the story of working women in the United States has been one of slow but steady progress. Against this backdrop, the latest monthly employment figures from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics delivered an acute shock.

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This is the scourge of the pandemic: It is landing multiple blows on those least able to bear them, widening inequalities stemming from gender, class and race.

In recent decades, women in the work force have been on the ascent. In the late 1980s, women’s pay [*rose*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t03.htm), on average, from about 62 cents for every dollar made by men to 81 cents. Their participation in the work force rose to just over 50 percent by the start of 2020, from 44 percent in 1972. Fifty-nine percent of Black women work, up from about 49 percent at the start of the 1970s. Similarly, 58 percent of Hispanic women work, up from 41 percent in 1972.

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To understand why, Americans must reckon with the heavily gendered nature of the work force. Even in more stable times, jobs typically held by women were among the lowest-status and worst-paid work. Women, for example, account for about three-quarters of workers in education and a majority in food services. The December numbers for these sectors were stunning: Educational services employment was down by 62,500, while food services [*lost*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t03.htm) a whopping 372,000 jobs.

These losses are unlikely to abate. Meanwhile, nearly three-quarters of those working at or below minimum wage in 2019 worked in [*services*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t03.htm), mainly in food preparation and food service, which have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic.

Many of those who lost their jobs last month are trapped in a downward spiral. Research shows that workers of color are [*far more likely*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t03.htm) to be paid poverty-level wages than white workers, and they are [*more likely*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t03.htm) to have debts than to have savings. They may be at risk of [*eviction*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t03.htm).

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If access to higher education presages stability, the prospects for women are dire. Although women in the United States now account for just [*over half*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t03.htm) of all bachelor’s degrees in all ethnic groups, Black women made up just 6 percent of graduates.

In the United States and other rich economies, social scientists describe this phenomenon as an example of the “Matthew effect,” named for Matthew 25:29 in the Bible: “For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.”

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Diane Coyle ([*@DianeCoyle1859*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t03.htm)) is a professor of public policy at the University of Cambridge and the author of “Markets, State and People: Economics for Public Policy.”

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t03.htm) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t03.htm). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t03.htm).

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PHOTO: The pandemic has widened existing inequalities of gender, class and race. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Joe Raedle/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 16, 2021

**End of Document**



[***New Covid Divide: The Very Liberal vs. Other Liberals***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651J-MYC1-DXY4-X0CW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 19, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 17

**Length:** 2070 words

**Byline:** By David Leonhardt

**Body**

The left-right divide over Covid-19 -- with blue America taking the virus more seriously than red America -- has never been the pandemic's only political divide. Each partisan tribe has also had its internal disagreements.

Republicans have long been split over vaccination, with many eagerly getting shots while many others refuse. Democrats have their own growing schism, between those who believe Covid precautions should continue to be paramount and those who favor moves toward normalcy.

The key dividing line appears to be ideology. Americans who identify as ''very liberal'' are much more worried about Covid than Americans who identify as ''somewhat liberal'' or ''liberal.'' Increasingly, the very liberal look like outliers on Covid: The merely liberal are sometimes closer to moderates than to the very liberal.

That is a central finding of a poll conducted last week by Morning Consult for this newsletter. The poll is a follow-up to one from January. This time, to go deeper than partisan identification, we asked respondents to choose one of seven labels: very liberal, liberal, slightly liberal, moderate, slightly conservative, conservative or very conservative.

Among the results:

Nearly 50 percent of very liberal Americans say that they believe Covid presents a ''great risk'' to their personal health. Other liberals, moderates and conservatives tend to be less worried. CHART1

When parents were asked about the threat to their children, the pattern was similar.

More than 60 percent of very liberal Americans believe that mask mandates should continue for the foreseeable future. Most moderates and conservatives see mandates as a temporary strategy that should end this year.

Personal safety

Why does political ideology so strongly shape Covid beliefs?

Donald Trump certainly plays a role. As president, he repeatedly made false statements downplaying Covid. Many Republican voters adopted his view, while many liberal Democrats went in the other direction. They came to equate any loosening of Covid restrictions with Trumpism, even after vaccines tamed the virus's worst effects.

But I don't think Trump is the only explanation. Every group of Democrats disdains him, yet Democrats disagree about Covid. Apart from Trump, the pandemic seems to be tapping into different views of risk perception.

Very liberal Americans make up almost 10 percent of adults, according to our poll and others. Many are younger than 50 and have a four-year college degree. They span all races but are disproportionately white, the Pew Research Center has found.

In recent years, these progressive professionals have tended to adopt a cautious approach to personal safety. You might even call it conservative.

It is especially notable in child rearing. Parents seek out the healthiest food, sturdiest car seats and safest playgrounds. They do not let their children play tackle football, and they worry about soccer concussions. The sociologist Annette Lareau has described the upper-middle-class parenting style as ''concerted cultivation'' and contrasted it with a ***working-class*** style of ''natural growth.''

A cautious approach to personal safety has big benefits. It has helped popularize bicycle helmets, for example. In the case of Covid, very liberal Americans have been eloquent advocates for protecting the elderly and immunocompromised and for showing empathy toward the unvaccinated.

Yet the approach also has downsides. It can lead people to obsess over small, salient risks while ignoring bigger ones. A regimented childhood, with scheduled lessons replacing unstructured neighborhood play time, may lead to fewer broken bones, but it does not necessarily maximize creativity, independence or happiness.

When it comes to Covid, there is abundant evidence that the most liberal Americans are exaggerating the risks to the vaccinated and to children.

Consider that Democrats younger than 45 are more likely to say the virus poses a great risk to them than those older than 65 are -- which is inconsistent with scientific reality but consistent with younger Democrats' more intense liberalism. Or consider that many liberals (including Sonia Sotomayor) feel deep anxiety about Covid's effects on children -- even though the flu kills more children in a typical year and car crashes kill about five times as many. Long Covid, similarly, appears to be rare in both children and vaccinated people.

The truth is that the vast majority of severe Covid illness is occurring among those Americans who have chosen not to be vaccinated and boosted.

'Public Health 101'

I know that this newsletter's emphasis on liberals' Covid fears has angered some people. And I understand why many Americans -- including some moderates and conservatives, as our poll shows -- remain so focused on the virus. It has dominated daily life for more than two years, and some risk remains. Shifting gears is hard.

But trying to eliminate Covid risk, and allowing the virus to distort daily life, has costs, too. That's why much of Europe, which is hardly a bastion of Trumpism, has stopped trying to minimize caseloads.

The American focus on Covid's dangers, by contrast, has caused disruption and isolation that feed educational losses, mental health troubles, drug overdoses, violent crime and vehicle crashes. These damages have fallen disproportionately on low-income, Black and Latino Americans, exacerbating inequality in ways that would seem to violate liberal values.

''Rather than eliminating the risk of Covid, you've got to manage the risk,'' Elizabeth H. Bradley, a public health expert and the president of Vassar College, told me recently. ''If you really go for minimizing the risk, you're going to have unintended consequences to people's physical health, their mental health, their social health.''

She added: ''It's Public Health 101.''

Many Americans seem to have adopted this view. But there are still holdouts.

More on the virus:

Moderna asked the F.D.A. to authorize a second booster dose for all adults.

Thirty-five manufacturers will produce inexpensive versions of Pfizer's post-infection pills to sell in poorer countries.

President Biden named Dr. Ashish Jha, a dean at Brown University, as his new Covid policy coordinator.

THE LATEST NEWS << keep as H3 for NL, and remember that a thick rule will pull in right above this heading in the inbox version

State of the War<<keep as label for nl, and remember to type these in in title case

Russian forces remain stalled outside Kyiv, taking heavy casualties. The Ukrainian military yesterday claimed to have shot down 10 Russian planes and cruise missiles.

Russia does control large sections of eastern and southern Ukraine. Many cities there are desolate and ruined: ''There is no one to bury the dead,'' an official said.

This morning, Russian missiles struck the outskirts of the western city of Lviv, which had been a haven, its mayor said.

In Mariupol, a southern city that hasn't fallen, rescuers are pulling survivors from a bombed theater. The death toll is unclear.

The House voted to allow the U.S. to impose higher tariffs on Russian goods. The bill now moves to the Senate.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that the U.S. would punish China if it gave Russia military aid. Biden is scheduled to talk to Xi Jinping this morning.

More on Ukraine<<Write these in in title case!

Vladimir Putin falsely claims that Ukraine is run by Nazis. Here's the origin of that myth.

By labeling Putin a ''war criminal,'' Biden personalized the conflict, The Times's David Sanger writes.

A Russian court extended the detention of the W.N.B.A. star Brittney Griner by two months. She was said to be ''OK.''

Arnold Schwarzenegger released an emotional video directed at Russians and debunking misinformation.

These photos capture the desperation and resolve of Kyiv's residents.

Politics<<keep as label for nl, and remember to type these in in title case

Republicans are targeting a crime wave that doesn't exist: voter fraud.

Biden wants to move away from fossil fuels. The largest federally owned utility plans to invest in them instead.

Other Big Stories<<keep as label for nl, and remember to type these in in title case

Three Doctors Without Borders workers were executed by soldiers in Ethiopia, a Times investigation found.

A 13-year-old was driving the truck that hit a van in Texas, killing nine people -- including a college golf coach and six players.

Anthony Veasna So's ''Afterparties'' won the National Book Critics Circle Award for best debut. Honorée Fanonne Jeffers's ''The Love Songs of W.E.B. Du Bois'' won best fiction.

Opinions

Russia's stumbles in Ukraine reveal the weaknesses of autocracies, says David Brooks.

Michelle Goldberg profiles Peter Marki-Zay, the Hungarian politician trying to unseat Prime Minister Viktor Orban.

MORNING READS<< keep as H3 for NL, and remember that a thick rule will pull in right above this heading in the inbox version

Up close: Campbell Addy is the photographer of the moment.

College rankings: A professor is casting doubt.

Modern Love: On (not) wasting time with a younger man.

A Times classic: The best memoirs since 1969.

Advice from Wirecutter: Consider a string trimmer.

Lives Lived: The Yankees pitcher Ralph Terry threw two of the most dramatic pitches in baseball history. Both ended a World Series, but with different outcomes. He died at 86.

ARTS AND IDEAS << keep as H3 for NL, and remember that a thick rule will pull in right above this heading in the inbox version

Read like Ferrante

Elena Ferrante, the pseudonymous author of the Neapolitan novels, ''The Lost Daughter,'' and more, has published a collection of lectures about writing and reading. Here are a few takeaways:

She kept a notebook as a teenager. ''The writer,'' her young self wrote, ''has a duty to put into words the shoves he gives and those he receives from others.''

She balances tidiness with disorder. ''Love stories become interesting to Ferrante at the moment when a character falls out of love; mysteries gain intrigue when she understands that the puzzle won't be solved,'' The Times's Molly Young writes.

She's a rereader. ''To read a book is to absorb, consciously or not, all the other books that influenced that book, as well as the books that influenced those books, and so on; to interpret even one paragraph on a page is to vector endlessly back in time,'' Molly writes.

PLAY, WATCH, EAT<< keep as H3 for NL, and remember that a thick rule will pull in right above this heading in the inbox version

What to Cook<<keep as label for nl, and remember to type these in in title case

Get crunch from your tofu with this McDonald's-inspired recipe. (The Times is starting a weekly newsletter about where to eat in New York City.)

What to Listen to<<keep as label for nl, and remember to type these in in title case

The Spanish pop singer Rosalía smashed together new sounds from the Latin world and beyond on her latest album, ''Motomami.''

What to Watch<<keep as label for nl, and remember to type these in in title case

Sandra Bullock, Channing Tatum and Daniel Radcliffe (and Brad Pitt!) gallivant in the jungle in the comedy adventure ''The Lost City.''

Late Night<<keep as label for nl, and remember to type these in in title case

The hosts discussed Biden calling Putin a ''war criminal.''

Take the News Quiz

Test your knowledge of this week's headlines.

Now Time to Play<<keep as label for nl, and remember to type these in in title case

The pangrams from yesterday's Spelling Bee were whippoorwill and whirlpool. Here is today's puzzle -- or you can play online.

Here's today's Wordle. Here's today's Mini Crossword, and a clue: Somersault (four letters).

If you're in the mood to play more, find all our games here.

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. -- David

P.S. A University of Kansas scholarship will honor Carlos Tejada, a Times editor who died recently. You can donate here.

Here's today's front page.

''The Daily'' is about the metal of the future. On ''Popcast,'' the sounds of Ukrainian pop. On ''The Ezra Klein Show,'' Emma Ashford discusses how Putin's war could end.

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Tom Wright-Piersanti, Ashley Wu and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com.Sign*](mailto:themorning@nytimes.com.Sign) up here to get this newsletter in your inbox.

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Mask mandates have split Democrats, with more of those who identify as liberal or slightly liberal saying they should end soon. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDRES KUDACKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Sanders Apologizes to Biden for Surrogate’s Critique***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y1R-85D1-DXY4-X46T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 21, 2020 Tuesday 15:45 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 622 words

**Byline:** Daniel Victor

**Highlight:** The opinion piece by Zephyr Teachout accused Joe Biden of having “a big corruption problem.”

**Body**

The opinion piece by Zephyr Teachout accused Joe Biden of having “a big corruption problem.”

Senator Bernie Sanders apologized to Joseph R. Biden Jr. on Monday after a Sanders campaign surrogate wrote an opinion article accusing the former vice president of having “a big corruption problem.”

Mr. Sanders distanced himself from the piece by Zephyr Teachout, an associate professor at Fordham Law School, former New York political candidate and [*longtime supporter of Mr. Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/04/nyregion/zephyr-teachout-john-faso-new-york-congressional-district-race.html). The op-ed,   [*published on Monday in The Guardian*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/04/nyregion/zephyr-teachout-john-faso-new-york-congressional-district-race.html), argued that Mr. Biden “represents the transactional, grossly corrupt culture in Washington that long precedes Trump.”

In an interview published Monday night, Mr. Sanders said he did not agree.

“It is absolutely not my view that Joe is corrupt in any way. And I’m sorry that that op-ed appeared,” Mr. Sanders [*told CBS News*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/04/nyregion/zephyr-teachout-john-faso-new-york-congressional-district-race.html).

The Sanders campaign has recently intensified its attacks on Mr. Biden’s record, [*especially on Social Security*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/04/nyregion/zephyr-teachout-john-faso-new-york-congressional-district-race.html), and the op-ed threatened to increase tensions between the Democratic candidates. Ron Klain, a top Biden adviser, said on Twitter before Mr. Sanders apologized: “There are a lot of legitimate issues to debate in 2020. But the only two campaigns ever to call @Joebiden “corrupt” are Trump and Sanders. What does that tell you?”

Later on Monday, Mr. Biden thanked Mr. Sanders for the apology.

“Thanks for acknowledging this, Bernie,” [*he said on Twitter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/04/nyregion/zephyr-teachout-john-faso-new-york-congressional-district-race.html). “These kinds of attacks have no place in this primary. Let’s all keep our focus on making Donald Trump a one-term president.”

The two were among the leading presidential candidates who [*joined arms on Monday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/04/nyregion/zephyr-teachout-john-faso-new-york-congressional-district-race.html) in Columbia, S.C., to honor the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., even as their campaigns tussled. Mr. Biden demanded an apology from Mr. Sanders for portraying him as open to cuts in Social Security, which he denies, but Mr. Sanders did not offer one.

On Saturday, Mr. Biden [*accused the Sanders campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/04/nyregion/zephyr-teachout-john-faso-new-york-congressional-district-race.html) of using a “doctored” video to distort his record on Social Security. A Sanders adviser circulated a video on Jan. 1 that left out the context of Mr. Biden’s remarks but did not appear to be doctored.

Mr. Sanders [*campaigned for Ms. Teachout*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/04/nyregion/zephyr-teachout-john-faso-new-york-congressional-district-race.html) in her unsuccessful 2016 run in New York’s 19th Congressional District, helping to attract his avid supporters by appearing alongside her at campaign events. Ms. Teachout endorsed Mr. Sanders in his 2016 campaign against Hillary Clinton for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Ms. Teachout does not work for the Sanders campaign, but she has endorsed him.

In her opinion piece, she argued that nominating Mr. Biden would make it harder for Democrats to defeat President Trump.

“It looks like ‘Middle Class’ Joe has perfected the art of taking big contributions, then representing his corporate donors at the cost of middle- and ***working-class*** Americans,” Ms. Teachout wrote. “Converting campaign contributions into legislative favors and policy positions isn’t being ‘moderate.’ It is the kind of transactional politics Americans have come to loathe.”

Mr. Sanders told CBS News that he disapproved of his supporters demonizing political opponents online, saying “we need a serious debate in this country on issues.”

“I appeal to my supporters: Please, engage in civil discourse,” he said. “And by the way, we’re not the only campaign that does it. Other people act that way as well. I would appeal to everybody: Have a debate on the issues. We can disagree with each other without being disagreeable, without being hateful. That is not what American politics should be about.”

PHOTO: Joseph R. Biden Jr. and Senator Bernie Sanders during the Democratic debate in Des Moines, Iowa, last week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tamir Kalifa for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 12, 2020

**End of Document**



[***This Putsch Was Decades in the Making***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61RN-V3F1-DXY4-X4PV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 12, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 21

**Length:** 916 words

**Byline:** By Paul Krugman

**Body**

G.O.P. cynics have been coddling crazies for a long time.

One striking aspect of the Capitol Hill putsch was that none of the rioters' grievances had any basis in reality.

No, the election wasn't stolen -- there is no evidence of significant electoral fraud. No, Democrats aren't part of a satanic pedophile conspiracy. No, they aren't radical Marxists -- even the party's progressive wing would be considered only moderately left of center in any other Western democracy.

So all the rage is based on lies. But what's almost as striking as the fantasies of the rioters is how few leading Republicans have been willing, despite the violence and desecration, to tell the MAGA mob that their conspiracy theories are false.

Bear in mind that Kevin McCarthy, the House minority leader, and two-thirds of his colleagues voted against accepting the Electoral College results even after the riot. (McCarthy then shamelessly decried ''division,'' saying that ''we must call on our better angels.'')

Or consider the behavior of leading Republicans who aren't usually considered extremists. On Sunday Senator Rob Portman declared that we need to ''restore confidence in the integrity of our electoral system.'' Portman isn't stupid; he has to know that the only reason so many people doubt the election results is that members of his party deliberately fomented that doubt. But he's still keeping up the pretense.

And the cynicism and cowardice of leading Republicans is, I would argue, the most important cause of the nightmare now enveloping our nation.

Of course we need to understand the motives of our homegrown enemies of democracy. In general, political scientists find -- not surprisingly, given America's history -- that racial antagonism is the best predictor of willingness to countenance political violence. Anecdotally, personal frustrations -- often involving social interactions, not ''economic anxiety'' -- also seem to drive many extremists.

But neither racism nor widespread attraction to conspiracy theories is new in our political life. The worldview described in Richard Hofstadter's classic 1964 essay ''The Paranoid Style in American Politics'' is barely distinguishable from QAnon beliefs today.

So there's only so much to be gained from interviewing red-hatted guys in diners; there have always been people like that. If there are or seem to be more such people than in the past, it probably has less to do with intensified grievances than with outside encouragement.

For the big thing that has changed since Hofstadter wrote is that one of our major political parties has become willing to tolerate and, indeed, feed right-wing political paranoia.

This coddling of the crazies was, at first, almost entirely cynical. When the G.O.P. began moving right in the 1970s its true agenda was mainly economic -- what its leaders wanted, above all, were business deregulation and tax cuts for the rich. But the party needed more than plutocracy to win elections, so it began courting ***working-class*** whites with what amounted to thinly disguised racist appeals.

Not incidentally, white supremacy has always been sustained in large part through voter suppression. So it shouldn't be surprising to see right-wingers howling about a rigged election -- after all, rigging elections is what their side is accustomed to doing. And it's not clear to what extent they actually believe that this election was rigged, as opposed to being enraged that this time the usual vote-rigging didn't work.

But it's not just about race. Since Ronald Reagan, the G.O.P. has been closely tied to the hard-line Christian right. Anyone shocked by the prevalence of insane conspiracy theories in 2020 should look back to ''The New World Order,'' published by Reagan ally Pat Robertson in 1991, which saw America menaced by an international cabal of Jewish bankers, Freemasons and occultists. Or they should check out a 1994 video promoted by Jerry Falwell Sr. called ''The Clinton Chronicles,'' which portrayed Bill Clinton as a drug smuggler and serial killer.

So what has changed since then? For a long time Republican elites imagined that they could exploit racism and conspiracy theorizing while remaining focused on a plutocratic agenda. But with the rise first of the Tea Party, then of Donald Trump, the cynics found that the crazies were actually in control, and that they wanted to destroy democracy, not cut tax rates on capital gains.

And Republican elites have, with few exceptions, accepted their new subservient status.

You might have hoped that a significant number of sane Republican politicians would finally say that enough is enough, and break with their extremist allies. But Trump's party didn't balk at his corruption and abuse of power; it stood by him when he refused to accept electoral defeat; and some of its members are responding to a violent attack on Congress by complaining about their loss of Twitter followers.

And there's no reason to believe that the atrocities yet to come -- for there will be more atrocities -- will make a difference. The G.O.P. has reached the culmination of its long journey away from democracy, and it's hard to see how it can ever be redeemed.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/11/opinion/republicans-democracy.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/11/opinion/republicans-democracy.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY TED S. WARREN/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** January 12, 2021

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[***No, a Black Lives Matter Co-Founder Didn’t Partner With a Pro-Communist Chinese Group***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60W0-JST1-JBG3-6013-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 18, 2020 Friday 18:49 EST

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**Section:** TECHNOLOGY

**Length:** 771 words

**Byline:** Kevin Roose

**Highlight:** A Heritage Foundation investigation went viral on Thursday, but it conflated two nonprofits with the same name.

**Body**

A Heritage Foundation investigation went viral on Thursday, but it conflated two nonprofits with the same name.

On Thursday, an article from The Daily Signal, the blog of the conservative Heritage Foundation, claimed to show a damning link between an organization started by a Black Lives Matter co-founder, Alicia Garza, and a nonprofit with ties to the Chinese government. The article went viral.

But the article conflated two nonprofits with the same name, and it made incorrect claims about the links between Ms. Garza’s organization and the Chinese government.

The story was titled “This BLM Co-Founder and Pro-Communist China Group Are Partnering Up. Here’s Why.” It claimed that Ms. Garza, an activist and organizer in Oakland, was receiving funding from a pro-China organization for her project, Black Futures Lab. It pointed to the Black Futures Lab’s donation page, which lists a disclaimer saying that it is “a fiscally sponsored project of the Chinese Progressive Association.”

The report went on to detail the apparent links between the Chinese Progressive Association and the Chinese government, calling the nonprofit “a partner of the PRC in the United States” that has sponsored events with the Chinese consulate, such as raising a Chinese flag over City Hall in Boston last year.

But a cursory search of tax records shows that the Chinese Progressive Association in San Francisco, which has teamed up with the Black Futures Lab, is an entirely different nonprofit from the Chinese Progressive Association in Boston, which sponsored events with the Chinese consulate.

After The New York Times reached out to the Heritage Foundation, The Daily Signal updated its article, but it continued to falsely claim that there is a link between the Boston and San Francisco groups. Mike Gonzalez, the article’s author, said in an emailed statement that the historical ties between the two organizations was “actually fairly clear” and that they were “united around shared goals,” but said that the piece had been updated “to improve clarity.”

The San Francisco C.P.A. was started in 1972 to support ***working-class*** Chinese immigrants, according to its [*website*](https://cpasf.org/about/mission-history/), while the Boston C.P.A. (formerly known as the Chinatown Peoples Progressive Association) was founded in 1977 to advocate for “full equality and empowerment of the Chinese community in Greater Boston and beyond,” according to its [*website*](https://cpasf.org/about/mission-history/). Beyond their names and the overall mission of empowering Chinese-Americans, the two organizations do not appear to be linked.

A spokesman for the Boston-based C.P.A., Mark Liu, confirmed that the organizations are separate and unrelated, and that Ms. Garza and the Black Futures Lab had not received any funding from the Boston group. He also disputed the characterization of the organization as “pro-communist,” calling it “an attempt to discredit and defame our work in the community.”

Shaw San Liu, the executive director of the San Francisco-based C.P.A., said in an interview that the group had provided “administrative support” to Black Futures Lab, but said the organization was not pro-communist, and had no ties to the Chinese government.

“This is a ridiculous disinformation effort,” she said. “It’s just so clearly racist in the attempt to inflame anti-China sentiments and use it to attack Black Lives Matter.”

Despite the mix-up, the Daily Signal’s article went viral on right-wing social media on Thursday, ultimately becoming one of the most-engaged posts on Facebook. Breitbart, the far-right news organization, shared it on Facebook, as did Ben Shapiro, the conservative influencer, who shared it with a single-word caption: “Whoa.” Donald Trump Jr., the president’s son, shared a Washington Examiner write-up of the report on Twitter. It was also featured by Fox News.

According to CrowdTangle, a Facebook-owned data tool, the Daily Signal article received more than 15,000 shares on Facebook. A New York Post story about the supposed Black Lives Matter-China link received more than 25,000 shares.

Conservative attempts to tie Black Lives Matter to communist groups are years old, and have included digging up a statement from one of the movement’s early leaders claiming that several of them were “trained Marxists.” But there is no indication that today’s Black Lives Matter movement has any formal link to Marxism, or to the Chinese Communist Party. As [*PolitiFact*](https://cpasf.org/about/mission-history/) put it this year: “Black Lives Matter has grown into a national anti-racism movement broadly supported by Americans, few of whom would identify themselves as Marxist.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Lindsey Wasson for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 18, 2020

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[***Leftist, From England's North, and Pledging to Mend Labour's Base***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YCK-5331-DXY4-X1XJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 7, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6; THE SATURDAY PROFILE

**Length:** 1405 words

**Byline:** By Megan Specia

**Body**

The scion of a leftist family from northern England, Lisa Nandy offers a different view of what the party should stand for.

SOWERBY BRIDGE, England -- Shaking the raindrops from her waterproof jacket, its oversized hood nearly covering her eyes, Lisa Nandy bundled into the Willow Cafe with a smile and an easy hello.

Ms. Nandy, 40, a Labour politician, is vying for her party's leadership and was here to meet with residents of this small town in West Yorkshire that had been devastated by flooding days earlier.

As she sat with local leaders over a cup of tea to discuss the impact and the logistics of rebuilding a region in crisis, her brow furrowed as they listed their concerns.

But another crisis was also front of mind for Ms. Nandy: the one facing Britain's Labour Party, which is still reeling from a December election that saw its support base in northern England crumble and delivered its worst result since 1935, spelling the end of Jeremy Corbyn's leadership.

''I said when I launched the election campaign, if Labour doesn't change, we will die and we will deserve to,'' she said in a recent interview. ''And I think it is that serious for the Labour Party.''

Younger, female and from the north of England herself, Ms. Nandy -- the daughter of Luise Fitzwalter, a former journalist and local Labour councilor, and Dipak Nandy, a prominent Marxist academic born in India -- is a portrait of just how different the party leadership could look.

Though she often jokes that at home she is considered the one on the right, she is a socially liberal, center-left contender in a field that leans further to the left.

Her remaining rivals -- Keir Starmer, Labour's Brexit policy leader under Mr. Corbyn, and Rebecca Long-Bailey, who served as Mr. Corbyn's business secretary -- are seen as more closely aligned with the party's left wing, and Mr. Starmer is considered the clear favorite to prevail.

But with analysts pointing to Labour's betrayal of its ***working-class*** roots in England's industrial north and a slide toward London-centered left-wing politics under Mr. Corbyn as the reason for its steep losses, Ms. Nandy offers an alternative -- albeit most likely for the future. She is calling for change within a party that she sees as ''far too top-heavy'' and ''far too disconnected.''

''I think the challenge that we face in Britain is very similar to the challenge that the left faces across much of the world,'' Ms. Nandy said, ''and no different actually to the challenge in the U.S. about reconnecting to people outside of the major cities.''

Arguably the least recognizable of the candidates heading into the contest, she made waves with a formidable performance during a sit-down with the famed BBC interviewer Andrew Neil in January. (Prime Minister Boris Johnson's refusal to appear on Mr. Neil's show caused a stir ahead of the general election.)

Since then, Ms. Nandy's momentum has continued to build. In a straw poll of the audience after the most recent Sky News debate between the three candidates, Ms. Nandy was the clear crowd favorite. Speaking on BBC, the prominent political commentator George Monbiot described Ms. Nandy as his preferred candidate with ''a lovely touch'' who ''gets the collaborative nature of what politics now need to be.''

During her visit to Sowerby Bridge, she won the praise -- if not the outright endorsement -- of Holly Lynch, the Labour lawmaker who represents the area.

''I think what Lisa is saying and what she is doing absolutely resonates with people,'' Ms. Lynch said as the two toured a local cheese factory that had been disrupted by the flooding. She described Ms. Nandy as ''grounded'' and ''quite funny at times, qualities that you don't see in leaders of political parties.''

Whether that praise will translate to votes as members begin casting their ballots remains to be seen, and a recent opinion poll from the YouGov research group confirmed that Mr. Starmer remained firmly in the lead ahead of Labour's announcement of its new leader on April 4.

But for now, Ms. Nandy is having a moment.

She has drawn attention as she made the case for taxing wealth, abolishing the monarchy and vowing to move Labour not further toward the center but further toward the north.

This ethos at the core of her leadership pitch emphasizes a shift in the party's focus to Britain's largely ***working-class*** towns and smaller cities that are often left behind, a move that she believes Labour must make in order to survive.

As industry disappeared from these former mining and manufacturing communities over the past four decades, young people left for the big cities, leaving behind overwhelming numbers of older voters who feel disconnected from the political system, she said. At the same time, the party's other main wing of socially liberal urban youth face their own issues of high housing costs and strains on public services.

''They're two sides of the same coin,'' Ms. Nandy said. ''You've got to be able to connect with both, and you've got to be able to speak for both.''

She believes she is the right candidate to offer those solutions by ''investing in one area in order to alleviate the pressure on others,'' an approach that, as she puts it, ''solves a whole set of problems.''

Ms. Nandy was born in Manchester and grew up there and in the nearby town of Bury, and has spent the last decade representing the northern town of Wigan, where she lives with her partner, Andy Collis, and their 4-year-old son, Otis.

Liberal politics have always been part of her life. Her father was born in Kolkata and came to Britain in the 1950s to study at the University of Leeds. (Running short of money, he was taken in there by one of his professors, Arnold Kettle, an avowed communist and father of Martin Kettle, who is now a columnist with The Guardian.)

Mr. Nandy went on to become the first director of the Runnymede Trust think tank on race and helped draft Britain's Race Relations Bill of 1976.

Ms. Nandy's pedigree also includes her maternal grandfather, Frank Byers, who was a Liberal member of Parliament and went on to lead his party in the House of Lords. Her stepfather, Ray Fitzwalter, was a revered investigative journalist.

She lived her early adult years in London and worked at homelessness and children's charities before entering politics.

But her goal is to make it clear that she is listening to both sides of the party, evidenced by this tour of Sowerby Bridge -- trailed by a cameraman from her campaign -- where the plastic bags and debris still clung in the branches of trees along the Calder River, a reminder of how high the floodwaters had risen. Mr. Johnson had been criticized for opting out of a visit to this part of West Yorkshire, and business owners described feeling neglected.

Despite what Ms. Nandy described as the ''relentlessness of the process'' of campaigning across the country, she has made it her mission to show that she is listening.

''This is the last moment where people in towns like mine are looking at us to see if we've got it,'' she said, ''and I am determined that they are going to hear that from us.''

During a meeting with party members in the upstairs room of a pub later in the day, she made her pitch to a crowd of two dozen people, mostly in their 60s and 70s, who listened as she spoke of the party's existential crisis.

''This has been a really long time coming,'' she said of the recent election failure, ''and I don't think the Labour Party has had an honest reckoning with how deep this is and how long and how far back the roots of this go in communities like mine.''

In a room of people who looked nothing like her, she embraced her identity as a youthful, mixed-race, female candidate -- even nodding to her well-documented love of Britney Spears, as the only candidate whose fandom made national headlines.

''Now, I know for a lot of members this is a bit of a leap, because there's never been a leader who looks or sounds like me,'' she said, before pointing to the successes of young female leaders in New Zealand and Finland as proof that change is possible.

But despite her appeal, Ms. Nandy and her supporters acknowledge that her candidacy is a long shot. Linda McDougall, the wife of the former Labour lawmaker Austin Mitchell, was in the crowd and offered her support.

''But it's a tough one, isn't it?'' Ms. McDougall told the candidate. ''You need a miracle.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/06/world/europe/lisa-nandy-labour-leadership.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/06/world/europe/lisa-nandy-labour-leadership.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARY TURNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2020

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[***This Putsch Was Decades in the Making***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61RM-6921-DXY4-X475-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 11, 2021 Monday 20:06 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 914 words

**Byline:** Paul Krugman

**Highlight:** G.O.P. cynics have been coddling crazies for a long time.

**Body**

G.O.P. cynics have been coddling crazies for a long time.

One striking aspect of the Capitol Hill putsch was that none of the rioters’ grievances had any basis in reality.

No, the election wasn’t stolen — there is no evidence of significant electoral fraud. No, Democrats aren’t part of a satanic pedophile conspiracy. No, they aren’t radical Marxists — even the party’s progressive wing would be considered only moderately left of center in any other Western democracy.

So all the rage is based on lies. But what’s almost as striking as the fantasies of the rioters is how few leading Republicans have been willing, despite the violence and desecration, to tell the MAGA mob that their conspiracy theories are false.

Bear in mind that Kevin McCarthy, the House minority leader, and [*two-thirds*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/07/us/elections/electoral-college-biden-objectors.html) of his colleagues voted against accepting the Electoral College results even after the riot. (McCarthy then shamelessly [*decried*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/07/us/elections/electoral-college-biden-objectors.html) “division,” saying that “we must call on our better angels.”)

Or consider the behavior of leading Republicans who aren’t usually considered extremists. On Sunday Senator Rob Portman [*declared*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/07/us/elections/electoral-college-biden-objectors.html) that we need to “restore confidence in the integrity of our electoral system.” Portman isn’t stupid; he has to know that the only reason so many people doubt the election results is that members of his party deliberately fomented that doubt. But he’s still keeping up the pretense.

And the cynicism and cowardice of leading Republicans is, I would argue, the most important cause of the nightmare now enveloping our nation.

Of course we need to understand the motives of our homegrown enemies of democracy. In general, political scientists find — not surprisingly, given America’s history — that [*racial antagonism*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/07/us/elections/electoral-college-biden-objectors.html) is the best predictor of willingness to countenance political violence. Anecdotally, [*personal frustrations*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/07/us/elections/electoral-college-biden-objectors.html) — often involving social interactions, not “economic anxiety” — also seem to drive many extremists.

But neither racism nor widespread attraction to conspiracy theories is new in our political life. The worldview described in Richard Hofstadter’s classic 1964 [*essay*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/07/us/elections/electoral-college-biden-objectors.html) “The Paranoid Style in American Politics” is barely distinguishable from QAnon beliefs today.

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This coddling of the crazies was, at first, almost entirely cynical. When the G.O.P. began moving right in the 1970s its true agenda was mainly economic — what its leaders wanted, above all, were business deregulation and tax cuts for the rich. But the party needed more than plutocracy to win elections, so it began courting ***working-class*** whites with what amounted to thinly disguised [*racist appeals*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/07/us/elections/electoral-college-biden-objectors.html).

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But it’s not just about race. Since Ronald Reagan, the G.O.P. has been closely tied to the hard-line Christian right. Anyone shocked by the prevalence of insane conspiracy theories in 2020 should look back to “[*The New World Order*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/07/us/elections/electoral-college-biden-objectors.html),” published by Reagan ally Pat Robertson in 1991, which saw America menaced by an international cabal of Jewish bankers, Freemasons and occultists. Or they should check out a 1994 video promoted by Jerry Falwell Sr. called “[*The Clinton Chronicles*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/07/us/elections/electoral-college-biden-objectors.html),” which portrayed Bill Clinton as a drug smuggler and serial killer.

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The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/07/us/elections/electoral-college-biden-objectors.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/07/us/elections/electoral-college-biden-objectors.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/07/us/elections/electoral-college-biden-objectors.html).

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY TED S. WARREN/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** January 12, 2021

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[***Biden Tested by Gas Prices And Lag in Shifting to E.V.s***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:643S-BB91-JBG3-6462-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 18, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1500 words

**Byline:** By Jim Tankersley

**Body**

The president asked the Federal Trade Commission to look into whether big oil companies were fueling a spike in gas prices.

DETROIT -- President Biden on Wednesday helped christen a General Motors factory that manufactures electric vehicles, zipping around in a battery-powered Hummer to highlight a transition to energy-efficient cars and trucks that the president hopes his $1 trillion infrastructure law will accelerate.

But the visit came on a day when Mr. Biden was dealing with a more immediate problem -- surging gas prices. Before he left for Michigan, the president asked the Federal Trade Commission to investigate whether oil and gas companies were engaging in ''illegal conduct'' that was driving up prices at the pump.

Mr. Biden toured G.M.'s ''Factory Zero,'' watching workers bolt a 3,000-pound battery into the body of a white Hummer truck and then taking one for a spin in a lot behind the plant.

''These suckers are something else,'' he said after the drive.

In a speech at the plant, Mr. Biden said it was an economic and environmental necessity that the United States lead the world in electric vehicle production. ''We're going to make sure that these jobs end up in Michigan,'' he said, ''not halfway around the world.''

The split screen of what Mr. Biden calls America's future and the immediate political pain of high gas prices showcased just how far the United States has to go to catch up to its rivals in the race for low-emission vehicles and how dependent it remains on fossil fuels.

Soaring gas prices, driven upward by an OPEC choke on production and renewed driving activity as commuters and tourists return from a pandemic hiatus, have dented Americans' views of the economy and helped fuel an acceleration of inflation that has jeopardized part of Mr. Biden's economic agenda in Congress.

The average gallon of gas was nearly $3.40 in the United States on Monday, according to the Energy Information Administration, its highest price in seven years.

On Wednesday, Mr. Biden asked the Federal Trade Commission to consider whether large oil and gas companies were artificially pushing up gasoline prices for American consumers, the administration's latest effort to target concentration in the energy industry in a bid to bring down costs.

The move is unlikely to spur immediate action by the F.T.C., which has the power to break up large industry players, and it is unlikely to affect gasoline prices materially anytime soon. But it could prompt the commission to open an investigation to gather data on how companies set gasoline prices, which could be used in future enforcement actions.

Mr. Biden's letter to Lina Khan, the antitrust champion he appointed as the commission's chair, claims ''mounting evidence of anti-consumer behavior by oil and gas companies.'' The president noted that prices at the pump had risen even as the costs of refined fuel had fallen and industry profits had risen. The two largest players in the industry, Exxon Mobil and Chevron, have doubled their net income since 2019, he wrote, while announcing billions of dollars in plans to issue dividends and buy back stock.

''The F.T.C. is concerned about this issue, and we are looking into it,'' Lindsay Kryzak, a spokeswoman for the agency, said in a statement.

Rising gas prices have long been a political problem for presidents, who are often blamed for increases that are largely out of their control.

The liberal polling group Data for Progress released a memo on Wednesday showing that increased voter disapproval of Mr. Biden ''strongly correlates'' with the rise in gas prices over the summer and the fall. The memo contended that higher pump prices have overpowered other economic improvements that should be lifting the president, like a strengthening job market and strong wage growth for low-paid and middle-class workers. The group cheered the F.T.C. request while urging Mr. Biden to ''consider executive prescriptions in the short term that remedy the recent rise of retail gas prices to a reasonable degree.''

Administration officials pointed the finger at oil companies. Chris Meagher, a deputy White House press secretary, told reporters on Air Force One that drivers would be paying as much as 25 cents less per gallon if the gap between refined fuel costs and gasoline prices at the pump were to return to normal prepandemic levels.

The increase of about $1 per gallon since Mr. Biden took office has pinned the president between his goals of reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that drive climate change and keeping costs low for middle-class consumers.

Mr. Biden refused to include an increase in the federal gasoline tax to offset the spending in his infrastructure negotiations with Republicans, while insisting that the agreement include $7.5 billion to build what the White House says will be as many as 500,000 electric charging stations nationwide. The infrastructure law also includes $7.5 billion to help bolster supply chains that feed electric vehicles and $5 billion for electric buses.

''It's going to take us between now and 2030 to have half the vehicles in America electric vehicles,'' Mr. Biden said during a news conference in Rome last month after a meeting where he pushed global oil producers to pump more to bring prices down. ''So, the idea we're not going to need gasoline for automobiles is just not realistic.''

When the cost of gasoline tops $3.35 a gallon, he added, ''it has profound impact on ***working-class*** families just to get back and forth to work.''

Electrifying the transportation sector looms as a critical step for wealthy nations like the United States as they try to reduce fossil fuel use and avert catastrophic global temperature increases. Over time, moving to a more heavily electric vehicle fleet will also reduce demand for gasoline -- and with it, prices.

But the United States lags far behind Europe and China in its adoption of electric cars. Battery-powered vehicles accounted for fewer than 3 percent of new registrations in the United States this year, compared with 9 percent in the European Union and 10 percent in China.

One reason for the slow uptake in the United States is a lack of places to recharge. There are 45,000 public charging stations in the country, according to the Energy Department. The European Union, with less than half the land area of the United States, has five times as many.

Electric vehicle sales have been growing quickly in the United States despite less of a push from the government, nearly doubling compared to last year even as sales of gasoline-powered vehicles slumped. Tesla dominates the U.S. market, accounting for well over half of electric vehicle sales. But traditional automakers are gaining share with models like the Ford Mustang Mach-E, the Chevrolet Bolt and the Volkswagen ID.4.

Electric vehicles have implications for the United States' rivalry with China. Beijing hopes to exploit the shift to electric transportation to become a major auto exporter. Chinese automakers like SAIC Motor have been moving aggressively into Europe and are expected to target the United States. The more cars they sell, the more experience they accumulate with the new technology, which they can apply to make better products.

Mr. Biden is pushing Congress to do more to incentivize the electric shift. The $1.85 trillion collection of spending programs and tax cuts that Democrats hope to push through the House this week includes billions of dollars in loans and grants to further support electric vehicle manufacturing. It would expand tax credits for buying electric vehicles to as much as $12,500 each, offering more for union-made cars and trucks built in America.

The president has repeatedly championed electric vehicles in person. Mr. Biden this spring visited a Ford factory that manufactures an all-electric version of the F-150 pickup truck, which the president also took for a spin. G.M. has said it will go all electric by 2035. Ford has announced $30 billion in investments in electrification and said it will go zero emissions worldwide by 2040. White House officials said on Wednesday that automakers had now committed $70 billion to electric vehicle manufacturing in the United States.

On Wednesday, Mr. Biden met with autoworkers and the chief executive of G.M., Mary Barra, and marveled at the steering radius and top speed of the Hummer. In a grand-opening ceremony for the plant, Ms. Barra said the spending bill Mr. Biden was championing in Congress would put America ''on an irreversible path to a zero-emissions future.''

The president opened his remarks by highlighting new research suggesting that his spending bill would not add to rising prices across the country, but he quickly pivoted back to geeking out about cars.

''God, it's good to be back in Detroit,'' Mr. Biden told the crowd. ''And that Hummer: one hell of a vehicle.''

Jack Ewing contributed reporting from New York.Jack Ewing contributed reporting from New York.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/17/business/biden-gas-prices.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/17/business/biden-gas-prices.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Left, President Biden on Wednesday at a G.M. factory in Detroit that makes electric vehicles. Right, a gas pump in Queens shows the kind of prices that have dented Americans' economic views. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

JUTHARAT PINYODOONYACHET FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B5)

**Load-Date:** November 18, 2021

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[***A French Designer Who Celebrates Mexico’s Popular-Design Aesthetic; In Studio***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63DC-GK41-JBG3-63Y0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 19, 2021 Thursday 12:30 EST

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**Section:** T-MAGAZINE

**Length:** 1395 words

**Byline:** Michael Snyder and Pia Riverola

**Highlight:** In his colorful Guadalajara work space, Fabien Cappello collects and creates pieces he calls “prototypes of the future.”

**Body**

In his colorful Guadalajara work space, Fabien Cappello collects and creates pieces he calls “prototypes of the future.”

EVERY AFTERNOON, YOLANDA González Murillo passes by the open front door of the French industrial designer [*Fabien Cappello’s*](http://fabiencappello.com/) studio in the Mexican city of [*Guadalajara*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/15/t-magazine/guadalajara-homes-design-architecture.html) selling icy paletas that she pulls from frost-slicked molds. The flavors change with the seasons: walnut and vanilla in the winter, mango in the spring and prickly pear in the summer, all made from produce that González purchases from a market in the ***working-class*** neighborhood of Alcalde Barranquitas. The ice pops are delicious, Cappello says, but he’s more drawn to their molds: long, tapered wands of stainless steel made for decades by a family of metalworkers in the lakeside town of Chapala, an hour away.

“We’re always talking about the product rather than the tool, but the guys who make these molds allow these other businesses to thrive,” says Cappello, 37, standing among a riotous collection of mismatched objects that crowd his 900-square-foot studio. Some are his own creations — candlesticks fashioned from corrugated metal tubing in fluorescent shades of pink and gold; decorative plates made from off-cuts of opaque, candy-colored glass — and others, like plastic jugs and metal bird cages, he’s picked up at markets and neighborhood shops since moving to Mexico in 2016.

Cappello had previously lived in London, first while earning a graduate degree at the Royal College of Art, then as the director of his namesake design studio, which he founded in 2010. But his move to Mexico was inspired in no small part by these quotidian objects, basic necessities like broomsticks and tortilla presses made in urban workshops and suspended halfway between craft and industry — items so ordinary, Cappello says, that most people don’t consider them designed at all. Still, each one represents part of Mexico’s vast lexicon of diseño popular, or “popular design,” a concept as central to Cappello’s practice as it is to the country’s cultural, economic and political universe.

The word itself — “popular” — is difficult to translate: It’s not entirely like its English homograph, in the sense of “well liked,” and bears only a passing resemblance to “folk,” often used as its stand-in (as in “artes populares,” or “folk arts”). Closer to the Latin root “popularis,” meaning “of the people,” Mexico’s “popular” can describe the music, food and neighborhoods — like Alcalde Barranquitas — that the aspirational middle and upper classes typically shun. Used from within the communities to which it applies, the word carries a whiff of the English “proletariat,” with its proudly political implications; spoken by outsiders, it displays traces of the classism that organizes Mexican society.

Born and raised in the Le Pierrier housing development in the Parisian banlieue, or suburb, of Plessis-Robinson, Cappello is a product of his city’s own barrios populares. He describes the items that fill his studio as “objetos de resistencia,” or “objects of resistance” — the title of his current exhibition at Zaventem Ateliers outside Brussels, consisting of 340 pieces gathered from around central Mexico. Like the areas that tend to produce them, these objects, Cappello says, “resist the material homogenization that’s accelerated through the beginning of this century.”

A creator and collector of objects, Cappello gathers these artifacts (along with short videos of how they’re made) as an informal catalog of techniques and solutions to draw upon as design challenges present themselves. Some of those ideas will yield goods for the home; others may eventually scale up into public furniture and lighting design. Taken together, they form a map of central Mexico’s complex microeconomies. “I don’t look at these things as archaic or cute,” he says. “I see them as prototypes for the future.”

CAPPELLO HAS BEEN interested in urban resourcefulness since the beginning of his career. During his time in London, he worked with small-scale manufacturers across Europe, creating, among other projects, a fountain of glass watering cans in Venice, desks that conjure the [*Memphis Group*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/07/t-magazine/ettore-sottsass-designer-memphis-charles-zana.html) made from colorful sheets of perforated metal in Paris and, in London, a series of stools from discarded Christmas trees.

By late 2015, Cappello had decided to leave London (“the most constraining place imaginable,” he says), but other opportunities on the European continent seemed similarly stultifying, in part because the region’s great artisans were now virtually inaccessible to anyone but the big luxury conglomerates. Unsure of where to go next, he visited Mexico City at the invitation of a friend from design school who’d moved there several years before. He spent days perusing the historic center’s hangarlike markets and countless workshops, many of them tucked into crumbling colonial houses and crooked functionalist apartment blocks. The next year, he moved to Mexico City, though he found himself increasingly drawn north to Guadalajara. In 2020, he relocated there to join his partner, Andrés Treviño, 28, who advances trans and queer rights as the director of sexual diversity for the state government of Jalisco.

Cappello had long admired Guadalajara, a burgeoning design capital filled with workshops dedicated to trades like carpentry and metalwork. And then there was the studio itself: a modest corner building, its concrete facade painted pear green, its corrugated metal doors the color of turmeric, owned by the Treviños since the 1970s but left unoccupied for nearly two decades after the family’s tannery-supply business moved elsewhere.

Over the last year, Cappello and his boyfriend have made modest adjustments to the space. They transformed a pair of mildewed offices into a receiving gallery for clients and collaborators, decorating it with delirious planes of contrasting color — a constant in much of Cappello’s work, despite his colorblindness. An electric blue shelf, originally designed as a book display for an art fair, backs up against a canary yellow wall. Round resin door handles in pink, orange, white and blue crowd its upper shelf, gathered around the base of a table lamp fashioned from a jicara, the dried gourd used for millenniums across Mesoamerica to collect water and serve drinks. A small patio lush with hanging succulents connects the front office to a warehouselike workshop where Cappello plans to install a folding glass door in order to bring his own artes y oficios — his “art and vocation” — back into the street.

“I’m not a designer who works with craft,” Cappello says. It’s a defiant remark in a country replete with makers, both local and foreign, who collaborate with artisans in an effort to preserve (or simply capitalize on) ancient traditions before they disappear, often treating clay casseroles and wooden spoons, early iterations of diseño popular, as holy relics rather than household wares. But Cappello is “more interested in looking at objects from the side of production or function rather than aesthetic or symbolic value,” he says. “I want to speak to a more diverse understanding of a place’s material culture.”

His own work is no less informed by place; it just happens that the regions animating his practice are not picturesque villages nestled among cactus-studded hills but the city itself. The pieces that emerge from Cappello’s studio — steampunk flower vases made in workshops that specialize in folding sheets of tin into cake molds; geometric wall sconces that resemble TV antennas fashioned from broomsticks — translate the vitality of those barrios populares into products that are themselves objects of resistance against uniformity and pious good taste: each one a prototype for an uncertain future.

PHOTOS: Above: original works in Fabien Cappello’s Guadalajara, Mexico, studio, including “Las Macetas” (2021), a planter and pedestal in colored fiberglass, and “Los Floreros de Hojalata” (2021), a tin vase. Right: a table and bench made for a 2020 art fair, and vintage chairs surrounded by Cappello’s “Offcuts” plates for Hem (2021), a ceiling lamp of his own design (2018) and found objects. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY PIA RIVEROLA; JASON WU FOR BRIZO FAUCET, BRIZO.COM; WATERWORKS FAUCET, WATERWORKS.COM; FANTINI FAUCET, FANTINIUSA.COM; KOHLER FAUCET, KOHLER.COM; ROHL FAUCET, HOUSEOFROHL.COM; VOLA FAUCET, EN.VOLA.COM)

**Load-Date:** August 29, 2021

**End of Document**



[***In Tennessee, Fears a Neighborhood Will Disappear***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YBY-8071-DXY4-X1MH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 5, 2020 Thursday

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**Length:** 1400 words

**Byline:** By Richard Fausset and Steve Cavendish

**Body**

A devastating tornado in 1998 transformed East Nashville and forced many African-American residents to relocate. Now, North Nashville residents fear the same will happen to them.

NASHVILLE -- Adia Victoria huddled with her cat under the covers in the North Nashville home she shares with her mother, her ears popping as a tornado roared across their neighborhood, among the oldest in this booming city.

A few hours later, in the morning light, the damage was clear: Much of their neighborhood -- a traditional and important African-American community that has been rapidly gentrifying -- had been decimated. Now, Ms. Victoria, an African-American musician and songwriter, assumed that the gentrification pressure would only get worse, that working people would struggle to rebuild, flirt with the idea of selling to developers or simply move away.

''My mom and I woke up, and with this dark-humor laugh were like, 'Well, there goes the rest of the neighborhood,''' she said.

As this city cleans up from nightmare storms that cut a swath across the central part of the state on Tuesday, killing at least two dozen people across four counties, some residents of North Nashville also worried that the tornado's destruction would exacerbate the forces that have been diluting their neighborhood's character and culture.

''There has been a gentrification tornado spinning through North Nashville for the last 10 years,'' said the Rev. Jeff Obafemi Carr, an activist and former mayoral candidate. ''You hope that a physical tornado doesn't become the catalyst for more.''

The neighborhood's post-storm anxiety echoes broader concerns about whether this fast-growing metropolitan area, rife with cool cachet and rising housing prices, is doing enough to accommodate its African-American community as the city is transformed by construction cranes and new residents.

Unverified rumors about forces that Ms. Victoria described as ''greater than the tornado itself'' spun through the neighborhood on Wednesday.

''I heard people in Land Rovers were going around yesterday basically trying to scout property -- but I can't validate that,'' said Freddie O'Connell, a white member of the unified City-County Council whose district includes a badly damaged portion of North Nashville.

With a diversified economy and its sheen of countrypolitan chic, Nashville continues to grow. It recently passed Memphis as the state's most populous city, with about 700,000 residents, and demographers predict it will grow by more than another 100,000 people over the next 20 years.

Along with that, however, has come a growing -- and well-founded -- fear of black displacement. In late 2017, the city's daily newspaper, The Tennessean, analyzed census data and found that the African-American population had plummeted in some historically black neighborhoods, in some cases by 20 percentage points or more. Many black residents also had left the city's urban core, the newspaper found, ''while white buyers and renters are spreading throughout the core.''

Though Nashville's global calling card, country music, is usually associated with America's white ***working class***, the city is nearly 28 percent black, with a storied civil rights legacy and a number of historically black colleges and universities. Yet many African-American residents said they have felt slighted in recent years as Nashville's cool-town reputation took off.

An ambitious $9 billion public transit plan was shot down by voters after opponents argued that ***working-class*** black people would bear an undue tax burden and see relatively few benefits. Some black leaders saw a recent effort to scale back services at Nashville General Hospital, which is city-funded and on the city's north side, as an affront. So was a short-lived plan to develop homes, retail and office space at Fort Negley, where enslaved African-Americans are buried.

And there is controversy over Nashville's signature dish, hot chicken, an African-American creation that many feel has been misappropriated and widely marketed by white people.

Tuesday's deadly tornado was not the first to play a role in the city's gentrification drama. After the East Nashville neighborhood was hit hard by a destructive storm in 1998, it enjoyed a hip renaissance, fueled in part by insurance money. The cool bars and pricey restaurants that emerged after the storm helped boost property values and a gentrifying circle that continues today.

This week's storms were indiscriminate in their wrath, and once again, East Nashville was battered. The Basement East, a popular indie-rock club founded in 2015, was badly damaged. Nearby, a couple was killed after leaving Attaboy Lounge, a craft cocktail lounge. Scores of homes were rendered unlivable.

On Wednesday, gentrification concerns were not a top priority for many Nashville residents who were simply trying to clean up their neighborhoods. Professional cleanup crews, joined by volunteers of all races and backgrounds, worked to clear the streets of tangled wires and branches and help their neighbors as power outages continued to plague some areas.

In Putnam County, in the rolling countryside east of Nashville, 18 people were killed, including 13 adults and five children under the age of 13. Late Wednesday, one person remained unaccounted for.

''Most of the folks that I have talked with, black and white, all of our heads are pretty much in the same place,'' said the Rev. Dr. Frank Gordon, pastor of North Nashville's Fourteenth Avenue Missionary Baptist Church. ''We have been through these things before with tornadoes and floods in Nashville. Each time that I recall it has happened, the major thrust in the community has been everybody pulling together.''

Still, beneath the sounds of the buzzing of chain saws, many worried about how the tornado would transform North Nashville.

In September, Ms. Victoria wrote a searing essay in The Nashville Scene decrying the expensive makeover that had begun transforming North Nashville. Ms. Victoria described the new construction, and the new flavors that came with new neighbors, including ''the appearance of a natural-foods section at the Kroger on Rosa Parks Boulevard where years ago I purchased my first chitterlings.''

''There is a rapaciousness in the air, bordering on the obscene, as the city contorts, bends, shucks and jives to become whatever version of itself will bring about the largest turn of profit,'' she wrote. ''Those positioned to make money do so, while all those standing outside the circle of profit are left on their front porch wondering when their lives will be razed and paved over.''

The dramatic changes were on full display in the Buena Vista area of North Nashville.

There, Shirley Brooks has lived on Monroe Street for a decade in a one-story wood house. Before the tornado, she watched as new brick townhomes rose all around her. They were barely affected by the storm. But the tornado tore off the front of her little green house and wrecked its roof, displacing her and the 15 other residents.

''We got to the middle of the house and the roof caved in,'' Ms. Brooks said. ''I had the baby and the roof fell in on my back. We were trapped in the back and couldn't get out. I was screaming and hollering to the people next door, saying, 'Please help us! We can't get out! We can't get out.'''

The next day, Ms. Brooks and her grandchildren returned to their ruined home, gathered what they could and prepared to go elsewhere. She said her landlord told her that he did not plan to rebuild it.

''They told me they didn't have no more rental property,'' she said, ''and I don't have nowhere to go.''

Nearby, the Rev. Lisa Hammonds stood outside of St. John A.M.E. Church, the oldest A.M.E. sanctuary in Tennessee. The tornado had cratered the roof and caused other structural damage. On Wednesday, it was surrounded by police tape.

Ms. Hammonds talked about feeling slighted when the initial news coverage of the tornado seemed to focus more on fully gentrified places like the nearby Germantown neighborhood. She spoke of the new housing sprouting up in North Nashville, including the buildings that residents call ''tall and skinnies,'' built to maximize space and profits on small lots.

''What we have to understand is that it's happening already,'' Ms. Hammonds said. ''We just have to figure out what that means for our community.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/04/us/tennessee-tornado.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/04/us/tennessee-tornado.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Shirley Brooks, second from right, at the home where she lived when a tornado ravaged the Buena Vista area of North Nashville.

Jonathan Brandt, one of many volunteers helping with cleanup in Buena Vista, on Wednesday at the Mt. Bethel Baptist Church. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LUKE SHARRETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 5, 2020

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[***The Meters’ Leo Nocentelli Gets a Solo Career, 50 Years Late***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:643T-GMW1-JBG3-64Y8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 18, 2021 Thursday 14:07 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; music

**Length:** 1538 words

**Byline:** Nate Rogers

**Highlight:** In the 1970s, Nocentelli recorded a folk album drastically different from his band’s funk music. Barely anyone heard it — until it ended up at a swap meet.

**Body**

In the 1970s, Nocentelli recorded a folk album drastically different from his band’s funk music. Barely anyone heard it — until it ended up at a swap meet.

Leo Nocentelli decided to record a solo album just once, in the early 1970s. Though he was the guitarist and primary songwriter of the Meters — the epochal house band of New Orleans funk — he had a different palette in mind for his own LP: James Taylor and Elton John. He made “Another Side,” what he has referred to as his “country-and-western album,” and then it disappeared.

“I completely forgot about it,” Nocentelli, 75, said on a video call, wearing a newsboy cap and shades at his home in New Orleans, noting that he didn’t even have a copy of the record. “It was like a distant memory. I didn’t remember the songs.”

The quarter-inch master tapes of “Another Side,” out Nov. 19 in various formats after a 50-year delay, sat unreleased in storage for decades at [*Allen Toussaint*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/11/arts/music/allen-toussaint-dies.html)’s Sea-Saint Recording Studio in New Orleans. When Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005, Sea-Saint — which housed numerous landmark recordings — was destroyed by floodwater, and its archives were reasonably presumed to have perished along with it.

But about a quarter of the tapes at the facility were spared. And eventually the surviving material made its way to Los Angeles, where Bill Valenziano, who bought Sea-Saint in 1995, had it put into storage. After some missed payments and an auction in 2018, [*16 boxes of master tapes*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/music/story/2019-08-28/allen-toussaint-new-orelans-hurricane-katrina-mike-nishita) bearing the Sea-Saint name landed at a swap meet in Torrance, Calif. When they were brought out for sale, a collector and D.J. named Mike Nishita was called over to take a look, and his eyes widened at the sight of the names: the Meters, Dr. John, Irma Thomas.

“I didn’t really know about that studio at all,” Nishita, a soft-spoken individual known by some as “Hawaiian Mike,” said in a recent interview. (His brother is “Money Mark” Nishita, a keyboardist often referred to as the unofficial fourth member of the Beastie Boys.) “I just Googled ‘Sea-Saint,’ and was like, ‘Holy [expletive].’” He bought the lot for $100 a box, and got out of there before the seller could change his mind. Sifting through the music, he quickly found his favorite reel of the bunch: Nocentelli’s lost solo album, which no one else in the world seemed to know existed.

“I immediately wanted to shut it off — like, someone has to hear this besides me,” he said, remembering when he hit play for the first time. “It kind of wasn’t fair that I get to listen to it.”

Nishita was well aware of Nocentelli — as a member of the Meters, a group that made its name with infectious semi-instrumentals like [*“Cissy Strut”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xagItL2QnHA) and [*“Look-Ka Py Py,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwzBZQX2cqQ) seven of which charted on the Billboard Hot 100 between 1969 and 1970. With Art Neville on keyboard, George Porter Jr. on bass, Zigaboo Modeliste on drums and Nocentelli on guitar, the Meters were just as busy behind the scenes, regularly playing as session musicians on a variety of Toussaint productions, such as Dr. John’s [*“Right Place, Wrong Time”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4PjWgiH-LQ) and Labelle’s [*“Lady Marmalade.”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tw6HrI9e1K4)

But according to Nocentelli, his path might very well have gone in a completely different direction. “The Meters kind of happened by accident,” he said, noting that, growing up in New Orleans, he was more interested in becoming a jazz guitarist in the vein of Wes Montgomery. That was before he found himself scooped into the world of R&amp;B, playing on Lee Dorsey’s Top 10 hit “Ya Ya” when he was 15, and supporting Otis Redding on tour at 16.

Just as quickly as the Meters took off, though, there were problems that threatened their future. What the group has described as an unfavorable publishing and managerial arrangement with Toussaint and his business partner, Marshall Sehorn, limited the band’s royalties, and in 1971, the group’s label, Josie Records, went out of business. Around that point, the Meters went on a hiatus — and at home in the Seventh Ward, Nocentelli began noodling around with a nylon-string guitar.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/6pwqZ7iNG0w)]

He was inspired by the sounds and stories of James Taylor’s 1970 album, “Sweet Baby James,” and wanted to craft his own take on the style: Catchy songs like “Pretty Mittie,” about a farmer’s plans to move to the city, and “Riverfront,” a ***working-class*** anthem inspired by the real life of Aaron Neville, Art’s brother. There were also somber songs about love and loss — and about the question of what success really means in the entertainment industry. “Reaching high but not getting nowhere,” he sings on “Getting Nowhere,” his trademark propulsive riffing replaced with understated strumming. “I must have gotten on the wrong cloud.”

Initially, Nocentelli didn’t have any intention to record his solo music, which he didn’t tell anyone about. But being around the elegant and confident Toussaint ultimately changed his mind. “I really admired him,” Nocentelli said, clearly sentimental about their long, complicated friendship. “He was a huge influence on me with recording aspects of the business.”

Snagging any opening he could at Cosimo Matassa’s Jazz City, the pre-eminent New Orleans recording studio before Sea-Saint opened in 1973, Nocentelli began recording his album, tapping those around him to play supporting parts: Toussaint on piano, Porter on bass, Modeliste and the highly regarded jazz player James Black on drums. All said, Nocentelli laid down nine originals and a cover of the Elton John single “Your Song,” which had then just been released.

“We would be in the studio recording, not knowing what or who we were recording for,” Porter, 73, said on the phone from New Orleans of how swamped with sessions the band was during those years. “When Leo was reminding me that I’m playing on this record, I said, ‘Really?’”

The pieces had started to come together, but the album never went further than the rough recordings, which Nocentelli essentially viewed as demos at the time. The way he remembers it, his money was drying up, and the Meters were soon back together and busier than ever after signing to Warner Bros., leaving “Another Side” to pick up cobwebs. But Porter has a less charitable view of why he and his bandmates weren’t encouraged to branch out on their own and how a record like this could be left behind: “My gut feeling was that Marshall Sehorn did not at all want us to become so big that we weren’t under his thumb,” he said. “So him sitting on that project and making that disappear is not a surprise.”

Either way, the Meters carried on into their major-label period, subsequently embracing songs with more traditional singing parts. Yet Nocentelli almost never took lead vocals while in the band, despite having proven more than capable during his solo foray. “I was always the shy guy,” he said. If you look, it’s hard to even find pictures of Nocentelli by himself in the Meters’ original run.

As time has gone on, the main narratives of this era of New Orleans music have solidified, and some of the chapters have started to close; Sehorn died in 2006, [*Matassa*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/14/arts/music/cosimo-matassa-whose-studio-birthed-a-rock-n-roll-sound-dies-at-88.html) in 2014, Toussaint in 2015 and [*Art Neville*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/23/arts/music/art-neville-dead.html) in 2019. (The Meters broke up in 1977; since the late ’80s, they have reunited off and on in various forms.) But when a new wrinkle in the timeline opened at that swap meet in Torrance, it offered a sideways glimpse at an alternate reality in which Nocentelli became a star in his own right.

“There’s a certain spirituality about this that I feel,” Nocentelli said. “Things like this are very rare. It wasn’t supposed to happen.”

In terms of finally giving “Another Side” the industry attention it previously missed, it was not difficult to find an interested party. Nishita is close friends with Mario Caldato Jr., a producer and engineer who’s worked with the Beastie Boys and knows Matt Sullivan, the founder of Light in the Attic Records. Sullivan was one of the first people invited to check out the collection, and soon set up the Nocentelli release. Right place, right time.

“Every time I listen to this record, it’s like, how was this never released?” Sullivan said, speaking from Austin, Texas. “This should have been on the radio in the ’70s.”

There are still approximately 3,000 more hours of Sea-Saint-related music sitting in Nishita’s garage, which he says includes an unreleased Meters album from their early days. The prospect of that particular one ever being released is far more precarious from a legal perspective than Nocentelli’s solo album, but if all principal parties can get on board, it could happen.

For now, Nocentelli is giving his new role a try, embracing a spotlight that had flickered near him for so long. He’s even beginning to accept the imperfections of “Another Side” that still stick out when he listens, 50 years later. “I was hearing much more than what was there,” he said, explaining that he planned for the album to have horns, as well as additional instrumentation. “But that doesn’t mean that what was there wasn’t sufficient. Evidently it was. And it is.”

PHOTOS: Top, Leo Nocentelli, whose solo release is “Another Side.” Above, clockwise from left: Zigaboo Modeliste, Art Neville, George Porter Jr. and Nocentelli back in the Meters’ heyday (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AKASHA RABUT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; GILLES PETARD/REDFERNS, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** November 22, 2021

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[***In Society of Many Colors, Halls of Power Are White***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63ST-D2R1-DXY4-X3HS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1353 words

**Byline:** By Yan Zhuang

**Body**

A young daughter of Vietnamese refugees was set to run for Parliament. Then she was passed over for a white insider, and a debate over cultural diversity flared into the open.

MELBOURNE, Australia -- She seemed an ideal political candidate in a country that likes to call itself the world's ''most successful multicultural nation.''

Tu Le, a young Australian lawyer who is the daughter of Vietnamese refugees, was set to become the opposition Labor Party's candidate for Parliament in one of Sydney's most diverse districts. She grew up nearby, works as an advocate for exploited migrant workers and had the backing of the incumbent.

Then Ms. Le was passed over. The leaders of the center-left party, which casts itself as a bastion of diversity, instead chose a white American-born senator, Kristina Keneally, from Sydney's wealthy northeast to run for the safe Labor seat in the city's impoverished southwest.

But Ms. Le, unlike many before her, did not go quietly. She and other young members of the political left have pushed into the open a debate over the near absence of cultural diversity in Australia's halls of power, which has persisted even as the country has been transformed by non-European migration.

While about a quarter of the population is nonwhite, members of minority groups make up only about 6 percent of the federal Parliament, according to a 2018 study. That figure has barely budged since, leaving Australia far behind comparable democracies like Britain, Canada and the United States.

In Australia, migrant communities are often seen but not heard: courted for photo opportunities and as fund-raising bases or voting blocs, but largely shut out of electoral power, elected officials and party members said. Now, more are demanding change after global reckonings on race like the Black Lives Matter movement and a pandemic that has crystallized Australia's class and racial inequalities.

''The Australia that I live in and the one that I work in, Parliament, are two completely different worlds,'' said Mehreen Faruqi, a Greens party senator who in 2013 became Australia's first female Muslim member of Parliament. ''And we now know why they are two completely different worlds. It's because people are not willing to step aside and actually make room for this representation.''

The backlash has reached the highest levels of the Labor Party, which is hoping to unseat Prime Minister Scott Morrison in a federal election that must be held by May.

The Labor leader, Anthony Albanese, faced criticism when he held up the white senator, Ms. Keneally, 52, as a migrant ''success story'' because she had been born in the United States. Some party members called the comment tone deaf, a charge they also leveled at former Prime Minister Paul Keating after he said local candidates ''would take years to scramble'' to Ms. Keneally's ''level of executive ability, if they can ever get there at all.''

Ms. Keneally, one of the Labor Party's most senior members, told a radio interviewer that she had ''made a deliberate decision'' to seek the southwestern Sydney seat. She did so, she said, because it represents an overlooked community that had ''never had a local member who sits at the highest level of government, at a senior level at the cabinet table, and I think they deserve that.''

She plans to move to the district, she said. In the Australian political system, candidates for parliamentary seats are decided either by party leaders or through an internal vote of party members from that district. Candidates do not have to live in the district they seek to represent.

When contacted for comment, Ms. Keneally's office referred The New York Times to previous media interviews.

Chris Hayes, the veteran lawmaker who is vacating the southwestern Sydney seat, said he had endorsed Ms. Le because of her deep connections with the community.

''It would be sensational to be able to not only say that we in Labor are the party of multiculturalism, but to actually show it in our faces,'' he told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in March.

Ms. Le, 30, said she believed the party leadership sidelined her because it saw her as a ''tick-the-box exercise'' instead of a viable contender.

As an outsider, ''the system was stacked against me,'' she said. ''I haven't 'paid my dues,' I haven't 'served my time' or been in with the faceless men or factional bosses for years.''

What she finds especially disappointing about Labor's decision, she said, is the message it sends: that the party takes for granted the ***working-class*** and migrant communities it relies on for votes.

Australia has not experienced the same sorts of fights over political representation that have resulted in growing electoral clout for minority groups in other countries, said Tim Soutphommasane, a former national racial discrimination commissioner, in part because it introduced a ''top down'' policy of multiculturalism in the 1970s.

That has generated recognition of minority groups, though often in the form of ''celebratory'' multiculturalism, he said, that uses food and cultural festivals as stand-ins for genuine engagement.

When ethnic minorities get involved in Australian politics, they are often pushed to become their communities' de facto representatives -- expected to speak on multiculturalism issues, or relegated to recruiting party members from the same cultural background -- and then are punished for supposedly not having broader appeal.

''The expectation from inside the parties as well as the community is that you're there to represent the minority, the small portion of your community that's from the same ethnic background as you,'' said Elizabeth Lee, a Korean Australian who is the leader of the Australian Capital Territory's Liberal Party. ''It's very hard to break through that mold.''

Many ethnically diverse candidates never make it to Parliament because their parties do not put them in winnable races, said Peter Khalil, a Labor member of Parliament.

During his own election half a decade ago, he was told to shave his goatee because it made him ''look like a Muslim,'' he said. (Mr. Khalil is a Coptic Christian.)

''They want to bleach you, whiten you,'' he added, ''because there's a fear that you'll scare people off.''

In the Australian political system, the displacement of a local candidate by a higher-ranking party insider is not unusual. Mr. Morrison was chosen to run for a seat in 2007 after a more popular Lebanese Australian candidate, Michael Towke, said he was forced to withdraw by leaders of the center-right Liberal Party.

Ms. Keneally moved to the safe Labor seat, with the backing of party leaders, because she was in danger of losing her current seat. Her backers also note that she has been endorsed by a handful of Vietnamese, Cambodian and Middle Eastern community leaders.

Joseph Haweil, 32, the mayor of a municipality in Melbourne and a Labor Party member, said that as a political aspirant from a refugee background, he saw in the controversy over Ms. Le a glimpse of his possible future. Mr. Haweil is Assyrian, a minority group from the Middle East.

''You can spend years and years doing the groundwork, the most important thing in politics -- assisting local communities, understanding your local community with a view to help them as a public policy maker -- and that's not still enough to get you over the line,'' he said.

Osmond Chiu, 34, a party member who is Chinese Australian, said ''the message it sent was that culturally diverse representation is an afterthought in Labor, and it will always be sacrificed whenever it is politically inconvenient.''

Ms. Le spoke out in a way that others in the past have avoided, perhaps to preserve future political opportunities. She said that she was uncertain what she would do next, but that she hoped political parties would now think twice before making a decision like the one that shut her out.

''It's definitely tapped into something quite uncomfortable to discuss, but I think it needs to be out in the open,'' she said. ''I don't think people will stand for it anymore.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/06/world/australia/labor-party-diversity.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/06/world/australia/labor-party-diversity.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Tu Le, a lawyer who is the daughter of Vietnamese refugees, was set to become the opposition Labor Party's candidate for Parliament in one of Sydney's most diverse districts. She was passed over. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW ABBOTT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Senator Kristina Keneally, above center, with Anthony Albanese, the Labor Party leader, and Tanya Plibersek, a Labor member of Parliament. Left, the shopping district of Cabramatta. In Australian politics, migrant groups are often seen but not heard. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAN HIMBRECHTS/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK

MATTHEW ABBOTT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 7, 2021

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[***Democrats Are Not The Party of A.O.C.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YCK-5331-DXY4-X248-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Jennifer Steinhauer

**Body**

In contests for party control between progressives and moderates, electoral and governing results speak for themselves.

WASHINGTON -- Congressional Democrats are very familiar with the political dramaturgy now playing out in their party's White House primary and know of its lessons and consequences.

Voters appear to be in a death match between those who crave an aggressively progressive policy agenda with little tolerance for dissent and more moderates whose central goal is to undermine the populist movements in both parties and defeat Donald J. Trump. Both believe theirs is the winning formula to unseat President Trump.

On Super Tuesday, this played out at the presidential level across the country between Bernie Sanders and Joe Biden. But it was evident at the congressional level as well. On Tuesday, Jessica Cisneros in Texas, the highest profile primary challenger of the Justice Democrats, a very progressive group, lost to the moderate Democratic incumbent, Henry Cuellar. Left-wing-activist-backed Senate candidates in Texas and North Carolina were crushed by more moderate candidates.

The first dress rehearsal for this battle was the 2018 midterm elections, when the Justice Democrats put its muscle behind nearly 80 Sanders-like insurgent candidates to target House seats, many of them held by less liberal Democratic incumbents. That year, scores of Democrats ranging from left of center (like Katie Porter of California) to fairly conservative (Anthony Brindisi of New York) took advantage of waning support for Mr. Trump in America's suburbs to make a run for House seats held by Republican incumbents.

The results were pretty unequivocal. Justice Democrats lost virtually every primary race in 2018 when they fielded a homegrown liberal candidate, but they won one very important race: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez upset Representative Joe Crowley in a New York seat he had held for years.

At the same time, scores of middle-of-the-road Democrats were able to get through crowded primaries and win over Republican and independent voters in the general election, giving their party a net gain of 40 seats and flipping the House.

The theory of the case for progressive candidates is that they galvanized the Democratic base, and if people would just give them a chance, they will force through policies that most of the country supports. But the data -- and many of the experiences of the 116th Congress -- tell a more nuanced story.

A 2019 Gallup poll found that from 1994 to 2018, the percentage of all Democrats who call themselves liberal had more than doubled, to 51 percent from 25 percent. But Gallup also found that between 1993 and 2016, the percentage of Americans identifying as conservative rested between 36 percent and 40 percent, holding at 35 percent in 2018.

Looked at another way, in this Congress, the size of the Progressive Caucus, representing the House's most liberal members, reached historic size -- just under 100 of the chamber's 235 Democrats -- but the New Democrat Coalition, a more moderate group, also grew to historic levels, to roughly 100 members.

Part of the issue is definitional. Socially liberal but fiscally conservative is now far too pat a description for contemporary moderate Democrats, many of whom would be to the left of the last Democratic president, Barack Obama.

Max Rose of Staten Island, a typical freshman who picked off a Republican in 2018, is a veteran who was awarded a Purple Heart and Bronze Star in Afghanistan. He cares little about the deficit and is strongly against the Green New Deal. Like the vast majority of freshman Democrats who won in 2018, he does not like Medicare for All, but he supports a public option on the Affordable Care Act's insurance exchanges, which was considered a far left position not so long ago. He and the rest of the freshman Democrats support abortion rights, which was not true for many moderates before this class.

Further, racial and geographic dynamics often get conflated with generational ones among Democratic voters.

The 2018 races illuminated this as well. The Ocasio-Cortez victory was considerably more complicated than the postelection analysis, which focused almost completely on shifting demographics in her district. While the narrative of her victory portrayed younger, nonwhite and ***working-class*** voters as her secret base, in reality Ms. Ocasio-Cortez had soundly beaten the incumbent in the areas of the district that were by and large more wealthy and educated, in particular parts of Queens filled with white residents fleeing overpriced Manhattan.

Mr. Crowley prevailed in most ***working-class*** corners of the district, including the district's Hispanic and African-American enclaves; he beat Ms. Ocasio-Cortez by more than 25 points in her own Parkchester section of the Bronx.

David Freedlander neatly summed this up in his analysis for Politico magazine soon after the race: ''Ocasio-Cortez, the young Latina who proudly identifies as a democratic socialist, hadn't been all but vaulted into Congress by the party's diversity, or a blue-collar base looking to even the playing field. She won because she had galvanized the college-educated gentrifiers who are displacing those people.''

In short, deeply blue areas, especially with young and affluent voters, may be seeking political representation far to the left of the Democrats who were once easily re-elected. But as scores of Democrats saw in 2018, and still more saw on Super Tuesday, much of the rest of the country's Democrats, especially older African-American voters who are a major component of the base, prefer more centrist candidates. This is the dichotomy that hangs over the party today.

The 116th Congress also demonstrated that political influence outside of Washington does not always translate into legislative victories, as progressives are promising.

Without question Ms. Ocasio-Cortez's influence on the Democratic Party also is striking in modern politics for a freshman House member. In her first few months in office she got normally skittish Democrats and some early presidential candidates to sign on to her Green New Deal (introduced with Senator Edward Markey of Massachusetts), forced a national conversation about marginal tax rates and Medicare for All, helped tank a plan for Amazon to move to Queens, and catalyzed a vast rejection of corporate PAC money for incumbents who had just a year ago eschewed that plan as impractical at best, unilateral disarmament at worst.

But here was the reality for progressives: Medicare for All got little more than a hearing or two, while the House passed bill after bill pressing more incremental health care changes (but none of which the Republican-controlled Senate would even entertain). The Green New Deal had a messy if high-profile roll out, then fizzled. Ms. Ocasio-Cortez did not have even the modest legislative victories enjoyed by other freshman Democrats like Joseph Neguse of Colorado, Deb Haaland of New Mexico and Lauren Underwood of Illinois, who ran on getting health care bills on the floor.

What is more, many Democrats began to fret early on that the far left was going to do to them what the Tea Party had done to Republicans a few years back: Run them out of town, one primary at a time. Ms. Ocasio-Cortez previously suggested that Democrats who were not sufficiently loyal to an emergent brand of progressive politics should have others like her run against them in a primary. She is now suggesting that, exit polling be damned, Mr. Biden's latest string of successes is because of the strong-arming of corporate lobbyists, something Mr. Sanders has underscored by repeatedly calling Mr. Biden the establishment candidate.

But the results speak for themselves. Ms. Ocasio-Cortez threw her weight behind Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez in her Senate primary campaign in Texas to defeat the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee's chosen candidate, M.J. Hegar. Ms. Hegar ended up easily outpacing a crowded Democratic field.

''There are some people who one don't really seem to understand the math of the majority making,'' said Representative Abigail Spanberger of Virginia, a former intelligence officer, whose Richmond-area district had been held by Republicans for decades. ''There's some people that just think that we're out of touch and that if we just worked hard, more Democrats would come out of the woodwork, and so we should just try to say all the things that excite all the Democrats. You can say that until you're blue in the face, but there are just not that many Democrats in my district.''

Jennifer Steinhauer, a political reporter for The Times, is the author of the forthcoming ''The Firsts: The Inside Story of the Women Reshaping Congress.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/sunday-review/democratic-party-ocasio-cortez.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/sunday-review/democratic-party-ocasio-cortez.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez at a Queens rally for Bernie Sanders last year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER LEE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2020

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[***The Woman Who’s Shaking Up Britain’s Labour Leadership Campaign; The Saturday Profile***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YC5-J561-JBG3-61JW-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** The scion of a leftist family from northern England, Lisa Nandy offers a different view of what the party should stand for.

**Body**

The scion of a leftist family from northern England, Lisa Nandy offers a different view of what the party should stand for.

SOWERBY BRIDGE, England — Shaking the raindrops from her waterproof jacket, its oversized hood nearly covering her eyes, Lisa Nandy bundled into the Willow Cafe with a smile and an easy hello.

Ms. Nandy, 40, a Labour politician, is vying for her party’s leadership and was here to meet with residents of this small town in West Yorkshire that had been devastated by flooding days earlier.

As she sat with local leaders over a cup of tea to discuss the impact and the logistics of rebuilding a region in crisis, her brow furrowed as they listed their concerns.

But another crisis was also front of mind for Ms. Nandy: the one facing Britain’s Labour Party, which is still reeling from a December election that saw its [*support base in northern England crumble*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html) and delivered its worst result since 1935, spelling   [*the end of Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html)

“I said when I launched the election campaign, if Labour doesn’t change, we will die and we will deserve to,” she said in a recent interview. “And I think it is that serious for the Labour Party.”

Younger, female and from the north of England herself, Ms. Nandy — the daughter of Luise Fitzwalter, a former journalist and local Labour councilor, and Dipak Nandy, a prominent Marxist academic born in India — is a portrait of just how different the party leadership could look.

Though she often jokes that at home she is [*considered the one on the right*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html), she is a socially liberal, center-left contender in a field that leans further to the left.

Her remaining rivals — Keir Starmer, [*Labour’s Brexit policy leader under Mr. Corbyn*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html), and Rebecca Long-Bailey, who served as Mr. Corbyn’s business secretary — are seen as more closely aligned with the party’s left wing, and Mr. Starmer is considered the clear favorite to prevail.

But with analysts pointing to Labour’s betrayal of its ***working-class*** roots in England’s industrial north and a slide toward London-centered left-wing politics under Mr. Corbyn as the reason for its steep losses, Ms. Nandy offers an alternative — albeit most likely for the future. She is calling for change within a party that she sees as “far too top-heavy” and “far too disconnected.”

“I think the challenge that we face in Britain is very similar to the challenge that the left faces across much of the world,” Ms. Nandy said, “and no different actually to the challenge in the U.S. about reconnecting to people outside of the major cities.”

Arguably the least recognizable of the candidates heading into the contest, she made waves with [*a formidable performance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html) during a sit-down with the famed BBC interviewer Andrew Neil in January. (Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s refusal to appear on Mr. Neil’s show   [*caused a stir ahead of the general election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html).)

Since then, Ms. Nandy’s momentum has continued to build. In a straw poll of the audience after the most [*recent Sky News debate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html) between the three candidates, Ms. Nandy was the clear crowd favorite. Speaking on BBC, the prominent political commentator George Monbiot described Ms. Nandy as his preferred candidate with “a lovely touch” who “gets the collaborative nature of what politics now need to be.”

During her visit to Sowerby Bridge, she won the praise — if not the outright endorsement — of Holly Lynch, the Labour lawmaker who represents the area.

“I think what Lisa is saying and what she is doing absolutely resonates with people,” Ms. Lynch said as the two toured a local cheese factory that had been disrupted by the flooding. She described Ms. Nandy as “grounded” and “quite funny at times, qualities that you don’t see in leaders of political parties.”

Whether that praise will translate to votes as members begin casting their ballots remains to be seen, and a[*recent opinion poll from the YouGov*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html) research group confirmed that Mr. Starmer remained firmly in the lead ahead of Labour’s announcement of its new leader on April 4.

But for now, Ms. Nandy is having a moment.

She has drawn attention as she made the case for [*taxing wealth*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html),   [*abolishing the monarchy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html) and vowing to move Labour not further toward the center but   [*further toward the north*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html).

This ethos at the core of her leadership pitch emphasizes a shift in the party’s focus to Britain’s largely ***working-class*** towns and smaller cities that are often left behind, a move that she believes Labour must make in order to survive.

As industry disappeared from these former mining and manufacturing communities over the past four decades, young people left for the big cities, leaving behind overwhelming numbers of older voters who feel disconnected from the political system, she said. At the same time, the party’s other main wing of socially liberal urban youth face their own issues of high housing costs and strains on public services.

“They’re two sides of the same coin,” Ms. Nandy said. “You’ve got to be able to connect with both, and you’ve got to be able to speak for both.”

She believes she is the right candidate to offer those solutions by “investing in one area in order to alleviate the pressure on others,” an approach that, as she puts it, “solves a whole set of problems.”

Ms. Nandy was born in Manchester and grew up there and in the nearby town of Bury, and has spent the last decade representing the northern town of Wigan, where she lives with her partner, Andy Collis, and their 4-year-old son, Otis.

Liberal politics have always been part of her life. Her father was born in Kolkata and came to Britain in the 1950s to study at the University of Leeds. (Running short of money, he was taken in there by one of his professors, Arnold Kettle, an avowed communist and father of Martin Kettle, who is now a columnist with The Guardian.)

Mr. Nandy went on to become the first director of the [*Runnymede Trust*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html)think tank on race and helped draft Britain’s Race Relations Bill of 1976.

Ms. Nandy’s pedigree also includes her maternal grandfather, Frank Byers, who was a Liberal member of Parliament and went on to lead his party in the House of Lords. Her stepfather, Ray Fitzwalter, [*was a revered investigative journalist*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html).

She lived her early adult years in London and worked at homelessness and children’s charities before entering politics.

But her goal is to make it clear that she is listening to both sides of the party, evidenced by this tour of Sowerby Bridge — trailed by a cameraman from her campaign — where the plastic bags and debris still clung in the branches of trees along the Calder River, a reminder of how high the floodwaters had risen. Mr. Johnson had [*been criticized for opting out of a visit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html) to this part of West Yorkshire, and business owners described feeling neglected.

Despite what Ms. Nandy described as the “relentlessness of the process” of campaigning across the country, she has made it her mission to show that she is listening.

“This is the last moment where people in towns like mine are looking at us to see if we’ve got it,” she said, “and I am determined that they are going to hear that from us.”

During a meeting with party members in the upstairs room of a pub later in the day, she made her pitch to a crowd of two dozen people, mostly in their 60s and 70s, who listened as she spoke of the party’s existential crisis.

“This has been a really long time coming,” she said of the recent election failure, “and I don’t think the Labour Party has had an honest reckoning with how deep this is and how long and how far back the roots of this go in communities like mine.”

In a room of people who looked nothing like her, she embraced her identity as a youthful, mixed-race, female candidate — even nodding to her [*well-documented love of Britney Spears*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html), as the only candidate whose fandom made national headlines.

“Now, I know for a lot of members this is a bit of a leap, because there’s never been a leader who looks or sounds like me,” she said, before pointing to the successes of young female leaders in New Zealand and Finland as proof that change is possible.

But despite her appeal, Ms. Nandy and her supporters acknowledge that her candidacy is a long shot. Linda McDougall, the wife of the former Labour lawmaker Austin Mitchell, was in the crowd and offered her support.

“But it’s a tough one, isn’t it?” Ms. McDougall told the candidate. “You need a miracle.”

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARY TURNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Biden Highlights Electric Vehicles While Asking for Inquiry Into High Gas Prices***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:643K-JTX1-DXY4-X0SF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 1535 words

**Byline:** Jim Tankersley

**Highlight:** The president asked the Federal Trade Commission to look into whether big oil companies were fueling a spike in gas prices.

**Body**

The president asked the Federal Trade Commission to look into whether big oil companies were fueling a spike in gas prices.

DETROIT — President Biden on Wednesday helped christen a General Motors factory that manufactures electric vehicles, zipping around in a battery-powered Hummer to highlight a transition to energy-efficient cars and trucks that the president hopes his $1 trillion infrastructure law will accelerate.

But the visit came on a day when Mr. Biden was dealing with a more immediate problem — surging gas prices. Before he left for Michigan, the president asked the Federal Trade Commission to investigate whether oil and gas companies were engaging in “illegal conduct” that was driving up prices at the pump.

Mr. Biden toured G.M.’s “Factory Zero,” watching workers bolt a 3,000-pound battery into the body of a white Hummer truck and then taking one for a spin in a lot behind the plant.

“These suckers are something else,” he said after the drive.

In a speech at the plant, Mr. Biden said it was an economic and environmental necessity that the United States lead the world in electric vehicle production. “We’re going to make sure that these jobs end up in Michigan,” he said, “not halfway around the world.”

The split screen of what Mr. Biden calls America’s future and the immediate political pain of high gas prices showcased just how far the United States has to go to catch up to its rivals in the race for low-emission vehicles and how dependent it remains on fossil fuels.

Soaring gas prices, driven upward by an OPEC choke on production and renewed driving activity as commuters and tourists return from a pandemic hiatus, have dented Americans’ views of the economy and helped fuel an acceleration of inflation that has jeopardized part of Mr. Biden’s economic agenda in Congress.

The average gallon of gas was nearly $3.40 in the United States on Monday, according to the Energy Information Administration, its highest price in seven years.

On Wednesday, Mr. Biden [*asked the Federal Trade Commission*](https://int.nyt.com/data/documenttools/ftc-gas-prices/92d93dca9793b8b4/full.pdf) to consider whether large oil and gas companies were artificially pushing up gasoline prices for American consumers, the administration’s latest effort to target concentration in the energy industry in a bid to bring down costs.

The move is unlikely to spur immediate action by the F.T.C., which [*has the power*](https://www.ftc.gov/tips-advice/competition-guidance/guide-antitrust-laws/antitrust-laws) to break up large industry players, and it is unlikely to affect gasoline prices materially anytime soon. But it could prompt the commission to open an investigation to gather data on how companies set gasoline prices, which could be used in future enforcement actions.

Mr. Biden’s letter to Lina Khan, the antitrust champion he appointed as the commission’s chair, claims “mounting evidence of anti-consumer behavior by oil and gas companies.” The president noted that prices at the pump had risen even as the costs of refined fuel had fallen and industry profits had risen. The two largest players in the industry, Exxon Mobil and Chevron, have doubled their net income since 2019, he wrote, while announcing billions of dollars in plans to issue dividends and buy back stock.

“The F.T.C. is concerned about this issue, and we are looking into it,” Lindsay Kryzak, a spokeswoman for the agency, said in a statement.

Rising gas prices have long been a political problem for presidents, who are often blamed for increases that are largely out of their control.

The liberal polling group Data for Progress [*released a memo on Wednesday*](https://www.dataforprogress.org/blog/2021/11/17/do-voters-disapprove-of-biden-or-rising-gas-prices) showing that increased voter disapproval of Mr. Biden “strongly correlates” with the rise in gas prices over the summer and the fall. The memo contended that higher pump prices have overpowered other economic improvements that should be lifting the president, like a strengthening job market and strong wage growth for low-paid and middle-class workers. The group cheered the F.T.C. request while urging Mr. Biden to “consider executive prescriptions in the short term that remedy the recent rise of retail gas prices to a reasonable degree.”

Administration officials pointed the finger at oil companies. Chris Meagher, a deputy White House press secretary, told reporters on Air Force One that drivers would be paying as much as 25 cents less per gallon if the gap between refined fuel costs and gasoline prices at the pump were to return to normal prepandemic levels.

The increase of about $1 per gallon since Mr. Biden took office has pinned the president between his goals of reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that drive climate change and keeping costs low for middle-class consumers.

Mr. Biden refused to include an increase in the federal gasoline tax to offset the spending in his infrastructure negotiations with Republicans, while insisting that the agreement include $7.5 billion to build what the White House says will be as many as 500,000 electric charging stations nationwide. The infrastructure law also includes $7.5 billion to help bolster supply chains that feed electric vehicles and $5 billion for electric buses.

“It’s going to take us between now and 2030 to have half the vehicles in America electric vehicles,” Mr. Biden said during a news conference in Rome last month after a meeting where he pushed global oil producers to pump more to bring prices down. “So, the idea we’re not going to need gasoline for automobiles is just not realistic.”

When the cost of gasoline tops $3.35 a gallon, he added, “it has profound impact on ***working-class*** families just to get back and forth to work.”

Electrifying the transportation sector looms as a critical step for wealthy nations like the United States as they try to reduce fossil fuel use and avert catastrophic global temperature increases. Over time, moving to a more heavily electric vehicle fleet will also reduce demand for gasoline — and with it, prices.

But the United States lags far behind Europe and China in its adoption of electric cars. Battery-powered vehicles accounted for fewer than 3 percent of new registrations in the United States this year, compared with 9 percent in the European Union and 10 percent in China.

One reason for the slow uptake in the United States is a lack of places to recharge. There are 45,000 public charging stations in the country, according to the Energy Department. The European Union, with less than half the land area of the United States, has five times as many.

Electric vehicle sales have been growing quickly in the United States despite less of a push from the government, nearly doubling compared to last year even as sales of gasoline-powered vehicles slumped. Tesla dominates the U.S. market, accounting for well over half of electric vehicle sales. But traditional automakers are gaining share with models like the Ford Mustang Mach-E, the Chevrolet Bolt and the Volkswagen ID.4.

Electric vehicles have implications for the United States’ rivalry with China. Beijing hopes to exploit the shift to electric transportation to become a major auto exporter. Chinese automakers like SAIC Motor have been [*moving aggressively into Europe*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/31/business/electric-cars-china-europe.html) and are expected to target the United States. The more cars they sell, the more experience they accumulate with the new technology, which they can apply to make better products.

Mr. Biden is pushing Congress to do more to incentivize the electric shift. The $1.85 trillion collection of spending programs and tax cuts that Democrats hope to push through the House this week includes billions of dollars in loans and grants to further support electric vehicle manufacturing. It would expand tax credits for buying electric vehicles to as much as $12,500 each, offering more for union-made cars and trucks built in America.

The president has repeatedly championed electric vehicles in person. Mr. Biden this spring [*visited a Ford factory*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/18/business/biden-ford-electric-truck.html) that manufactures an all-electric version of the F-150 pickup truck, which the president also took for a spin. G.M. has said it will go all electric by 2035. Ford has announced $30 billion in investments in electrification and said it will go zero emissions worldwide by 2040. White House officials said on Wednesday that automakers had now committed $70 billion to electric vehicle manufacturing in the United States.

On Wednesday, Mr. Biden met with autoworkers and the chief executive of G.M., Mary Barra, and marveled at the steering radius and top speed of the Hummer. In a grand-opening ceremony for the plant, Ms. Barra said the spending bill Mr. Biden was championing in Congress would put America “on an irreversible path to a zero-emissions future.”

The president opened his remarks by highlighting new research suggesting that his spending bill would not add to rising prices across the country, but he quickly pivoted back to geeking out about cars.

“God, it’s good to be back in Detroit,” Mr. Biden told the crowd. “And that Hummer: one hell of a vehicle.”

Jack Ewing contributed reporting from New York.

Jack Ewing contributed reporting from New York.

PHOTOS: Left, President Biden on Wednesday at a G.M. factory in Detroit that makes electric vehicles. Right, a gas pump in Queens shows the kind of prices that have dented Americans’ economic views. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES; JUTHARAT PINYODOONYACHET FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B5)

**Load-Date:** November 18, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A Sea of White Faces in Australia’s ‘Party of Multiculturalism’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63SK-SC41-JBG3-635F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Yan Zhuang

**Highlight:** A young daughter of Vietnamese refugees was set to run for Parliament. Then she was passed over for a white insider, and a debate over cultural diversity flared into the open.

**Body**

A young daughter of Vietnamese refugees was set to run for Parliament. Then she was passed over for a white insider, and a debate over cultural diversity flared into the open.

MELBOURNE, Australia — She seemed an ideal political candidate in a country that likes to call itself the world’s “most successful multicultural nation.”

Tu Le, a young Australian lawyer who is the daughter of Vietnamese refugees, was set to become the opposition Labor Party’s candidate for Parliament in one of Sydney’s most diverse districts. She grew up nearby, works as an advocate for exploited migrant workers and had the backing of the incumbent.

Then Ms. Le was passed over. The leaders of the center-left party, which casts itself as a bastion of diversity, instead chose a white American-born senator, Kristina Keneally, from Sydney’s wealthy northeast to run for the safe Labor seat in the city’s impoverished southwest.

But Ms. Le, unlike many before her, did not go quietly. She and other young members of the political left have pushed into the open a debate over the near absence of cultural diversity in Australia’s halls of power, which has persisted even as the country has been transformed by non-European migration.

While about a quarter of the population is nonwhite, members of minority groups make up only about 6 percent of the federal Parliament, [*according to a 2018 study*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/10/world/australia/study-diversity-multicultural.html). That figure has barely budged since, leaving Australia far behind comparable democracies like Britain, Canada and the United States.

In Australia, migrant communities are often seen but not heard: courted for photo opportunities and as fund-raising bases or voting blocs, but largely shut out of electoral power, elected officials and party members said. Now, more are demanding change after global reckonings on race like the Black Lives Matter movement and a pandemic that has crystallized Australia’s class and racial inequalities.

“The Australia that I live in and the one that I work in, Parliament, are two completely different worlds,” said Mehreen Faruqi, a Greens party senator who in 2013 became Australia’s first female Muslim member of Parliament. “And we now know why they are two completely different worlds. It’s because people are not willing to step aside and actually make room for this representation.”

The backlash has reached the highest levels of the Labor Party, which is hoping to unseat Prime Minister Scott Morrison in a federal election that must be held by May.

The Labor leader, Anthony Albanese, faced criticism when he held up the white senator, Ms. Keneally, 52, as a migrant “[*success story*](https://anthonyalbanese.com.au/media-centre/sydney-doorstop-interview-14-sept-2021)” because she had been born in the United States. Some party members called the comment tone deaf, a charge they also leveled at former Prime Minister Paul Keating after he [*said*](https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/good-intentions-are-not-enough-paul-keating-backs-keneally-as-the-mp-fowler-needs-20210914-p58rid.html) local candidates “would take years to scramble” to Ms. Keneally’s “level of executive ability, if they can ever get there at all.”

Ms. Keneally, one of the Labor Party’s most senior members, [*told a radio interviewer*](https://www.2gb.com/house-hunt-begins-for-kristina-keneally-as-she-welcomes-fowler-uproar/) that she had “made a deliberate decision” to seek the southwestern Sydney seat. She did so, she said, because it represents an overlooked community that had “never had a local member who sits at the highest level of government, at a senior level at the cabinet table, and I think they deserve that.”

She plans to move to the district, she said. In the Australian political system, candidates for parliamentary seats are decided either by party leaders or through an internal vote of party members from that district. Candidates do not have to live in the district they seek to represent.

When contacted for comment, Ms. Keneally’s office referred The New York Times to previous media interviews.

Chris Hayes, the veteran lawmaker who is vacating the southwestern Sydney seat, said he had endorsed Ms. Le because of her deep connections with the community.

“It would be sensational to be able to not only say that we in Labor are the party of multiculturalism, but to actually show it in our faces,” he told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in March.

Ms. Le, 30, said she believed the party leadership sidelined her because it saw her as a “tick-the-box exercise” instead of a viable contender.

As an outsider, “the system was stacked against me,” she said. “I haven’t ‘paid my dues,’ I haven’t ‘served my time’ or been in with the faceless men or factional bosses for years.”

What she finds especially disappointing about Labor’s decision, she said, is the message it sends: that the party takes for granted the ***working-class*** and migrant communities it relies on for votes.

Australia has not experienced the same sorts of fights over political representation that have resulted in growing electoral clout for minority groups in other countries, said Tim Soutphommasane, a former national racial discrimination commissioner, in part because it introduced a “top down” policy of multiculturalism in the 1970s.

That has generated recognition of minority groups, though often in the form of “celebratory” multiculturalism, he said, that uses food and cultural festivals as stand-ins for genuine engagement.

When ethnic minorities get involved in Australian politics, they are often pushed to become their communities’ de facto representatives — expected to speak on multiculturalism issues, or relegated to recruiting party members from the same cultural background — and then are punished for supposedly not having broader appeal.

“The expectation from inside the parties as well as the community is that you’re there to represent the minority, the small portion of your community that’s from the same ethnic background as you,” said Elizabeth Lee, a Korean Australian who is the leader of the Australian Capital Territory’s Liberal Party. “It’s very hard to break through that mold.”

Many ethnically diverse candidates never make it to Parliament because their parties do not put them in winnable races, said Peter Khalil, a Labor member of Parliament.

During his own election half a decade ago, he was told to shave his goatee because it made him “look like a Muslim,” he said. (Mr. Khalil is a Coptic Christian.)

“They want to bleach you, whiten you,” he added, “because there’s a fear that you’ll scare people off.”

In the Australian political system, the displacement of a local candidate by a higher-ranking party insider is not unusual. Mr. Morrison was chosen to run for a seat in 2007 after a more popular Lebanese Australian candidate, Michael Towke, [*said*](https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/scott-morrison-had-secret-plan-to-make-malcolm-turnbull-state-liberal-leader-20160428-goh80n.html) he was forced to withdraw by leaders of the center-right Liberal Party.

Ms. Keneally moved to the safe Labor seat, with the backing of party leaders, because she was in danger of losing her current seat. Her backers also note that she has been endorsed by a handful of Vietnamese, Cambodian and Middle Eastern community leaders.

Joseph Haweil, 32, the mayor of a municipality in Melbourne and a Labor Party member, said that as a political aspirant from a refugee background, he saw in the controversy over Ms. Le a glimpse of his possible future. Mr. Haweil is Assyrian, a minority group from the Middle East.

“You can spend years and years doing the groundwork, the most important thing in politics — assisting local communities, understanding your local community with a view to help them as a public policy maker — and that’s not still enough to get you over the line,” he said.

Osmond Chiu, 34, a party member who is Chinese Australian, said “the message it sent was that culturally diverse representation is an afterthought in Labor, and it will always be sacrificed whenever it is politically inconvenient.”

Ms. Le spoke out in a way that others in the past have avoided, perhaps to preserve future political opportunities. She said that she was uncertain what she would do next, but that she hoped political parties would now think twice before making a decision like the one that shut her out.

“It’s definitely tapped into something quite uncomfortable to discuss, but I think it needs to be out in the open,” she said. “I don’t think people will stand for it anymore.”

PHOTOS: Tu Le, a lawyer who is the daughter of Vietnamese refugees, was set to become the opposition Labor Party’s candidate for Parliament in one of Sydney’s most diverse districts. She was passed over. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW ABBOTT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Senator Kristina Keneally, above center, with Anthony Albanese, the Labor Party leader, and Tanya Plibersek, a Labor member of Parliament. Left, the shopping district of Cabramatta. In Australian politics, migrant groups are often seen but not heard. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAN HIMBRECHTS/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK; MATTHEW ABBOTT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 7, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Was a Writer and Activist Too Left-Wing to Be a Saint?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64KW-9PK1-DXY4-X494-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 23, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MB; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1675 words

**Byline:** By Liam Stack

**Body**

Hundreds of people gathered at St. Patrick's Cathedral to celebrate an important moment for Catholics in New York. Cardinal Timothy Dolan delivered a homily on the life of one of their own, Dorothy Day, a native New Yorker and anarchist writer and activist who died in 1980.

The sermon last month represented the end of a 20-year inquiry by the Archdiocese of New York on whether Ms. Day should receive sainthood, a question the Vatican will ultimately decide.

Many of her admirers, including her granddaughter, had hoped Cardinal Dolan would talk about her commitment to social justice for the poor and the oppressed and her opposition to war and capitalism. In 1933, Ms. Day -- often described as both politically radical and theologically orthodox -- founded the Catholic Worker Movement, which remains active around the world in the form of Catholic Worker houses, where members live for free and provide services to the poor.

But in his sermon, Cardinal Dolan described Ms. Day's ''far from sinless life.''

''I am not going to go into her story,'' he told the audience. The important thing for them to know was that when she was 25 she became ''kind of frustrated with her life.''

''She had done quite a bit of experimenting and drifting, and she'd be the first to admit her promiscuity,'' the cardinal continued. ''But she kept detecting an emptiness, a searching in her life. And after a lot of prayer and study, that led in 1925 to her baptism as a Catholic.''

His remarks skimmed over her push to change policies that affected the poor and her political beliefs -- adding fuel to the longstanding anxiety among Catholic Workers that the Catholic hierarchy may dilute or obscure her message even as it considers elevating her.

After Mass, Martha Hennessy, Ms. Day's granddaughter, was distraught. ''He has reduced her to 'she lived a life of sexual promiscuity and she dabbled in communism,''' she said. ''What worse enemy could we have, saying those things about her?'' Ms. Hennessy is active in the movement and did a reading at the Mass. ''We have got to focus on her policies, we have got to focus on her practices.''

Ms. Day loved the church and its rituals and devoted her life to the Gospel, which she felt drove her to renounce material possessions and commit herself to a life of activism on behalf of the poor, a devotion to pacifism and opposition to both capitalism and communism. She often described herself as an anarchist.

''One thing about Dorothy Day that I love is that she makes everyone uncomfortable,'' said the Rev. Anthony Andreassi, the principal of Regis High School in Manhattan, who led a prayer service outside Ms. Day's childhood home in Brooklyn one day last month.

''The Catholic Church, like everything else, is so divided between liberals and conservatives,'' he said. ''She is one of these people who both the left and the right find so much richness in.''

Ms. Day was born in Brooklyn Heights in 1897 and grew up in a ***working-class*** family. Her parents were Protestants who rarely attended church, though even as a child she had an interest in spirituality and Scripture. The family moved to Northern California and later Chicago for her father's job as a sportswriter, and Ms. Day returned to New York as an adult.

She spent much of her 20s writing for leftist newspapers in New York City and living a bohemian, barhopping life in Lower Manhattan. She dated writers and artists, including the communist author Mike Gold, became close with the playwright Eugene O'Neill and later had an illegal abortion and attempted suicide.

Ms. Day converted to Catholicism after the birth of her daughter, Tamar, whose baptism alienated Ms. Day from some of her activist friends.

In 1932, a Catholic magazine sent her to cover the Hunger March in Washington, D.C., an effort to bring the Roman Catholic Church in the United States into the economic and social upheavals of the 1930s. It was also a response of sorts to communism, which offered a similar, but militantly atheist, critique of economic exploitation.

That assignment inspired Ms. Day to begin a leftist newspaper, The Catholic Worker, which began selling in 1933 for one penny and has not raised its price since.

With the help of the French theologian Peter Maurin, she turned the newspaper into a full-fledged movement: Catholic Workers, as members of the movement are known, commit themselves to lives of voluntary poverty, service to the poor and the oppressed and peaceful activism on their behalf.

The movement occupies a complicated position in the Catholic Church, whose American leadership has become increasingly aligned with political conservatism since Ms. Day's death. Cardinal Dolan himself is known as a conservative who delivered the opening prayer at the Republican National Convention in 2020.

''The Catholic Worker movement is all about asking yourself, if Jesus were alive today, who would his disciples be?'' said Bob Roberts, 61, a worker who gathered with others at the movement's house in the East Village on a recent winter morning. He assembled bologna sandwiches as members prepared to distribute food to the poor.

Ms. Day would be the first New Yorker made a saint since the 19th-century educator Elizabeth Ann Seton in 1975.

The process of making Ms. Day a saint started in the late 1990s, when Cardinal John J. O'Connor of New York began collecting information from those who had known her.

By 2002, the archdiocese had begun its formal inquiry into her life. Ten years later, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops unanimously voted to support the inquiry.

Its completion took nearly another decade, with the findings sent to the Vatican.

The next step in the process would be for the church to document two miracles that occurred thanks to Ms. Day's intervention, after which she would be named a saint.

The church prefers for miracles to have some medical component -- a terminally ill patient who makes a full recovery, for example -- because it is relatively straightforward to document the before-and-after effects, said George Horton, an organizer of the canonization effort.

The process of identifying and verifying a miracle can take years, or it can happen quickly. Mr. Horton said the archdiocese had already received a number of letters from people who say that their prayers to Ms. Day resulted in miraculous events in their lives.

''We have some leads,'' he said. In the interest of privacy, he declined to provide details about any of the leads that church officials viewed as most promising.

But what, Ms. Day's supporters have asked, is the cost of sainthood? They question whether Ms. Day would have even wanted the designation.

''I think if she heard she was going to be a saint, her knees would buckle,'' said Carmen Trotta, who has lived in the Catholic Worker house in the East Village since 1987 and occupies Ms. Day's old bedroom.

Indeed, Ms. Day often reacted negatively when people praised her as saintlike.

''Don't call me a saint,'' she said in one frequently cited quip. ''I don't want to be dismissed that easily.''

Her admirers also do not want her to be so easily digestible. ''If people hear about Dorothy Day from the Catholic hierarchy, they might get a misimpression of her,'' Mr. Trotta said. ''She was a rare breed: a Catholic pacifist who didn't believe in war, a suffragist, a member of the Anti-Imperialist League.''

Ms. Hennessy, her granddaughter, cited other people whose lives had been flattened to a single, often whitewashed message. She said she shared the concerns of many others in the Catholic Worker movement.

''Their mistrust has some legitimacy to it in terms of, you know, how do we treat Martin Luther King Jr.?'' Ms. Hennessy said. ''Are we really understanding the message he was trying to give us? And Mother Teresa, she got marginalized by becoming a patron saint against abortion when her whole life was about caring for the dying when nobody else would care for them. How did that get translated into anti-abortion?''

Beyond her discomfort with being called a saint, Ms. Day, who eschewed materialism, expressed concern about the use of church money for things like canonization, which requires years of painstaking work.

Indeed, the research process in her case has been expensive, costing an estimated $1 million, mostly because of the voluminous materials documenting Ms. Day's storied life as a rabble-rouser and a prolific writer. In addition to work in The Catholic Worker, she wrote books, personal diaries, correspondence and even a short-lived lifestyle column for The Staten Island Advance newspaper.

She was also arrested on several occasions for nonviolent protest, including once at the age of 75. Her activism and writing drew the attention of federal law enforcement, which maintained a file on her in the 1940s.

Most of that expense has been accrued in the last seven years, when the effort spent $100,000 to $120,000 on average annually, Mr. Horton said. Much of that money has come from the Archdiocese of New York, he said, but it has also come from donors whom he declined to name.

Mr. Horton said free labor was contributed by theologians and historians, church officials who interviewed Ms. Day's friends and relatives and a team of more than 100 volunteers who read and transcribed her works. More than 200 people have worked on the effort, he said.

''We have tried very much to emphasize her whole message, but sometimes it does get left out,'' he said. ''It has not been left out of the information that is going to Rome, I can tell you that.''

But far from being a paradox, he described the difference between Ms. Day's political radicalism and the politics of the church as a source of excitement and hope.

''We call her a saint for our times because she gives us a way back to unity,'' Mr. Horton said. ''She crosses all the divisions in our society and our government and our church, and she calls us back to the essence of the Gospel. I think that is what is recognized by church leaders.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/21/nyregion/dorothy-day-sainthood.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/21/nyregion/dorothy-day-sainthood.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, center, watching as documents concerning Dorothy Day were sealed last month during a Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEENAH MOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB1)

Top, Dorothy Day protesting nuclear testing in 1958. Above, the Rev. Anthony D. Andreassi speaking last month at a prayer service in Brooklyn Heights. Right, Ms. Day in 1965. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEAL BOENZI/THE NEW YORK TIMES

JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES

JOHN ORRIS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB4)

**Load-Date:** January 23, 2022

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[***In North of England, Battered Towns Test A Plan to 'Level Up'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63S0-DKK1-DXY4-X08D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 8

**Length:** 1330 words

**Byline:** By Stephen Castle

**Body**

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has made far-reaching promises to spread the good life beyond prosperous southeastern England to neglected parts in the middle and North of the country.

REDCAR, England -- Standing 180 feet tall, the coal bunker that dominated the skyline at the defunct steelworks in northeast England was weathered, discolored and an eyesore to some who lived nearby. Yet it was such a symbol of the region's industrial heritage that campaigners fought hard to stop its demolition.

They never had a chance. The tower was in the way of an economic development project, and last month controlled explosions reduced to it a few crumpled remains on a landscape littered with relics of rust belt Britain.

The demolition was part of an effort to convert the 4,500-acre site into a ''freeport,'' or low tax zone, that will build wind turbine blades and focus on clean energy and advanced manufacturing.

Redcar is more than just a town in transition, though. It is part of Prime Minister Boris Johnson's far-reaching plan to spread the good life beyond prosperous southeastern England to neglected parts in the middle and North of the country -- a policy he never defined but has called ''leveling up.''

The concept has since become a central pillar of Mr. Johnson's agenda, one he believes will shape his legacy as Britain's leader. He considers it so important that last month he gave one of his ablest ministers, Michael Gove, the job of transforming a vague series of aspirations into a strategy -- one that can improve the lives of ***working-class*** Northern voters who helped the Conservative Party gain a landslide election victory two years ago.

The issue is likely to be front and center at the party's annual conference, which begins Sunday in Manchester.

It is places like Redcar, a North Sea town of about 38,000, where Mr. Johnson's ambitions will be put to the test. Like many other towns in the North, it has been battered by deindustrialization, and thousands of jobs were lost when the steel complex closed in 2015.

On one of his first days in the job, Mr. Gove headed to Redcar to visit the nascent freeport project at the steelworks site, known as Teesworks, telling reporters afterward: ''All you need to do in order to understand 'leveling up' is to come here.''

Walking his dog close to the steelworks where he was employed in the 1970s, Stephen Bradbury, 73, expressed little regret over the demolition of the tower, a silo-like structure that held 5,000 tons of coal.

''Good riddance,'' he said, recalling his time as an electrician at the complex. ''The area suffered when it was closed down, but you have to move on.''

Still, Mr. Bradbury was not wholly convinced that Mr. Johnson's pet project would revitalize the area. ''You will never level up the North and the South,'' he said.

Ben Houchen, the mayor of Tees Valley and an influential member of Mr. Johnson's Conservative Party, said that leveling up would take years. He compared the economic disparity between the North and the South of England to the divide in East and West Germany after the country was united.

But Mr. Houchen, a leading architect of the development program, said leveling up was the government's ''No. 1 policy'' and what Mr. Johnson would be judged upon.

''Ultimately, a government that wants to govern for the whole country has to do something about that if it wants to win the next election,'' he said, adding, ''You've got to do something very dramatic to be able to move the dial, and something like Teesworks does that: 20,000 jobs over the next 12 years.''

Still, some analysts believe that there are so many complex and interlocking problems in neglected parts of the country that ''leveling up'' risks misfiring. And while the lack of specificity allows the government to avoid alienating anyone for now, it will eventually catch up to them.

''Politically if you don't define it, then leveling up appeals to everybody,'' said Paul Swinney, director of policy and research at the Center for Cities, a research institute. ''If you define it, you start to exclude people and start to annoy people.'' ''We shouldn't solely be focused on bring in more jobs -- though if we can, then great -- we should be focused on life expectancy, health outcomes and skills,'' he said.

To make a success of these kinds of projects, known as regeneration in Britain, there must not only be companies willing to hire but also workers with the right skills and qualifications -- and a transportation network able to get them to work.

As the crow flies, it is less than 10 miles from Redcar to Hartlepool, another town that suffered badly from deindustrialization, but with no bridge to connect them, the journey takes 45 minutes by car. It takes even longer by train.

So any surge in job creation at the new site in Redcar is unlikely to help Ian Jennings. After a spell of unemployment, Mr. Jennings, 49, has a job in a factory in Hartlepool and would like to trade up to something better.

Unemployment in Hartlepool is around 8 percent, well above the national average of about 5 percent.

Hartlepool is also slated to get a ''freeport'' in the area of its docks, though there are no details yet about what will happen there.

''There are a lot of promises being made and one government is as bad as the next,'' Mr. Jennings said, ''but I can't see a lot of things happening in my lifetime.''

Poor diet and ill health have also taken a toll on life expectancy in Hartlepool. Outside the Wharton Trust, a charity, there is a line of around 50 people for free food toward the end of its shelf life that a Tesco supermarket has donated.

Sacha Bedding, chief executive of the trust, warns of a short-term crisis, with rising prices for heating and food combining with the end of a bigger welfare payment that was provided during the pandemic.

''The scale of where we are in left-behind places is massive,'' he said, citing lagging educational achievement. Searching for a silver lining, he added: ''At least people are talking about 'leveling up,' even if nobody fully understands what it is.''

The leveling-up project should, he added, ''be our Marshall Plan for the decade if it is to be meaningful; it's about reconstruction on a scale which we have probably never done in peacetime.'' The worry was that instead of producing a 10-year plan and empowering communities with cash, the government tended to chase headlines and ''shoot from the hip,'' he said.

In Redcar, Rachel Woodings of Coatham House, a charity that supports young homeless people, said that many residents were close to eviction or were sofa-surfing, simply staying where they could overnight with friends.

''Young people don't have the same opportunities,'' she said. ''It's a lack of jobs. It's probably a skill set that's missing too. It's the same problems going around and around.''

It's not just the young who are struggling. Sharon Nicolson, 54, who is unemployed, said she had sometimes applied for 30 jobs in a week.

''You can't survive on £60 a week when I have to pay for electricity, feed myself, clothe myself -- it's ridiculous,'' she said, referring to her welfare payments.

Back near the derelict steelworks, John Nelson, 66, described how those who grew up nearby almost inevitably ended up taking the plentiful jobs that were once available.

''My dad worked here, so when I left school it was destined that I would work at British Steel,'' he said, referring to the company that at one point operated the enormous plant.

But eventually he chose an alternate route, leaving to set up his own business; none of his children went to work there. Mr. Nelson said he welcomed the demolition of the old industrial buildings.

''I know some people see beauty in them, but most of the people who are going on about it never worked there or had anything to do with it,'' he said of those who campaigned in vain to save the tower.

''You need to move on and earn a living,'' he said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/02/world/europe/england-boris-johnson-development.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/02/world/europe/england-boris-johnson-development.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, the remains of the former coal bunker demolished last month as part of the Teesworks redevelopment project in Redcar, a town of 38,000 in northern England. Above, the town center. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARY TURNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 3, 2021

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[***3 Senators Held Stage In Voting Rights Battle***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64KD-G251-JBG3-63SN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 14

**Length:** 1752 words

**Byline:** By Jonathan Weisman and Annie Karni

**Body**

Senators Cory Booker, Tim Scott and Raphael Warnock brought vastly different perspectives to proceedings that highlighted the Senate's striking lack of diversity.

WASHINGTON -- The Senate has only three Black members, a paltry number that is unrepresentative of the country, so when the chamber took up a voting rights bill this week aimed at preventing the disenfranchisement of voters of color, Senators Cory Booker, Tim Scott and Raphael Warnock played an outsized role in the debate.

During a more than 10-hour discourse on Wednesday that highlighted the Senate's lack of diversity, the three men brought vastly different perspectives to an issue that each said had affected them in deeply personal ways, with the two Democrats -- Mr. Warnock of Georgia and Mr. Booker of New Jersey -- serving as self-described witnesses to Republican-engineered voter suppression, and Mr. Scott, Republican of South Carolina, countering that the real threat to democracy was coming from the left.

The protracted proceedings underscored how heavily the white leaders of both parties lean on the few Black members of their rank-and-file when issues of race arise. When Vice President Kamala Harris, a former senator from California who was the first Black woman to serve in that post, briefly presided over the debate on Wednesday night, nearly half of the 11 African Americans who have ever served in the Senate were present at once.

But it also showed the power of representation and biography in a debate over policy.

The moral force that the three senators could marshal to their causes was clear. The back-and-forth between Mr. Scott, the son of a struggling single mother in ***working-class*** North Charleston, S.C., and Mr. Booker, a former Rhodes Scholar and big-city mayor, provided a striking moment, as they fought over the meaning of Jim Crow in the present day.

Mr. Scott used the elections of all three Black men -- but especially himself and Mr. Warnock -- to back up his case that America is a nation of expanding democratic opportunity, not voter suppression and inequity.

''It's hard to deny progress when two of the three come from the Southern states which people say are the places where African American votes are being suppressed,'' he said.

Mr. Warnock, who ministers from Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, the pulpit from which the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. preached, closed the debate with an appeal to every senator.

''Let the message go out: You cannot honor Martin Luther King and work to dismantle his legacy at the same time,'' Mr. Warnock said Wednesday night, two days after King's holiday, when virtually every senator of every political stripe produced an obligatory tribute to the slain civil rights leader.

''I will not sit quietly while some make Dr. King the victim of identity theft.''

The groundbreaking positions of the men, no doubt, are at least part of the reason they were thrust onto center stage. Mr. Scott was the first Black senator from the South since Reconstruction. Mr. Warnock is the first African American to represent Georgia in the Senate and the first Black Democrat to be elected to the Senate by a former state of the Confederacy. Mr. Booker is his state's first Black senator.

Donna Brazile, a Black Democratic strategist who headed Al Gore's 2000 presidential campaign, recalled watching Wednesday's debate and ''thinking, 'I thank God we have in 2022 three Black members of the United States Senate, regardless of party affiliation,' because they all spoke uniquely from their own experiences of the journey of Black Americans.''

But it can be a bit overwhelming, said Carol Moseley Braun, who was the first Black woman to serve in the Senate and the only Black person in the entire chamber when she served.

''If it had to do with women, I got trotted out. If it had to do with Black people, I got trotted out,'' she recalled in an interview on Thursday. ''I couldn't win.''

In the end, no amount of pressure from Mr. Warnock could sway a single Republican to back the voting rights and election protection bill, or persuade the two balking Democrats, Senators Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona and Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, to support weakening the filibuster to advance it over G.O.P. opposition.

Nor could Mr. Scott save his party from the fallout of defending voting restrictions passed by Republican legislatures that Democrats say are intended to disenfranchise minority voters. The South Carolina senator's ardent defense of Georgia's new voting law may have been lost amid the repercussions from a faux pas uttered on Wednesday by Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the Republican leader.

Asked about protests from voters of color over new restrictions, Mr. McConnell said, ''The concern is misplaced because if you look at the statistics, African American voters are voting in just as high a percentage as Americans.'' Critics interpreted the comment as implying that either Black voters are not wholly American, or that the top Senate Republican considered ''American'' synonymous with white.

In a statement provided to The New York Times on Thursday, Mr. McConnell sought to clarify his remarks, saying that he has ''consistently pointed to the record-high turnout for all voters in the 2020 election, including African Americans.''

Mr. Warnock is the obvious face of the Democratic cause, not because of his skin color but because his tight election victory in 2020 -- along with an even tighter win by his colleague, Senator Jon Ossoff, Democrat of Georgia -- gave the party its Senate majority, and because Mr. Warnock must face Georgia voters again this November, now under new election rules signed into law by the state's Republican governor.

Indeed, in an evenly divided Senate where the net loss of a single seat would cost Democrats control, Mr. Warnock is perhaps the most endangered Democrat, and the party's cause célèbre.

''Reverend Warnock is the moral authority and conscience on this issue by virtue of his background, his election and his extraordinary rhetorical capabilities,'' said Marc Elias, the party's top election lawyer. ''He speaks for so many people, and articulates what so many people feel in their hearts about the importance of voting rights.''

Last year, at least 19 states passed 34 laws restricting access to voting, according to the nonpartisan Brennan Center for Justice, but in the Senate on Wednesday, Georgia's law was front and center.

Mr. Scott fiercely defended the law -- ''supposedly the poster child of voter suppression'' -- as actually expanding access to the ballot, saying Democrats were distorting its effects to inject race into the voting rights fight when their real aim was political power.

He leaned in hard to his biography, which included a grandfather he escorted to the polls because he could not read, to burnish his credentials as he laid into the Democrats' case for a far-reaching rewrite of election laws that have traditionally been the purview of state and local governments.

Speaking for ''Americans from the Deep South who happen to look like me,'' the conservative Republican recounted the Jim Crow era that his grandfather had lived through, when literacy tests, job losses, beatings and lynchings kept Black Southerners from the polls. The Georgia law is nothing like the ''Jim Crow 2.0'' that President Biden and other Democrats have called it, he said.

''To have a conversation and a narrative that is blatantly false is offensive, not just to me or Southern Americans but offensive to millions of Americans who fought, bled and died for the right to vote,'' Mr. Scott said.

That brought a sharp response from Mr. Booker. ''Don't lecture me about Jim Crow,'' he said, adding: ''It is 2022 and they are blatantly removing more polling places from the counties where Blacks and Latinos are overrepresented. I'm not making that up. That is a fact.''

But it was Mr. Warnock who brought to the debate the names of his own constituents: a woman who has not been able to vote for a decade because of long lines and constantly moving polling places; a student who could not vote for him in 2020 because the epic waits near her college would have made her miss class; another who waited eight hours in the rain to cast her ballot.

''One part of being a first of any kind is thinking, 'How do I educate people?''' said Minyon Moore, who was a political director in the Clinton White House and a senior aide to Hillary Clinton. ''I see that as a badge of honor, not a burden, and I know that Senators Warnock and Booker do, too. They have a responsibility to educate and explain. If they don't do it, who will?''

Mr. Warnock, too, brandished his biography, which included growing up in the Kayton Homes housing project in Savannah, Ga., the youngest of 12 children. His mother picked cotton in Waycross, Ga., as a child, he said, and ''the 82-year-old hands that used to pick somebody else's cotton helped pick her youngest son as a United States senator'' in 2021.

It was difficult enough when he beat the incumbent Republican, Kelly Loeffler, by about 93,000 votes with a huge minority turnout; this November will be worse with the state's new law, he said.

Georgia's legislators ''have decided to punish their own citizens for having the audacity to show up,'' Mr. Warnock said, adding, ''Those are the fact of the laws that are being passed in Georgia and across the nation.''

Democrats have been wowed by such rhetorical performances, but the senator's first year in electoral politics has yielded little in the way of victories. The voting rights push that he has framed as a moral imperative has been blocked. Another effort, to secure health care for the working poor in states like Georgia that have refused to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, got a boost when it was included in the Build Back Better Act that passed the House. But that, too, has been stymied in the Senate.

He was blunt on Wednesday, when he said during the voting rights debate that he believed in bipartisanship, but then asked, ''Bipartisanship at what cost?''

''Raphael Warnock feels that he went up there with this idea he can work with anyone,'' said Jason Carter, a grandson of former President Jimmy Carter who was the Democratic candidate for governor in Georgia in 2014 and speaks regularly to Mr. Warnock. ''There may come a time where he throws up his hands and says we can't get anything done. I haven't heard the frustration boiling over yet.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/20/us/politics/voting-rights-cory-booker-tim-scott.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/20/us/politics/voting-rights-cory-booker-tim-scott.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The Senate's three Black members -- Tim Scott, above left, Cory Booker, right, and Raphael Warnock, left -- were thrust into outsized roles during the debate over the voting rights bill, which failed to pass. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARAHBETH MANEY/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 21, 2022

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[***When the Rich Rail Against the ‘Elites’; Jane Coaston***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63RS-W4R1-DXY4-X01G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 2, 2021 Saturday 10:43 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1333 words

**Byline:** Jane Coaston

**Highlight:** Coastal elites may have power. But so do the wealthy — all over America.

**Body**

I’ve been [*thinking*](https://twitter.com/janecoaston/status/1442481210035474435) a lot about wealth and elitism or, more accurately, the concept of who is an “elite” and who isn’t. And I have come to the conclusion that the way we discuss being an “elite” is inaccurate at best and downright wrong at worst.

But in order to explain how I think about “elites,” I need to tell you a story about one of my least favorite college basketball teams.

In March, Indiana University fired its men’s basketball coach, Archie Miller. Miller had gotten the job, one of the most prestigious in college basketball, in 2017, and he was expected to bring Hoosiers basketball back to national prominence. But it didn’t work out (well, it worked out great for me, [*a Michigan fan*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qdSFkZ1tQm4)). After four seasons in which Indiana never finished higher than sixth in the Big Ten Conference, the university wanted him gone.

The problem was, Indiana University [*couldn’t afford to pay Miller’s buyout*](https://www.indystar.com/story/sports/2021/06/25/iu-athletics-some-cost-cutting-stay-like-some-eliminated-jobs/5352822001/) — the money they’d owe him if they fired him without cause (as in, because they weren’t happy with his coaching, not because he broke any rules) before the end of his contract. In March 2021, that amount (which included his salary as well as promotional income and deferred compensation) [*was more than $10 million*](https://www.indystar.com/story/sports/college/indiana/2021/02/20/indiana-basketball-what-archie-miller-contract-buyout-iu-hoosiers/4389051001/).

In the world of high-level college basketball, $10 million is not uncommon for a buyout. If the University of Kentucky fired its head coach, John Calipari, without cause before his contract is up, it would have to pay him [*$54 million*](https://sports.usatoday.com/ncaa/salaries/mens-basketball/coach). But $10 million is still a significant amount of money, and in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, Indiana University did not have a spare $10 million to make Archie Miller go away. But it really, really wanted him gone.

So the university obtained private philanthropic funding through two boosters. One paid the $10 million for Miller’s buyout, and the other covered the costs to search for a new head basketball coach.

Now, I don’t know who these boosters are. Indiana University didn’t release their names. But if a person has the ability to hand over millions to get rid of a college basketball coach he or she doesn’t like, would you say that person is an elite?

There has been a great deal said about the so-called coastal elites. The Republican Party has attempted to position itself as the ***working-class*** party, while [*arguing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/04/opinion/labor-day-biden-republican-union.html) that the Democratic Party is for [*“the rich” and “coastal elites,”*](https://www.cruz.senate.gov/?p=video&amp;id=5313) who have an outsize influence on American politics and culture.

But in the process of constructing this narrative, the very concept of “elites” seems to have lost any actual meaning and become instead a straw man wielded by people who could also be easily described as elites themselves.

Senator Josh Hawley, for example, railed against “cosmopolitan elites” at the [*National Conservatism Conference in 2019*](https://www.hawley.senate.gov/senator-josh-hawleys-speech-national-conservatism-conference). Yet Hawley is the son of a prominent banker and attended a private boys’ school in Missouri before going to Stanford and Yale Law (with a [*brief stint teaching history*](https://www.nationalreview.com/magazine/2018/05/14/josh-hawley-senate-race-worthy-candidate-missouri/) at a boys’ school in London). He had a [*net worth of roughly $1.1 million*](https://www.opensecrets.org/personal-finances/josh-hawley/net-worth?cid=N00041620&amp;year=2018) in 2018, according to the research group OpenSecrets.

Now, Hawley would probably respond that while he has political power — he does! a lot of it! — he does not have cultural power, that even with the power of a United States senator, he’s not changing the ways Americans talk or [*think*](https://www.nationalaffairs.com/publications/detail/an-ivory-tower-of-our-own), the movies they watch or the music they listen to.

And that’s the power that many conservatives argue matters the most right now. The salience of cultural power is why white college graduates have been transmogrified by The New York Post into the “[*cultural elite*](https://nypost.com/2020/12/11/how-the-cultural-elite-came-to-rule-the-democratic-party/),” with no mention of their actual income. And by this definition, people like me are part of the elite: I’m a podcast host and writer for The New York Times. I am very much not rich, but I’ve got a lot of power to potentially change how people think or what they think about.

Surely, there’s some truth to this — even Karl Marx pointed out that class wasn’t just about wealth but also about the relationship between groups and property and the means of production. But the image of the elite that some on the right have constructed is only part of the story.

When I think about “elites,” I don’t think about just billionaires or corporate powerhouses or even popular musicians or cultural influencers. I grew up in Cincinnati, and the most powerful people I could think of were, well, rich.

They had money to buy boats and go on family vacations to faraway places like Destin, Fla., and paid full tuition for their kids at the high school I attended on scholarship. They owned car dealerships and advertised on local television. They probably went to Ohio State or the University of Cincinnati or the University of Dayton instead of the Ivy League, but where I grew up, they had the power to influence a school board vote or back a candidate in a suburban district that could help flip a swing state.

They were, as Patrick Wyman [*so brilliantly put it in The Atlantic*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/09/trump-american-gentry-wyman-elites/620151/), the American gentry: “the yeoman developer of luxury condominiums, the single-digit-millionaire meatpacking-plant owner, the property-management entrepreneur.” Or the people who had [*boat parades for Donald Trump*](https://www.news5cleveland.com/news/local-news/oh-lake/watch-boaters-beachgoers-gather-in-fairport-harbor-for-trump-boat-parade) during the 2020 election. Or the person who could hand Indiana University $10 million so maybe its basketball program wouldn’t reside in the basement of the Big Ten for another year.

The American gentry is often hidden by traditional class narratives: They can make hundreds of thousands of dollars a year as the owner of a bunch of Toyota dealerships, but they don’t have the same class status as, say, the chief executive of Toyota North America.

And, as [*David French noted*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/09/trump-american-gentry-wyman-elites/620151/) in his newsletter on Tuesday, the American gentry’s invisibility is part of the problem — and precisely what the Republican Party is trying to court with its rhetoric about coastal elitism: “A tremendous amount of Trump’s appeal rests with an extremely prosperous G.O.P. base that’s respected and admired in their home communities but feels scorned by [American cultural elites] and fears that its place in the national conversation hangs by a Big Tech thread.”

This group of people, French observes, has “prosperity and local power, but they lack cultural influence outside their churches and civic associations. They increasingly perceive their path to national influence as lying increasingly (maybe even exclusively) through political power.”

But the obsession of some Republicans with fighting coastal elitism seems to distract from a simple truth: Local power and local money are still power and money. Sure, as a member of the media, I can get members of Congress to respond to my emails (sometimes), but I can’t get rid of a prominent and highly paid college basketball coach like Archie Miller in one fell swoop. School boards in my home state probably don’t care much about what I have to say, but if I owned six car dealerships in suburban Cincinnati, they just might.

So what if I and the person who bankrolled Archie Miller’s buyout are both elites? What would that mean for our politics if we acknowledged that I have power but so does the guy who owns a fast-food chain in suburban Tennessee? And what if that power means we both have tremendous responsibilities, which can’t be foisted off because I’m not rich and he doesn’t live in a “cosmopolitan city” or work for a “media elite”?

I wonder. It could mean a reshaping of how we think about the relationships between wealth and power, recognizing that local power still matters and acknowledging that power should be accepted, not be foisted off onto one’s ideological opposition. Using disempowerment as a rallying cry — reveling in one’s “victim status,” as some might call it — wouldn’t work anymore. And the wielding of power and wealth would come with an understanding and acceptance of personal accountability.

Almost like a certain Big Ten basketball coach who couldn’t get his team into the NCAA tournament.

If you have thoughts please send a note to [*Coaston-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:Coaston-newsletter@nytimes.com).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alex Merto FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Rebel With a Cause***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YN2-4HS1-JBG3-626R-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Alex Cuadros

**Body**

THE GRINGA By Andrew Altschul

When Americans move to the global south, they are not immigrants but ''expats,'' which usually means they are rich, simply by dint of their access to dollars, and that they can go home anytime. Having myself lived for eight years in South America, I can attest that it's an enviable situation. Perhaps the only downside is that you inevitably meet fellow expats like the ones in Andrew Altschul's new novel, ''The Gringa.''

The gringa of the title is Leonora Gelb, a thinly fictionalized version of Lori Berenson, the New Yorker who was arrested in Peru in 1995 for allegedly collaborating with left-wing subversives, and spent 15 years in prison. The book opens with all that Leo, as she is called, hates about her home country: ''the sprawled, filth-strewn cities and prim, stingy towns, the metastatic freeways and supersized cars, the factory farms and clear-cut hills and amber waves of subsidized grain.'' Channeling her malaise into concrete action, Leo decides to volunteer for an N.G.O. outside Lima, and is soon drawn into the Cuarta Filosofía, a stand-in for the real-life guerilla group the Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement.

The author of two other novels, Altschul has also written about U.S. politics, with a righteous indignation not unlike Leo's. Still, he is most insightful when dissecting the romantic allure, for a certain kind of left-leaning Westerner, of a third world country whose social reality seems more black and white, the solutions simpler. After years of alienation at home, Leo finally feels as if she belongs in Peru, ''among people who understood that life was an uncompromising struggle, who knew what things were really worth.'' I heard similar sentiments from young expats as a reporter in Hugo Chávez's Venezuela.

Unfortunately, Altschul fails to convincingly imagine how a young, middle-class American Jewish woman, whatever her priors, could make the leap to armed struggle. Whereas Berenson spent years working for rebels in El Salvador before moving to Peru, Leo's radicalization is improbably swift, driven in equal parts by ideology and mere petulance. Her Peruvian comrades, meanwhile, read like revolutionary caricatures: ''I'm tired of your principles,'' one says. ''I'm tired of talking. It's time to act.''

The book is a hall of mirrors. Our narrator, Andres, a failed American novelist assigned to write a profile of Leo (''I've been asked to find the real Leonora Gelb'') is himself a doppelgänger, for Altschul. When not belaboring his struggle to figure out his subject, Andres agonizes over his ***working-class*** Peruvian girlfriend's accidental pregnancy. He's been living large as an expat in Cuzco, a touristy town where Altschul has written elsewhere about having spent time: ''I went out dancing almost every night and never had trouble finding company.'' This is another American type I have often encountered: men, almost always men, who are nobodies back home, but can live like B-list celebrities in Bogotá or Buenos Aires.

The novel's sharpest insight may lie in connecting Andres's selfish reinvention with Leo's apparently selfless one. Both are acts of privilege, unavailable to people from poor countries. I did find myself wondering, though, how intentional this critique of American solipsism really was. The big reveal, toward the end, is that Andres moved abroad not to take advantage of the luck of his birth, but to forget his shame over the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. Immersed in stories about Peru's dirty war, he has an epiphany: He can no longer run away from injustice. Given the overlap between author and narrator, this tidy arc seems oddly un-self-aware -- turning a meditation on revolutionary idealism into an expat's journey, with the tragedies of the global south a mere backdrop for personal transformation.Alex Cuadros is the author of ''Brazillionaires.'' His next book, about a tribe in the Amazon, is forthcoming.THE GRINGABy Andrew Altschul421 pp. Melville House. $27.99.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/10/books/review/gringa-andrew-altschul.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/10/books/review/gringa-andrew-altschul.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Lori Berenson, a New Yorker accused of terrorist activities, in 1995. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SILVIA IZQUIERDO/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** April 12, 2020

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[***Colombia Captures Guerrillas Accused in Deadly Car Bombing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:608C-DSN1-JBG3-6150-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 3, 2020 Friday 07:47 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; americas

**Length:** 700 words

**Byline:** Jenny Carolina González and Anatoly Kurmanaev

**Highlight:** Members of E.L.N., a left-wing insurgency, were charged with taking part in the bombing of a police academy last year that killed 22 cadets, shaking a country emerging from a long civil war.

**Body**

Members of E.L.N., a left-wing insurgency, were charged with taking part in the bombing of a police academy last year that killed 22 cadets, shaking a country emerging from a long civil war.

BOGOTÁ, Colombia — Colombian authorities have captured eight members of a left-wing guerrilla group who helped carry out the deadliest attack in years in the capital city, Bogotá, officials said on Thursday.

Prosecutors said the people arrested were members of the National Liberation Army, known as E.L.N., [*the rebel group that took responsibility*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/18/world/americas/atentado-bogota-colombia-bombing-eln.html) for the car bombing at the National Police Academy in January 2019 that killed 22 cadets. [*The bombing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/18/world/americas/atentado-bogota-colombia-bombing-eln.html) shocked a country emerging from decades of civil war, and ended peace talks with the rebels.

“Colombia lived a very painful moment,” President Iván Duque said in a national address after the arrests were announced, calling the bombing a “miserable terrorist attack that ended the lives of 22 students who chose the path of good, to study to serve their society.”

The arrests and the investigation leading up to them allowed the police to dismantle both an urban guerrilla cell and the financial network of one of E.L.N.’s main groupings, which operates in the plains region in the east of the country. That network, “supplied resources, weapons, explosives and official uniforms and drugs to the urban guerrillas,” Mr. Duque said.

He added that the raids provided further proof that E.L.N.’s top leadership was involved in the attack, weakening the already-dim prospect of restarting talks and reaching an agreement with the rebels. At the time of the attack, the group’s leaders were in negotiations [*in Havana*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/18/world/americas/atentado-bogota-colombia-bombing-eln.html) with government representatives on a possible peace deal.

The evidence could also raise tensions between Colombia and the Cuban government, which has declined to extradite top E.L.N. leaders residing there to face prosecution in Colombia.

The arrests took place in a series of raids around Colombia, including one on a cheese warehouse in a ***working-class*** neighborhood of Bogotá, where officials said the car bomb was hidden prior to the attack. Prosecutors said the guerrillas financed the attack by funneling drug trafficking revenues from their dairy-rich rural strongholds to a series of fake cheese companies in the capital.

Although the arrests dealt a blow to the E.L.N., they also revealed the group’s extensive presence in the most heavily-policed Colombian city and the sophistication of its financing and logistical networks.

And the top E.L.N. leaders accused of masterminding the attack remain at large.

“I don’t think this will be a big hit for the E.L.N., but it’s a necessary step by the government to investigate a crime that had such an impact on society,” said Luis Eduardo Celis, a Colombian security analyst. “E.L.N. is a complex organization that has very dynamic planning and financial capacity.”

Formed in the 1960s, the rebel group has transformed from a rigidly Marxist guerrilla force, fighting to depose the country’s right-wing elites, to a multinational criminal organization financed increasingly by drug trafficking, illegal gold mining and extortion in neighboring Venezuela.

The country’s largest leftist guerrilla group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, known as FARC, agreed to lay down the arms in 2016 after years of lengthy negotiations. Several right-wing paramilitary groups that fought in the civil war have also disbanded.

The 2019 bomb attack dashed hopes for a final national reconciliation and brought back, for Bogotá residents, memories of nearly daily violence at the peak of the insurgency in the 1990s.

Months after the policy academy explosion, [*factions of the FARC*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/18/world/americas/atentado-bogota-colombia-bombing-eln.html) announced they were returning to the jungle to resume their fight. Their decision was prompted partly by a [*growing number of killings*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/18/world/americas/atentado-bogota-colombia-bombing-eln.html) of left-leaning community leaders and Indigenous leaders in the countryside, which former FARC guerrillas say the government [*has done little to stem*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/18/world/americas/atentado-bogota-colombia-bombing-eln.html).

The violence now threatens to unravel the already fragile peace deal.

PHOTO: A raid led to the arrest of suspects linked to the 2019 bombing that left 22 dead in a police academy in Bogotá. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Colombian Defense Ministry FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Breaking the Rules in Pursuit of Justice in a Gritty Paris***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61P6-6TC1-JBG3-621Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 5, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 2; CRITIC'S PICK

**Length:** 883 words

**Byline:** By Mike Hale

**Body**

France's answer to ''The Wire'' and ''Law & Order'' begins its final season on MHz Choice.

The long-running crime drama ''Spiral'' -- its title in France, where it premiered on Canal+ back in 2005, is ''Engrenages,'' or ''Gears'' -- does not take place in a postcard Paris. Tourist landmarks and picturesque boulevards are scant; the Eiffel Tower occasionally appears in the hazy distance, like a mirage. The show's eighth and final season begins with a shot of Sacré-Coeur, but the camera pans down to the ***working-class*** Barbès district, where the dead body of a homeless Moroccan teenager is found inside a launderette washing machine.

And the Paris police officers of ''Spiral'' are cut from the same rough cloth. Their toolbox includes blackmail, intimidation and a disingenuousness so routine it's like breathing -- you can tell they're lying in the presence of their superiors because their lips are moving. They're not ''good cops,'' but of course they're good cops. ''Spiral'' may be an unusually tense, granular and absorbing cop show, but it's still a cop show. There's no doubt whom we're rooting for.

Season 8, whose 10 episodes aired in France in September and begin streaming Tuesday on MHz Choice, carries on a series-long exploration of the need to break the rules in a justice system hobbled by bureaucracy, careerism and politics. With the end in sight, however, the key is lower, less sensational, more twilight.

The subterfuges and indiscretions engaged in by the judicial-police team at the heart of the show are not as spectacular as we've become accustomed to. And the central characters, the fiercely determined police captain Laure Berthaud (Caroline Proust, in a captivating, beautifully ragged performance) and her wild-man colleague and lover Gilles Escoffier, or Gilou (Thierry Godard), are hunkered down. He's in prison after taking the fall for their most recent well-intentioned criminality, and she's back in charge of a unit that has been sidelined and is enjoying partial custody of the infant daughter she was incapable of caring for in the previous season.

But the legacy of their maverick behavior -- which had already driven away the strait-laced team member Tintin (Fred Bianconi) in one of the show's major emotional arcs -- is still central, as the talented young detective Ali (Tewfik Jallab) chafes under Laure's leadership and considers a transfer. And Laure dives right back into bending the rules, finding a way for the unit to take over the case of the launderette murder.

''Spiral'' is sometimes labeled the French ''Law & Order,'' a comparison that makes some superficial sense because the branch of the French justice system it portrays puts cops in a close working relationship with investigative judges, who function like American prosecutors. Both shows exploit that setup for visual and tonal variety -- stakeouts and chases alternating with brittle arguments in paneled chambers.

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The ''Spiral'' blend, or formula, is familiar: a well-paced and entertaining presentation of police gruntwork; a backdrop of administrative infighting and intrigue, which adds notes of dark humor; and the fraught personal lives of cops, prosecutors and lawyers, presented without undue sentimentality. Another, more apt, American comparison is to ''The Wire,'' but ''Spiral'' has been that show's equal, or better, in each of those categories. Few crime dramas have combined as rich a texture with stories as detailed and arresting; along with ''The Wire,'' ''NYPD Blue'' and ''Bosch'' come to mind. (''The Shield,'' with its murderous cops, was too hyperbolic and melodramatic to be a good comparison.)

If there's a complaint to make about the final season, it's that Laure and Gilou are without either of the judges they worked with and against so entertainingly over the years, Clément (Grégory Fitoussi), killed in Season 5, and Roban (Philippe Duclos), retired at the end of Season 7. Clara Bonnet joins the cast and is fine as a young judge trying to assert her control, but she doesn't have time to make a strong impression.

Otherwise ''Spiral'' works its way through a satisfying valedictory season, less hair-raising and dire than earlier editions but in some ways more moving. There are nods to the great tradition of the French caper film as the star-crossed Gilou gets drawn into a plot that clouds his future, and shades of noir as Laure ends up, literally, on a dark and lonely road. And the camera keeps coming back to an appropriate Parisian landmark, Renzo Piano's towering courthouse on the city's northwestern fringe -- stark, unadorned, impossible to look away from.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/04/arts/television/spiral-review.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/04/arts/television/spiral-review.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Caroline Proust and Bruno Debrandt in the French crime drama ''Spiral.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY CAROLINE DUBOIS/SON ET LUMIÈRE, VIA CANAL+)

**Load-Date:** January 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Becerra's Political Path Took Unexpected Turns***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61GF-K2D1-DXY4-X1T2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 9, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 19

**Length:** 1965 words

**Byline:** By Shawn Hubler and Sheryl Gay Stolberg

**Body**

Mr. Becerra was the first in his family to go to college. As attorney general of California, he took on the Trump administration on nearly every front. But can he take on the pandemic?

SACRAMENTO -- Four years ago, when a veteran California congressman, Xavier Becerra, came home to become the state's attorney general, eyebrows rose -- not in disapproval, but surprise.

News reports referred to then-Gov. Jerry Brown's ''unexpected'' pick to finish out the unexpired term of the state's new senator, Kamala Harris. Fellow politicians wondered why he would leave Washington, where he had been working for 24 years toward a top leadership position in Congress. But Mr. Becerra leaped into the fray as California's lead attack dog in the Trump resistance, filing roughly 100 lawsuits against the administration on everything from climate change to the Affordable Care Act.

''I'm not sure he was the logical choice,'' another former California governor, Gray Davis, said on Monday. ''But he did a hell of a job.''

With the announcement that President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. has selected Mr. Becerra as his nominee for the secretary of health and human services, Mr. Becerra, one of the country's best-known Latino politicians, is again surprising people. Some of the medical experts who had urged Mr. Biden's team to name someone with public health expertise were ''astounded'' at Mr. Becerra's nomination, one of them said.

But longtime supporters and old friends in California said Mr. Becerra was perfectly suited to a job that required not only an ability to lead a large organization but also an intimate knowledge of how badly many Americans, particularly essential workers, have suffered under the current administration's policies on health insurance and the pandemic.

''He'll be all-in because he is so committed,'' Mr. Brown said. ''Not just to the Affordable Care Act, but to health care and equity in general. And he knows his way around Washington.''

Certainly Mr. Becerra has been committed in recent years to fighting the White House on behalf of Californians, filing a barrage of lawsuits to protect immigrants, the environment, gun control and many other priorities that the state prizes as fundamental to its way of life. He has sued to stop the repeal of an Obama-era order that protected immigrant ''Dreamers'' who came to the United States as children and grew up without legal status. He has challenged the Trump administration's attempt to roll back California's authority to set its own rules on climate-warming tailpipe emissions.

Mr. Becerra has filed more than a dozen lawsuits about health alone, including one in which California led 20 states and the District of Columbia in a campaign against Republicans who sought to legally gut the Affordable Care Act -- a law in which California, with a third of its population relying on the state's version of Medicaid for health care, has an enormous stake.

Mr. Becerra also created a first-of-its kind state-level environmental justice bureau, focused on the unequal effect that pollution and other forms of environmental damage have on health in the most vulnerable communities.

And he settled a landmark antitrust case against Sutter Health, a Northern California network of doctors and hospitals, which agreed to pay out $575 million in damages and have its business operations monitored for 10 years. The lawsuit originally filed by a grocery workers' union health plan claimed that Sutter's anticompetitive behavior was driving up health costs.

The suit was a ''paradigm case'' on behalf of consumers, said Matt Cantor, a lawyer at Constantine Cannon, a New York firm that worked with Mr. Becerra's office on a related suit. That Mr. Becerra chose to bring it, he said, ''shows that he's very concerned about what the average American family and average American employer has to pay in health insurance premiums.''

A native of Sacramento, Mr. Becerra is the son of immigrant parents; his mother emigrated from Mexico as a young woman and his father was born in Sacramento but raised in Tijuana. They married at 18 and moved to California, where the elder Mr. Becerra worked picking vegetables and laboring in construction -- experience that friends say will shape how Mr. Becerra inhabits his job as health secretary.

''I think that it gives him a certain perspective and humility and an appreciation for working people, for ordinary people,'' said Representative Joaquin Castro of Texas, chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, who said Mr. Becerra mentored him and other Latino newcomers on Capitol Hill. ''And when you talk to Xavier you see that he's not a pretentious person.''

At McClatchy High School in Sacramento, he was a high achiever whose extracurriculars included golf, which he taught himself to play, and a leadership group that focused on conflict resolution. ''He was a really well-rounded guy -- an athlete and a nerd and a leader,'' said Karen Skelton, a California political consultant who went to school with him.

He was the first in his family to attend college, graduating from Stanford University in 1980 and Stanford Law School in 1984. In interviews, he has said that he applied to the elite school only because he had filled out a blank application a friend had discarded, and that it was not until he drove with his mother to affluent Palo Alto that he realized his family was not middle class. There, he met his wife, Carolina Reyes, who is now an obstetrician specializing in high-risk pregnancies.

Their three daughters are grown; friends note that although Mr. Becerra's father had little formal education, the attorney general's children earned their undergraduate degrees from Yale and Stanford Universities, and at least two have graduate degrees.

Though Mr. Becerra was not a name put forward by Mr. Biden's medical advisers, a person familiar with the selection process said the president-elect was impressed with his management experience and his legal advocacy on behalf of the Affordable Care Act -- President Barack Obama's signature health care law, which Mr. Biden, then vice president, worked to get passed in 2010.

Mr. Biden was also said to be taken with Mr. Becerra's personal story, which he views as much like his own; his commitment to social justice; and his record of working across party lines. The two men knew each other from their shared time on Capitol Hill, and Mr. Biden did not have to introduce himself when he offered the job to Mr. Becerra on Friday evening.

''He took note of how, like himself, Becerra came from a ***working-class*** family and also like himself Becerra was the first person in his family to graduate from college,'' said the person who described the process. ''And he was also taken with how, shortly after graduating from Stanford Law, Becerra started giving back and giving legal aid to clients who had mental health care needs.''

''Oh, he's the Latino Joe Biden,'' agreed Art Torres, a former state senator who hired Mr. Becerra to work in his Los Angeles district office in 1986, and who became an important mentor. ''***Working-class*** kid, the product of hard work. I used to kid him because he was the only guy I knew who still drank milk with his lunch. That's how much of a Boy Scout he was.''

That said, Mr. Torres joked, ''I don't know what he drank with dinner.''

After a stint as a deputy attorney general, in the mid-1980s, Mr. Becerra was tapped by Mr. Torres and other Latino leaders in Los Angeles to run for an open State Assembly seat -- part of a cadre of young Latino activists looking to replace the old-guard Latino establishment in Southern California.

He ran as a law-and-order candidate, and helped pass a bill into law that lengthened prison terms for gang members caught committing crimes on or near school property. But just weeks into Mr. Becerra's freshman term, Representative Ed Roybal, a Los Angeles Democrat, announced his retirement.

The ambitious Mr. Becerra announced his candidacy even though he did not live in Mr. Roybal's district -- drawing accusations that he was a carpetbagger -- but went on to represent the downtown-area district for 24 years.

In Congress, he landed a coveted slot on the powerful Ways and Means Committee, which is responsible for tax policy, becoming the first Latino to serve on the panel. He served on both the health and Social Security committees, and helped draft legislation on those issues.

Like many Democrats, he voted against the passage of a 2003 Republican-led bill expanding Medicare to include prescription drug coverage for older adults; he viewed the measure, which precluded the government from negotiating with drugmakers, as a giveaway to the pharmaceutical industry.

Less than a decade later, he joined Speaker Nancy Pelosi in pushing for passage of the Affordable Care Act.

He was said to be aiming for a top House leadership position when Mr. Brown tapped him after the 2016 election to succeed Ms. Harris as attorney general, overseeing an office of some 4,500 lawyers.

''I wanted someone with intellectual horsepower, but I also wanted a down-to-earth guy,'' Mr. Brown said.

On Monday, with one foot out the door, Mr. Becerra was still condemning the Trump administration from his day job in Sacramento, filing an amicus brief in a case challenging the administration's oversight of toxic chemicals and lashing out against federal pollution standards.

''It's despicable,'' Mr. Becerra said in a statement. ''Across the country, our relatives and neighbors in low-income communities are bearing the brunt of particulate matter pollution and the resulting health consequences. Today, the Trump administration's callous disregard for their lives is on full display.''

Meanwhile, conservative critics were condemning Mr. Becerra, with anti-abortion groups such as the Susan B. Anthony List calling on Twitter for Republican senators to ''stand firm & stop this unacceptable nomination.''

Among early conservative complaints was Mr. Becerra's stance on Medicare for All, the single-payer government-run health insurance plan promoted by Senator Bernie Sanders, who challenged Mr. Biden for the Democratic nomination for president. Mr. Becerra has supported it. Mr. Biden does not.

But on Monday, supporters in Washington and California downplayed those differences.

''Attorney General Becerra is a towering champion of health care, whose strategic leadership, keen intellect and outstanding policy expertise were essential in the defense of the Affordable Care Act in the courts,'' Ms. Pelosi said in a statement. ''As secretary of the department of health and human services, he will be a vital force for progress.''

And in Sacramento, California's governor, Gavin Newsom, lauded the choice as a breath of ''the fresh air of progress.''

''It's a game-changer for us,'' he said. ''We've had our eye on some big reforms. We've been looking for a great partner. And we've found one.''

Dr. Ada D. Stewart, a South Carolina family practice doctor and the president of the American Academy of Family Physicians, had been one of those hoping Mr. Biden would put a doctor in the health secretary's job. But Mr. Becerra, she said, is the next best thing: ''Someone who has the same priorities and the same principles'' as her organization, she said. ''Health care for all.''

Shawn Hubler reported from Sacramento, and Sheryl Gay Stolberg from Washington. Reporting was contributed by Michael D. Shear, Coral Davenport and Carl Hulse from Washington, and Jill Cowan and Sona Patel from Los Angeles.Shawn Hubler reported from Sacramento, and Sheryl Gay Stolberg from Washington. Reporting was contributed by Michael D. Shear, Coral Davenport and Carl Hulse from Washington, and Jill Cowan and Sona Patel from Los Angeles.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/08/us/xavier-becerra-hhs.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/08/us/xavier-becerra-hhs.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Xavier Becerra, the attorney general of California, encouraged students at his former high school in Sacramento to vote in 2018. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RICH PEDRONCELLI/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** December 9, 2020

**End of Document**



[***‘Spiral’ Review: A Peerless Policier Takes On Its Final Case; Critic’s Pick***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61P1-FSG1-JBG3-61GW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 4, 2021 Monday 09:02 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 896 words

**Byline:** Mike Hale

**Highlight:** France’s answer to “The Wire” and “Law &amp; Order” begins its final season on MHz Choice.

**Body**

France’s answer to “The Wire” and “Law &amp; Order” begins its final season on MHz Choice.

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And [*the Paris police officers of “Spiral”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/30/arts/television/spiral-and-3-other-french-shows-worth-seeking-out.html) are cut from the same rough cloth. Their toolbox includes blackmail, intimidation and a disingenuousness so routine it’s like breathing — you can tell they’re lying in the presence of their superiors because their lips are moving. They’re not “good cops,” but of course they’re good cops. “Spiral” may be an unusually tense, granular and absorbing cop show, but it’s still a cop show. There’s no doubt whom we’re rooting for.

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The subterfuges and indiscretions engaged in by the judicial-police team at the heart of the show are not as spectacular as we’ve become accustomed to. And the central characters, the fiercely determined police captain Laure Berthaud (Caroline Proust, in a captivating, beautifully ragged performance) and her wild-man colleague and lover Gilles Escoffier, or Gilou (Thierry Godard), are hunkered down. He’s in prison after taking the fall for their most recent well-intentioned criminality, and she’s back in charge of a unit that has been sidelined and is enjoying partial custody of the infant daughter she was incapable of caring for in the previous season.

But the legacy of their maverick behavior — which had already driven away the strait-laced team member Tintin (Fred Bianconi) in one of the show’s major emotional arcs — is still central, as the talented young detective Ali (Tewfik Jallab) chafes under Laure’s leadership and considers a transfer. And Laure dives right back into bending the rules, finding a way for the unit to take over the case of the launderette murder.

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PHOTO: Caroline Proust and Bruno Debrandt in the French crime drama “Spiral.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY CAROLINE DUBOIS/SON ET LUMIÈRE, VIA CANAL+)

**Load-Date:** January 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Was Dorothy Day Too Left-Wing to Be a Catholic Saint?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64KF-XFR1-DXY4-X27B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 21, 2022 Friday 12:36 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1737 words

**Byline:** Liam Stack

**Highlight:** The Archdiocese of New York has asked the Vatican to consider the social activist for sainthood. But church leaders are not entirely comfortable with her politics.

**Body**

Hundreds of people gathered at St. Patrick’s Cathedral to celebrate an important moment for Catholics in New York. Cardinal Timothy Dolan delivered a homily on the life of one of their own, Dorothy Day, a native New Yorker and anarchist writer and [*activist who died in 1980*](https://www.nytimes.com/1980/11/30/archives/dorothy-day-is-dead.html).

The sermon last month represented the end of a 20-year inquiry by the Archdiocese of New York on whether Ms. Day should receive sainthood, a question the Vatican will ultimately decide.

Many of her admirers, including her granddaughter, had hoped Cardinal Dolan would talk about her commitment to social justice for the poor and the oppressed and her opposition to war and capitalism. In 1933, Ms. Day — often described as both politically radical and theologically orthodox — founded the Catholic Worker Movement, which remains active around the world in the form of Catholic Worker houses, where members live for free and provide services to the poor.

But in his sermon, Cardinal Dolan described Ms. Day’s “far from sinless life.”

“I am not going to go into her story,” he told the audience. The important thing for them to know was that when she was 25 she became “kind of frustrated with her life.”

“She had done quite a bit of experimenting and drifting, and she’d be the first to admit her promiscuity,” the cardinal continued. “But she kept detecting an emptiness, a searching in her life. And after a lot of prayer and study, that led in 1925 to her baptism as a Catholic.”

His remarks skimmed over her push to change policies that affected the poor and her political beliefs — adding fuel to the longstanding anxiety among Catholic Workers that the Catholic hierarchy may dilute or obscure her message even as it considers elevating her.

After Mass, Martha Hennessy, Ms. Day’s granddaughter, was distraught. “He has reduced her to ‘she lived a life of sexual promiscuity and she dabbled in communism,’” she said. “What worse enemy could we have, saying those things about her?” Ms. Hennessy is active in the movement and did a reading at the Mass. “We have got to focus on her policies, we have got to focus on her practices.”

Ms. Day loved the church and its rituals and devoted her life to the Gospel, which she felt drove her to renounce material possessions and commit herself to a life of activism on behalf of the poor, a devotion to pacifism and opposition to both capitalism and communism. She often described herself as an anarchist.

“One thing about Dorothy Day that I love is that she makes everyone uncomfortable,” said the Rev. Anthony Andreassi, the principal of Regis High School in Manhattan, who led a prayer service outside Ms. Day’s childhood home in Brooklyn one day last month.

“The Catholic Church, like everything else, is so divided between liberals and conservatives,” he said. “She is one of these people who both the left and the right find so much richness in.”

Ms. Day was born in Brooklyn Heights in 1897 and grew up in a ***working-class*** family. Her parents were Protestants who rarely attended church, though even as a child she had an interest in spirituality and Scripture. The family moved to Northern California and later Chicago for her father’s job as a sportswriter, and Ms. Day returned to New York as an adult.

She spent much of her 20s writing for leftist newspapers in New York City and living a bohemian, barhopping life in Lower Manhattan. She dated writers and artists, including the communist author [*Mike Gold*](https://www.nytimes.com/1967/05/16/archives/michael-gold-author-is-dead-his-theme-was-social-protest-wrote-jews.html), became close with the playwright Eugene O’Neill and later had an illegal abortion and attempted suicide.

Ms. Day converted to Catholicism after the birth of her daughter, Tamar, whose baptism alienated Ms. Day from some of her activist friends.

In 1932, a Catholic magazine sent her to cover the Hunger March in Washington, D.C., an effort to bring the Roman Catholic Church in the United States into the economic and social upheavals of the 1930s. It was also a response of sorts to communism, which offered a similar, but militantly atheist, critique of economic exploitation.

That assignment inspired Ms. Day to begin a leftist newspaper, The Catholic Worker, which began selling in 1933 for one penny and has not raised its price since.

With the help of the French theologian Peter Maurin, she turned the newspaper into a full-fledged movement: Catholic Workers, as members of the movement are known, commit themselves to lives of voluntary poverty, service to the poor and the oppressed and peaceful activism on their behalf.

The movement occupies a complicated position in the Catholic Church, whose American leadership has become increasingly aligned with political conservatism since Ms. Day’s death. Cardinal Dolan himself is known as a conservative who delivered the opening prayer at the Republican National Convention in 2020.

“The Catholic Worker movement is all about asking yourself, if Jesus were alive today, who would his disciples be?” said Bob Roberts, 61, a worker who gathered with others at the movement’s house in the East Village on a recent winter morning. He assembled bologna sandwiches as members prepared to distribute food to the poor.

Ms. Day would be the first New Yorker made a saint since the 19th-century educator [*Elizabeth Ann Seton*](https://www.nytimes.com/1975/09/14/archives/a-saint-for-all-reasons-the-making-of-the-first-american-saint.html) in 1975.

The process of making Ms. Day a saint started in the late 1990s, when Cardinal John J. O’Connor of New York began collecting information from those who had known her.

By 2002, the archdiocese had begun its formal inquiry into her life. Ten years later, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops unanimously voted to support the inquiry.

Its completion took nearly another decade, with the findings sent to the Vatican.

The next step in the process would be for the church to document two miracles that occurred thanks to Ms. Day’s intervention, after which she would be named a saint.

The church prefers for miracles to have some medical component — a terminally ill patient who makes a full recovery, for example — because it is relatively straightforward to document the before-and-after effects, said George Horton, an organizer of the canonization effort.

The process of identifying and verifying a miracle can take years, or it can happen quickly. Mr. Horton said the archdiocese had already received a number of letters from people who say that their prayers to Ms. Day resulted in miraculous events in their lives.

“We have some leads,” he said. In the interest of privacy, he declined to provide details about any of the leads that church officials viewed as most promising.

But what, Ms. Day’s supporters have asked, is the cost of sainthood? They question whether Ms. Day would have even wanted the designation.

“I think if she heard she was going to be a saint, her knees would buckle,” said Carmen Trotta, who has lived in the Catholic Worker house in the East Village since 1987 and occupies Ms. Day’s old bedroom.

Indeed, Ms. Day often reacted negatively when people praised her as saintlike.

“Don’t call me a saint,” she said in one frequently cited quip. “I don’t want to be dismissed that easily.”

Her admirers also do not want her to be so easily digestible. “If people hear about Dorothy Day from the Catholic hierarchy, they might get a misimpression of her,” Mr. Trotta said. “She was a rare breed: a Catholic pacifist who didn’t believe in war, a suffragist, a member of the Anti-Imperialist League.”

Ms. Hennessy, her granddaughter, cited other people whose lives had been flattened to a single, often whitewashed message. She said she shared the concerns of many others in the Catholic Worker movement.

“Their mistrust has some legitimacy to it in terms of, you know, how do we treat Martin Luther King Jr.?” Ms. Hennessy said. “Are we really understanding the message he was trying to give us? And Mother Teresa, she got marginalized by becoming a patron saint against abortion when her whole life was about caring for the dying when nobody else would care for them. How did that get translated into anti-abortion?”

Beyond her discomfort with being called a saint, Ms. Day, who eschewed materialism, expressed concern about the use of church money for things like canonization, which requires years of painstaking work.

Indeed, the research process in her case has been expensive, costing an estimated $1 million, mostly because of the voluminous materials documenting Ms. Day’s storied life as a rabble-rouser and a prolific writer. In addition to work in The Catholic Worker, she wrote books, personal diaries, correspondence and even a short-lived lifestyle column for The Staten Island Advance newspaper.

She was also arrested on several occasions for nonviolent protest, including once at the age of 75. Her activism and writing drew the attention of federal law enforcement, which maintained a file on her in the 1940s.

Most of that expense has been accrued in the last seven years, when the effort spent $100,000 to $120,000 on average annually, Mr. Horton said. Much of that money has come from the Archdiocese of New York, he said, but it has also come from donors whom he declined to name.

Mr. Horton said free labor was contributed by theologians and historians, church officials who interviewed Ms. Day’s friends and relatives and a team of more than 100 volunteers who read and transcribed her works. More than 200 people have worked on the effort, he said.

“We have tried very much to emphasize her whole message, but sometimes it does get left out,” he said. “It has not been left out of the information that is going to Rome, I can tell you that.”

But far from being a paradox, he described the difference between Ms. Day’s political radicalism and the politics of the church as a source of excitement and hope.

“We call her a saint for our times because she gives us a way back to unity,” Mr. Horton said. “She crosses all the divisions in our society and our government and our church, and she calls us back to the essence of the Gospel. I think that is what is recognized by church leaders.”

PHOTOS: Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, center, watching as documents concerning Dorothy Day were sealed last month during a Mass at St. Patrick’s Cathedral. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEENAH MOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB1); Top, Dorothy Day protesting nuclear testing in 1958. Above, the Rev. Anthony D. Andreassi speaking last month at a prayer service in Brooklyn Heights. Right, Ms. Day in 1965. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEAL BOENZI/THE NEW YORK TIMES; JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES; JOHN ORRIS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB4)

**Load-Date:** January 23, 2022

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[***Battered Towns in England’s North Test Johnson’s Plan to ‘Level Up’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63RS-J0V1-DXY4-X008-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Stephen Castle

**Highlight:** Prime Minister Boris Johnson has made far-reaching promises to spread the good life beyond prosperous southeastern England to neglected parts in the middle and North of the country.

**Body**

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has made far-reaching promises to spread the good life beyond prosperous southeastern England to neglected parts in the middle and North of the country.

REDCAR, England — Standing 180 feet tall, the coal bunker that dominated the skyline at the defunct steelworks in northeast England was weathered, discolored and an eyesore to some who lived nearby. Yet it was such a symbol of the region’s industrial heritage that campaigners fought hard to stop its demolition.

They never had a chance. The tower was in the way of an economic development project, and last month controlled explosions reduced to it a few crumpled remains on a landscape littered with relics of rust belt Britain.

The demolition was part of an effort to convert the 4,500-acre site into a “freeport,” or low tax zone, that will build wind turbine blades and focus on clean energy and advanced manufacturing.

Redcar is more than just a town in transition, though. It is part of Prime Minister [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/06/world/europe/boris-johnson-uk-conservatives.html)’s far-reaching plan to spread the good life beyond prosperous southeastern England to neglected parts in the middle and North of the country — a policy he never defined but has called “leveling up.”

The concept has since become a central pillar of Mr. Johnson’s agenda, one he believes will shape his legacy as Britain’s leader. He considers it so important that last month he gave one of his ablest ministers, Michael Gove, the job of transforming a vague series of aspirations into a strategy — one that can improve the lives of ***working-class*** Northern voters who helped the Conservative Party gain a landslide election victory two years ago.

The issue is likely to be front and center at the party’s annual conference, which begins Sunday in Manchester.

It is places like Redcar, a North Sea town of about 38,000, where Mr. Johnson’s ambitions will be put to the test. Like many other towns in the North, it has been battered by deindustrialization, and thousands of jobs were lost when the steel complex closed in 2015.

On one of his first days in the job, Mr. Gove headed to Redcar to visit the nascent freeport project at the steelworks site, [*known as Teesworks*](https://www.teesworks.co.uk/), [*telling reporters afterward*](https://www.itv.com/news/tyne-tees/2021-09-24/michael-gove-tours-north-east-in-first-levelling-up-outing): “All you need to do in order to understand ‘leveling up’ is to come here.”

Walking his dog close to the steelworks where he was employed in the 1970s, Stephen Bradbury, 73, expressed little regret over the [*demolition of the tower*](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-tees-58593615), a silo-like structure that held 5,000 tons of coal.

“Good riddance,” he said, recalling his time as an electrician at the complex. “The area suffered when it was closed down, but you have to move on.”

Still, Mr. Bradbury was not wholly convinced that Mr. Johnson’s pet project would revitalize the area. “You will never level up the North and the South,” he said.

Ben Houchen, the mayor of [*Tees Valley*](https://teesvalley-ca.gov.uk/) and an influential member of Mr. Johnson’s Conservative Party, said that leveling up would take years. He compared the [*economic disparity*](https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/opinion/columnists/germany-teaches-us-that-levelling-up-will-be-a-long-haul-kevin-hollinrake-3238643) between the North and the South of England to the divide in East and West Germany after the country was united.

But Mr. Houchen, a leading architect of the development program, said leveling up was the government’s “No. 1 policy” and what Mr. Johnson would be judged upon.

“Ultimately, a government that wants to govern for the whole country has to do something about that if it wants to win the next election,” he said, adding, “You’ve got to do something very dramatic to be able to move the dial, and something like Teesworks does that: 20,000 jobs over the next 12 years.”

Still, some analysts believe that there are so many complex and interlocking problems in neglected parts of the country that “leveling up” risks misfiring. And while the lack of specificity allows the government to avoid alienating anyone for now, it will eventually catch up to them.

“Politically if you don’t define it, then leveling up appeals to everybody,” said Paul Swinney, director of policy and research at the [*Center for Cities*](https://www.centreforcities.org/), a research institute. “If you define it, you start to exclude people and start to annoy people.” “We shouldn’t solely be focused on bring in more jobs — though if we can, then great — we should be focused on life expectancy, health outcomes and skills,” he said.

To make a success of these kinds of projects, known as regeneration in Britain, there must not only be companies willing to hire but also workers with the right skills and qualifications — and a transportation network able to get them to work.

As the crow flies, it is less than 10 miles from Redcar to Hartlepool, another town that suffered badly from deindustrialization, but with no bridge to connect them, the journey takes 45 minutes by car. It takes even longer by train.

So any surge in job creation at the new site in Redcar is unlikely to help Ian Jennings. After a spell of unemployment, Mr. Jennings, 49, has a job in a factory in Hartlepool and would like to trade up to something better.

Unemployment in Hartlepool is around 8 percent, well above the national average of about 5 percent.

Hartlepool is also slated to get a “freeport” in the area of its docks, though there are no details yet about what will happen there.

“There are a lot of promises being made and one government is as bad as the next,” Mr. Jennings said, “but I can’t see a lot of things happening in my lifetime.”

[*Poor diet and ill health have also taken a toll on life expectancy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/30/world/europe/shortchanged-why-british-life-expectancy-has-stalled.html) in Hartlepool. Outside the Wharton Trust, a charity, there is a line of around 50 people for free food toward the end of its shelf life that a Tesco supermarket has donated.

Sacha Bedding, chief executive of the trust, warns of a short-term crisis, with rising prices for heating and food combining with the end of a bigger welfare payment that was provided during the pandemic.

“The scale of where we are in left-behind places is massive,” he said, citing lagging educational achievement. Searching for a silver lining, he added: “At least people are talking about ‘leveling up,’ even if nobody fully understands what it is.”

The leveling-up project should, he added, “be our Marshall Plan for the decade if it is to be meaningful; it’s about reconstruction on a scale which we have probably never done in peacetime.” The worry was that instead of producing a 10-year plan and empowering communities with cash, the government tended to chase headlines and “shoot from the hip,” he said.

In Redcar, Rachel Woodings of Coatham House, a charity that supports young homeless people, said that many residents were close to eviction or were sofa-surfing, simply staying where they could overnight with friends.

“Young people don’t have the same opportunities,” she said. “It’s a lack of jobs. It’s probably a skill set that’s missing too. It’s the same problems going around and around.”

It’s not just the young who are struggling. Sharon Nicolson, 54, who is unemployed, said she had sometimes applied for 30 jobs in a week.

“You can’t survive on £60 a week when I have to pay for electricity, feed myself, clothe myself — it’s ridiculous,” she said, referring to her welfare payments.

Back near the derelict steelworks, John Nelson, 66, described how those who grew up nearby almost inevitably ended up taking the plentiful jobs that were once available.

“My dad worked here, so when I left school it was destined that I would work at British Steel,” he said, referring to the company that at one point operated the enormous plant.

But eventually he chose an alternate route, leaving to set up his own business; none of his children went to work there. Mr. Nelson said he welcomed the demolition of the old industrial buildings.

“I know some people see beauty in them, but most of the people who are going on about it never worked there or had anything to do with it,” he said of those who campaigned in vain to save the tower.

“You need to move on and earn a living,” he said.

PHOTOS: Top, the remains of the former coal bunker demolished last month as part of the Teesworks redevelopment project in Redcar, a town of 38,000 in northern England. Above, the town center. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARY TURNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***‘I Will Not Sit Quietly’: 3 Black Senators in Spotlight on Voting Rights***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64KC-7VM1-DXY4-X18K-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Senators Cory Booker, Tim Scott and Raphael Warnock brought vastly different perspectives to proceedings that highlighted the Senate’s striking lack of diversity.

**Body**

Senators Cory Booker, Tim Scott and Raphael Warnock brought vastly different perspectives to proceedings that highlighted the Senate’s striking lack of diversity.

WASHINGTON — The Senate has only three Black members, a paltry number that is unrepresentative of the country, so when the chamber took up a voting rights bill this week aimed at preventing the disenfranchisement of voters of color, Senators Cory Booker, Tim Scott and Raphael Warnock played an outsized role in the debate.

During a more than 10-hour discourse on Wednesday that highlighted the Senate’s lack of diversity, the three men brought vastly different perspectives to an issue that each said had affected them in deeply personal ways, with the two Democrats — Mr. Warnock of Georgia and Mr. Booker of New Jersey — serving as self-described witnesses to Republican-engineered voter suppression, and Mr. Scott, Republican of South Carolina, countering that the real threat to democracy was coming from the left.

The protracted proceedings underscored how heavily the white leaders of both parties lean on the few Black members of their rank-and-file when issues of race arise. When Vice President Kamala Harris, a former senator from California who was the first Black woman to serve in that post, briefly presided over the debate on Wednesday night, nearly half of the [*11 African Americans*](https://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/history/h_multi_sections_and_teasers/Photo_Exhibit_African_American_Senators.htm) who have ever served in the Senate were present at once.

But it also showed the power of representation and biography in a debate over policy.

The moral force that the three senators could marshal to their causes was clear. The back-and-forth between Mr. Scott, the son of a struggling single mother in ***working-class*** North Charleston, S.C., and Mr. Booker, a former Rhodes Scholar and big-city mayor, provided a striking moment, as they fought over the [*meaning of Jim Crow in the present day*](https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/politics/100000008166733/tim-scott-cory-booker-jim-crow.html).

Mr. Scott used the elections of all three Black men — but especially himself and Mr. Warnock — to back up his case that America is a nation of expanding democratic opportunity, not voter suppression and inequity.

“It’s hard to deny progress when two of the three come from the Southern states which people say are the places where African American votes are being suppressed,” he said.

Mr. Warnock, who ministers from Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, the pulpit from which the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. preached, closed the debate with an appeal to every senator.

“Let the message go out: You cannot honor Martin Luther King and work to dismantle his legacy at the same time,” Mr. Warnock said Wednesday night, two days after King’s holiday, when virtually every senator of every political stripe produced an obligatory tribute to the slain civil rights leader.

“I will not sit quietly while some make Dr. King the victim of identity theft.”

The groundbreaking positions of the men, no doubt, are at least part of the reason they were thrust onto center stage. Mr. Scott was the [*first Black senator from the South*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/16/us/politics/tim-scott-police-protests.html) since Reconstruction. Mr. Warnock is the first [*African American to represent*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Americans_in_the_United_States_Congress) Georgia in the Senate and the first Black Democrat to be elected to the Senate by a [*former state of the Confederacy*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Confederate_states_by_date_of_admission_to_the_Confederacy). Mr. Booker is his state’s first Black senator.

Donna Brazile, a Black Democratic strategist who headed Al Gore’s 2000 presidential campaign, recalled watching Wednesday’s debate and “thinking, ‘I thank God we have in 2022 three Black members of the United States Senate, regardless of party affiliation,’ because they all spoke uniquely from their own experiences of the journey of Black Americans.”

But it can be a bit overwhelming, said Carol Moseley Braun, who was the first Black woman to serve in the Senate and the only Black person in the entire chamber when she served.

“If it had to do with women, I got trotted out. If it had to do with Black people, I got trotted out,” she recalled in an interview on Thursday. “I couldn’t win.”

In the end, no amount of pressure from Mr. Warnock could sway a single Republican to back the voting rights and election protection bill, or persuade the two balking Democrats, Senators Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona and Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, to support weakening the filibuster to advance it over G.O.P. opposition.

Nor could Mr. Scott save his party from the fallout of defending voting restrictions passed by Republican legislatures that Democrats say are intended to disenfranchise minority voters. The South Carolina senator’s ardent defense of Georgia’s new voting law may have been lost amid the repercussions from a faux pas uttered on Wednesday by Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the Republican leader.

Asked about protests from voters of color over new restrictions, [*Mr. McConnell said*](https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4997722/user-clip-mitch-mcconnell-voters-color), “The concern is misplaced because if you look at the statistics, African American voters are voting in just as high a percentage as Americans.” Critics interpreted the comment as implying that either Black voters are not wholly American, or that the top Senate Republican considered “American” synonymous with white.

In a statement provided to The New York Times on Thursday, Mr. McConnell sought to clarify his remarks, saying that he has “consistently pointed to the record-high turnout for all voters in the 2020 election, including African Americans.”

Mr. Warnock is the obvious face of the Democratic cause, not because of his skin color but because his tight election victory in 2020 — along with an even tighter win by his colleague, Senator Jon Ossoff, Democrat of Georgia — gave the party its Senate majority, and because Mr. Warnock must face Georgia voters again this November, now under new election rules signed into law by the state’s Republican governor.

Indeed, in an evenly divided Senate where the net loss of a single seat would cost Democrats control, Mr. Warnock is perhaps the most endangered Democrat, and the party’s cause célèbre.

“Reverend Warnock is the moral authority and conscience on this issue by virtue of his background, his election and his extraordinary rhetorical capabilities,” said Marc Elias, the party’s top election lawyer. “He speaks for so many people, and articulates what so many people feel in their hearts about the importance of voting rights.”

Last year, [*at least 19 states passed 34 laws restricting access to voting*](https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/voting-laws-roundup-december-2021), according to the nonpartisan Brennan Center for Justice, but in the Senate on Wednesday, [*Georgia’s law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/georgia-voting-law-annotated.html) was front and center.

Mr. Scott fiercely defended the law — “supposedly the poster child of voter suppression” — as actually expanding access to the ballot, saying Democrats were distorting its effects to inject race into the voting rights fight when their real aim was political power.

He leaned in hard to his biography, which included a grandfather he escorted to the polls because he could not read, to burnish his credentials as he laid into the Democrats’ case for a far-reaching rewrite of election laws that have traditionally been the purview of state and local governments.

Speaking for [*“Americans from the Deep South who happen to look like me,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OE2dsGCQE2Y) the conservative Republican recounted the Jim Crow era that his grandfather had lived through, when literacy tests, job losses, beatings and lynchings kept Black Southerners from the polls. The Georgia law is nothing like the “Jim Crow 2.0” that President Biden and other Democrats have called it, he said.

“To have a conversation and a narrative that is blatantly false is offensive, not just to me or Southern Americans but offensive to millions of Americans who fought, bled and died for the right to vote,” Mr. Scott said.

That brought a sharp response from Mr. Booker. “Don’t lecture me about Jim Crow,” he said, adding: “It is 2022 and they are blatantly removing more polling places from the counties where Blacks and Latinos are overrepresented. I’m not making that up. That is a fact.”

But it was [*Mr. Warnock who brought to the debate*](https://www.c-span.org/video/?517308-1/senate-blocks-voting-rights-bill-fails-change-filibuster) the names of his own constituents: a woman who has not been able to vote for a decade because of long lines and constantly moving polling places; a student who could not vote for him in 2020 because the epic waits near her college would have made her miss class; another who waited eight hours in the rain to cast her ballot.

“One part of being a first of any kind is thinking, ‘How do I educate people?’” said Minyon Moore, who was a political director in the Clinton White House and a senior aide to Hillary Clinton. “I see that as a badge of honor, not a burden, and I know that Senators Warnock and Booker do, too. They have a responsibility to educate and explain. If they don’t do it, who will?”

Mr. Warnock, too, brandished his biography, which included growing up in the Kayton Homes housing project in Savannah, Ga., the youngest of 12 children. His mother picked cotton in Waycross, Ga., as a child, he said, and “the 82-year-old hands that used to pick somebody else’s cotton helped pick her youngest son as a United States senator” in 2021.

It was difficult enough when he beat the incumbent Republican, Kelly Loeffler, by about 93,000 votes with a huge minority turnout; this November will be worse with the state’s new law, he said.

Georgia’s legislators “have decided to punish their own citizens for having the audacity to show up,” Mr. Warnock said, adding, “Those are the fact of the laws that are being passed in Georgia and across the nation.”

Democrats have been wowed by such rhetorical performances, but the senator’s first year in electoral politics has yielded little in the way of victories. The voting rights push that he has framed as a moral imperative [*has been blocked*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/19/us/politics/senate-voting-rights-filibuster.html). Another effort, to secure health care for the working poor in states like Georgia that have refused to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, got a boost when it was included in the Build Back Better Act that passed the House. But that, too, has been stymied in the Senate.

He was blunt on Wednesday, when he said during the voting rights debate that he believed in bipartisanship, but then asked, “Bipartisanship at what cost?”

“Raphael Warnock feels that he went up there with this idea he can work with anyone,” said Jason Carter, a grandson of former President Jimmy Carter who was the Democratic candidate for governor in Georgia in 2014 and speaks regularly to Mr. Warnock. “There may come a time where he throws up his hands and says we can’t get anything done. I haven’t heard the frustration boiling over yet.”

PHOTOS: The Senate’s three Black members — Tim Scott, above left, Cory Booker, right, and Raphael Warnock, left — were thrust into outsized roles during the debate over the voting rights bill, which failed to pass. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARAHBETH MANEY/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The Real G.O.P. Agenda***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62BP-WVV1-DXY4-X3NS-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Ian Millhiser

**Body**

The G.O.P.'s program lives in the judiciary -- and especially in the Supreme Court.

Not so long ago, Republicans had one of the most ambitious legislative agendas of any political party in modern American history.

Devised by the former House speaker, Paul Ryan, the so-called Ryan budget sought to reduce much of the nation's social safety net to ashes. Congressional Republicans planned to slash Medicaid spending and food stamps. In the most aggressive version of Mr. Ryan's proposal, Republicans would have replaced Medicare with ''premium support'' vouchers that could be used to buy private insurance, and then reduced the value of this subsidy every year -- effectively eliminating traditional Medicare over time.

But all of that has changed. The Ryan budget is a relic. At their 2020 national convention, Republicans didn't even bother to come up with a new platform.

Yet while the party appears to have no legislative agenda, it's a mistake to conclude that it has no policy agenda. Because Republicans do: They have an extraordinarily ambitious agenda to roll back voting rights, to strip the government of much of its power to regulate, to give broad legal immunity to religious conservatives and to immunize many businesses from a wide range of laws.

It's just that the Republican Party doesn't plan to pass its agenda through either one of the elected branches. Its agenda lives in the judiciary -- and especially in the Supreme Court.

From 2011, when Republicans gained control of the House of Representatives and denied President Barack Obama a governing majority, until the pandemic forced legislators' hands in 2020, Congress enacted hardly any major legislation outside of the 2017 tax law.

In the same period, the Supreme Court dismantled much of America's campaign finance law; severely weakened the Voting Rights Act; permitted states to opt out of the Affordable Care Act's Medicaid expansion; expanded new ''religious liberty'' rights permitting some businesses that object to a law on religious grounds to diminish the rights of third parties; weakened laws shielding workers from sexual and racial harassment; expanded the right of employers to shunt workers with legal grievances into a privatized arbitration system; undercut public sector unions' ability to raise funds; and halted Mr. Obama's Clean Power Plan.

Now, a 6-to-3 conservative-majority Supreme Court is likely to reshape the country in the coming decade, exempting favored groups from their legal obligations, stripping the Biden administration of much of its lawful authority, and even placing a thumb on the scales of democracy itself.

Many of these changes would build on decisions handed down long before President Donald Trump reshaped the Supreme Court. The court, for example, first allowed employers to force workers to sign away their right to sue the company -- locking those workers into a private-arbitration system that favors corporate parties -- in a 2001 case, Circuit City v. Adams. But the court's current majority is likely to make it much harder for workers and consumers to overcome these tactics. In Epic Systems v. Lewis (2018), Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote the court's majority opinion favoring an employer that forced its employees to give up their right to sue.

Similarly, in the 2014 case Burwell v. Hobby Lobby, the Supreme Court held that businesses seeking a religious exemption from a law may have it -- holding, for the first time, that such exemptions may be allowed even when they diminish the rights of others. That case permitted employers with religious objections to birth control to deny contraceptive coverage to their employees, even though a federal regulation required employer-provided health plans to cover contraception.

Before Justice Amy Coney Barrett joined the Supreme Court, however, a majority of the justices were very reluctant to grant religious exemptions to state regulations seeking to limit the spread of Covid-19. Yet after she became a justice, the court's new majority started granting such exemptions to churches that wanted to defy public health orders.

It's plausible that the Republican Party did not campaign on its old legislative agenda in 2020 because it was busy rebranding itself. Under Mr. Trump, Republicans attracted more ***working-class*** voters, while Democrats made gains in relatively affluent suburbs. So Mr. Ryan's plans to ransack programs like Medicaid aren't likely to inspire the party's emerging base.

And yet the court's conservative majority is still pushing an agenda that benefits corporations and the wealthy at the expense of workers and consumers.

It's easy to see why government-by-judiciary appeals to Republican politicians. There's no constituency for forced arbitration outside of corporate boardrooms. But when the court hands down decisions like Circuit City or Epic Systems, those decisions often go unnoticed. Employers score a major policy victory over their workers, and voters don't blame the Republican politicians who placed conservative justices on the court.

Judges can also hide many of their most consequential decisions behind legal language and doctrines. One of the most important legal developments in the last few years, for example, is that a majority of the court called for strict new limits on federal agencies' power to regulate the workplace, shield consumers and protect the environment.

In Little Sisters v. Pennsylvania (2020), the court signaled that it's likely to strike down the Department of Health and Human Services' rules requiring insurers to cover many forms of medical care -- including birth control, immunizations and preventive care for children. And in West Virginia v. E.P.A. (2016), the court shut down much of the E.P.A.'s efforts to fight climate change.

Yet to understand decisions like Little Sisters and West Virginia, a reader needs to master arcane concepts like the ''nondelegation doctrine'' or ''Chevron deference'' that baffle even many lawyers. The result is that the Republican Party's traditional constituency -- business conservatives -- walk away with big wins, while voters have less access to health care and breathe dirtier air.

By legislating from the bench, Republicans dodge accountability for unpopular policies. Meanwhile, the real power is held by Republican judges who serve for life -- and therefore do not need to worry about whether their decisions enjoy public support.

It's a terrible recipe for democracy. Voters shouldn't need to hire a lawyer to understand what their government is doing.

Ian Millhiser is a senior correspondent at Vox and author of the book ''The Agenda: How a Republican Supreme Court Is Reshaping America.''

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**Graphic**

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[***Xavier Becerra, H.H.S. Pick, Was California’s Anti-Trump Attack Dog***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61G6-RC81-DXY4-X3MP-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Mr. Becerra was the first in his family to go to college. As attorney general of California, he took on the Trump administration on nearly every front. But can he take on the pandemic?

**Body**

Mr. Becerra was the first in his family to go to college. As attorney general of California, he took on the Trump administration on nearly every front. But can he take on the pandemic?

SACRAMENTO — Four years ago, when a veteran California congressman, Xavier [*Becerra*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html), came home to become the state’s attorney general, eyebrows rose — not in disapproval, but surprise.

News reports referred to then-Gov. Jerry Brown’s “[*unexpected*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html)” pick to finish out the unexpired term of the state’s new senator, Kamala Harris. Fellow politicians wondered why he would leave Washington, where he had been working for 24 years toward a top leadership position in Congress. But Mr. Becerra leaped into the fray as California’s lead attack dog in the Trump resistance, filing roughly 100 lawsuits against the administration on everything from climate change to the Affordable Care Act.

“I’m not sure he was the logical choice,” another former California governor, Gray Davis, said on Monday. “But he did a hell of a job.”

With the announcement that President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. has selected Mr. Becerra as [*his nominee for the secretary of health and human services*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html), Mr. Becerra, one of the country’s best-known Latino politicians, is again surprising people. Some of the medical experts who had urged Mr. Biden’s team to name someone with public health expertise were “astounded” at Mr. Becerra’s nomination, one of them said.

But longtime supporters and old friends in California said Mr. Becerra was perfectly suited to a job that required not only an ability to lead a large organization but also an intimate knowledge of how badly many Americans, particularly essential workers, have suffered under the current administration’s policies on health insurance and the pandemic.

“He’ll be all-in because he is so committed,” Mr. Brown said. “Not just to the Affordable Care Act, but to health care and equity in general. And he knows his way around Washington.”

Certainly Mr. Becerra has been committed in recent years to fighting the White House on behalf of Californians, [*filing a barrage of lawsuits*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html) to protect immigrants, the environment, gun control and many other priorities that the state prizes as fundamental to its way of life. He has sued to stop the repeal of an Obama-era order that [*protected immigrant “Dreamers”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html) who came to the United States as children and grew up without legal status. He has challenged the Trump administration’s attempt to roll back California’s authority to set its own rules on climate-warming [*tailpipe emissions*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html).

Mr. Becerra has filed more than a dozen lawsuits about health alone, including one in which California led 20 states and the District of Columbia in a campaign against Republicans who sought to legally gut the Affordable Care Act — a law in which California, with a third of its population relying on the state’s version of Medicaid for health care, has an enormous stake.

Mr. Becerra also created a first-of-its kind state-level environmental justice bureau, focused on the unequal effect that pollution and other forms of environmental damage have on health in the most vulnerable communities.

And he [*settled a landmark antitrust case*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html) against Sutter Health, a Northern California network of doctors and hospitals, which agreed to pay out $575 million in damages and have its business operations monitored for 10 years. The lawsuit originally filed by a grocery workers’ union health plan claimed that Sutter’s anticompetitive behavior was driving up health costs.

The suit was a “paradigm case” on behalf of consumers, said Matt Cantor, a lawyer at Constantine Cannon, a New York firm that worked with Mr. Becerra’s office on a related suit. That Mr. Becerra chose to bring it, he said, “shows that he’s very concerned about what the average American family and average American employer has to pay in health insurance premiums.”

A native of Sacramento, Mr. Becerra is the son of immigrant parents; his mother emigrated from Mexico as a young woman and his father was born in Sacramento but raised in Tijuana. They married at 18 and moved to California, where the elder Mr. Becerra worked picking vegetables and laboring in construction — experience that friends say will shape how Mr. Becerra inhabits his job as health secretary.

“I think that it gives him a certain perspective and humility and an appreciation for working people, for ordinary people,” said Representative Joaquin Castro of Texas, chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, who said Mr. Becerra mentored him and other Latino newcomers on Capitol Hill. “And when you talk to Xavier you see that he’s not a pretentious person.”

At McClatchy High School in Sacramento, he was a high achiever whose extracurriculars included golf, which he taught himself to play, and a leadership group that focused on conflict resolution. “He was a really well-rounded guy — an athlete and a nerd and a leader,” said Karen Skelton, a California political consultant who went to school with him.

He was the first in his family to attend college, graduating from Stanford University in 1980 and Stanford Law School in 1984. In interviews, he has said that he applied to the elite school only because he had filled out a blank application a friend had discarded, and that it was not until he drove with his mother to affluent Palo Alto that he realized his family was not middle class. There, he met his wife, Carolina Reyes, who is now an obstetrician specializing in high-risk pregnancies.

Their three daughters are grown; friends note that although Mr. Becerra’s father had little formal education, the attorney general’s children earned their undergraduate degrees from Yale and Stanford Universities, and at least two have graduate degrees.

Though Mr. Becerra was not a name put forward by Mr. Biden’s medical advisers, a person familiar with the selection process said the president-elect was impressed with his management experience and his legal advocacy on behalf of the Affordable Care Act — President Barack Obama’s signature health care law, which Mr. Biden, then vice president, worked to get passed in 2010.

Mr. Biden was also said to be taken with Mr. Becerra’s personal story, which he views as much like his own; his commitment to social justice; and his record of working across party lines. The two men knew each other from their shared time on Capitol Hill, and Mr. Biden did not have to introduce himself when he offered the job to Mr. Becerra on Friday evening.

“He took note of how, like himself, Becerra came from a ***working-class*** family and also like himself Becerra was the first person in his family to graduate from college,” said the person who described the process. “And he was also taken with how, shortly after graduating from Stanford Law, Becerra started giving back and giving legal aid to clients who had mental health care needs.”

“Oh, he’s the Latino Joe Biden,” agreed Art Torres, a former state senator who hired Mr. Becerra to work in his Los Angeles district office in 1986, and who became an important mentor. “***Working-class*** kid, the product of hard work. I used to kid him because he was the only guy I knew who still drank milk with his lunch. That’s how much of a Boy Scout he was.”

That said, Mr. Torres joked, “I don’t know what he drank with dinner.”

After a stint as a deputy attorney general, in the mid-1980s, Mr. Becerra was tapped by Mr. Torres and other Latino leaders in Los Angeles to run for an open State Assembly seat — part of a cadre of young Latino activists looking to replace the old-guard Latino establishment in Southern California.

He ran as a law-and-order candidate, and helped pass a bill into law that lengthened prison terms for gang members caught committing crimes on or near school property. But just weeks into Mr. Becerra’s freshman term, Representative Ed Roybal, a Los Angeles Democrat, announced his retirement.

The ambitious Mr. Becerra announced his candidacy even though he did not live in Mr. Roybal’s district — drawing accusations that he was a carpetbagger — but went on to represent the downtown-area district for 24 years.

In Congress, he landed a coveted slot on the powerful Ways and Means Committee, which is responsible for tax policy, becoming the first Latino to serve on the panel. He served on both the health and Social Security committees, and helped draft legislation on those issues.

Like many Democrats, he voted against the passage of a 2003 Republican-led bill expanding Medicare to include prescription drug coverage for older adults; he viewed the measure, which precluded the government from negotiating with drugmakers, as a giveaway to the pharmaceutical industry.

Less than a decade later, he joined Speaker Nancy Pelosi in pushing for passage of the Affordable Care Act.

He was said to be aiming for a top House leadership position when Mr. Brown tapped him after the 2016 election to succeed Ms. Harris as attorney general, overseeing an office of some 4,500 lawyers.

“I wanted someone with intellectual horsepower, but I also wanted a down-to-earth guy,” Mr. Brown said.

On Monday, with one foot out the door, Mr. Becerra was still condemning the Trump administration from his day job in Sacramento, [*filing an amicus brief*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html) in a case challenging the administration’s oversight of toxic chemicals and [*lashing out against federal pollution standards*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html).

“It’s despicable,” Mr. Becerra said in a statement. “Across the country, our relatives and neighbors in low-income communities are bearing the brunt of particulate matter pollution and the resulting health consequences. Today, the Trump administration’s callous disregard for their lives is on full display.”

Meanwhile, conservative critics were condemning Mr. Becerra, with anti-abortion groups such as the Susan B. Anthony List [*calling on Twitter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html) for Republican senators to “stand firm &amp; stop this unacceptable nomination.”

Among early conservative complaints was Mr. Becerra’s stance on Medicare for All, the single-payer government-run health insurance plan promoted by Senator Bernie Sanders, who challenged Mr. Biden for the Democratic nomination for president. Mr. Becerra has supported it. Mr. Biden does not.

But on Monday, supporters in Washington and California downplayed those differences.

“Attorney General Becerra is a towering champion of health care, whose strategic leadership, keen intellect and outstanding policy expertise were essential in the defense of the Affordable Care Act in the courts,” Ms. Pelosi said in a statement. “As secretary of the department of health and human services, he will be a vital force for progress.”

And in Sacramento, California’s governor, Gavin Newsom, lauded the choice as a breath of “the fresh air of progress.”

“It’s a game-changer for us,” he said. “We’ve had our eye on some big reforms. We’ve been looking for a great partner. And we’ve found one.”

Dr. Ada D. Stewart, a South Carolina family practice doctor and the president of the American Academy of Family Physicians, had been one of those hoping Mr. Biden would put a doctor in the health secretary’s job. But Mr. Becerra, she said, is the next best thing: “Someone who has the same priorities and the same principles” as her organization, she said. “Health care for all.”

Shawn Hubler reported from Sacramento, and Sheryl Gay Stolberg from Washington. Reporting was contributed by Michael D. Shear, Coral Davenport and Carl Hulse from Washington, and Jill Cowan and Sona Patel from Los Angeles.

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PHOTO: Xavier Becerra, the attorney general of California, encouraged students at his former high school in Sacramento to vote in 2018. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RICH PEDRONCELLI/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

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[***Top Demographer Has Hope For New York City's Recovery***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62BP-WVV1-DXY4-X3M1-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Annie Correal

**Body**

Joseph J. Salvo, who is retiring after nearly 30 years as New York City's chief demographer, is optimistic about New York City's recovery after the pandemic.

In nearly three decades as New York City's chief demographer at the Department of City Planning, Joseph J. Salvo has been the top expert on the city's population, providing data and analysis of the city's always-changing populace to help city officials, community organizers and journalists understand the most diverse city in the world.

Who is being overlooked in the census count and how can they be included? How should the city redraw a school zone? Which polling places need foreign-language speakers -- and what languages should they speak? Mr. Salvo has had the answers.

Days before his retirement on Thursday at age 65, Mr. Salvo, the son of Italian immigrants in the Bronx, shared his predictions for New York City as it emerges from the pandemic -- and confronts the biggest economic crisis the city has seen since the 1970s. The following is an edited conversation.

You know the city better than almost anybody. What are the effects of the coronavirus pandemic and what comes next?

There is so much talk of people leaving the city. There has been temporary dislocation, but I think it's mostly a phenomenon among people who have the resources to move. If you ask me what the real threat to the city is, I will tell you the real threat is that we stop attracting immigrants.

The city's population boomed early in the last decade. But, starting in 2016, immigration to the city starts to go down substantially. We are talking about a 46 percent decline in the number of immigrants coming to the city. Half of the births are to immigrant women. So births are down, too. All of this has caused the population to decline. The biggest fear I have with Covid is New York not being a magnet for those people with the greatest aspirations. But the hope is that under the new administration, the immigrant population will resurrect itself.

Why is that important?

I lived through the 1970s in the city. New York City was in the throes of a major crisis. The city was broke. There were a lot of people who were down on the city and a tremendous loss of population. From 7.9 million people it went all the way down to 7.1 million people in the course of a single decade. At the same time, 800,000 immigrants came to the city. It was true that New York City was in terrible shape, but it also offered a lot of opportunities. The city rose up and prospered, largely on the backs of immigrants. So we have been in this cycle before.

Judging from how the city came back from the abysmal 1970s and built itself back up in the '80s and '90s, it will happen again. The city will rise. It will rise through the power of immigration.

***Working-class*** immigrants were one of the groups hit hardest by the pandemic. Why? And what will that mean for recovery?

In the pandemic, they are trying to make a living and coming home and living in close proximity to other people. And they work the cash-only jobs, service jobs, services in buildings, home health aides, that we start to lose. Our growth is going to depend on giving support to these immigrants, many of whom suffered and lost family members.

What do you think the city should do to support a recovery?

The questions we are looking at today are access to housing, equity and fairness, and those issues need to be tackled head on. Those issues are now on the front burner. Housing is something to watch. People are living in overcrowded housing situations, and I think that's one of the reasons the crisis was so bad.

What's the best bet for a recovery?

What we pray will happen is that the city will come back with a ferocity we have never seen in food, beverage, entertainment and hotels. All of that is going to come back. And hopefully the immigrant population will prosper because of that. That's the key.

What does the city look like on the eve of your departure?

The city is 37 percent foreign-born, and if you add the next generation, it's more than 50 percent. We have more than three million immigrants. The largest groups are from China, Dominican Republic and Mexico. We have a mix that is much more varied than in other places. Don't be fooled by percentages. If someone says that only 2 percent of the city's population not proficient in English speaks Arabic -- that's more than 35,000 people who need assistance learning English!

You worked to make sure hundreds of thousands of New York City addresses were added to the Census Bureau's address list. And you were brought in as an expert witness in the legal challenge to the Trump administration's effort to add a citizenship question to the census in 2019. Why is the census important?

The New York attorney general realized they needed someone in court to show the damage that could be done, if there was a citizenship question. I ended up live, in court, with a map. ''Look at this map. If the census doesn't get a good response, look at the damage that gets done.'' That is a major point in my career because the outcome was favorable. I feel like I was defending my father and the people that came before, and after me.

And the address list for New York City is the best it could ever be. That's my pride and joy. Being able to get the city its fair share of representation.

How can the next chief demographer help New York City to bounce back, and perhaps help counter xenophobia and racism?

Our job is interpretation, making people understand the facts. If people understand the facts and if people understand the diversity with facts, maybe we will replace the hostility. I think 98 percent of it is driven by fear of change. I would like to think that most New Yorkers, real New Yorkers, look at change and they learn to accept it. This is what it means to live in a dynamic city.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/01/nyregion/nyc-population-pandemic-recovery.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/01/nyregion/nyc-population-pandemic-recovery.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Joseph J. Salvo, the city's chief demographer, last week in the Bronx. He is retiring. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GREGG VIGLIOTTI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 2, 2021

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[***On Politics: Watch Where Sanders Goes***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y8T-FKR1-JBG3-6157-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1433 words

**Byline:** Giovanni Russonello

**Highlight:** Bernie Sanders has been campaigning in Texas, a Super Tuesday state. This is your morning tip sheet.

**Body**

Good morning and welcome to On Politics, a daily political analysis of the 2020 elections based on reporting by New York Times journalists.

[*Sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) to get On Politics in your inbox every weekday.

Where things stand in the race

* If you want to know what the candidates are thinking, just look at where they’re traveling. As [*the results of the Nevada caucuses*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) rolled in on Saturday, Bernie Sanders was in San Antonio, clearly   [*hoping to use the momentum*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) from his win in Nevada to drive open a lead over Joe Biden in Texas. It is one of 14 states to vote on Super Tuesday — just over a week away! — and   [*recent polls*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) there have shown the two candidates essentially tied.

1. More to the point of San Antonio’s relevance: Among Texas’s five largest cities, it’s the most heavily Latino. Roughly half of Latino caucusgoers in Nevada backed Sanders, versus less than a third of that number for Biden, according to [*entrance polls*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline). In Texas, Hispanic voters made up roughly a third of Democratic primary voters in 2016, according to exit polls.
2. The Nevada results are still not fully counted. Sanders’s seemingly wide margin of victory helped Nevada avoid becoming another Iowa, but we’re still waiting on official results from 12 percent of the state’s precincts — and Pete Buttigieg’s campaign is already crying foul about “irregularities” in the reporting process. (More on that process below, from our on-the-ground reporter, [*Reid J. Epstein*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline).)
3. Even the man who was once the Nevada caucuses’ most prominent booster now thinks they ought to be a thing of the past. Harry Reid, the former Senate majority leader, was largely responsible for moving his state’s caucuses up to the coveted No. 3 spot on the nominating calendar in 2008. But on Sunday, he declared that it’s time for caucuses, with their complex and often-arcane processes, to be eliminated. “Our Democratic Party did a good job,” he told (our) Reid. “[*All caucuses should be a thing of the past*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline). They don’t work for a multitude of reasons.”
4. Biden appears likely to finish in a distant second, but the silver lining is that he maintained his lead among black caucusgoers (a key base of support), capturing two of every five African-American votes. Sanders received 27 percent, good for second place among that demographic.
5. But a [*CBS News poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) of likely South Carolina primary voters — conducted online by YouGov, before the Nevada caucuses were complete — found that Biden’s advantage in South Carolina has taken a big dip. He’s down to 28 percent (from 45 percent in November) while Sanders holds 23 percent. Tom Steyer, a billionaire hedge-fund investor who has focused heavily on winning over black voters in South Carolina, was not far behind, with 18 percent of likely primary voters.
6. There’s one race Steyer is winning by a mile: the race for eyeballs. More than four in five likely voters said they had seen a TV or web ad from the candidate. Steyer wasn’t on the debate stage last week, but he has qualified for Tuesday’s showdown in Charleston, S.C.
7. That debate, hosted by CBS News and the Congressional Black Caucus Institute, will also provide a much-needed opportunity for redemption for Michael Bloomberg. It’s the last debate before Super Tuesday, when he will be on the ballot for the first time (in all 14 participating states).
8. If the Nevada caucuses’ results hold up, Elizabeth Warren will finish fourth. It’s a weaker showing than expected after her strong debate performance in the state. But you might not want to read too much into it. When all of the ballots are counted, it seems likely that a majority will have come from the early-voting period, which ran until Tuesday, meaning Warren’s performance onstage on Wednesday did not have enough of a chance to register. Since then, a new [*national poll from CBS News and YouGov*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) has shown Warren at 19 percent, putting her in a statistical tie for second place with Biden (17 percent). She also announced on Saturday that she had raised $14 million in the previous 10 days. On March 3, she will be looking to rack up strong showings, if not outright victories, in California, Texas and some of the day’s other delegate-rich contests, including in her home state of Massachusetts.

Photo of the day

Kelsey Rodriguez, a volunteer, helped direct attendees to seats and standing areas before the start of a rally at the Fertitta Center at the University of Houston on Sunday.

Sanders’s support has a lot to do with class.

When analyzing the voters Sanders most relies on, pundits often examine the racial, generational and ideological divides that affect his base.

And certainly, his support differs widely along all those lines.

But there’s an often-overlooked element of his base that’s proving particularly salient: It has a notable ***working-class*** tilt. He is [*considerably more popular*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) among lower-educated and lower-income voters, to a rare degree that’s more pronounced than any major Democratic presidential candidate in recent American history.

“In Nevada, we have just put together a multigenerational, multiracial coalition, which is going to not only win in Nevada, it’s going to sweep this country,” Sanders declared in Austin, Tex., on Saturday night, as the results of the Nevada caucuses came in, a nod toward the narrative he commonly uses to describe his support.

But the victory also had a clear class tilt: He won 40 percent of Nevada caucusgoers without a college degree — 13 percentage points more than his total among those with a degree — according to entrance polls.

In national polls, he is generally most popular among Democratic voters making less than $50,000 a year, and least popular among six-digit earners. (Entrance polls in Nevada didn’t ask caucusgoers about their income.)

Lower-income and lower-education voters, as well as Hispanics and young people, who are typically less likely to turn up to the polls, are also the very voters Sanders has been relying on.

So far, he’s been winning. But that isn’t necessarily because he has been able to create a surge in these so-called low-propensity voters, as his campaign has long claimed he would. In Nevada, for instance, entrance polls suggested that there was no increase in Latino turnout as a share of the vote this year compared with 2016, and the percentage of voters without a college degree actually declined.

Still, we’re only three states in. It remains to be seen whether Sanders is indeed able to drive high turnout among those who are typically disengaged, particularly those in the ***working class***.

Why are the Nevada results taking so long? The answer begins in 2016.

What’s taking so long for the full results to come in from Nevada?

The reporting process for all Democratic caucuses is far more complicated this year, thanks to changes that the Democratic National Committee made after the 2016 election to address transparency concerns.

The committee mandated that the Nevada Democratic Party collect more than 100 data points from each of the state’s 2,097 precincts — and that it had to use a duplicative notation system to guarantee accuracy.

What’s more, when disaster struck at Iowa’s caucuses this month, Nevada’s Democratic Party had to ditch the app it had planned on using to tabulate results and quickly come up with a new plan. This led to a jam on many of the call-in hotlines that caucuses used to report their results on Saturday night.

Another layer of complexity comes from the fact that Nevada offered a four-day early-voting period for the first time, meaning that day-of caucusgoers’ preferences had to be collated in real time at each precinct with the early vote totals.

To understand how this cavalcade of complexity began, we have to go back four years, when Sanders narrowly lost both the Iowa and Nevada caucuses to Hillary Clinton. His supporters felt (and still feel) that he had more support — but nobody knows for sure, because the only result the state parties reported was the delegate count.

In 2017 and 2018, Sanders’s allies pushed the D.N.C. to adopt new rules requiring more transparency in caucuses. State parties now have to allow for absentee participation and report the number of raw supporters for each candidate on each round of candidate alignment.

That’s why every Nevada precinct has to report over 100 data points. Which, as it turns out, takes a long time.

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[***Liberal Superstar Builds Challenge to Democrats From the Left***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y8B-W241-DXY4-X55H-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Catie Edmondson

**Body**

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez endorsed a slate of progressive challengers to Democratic candidates and incumbents, working to create a liberal counterweight to the party's official campaign arm.

WASHINGTON -- Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez on Friday endorsed an all-female slate of progressive candidates through her new political action committee, using her clout in the insurgent left and the considerable campaign funds she has drawn to counter the Democratic establishment in key races around the country.

The endorsements of the congressional candidates -- including one who is challenging Senate Democrats' preferred candidate in Texas -- amount to a powerful stamp of approval for a diverse group of newcomers. They also are a clear sign that Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, a celebrity of the liberal left, intends to leverage her influence among activists to try to reshape the Democratic Party.

The move also underlines the struggle among Democrats that is defining the race for the presidency, which is pitting Senator Bernie Sanders, the self-described democratic socialist, against more moderate candidates who are presenting themselves as better able to appeal to a broad section of voters in taking on President Trump. Ms. Ocasio-Cortez has traversed the country to campaign for Mr. Sanders, and her efforts to pull Congress to the left parallel his bid to deploy his progressive message to emerge as the Democratic nominee, an effort that has instilled fear in many centrist lawmakers who believe it could cost them their seats.

''One of our primary goals is to reward political courage in Congress and also to help elect a progressive majority in the House of Representatives,'' Ms. Ocasio-Cortez said in an interview. ''There's kind of a dual nature to this: One is opening the door to newcomers, and the other is to reward members of Congress that are exhibiting very large amounts of political courage.''

Her own upset victory in 2018 over a 20-year Democratic congressman has inspired a slew of Democratic primary challenges across the nation targeting powerful incumbents -- though many have little chance of winning. Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, who toppled a top party leader in her primary election, has carefully selected the races in which she is intervening with an eye for districts where her seal of approval would help the primary challenger prevail.

''Anyone can show up one day and say, 'I support all these policies; that makes me a progressive,''' she said. ''But one of the things that is really important to us is winning.''

In the committee's first slate of endorsements, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez is backing seven women running for congressional seats, including Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez, a labor and voting rights activist who is running against the candidate endorsed by Senate Democrats' campaign arm, M.J. Hegar, to take on a Republican, Senator John Cornyn. Three others -- Teresa Leger Fernandez in New Mexico, Samelys López in New York, and Georgette Gómez in California -- are running for open seats in Democratic districts; Ms. Gómez has also been endorsed by Mr. Sanders. Another, Kara Eastman, is challenging Representative Don Bacon, Republican of Nebraska, for a second time.

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez has already announced her support for primary challengers to a pair of her House Democratic colleagues: Marie Newman, who is running against Representative Daniel Lipinski of Illinois, and Jessica Cisneros, who is seeking to oust Representative Henry Cuellar of Texas.

Democratic strategists say that Ms. Ocasio-Cortez could shape the terrain for congressional candidates in powerful ways.

''We've never seen somebody break onto the scene with this amount of potential and ability to drive the conversation and drive financial commitments from supporters,'' said Ian Russell, a former deputy executive director of House Democrats' campaign arm. ''The challenge for her is determining where she wants to spend her capital.''

Leveraging her name recognition and ability to bring in an avalanche of donations with a single post on Twitter, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez began the Courage to Change political action committee in January, pledging to elect ''***working-class*** champions'' and explicitly framing the enterprise as a progressive counterweight to House Democrats's campaign arm.

''When community leaders, activists, and ***working-class*** candidates try to run for office, organizations like the D.C.C.C. discourage them,'' read a fund-raising pitch for the committee, using the acronym for the campaign arm, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. ''These potential progressive leaders are asked: 'Can you raise $300,000 from your friends and family? If not, don't bother trying.'''

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez said she saw her role as breaking down the barriers to entry for the kinds of Democrats who should be serving.

''It's important for us to create mechanisms of support because so much of what is happening in Washington is driven by fear of loss,'' she said in the interview. ''We can really create an ecosystem that makes people more comfortable into making the leap to make politically courageous choices.''

The endorsements reflect a careful calculus by Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, who came to Congress vowing to take down Democrats who were not sufficiently progressive, but she has since tempered that zeal. In both cases where she has thrown her support behind a challenger to a sitting lawmaker, the incumbents have broken with key Democratic orthodoxies; Mr. Lipinski opposes abortion rights, while Mr. Cuellar has an ''A'' rating from the National Rifle Association.

She has not yet endorsed a candidate vying to oust any of the party elders, including the leaders of several high-profile committees who are facing primary challenges, like Representative Richard E. Neal of Massachusetts, the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Representative Jerrold Nadler of New York, who leads the Judiciary Committee, or Representative Eliot L. Engel of New York, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

The House Democratic campaign arm infuriated progressives last year when it formalized a policy barring campaign vendors from conducting business with a primary opponent of a sitting Democrat, a move intended to shield incumbents. Democratic leaders defended the policy, arguing it was reasonable to afford incumbents that level of protection.

Top progressive lawmakers in the House in January signed onto a temporary détente, but Ms. Ocasio-Cortez made clear she would continue to refuse paying the party dues and press forward with her own fund-raising.

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee has ''always been the gatekeeper and to some extent it still is,'' Mr. Russell said.

But, he added, ''we are seeing new forces like AOC on the scene, breaking through the gates.''

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez raised $1.4 million in January, according to her campaign, with nearly 20,000 contributions directed specifically to the political action committee. The average contribution was about $17.

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez's star power has already surged as she campaigns for Mr. Sanders, drawing thousands to rallies and raising larger questions about what she will do next.

''Alexandria is a real political talent,'' said Representative Ro Khanna, Democrat of California, and an ally of Ms. Ocasio-Cortez's. ''She has made an enormous impact on the Green New Deal, and I predict she will be governor or senator in the near future and then off to the races after that.''

Mr. Trump made a more provocative prediction this month, writing on Twitter that Ms. Ocasio-Cortez would mount a primary challenge to Senator Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York and the minority leader, and win because of ''how badly'' he said Mr. Schumer had handled impeachment. A spokesman for Mr. Schumer declined to comment.

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez said that she was not sure what her next move in politics would be -- and that she sometimes wondered how long she would stay in politics. Until then, she said she would work to elect more people like herself to serve in the House and Senate.

''While I think sometimes a lot of people see this as a huge amassing of influence or power or money or what have you, my personal experience does not feel that way -- it can feel very lonely,'' she said. ''I think my ambition right now is to be a little less lonely in Congress.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/21/us/politics/aoc-democrats.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/21/us/politics/aoc-democrats.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has traveled the country campaigning for Bernie Sanders, which has increased her political star power. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AMY KONTRAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez is supporting seven women through a political action committee, including Jessica Cisneros, at left, who is challenging the Democratic congressman Henry Cuellar in Texas, and Teresa Leger Fernandez, right, who is running for an open seat. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CALLAGHAN O'HARE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

RAMSAY DE GIVE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***How N.Y.C.’s Population Expert Says the City Will Bounce Back***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62BH-7VC1-JBG3-61KR-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Annie Correal

**Highlight:** Joseph J. Salvo, who is retiring after nearly 30 years as New York City’s chief demographer, is optimistic about New York City’s recovery after the pandemic.

**Body**

Joseph J. Salvo, who is retiring after nearly 30 years as New York City’s chief demographer, is optimistic about New York City’s recovery after the pandemic.

In nearly three decades as New York City’s [*chief demographer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/02/nyregion/02experience.html) at the Department of City Planning, Joseph J. Salvo has been the top expert on the city’s population, [*providing data*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/02/nyregion/02experience.html) and analysis of the city’s always-changing populace to help city officials, community organizers and journalists understand the most diverse city in the world.

Who is being overlooked in the census count and how can they be included? How should the city redraw a school zone? Which polling places need foreign-language speakers — and what languages should they speak? Mr. Salvo has had the answers.

Days before his retirement on Thursday at age 65, [*Mr. Salvo*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/02/nyregion/02experience.html), the son of Italian immigrants in the Bronx, shared his predictions for New York City as it emerges from the pandemic — and confronts the biggest economic crisis the city has seen since the 1970s. The following is an edited conversation.

You know the city better than almost anybody. What are the effects of the coronavirus pandemic and what comes next?

There is so much talk of people leaving the city. There has been temporary dislocation, but I think it’s mostly a phenomenon among people who have the resources to move. If you ask me what the real threat to the city is, I will tell you the real threat is that we stop attracting immigrants.

The city’s population boomed early in the last decade. But, starting in 2016, [*immigration*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/02/nyregion/02experience.html) to the city starts to go down substantially. We are talking about a 46 percent decline in the number of immigrants coming to the city. Half of the births are to immigrant women. So births are down, too. All of this has [*caused the population to decline*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/02/nyregion/02experience.html). The biggest fear I have with Covid is New York not being a magnet for those people with the greatest aspirations. But the hope is that under the new administration, the immigrant population will resurrect itself.

Why is that important?

I lived through the 1970s in the city. New York City was in the throes of a major crisis. The city was broke. There were a lot of people who were down on the city and a tremendous loss of population. From 7.9 million people it went all the way down to 7.1 million people in the course of a single decade. At the same time, 800,000 immigrants came to the city. It was true that New York City was in terrible shape, but it also offered a lot of opportunities. The city rose up and prospered, largely on the backs of immigrants. So we have been in this cycle before.

Judging from how the city came back from the abysmal 1970s and built itself back up in the ’80s and ’90s, it will happen again. The city will rise. It will rise through the power of immigration.

***Working-class*** immigrants were one of the groups hit hardest by the pandemic. Why? And what will that mean for recovery?

In the pandemic, they are trying to make a living and coming home and living in close proximity to other people. And they work the cash-only jobs, service jobs, services in buildings, home health aides, that we start to lose. Our growth is going to depend on giving support to these immigrants, many of whom suffered and lost family members.

What do you think the city should do to support a recovery?

The questions we are looking at today are access to housing, equity and fairness, and those issues need to be tackled head on. Those issues are now on the front burner. Housing is something to watch. People are living in overcrowded housing situations, and I think that’s one of the reasons the crisis was so bad.

What’s the best bet for a recovery?

What we pray will happen is that the city will come back with a ferocity we have never seen in food, beverage, entertainment and hotels. All of that is going to come back. And hopefully the immigrant population will prosper because of that. That’s the key.

What does the city look like on the eve of your departure?

The city is 37 percent foreign-born, and if you add the next generation, it’s more than 50 percent. We have more than three million immigrants. The largest groups are from China, Dominican Republic and Mexico. We have a mix that is much more varied than in other places. Don’t be fooled by percentages. If someone says that only 2 percent of the city’s population not proficient in English speaks Arabic — that’s more than 35,000 people who need assistance learning English!

You worked to make sure hundreds of thousands of New York City addresses were added to the Census Bureau’s address list. And you were brought in as an expert witness in the legal challenge to the Trump administration’s effort to add a citizenship question to the census in 2019. Why is the census important?

The New York attorney general realized they needed someone in court to show the damage that could be done, if there was a citizenship question. I ended up live, in court, with a map. “Look at this map. If the census doesn’t get a good response, look at the damage that gets done.” That is a major point in my career because the outcome was favorable. I feel like I was defending my father and the people that came before, and after me.

And the address list for New York City is the best it could ever be. That’s my pride and joy. Being able to get the city its fair share of representation.

How can the next chief demographer help New York City to bounce back, and perhaps help counter xenophobia and racism?

Our job is interpretation, making people understand the facts. If people understand the facts and if people understand the diversity with facts, maybe we will replace the hostility. I think 98 percent of it is driven by fear of change. I would like to think that most New Yorkers, real New Yorkers, look at change and they learn to accept it. This is what it means to live in a dynamic city.

PHOTO: Joseph J. Salvo, the city’s chief demographer, last week in the Bronx. He is retiring. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GREGG VIGLIOTTI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 8, 2021

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[***What’s Better Than Charity?; Tressie McMillan Cottom***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64B1-J7M1-DXY4-X29V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

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**Byline:** Tressie McMillan Cottom

**Highlight:** Mutual aid fulfills needs, but it also builds stronger, more resilient communities.

**Body**

This article is part of Times Opinion’s Holiday Giving Guide 2021. For other ideas on where to donate this year, please see [*the rest of our guide here*](http://nytimes.com/givingguide2021).

This holiday season, I am thinking a lot about the difference between charity and mutual aid. Perhaps it’s something about the pandemic that has made me crave social connection. Or perhaps I am returning to my roots. My family was not wealthy, or even solidly middle class, for most of my childhood. But we had a big appetite for giving to people.

My great-great-grandfather offered small loans to his rural Black community long before banks would lend to Black people. For my parents and their siblings, it looked like taking people into our homes when they needed it, feeding people when we noticed someone skipping meals and giving away a car when someone was struggling to get to work. My great-grandmother was fond of reminding all of her children and their children of the two rules of giving: Always give better than you would buy for yourself, and never call attention to your giving. It was implied that doing so for others — giving your best and affording people their dignity — would mean that when our time came to be on the receiving end of someone’s giving, they would afford us the same. This reciprocity is what distinguishes mutual aid from other types of giving.

I now know that my family’s culture of mutual aid was very much in keeping with our social class. We believe that rich people give away money, when it is more true that rich people like to raise money. Whether you call it a benefit or a charity or a fund-raiser, philanthropy is a highly organized affair for the wealthiest Americans. With some [*qualifications*](https://econofact.org/are-rich-people-really-less-generous) about what counts as charity, [*study*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/12/opinion/sunday/how-to-get-the-wealthy-to-donate.html) after [*study*](https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/news/environment/poor-people-really-are-more-charitable-than-the-rich-according-to-new-research-93441/) shows that lower-income people are more generous than higher-income people.

There are a lot of reasons for this, but I believe there is one in particular on which we should meditate this year: Lower-income people give more because the giving establishes a culture of reciprocity, one that not only meets material needs but also builds the political power and social connections that makes them more resilient.

When your economic circumstances make you sensitive to the fickle nature of good fortune, you learn that being resilient is just as important as receiving a holiday bonus. As I look across my various communities this year, I see that resilience is low, and that is true among both my highly educated, well-off friends and my ***working-class*** friends and family. If we want to inspire the kind of giving that generates social connection, maybe we should give as poor people do.

[*Matthew Whitley*](https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/why-mutual-aid-social-solidarity-not-charity/), writing for Open Democracy, distinguishes between mutual aid and charity by calling to the former’s appeal to collectivity: It “emphasizes horizontal networks of solidarity rather than ‘top down’ solutions, networks that flow in both directions and sustain the life of a community.” In concrete terms, mutual aid looks like members of a community sussing out what another member needs — through conversations held over a text or email chain, in an online social media group, during a kaffeeklatsch in the park — and then learning how best to meet that need by collaborating with that community member.

So perhaps a group of neighbors, for instance, coordinates buying the sleeping bags or patching the roof or delivering the meals to the person in need — the aid is bidirectional, or relational. Mutual aid encourages relationships among people, whereas philanthropy builds ties between people and organizations. They may both be useful amid a patchwork of care. But mutual aid has the added benefit of expanding a community’s capacity to build more ways to give. That is the part that most resonates with me during this holiday in particular.

It has been a brutal two years for us collectively, and we experience much of that brutality individually. Covid broke families and friend networks and associations into the smallest possible constituent parts and banished us to our homes. Even when we entered public spaces, we sprung webs of social norms that prohibited public life. That is why so many of us are lonely. Researchers [*found that*](https://www.chcf.org/blog/pandemic-loneliness/) 40 percent of people felt more socially isolated at the height of the pandemic than they had previously. Some of us are both isolated and terrorized: White racial violence, police brutality and even just the coarseness of routine interactions affect some groups more than others. We are stressed out and angry with one another, rationally afraid of real monsters and irrationally afraid of phantoms. Against a backdrop of muted celebrations and abortive attempts for us to relaunch a “new normal,” giving as part of a collective feels especially good.

Mutual aid reflects one of my most deeply held beliefs: that every big political problem is rooted in our everyday lives. When our nation-states fail us, it is because we have already failed one another. Mutual aid is a corrective for our culture’s competitive individualization, which has isolated us from one another. Connecting with your neighbors to solve a real, immediate problem for someone you might bump into while you’re out walking the dog or doing errands is ultimately a gift to yourself.

Finding a local mutual aid organization or cause might take a bit more effort than finding a charitable organization, but it is worth it. It develops the muscle memory for giving in a way that stretches our empathy as well as our social ties. If you need help figuring out a way to give money and time directly to people who need it, you can check out the [*Mutual Aid 101*](https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vRMxV09kdojzMdyOfapJUOB6Ko2_1iAfIm8ELeIgma21wIt5HoTqP1QXadF01eZc0ySrPW6VtU_veyp/pub?) guide by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Mariame Kaba. Another good way to start is by searching “mutual aid” and your city on your search engine of choice. In my area of North Carolina, for instance, [*Mutual Aid Carrboro*](https://mutualaiddisasterrelief.org/co-conspirators/mutual-aid-carrboro/) keeps a collective ear to the ground for unmet needs and then meets them.

I would also like to tell you about three organizations that would be great stewards of your donation. Each of them has some personal significance for me. As a researcher and an educator, I believe in the liberatory potential of accessible humanities and social-science education. Having access to stimulating literature and social science because of libraries and a well-read family absolutely set the course of my life. I want that opportunity for everyone, yet we generally reserve it for those fortunate enough to make it to college.

I obviously believe in higher education. I have staked my entire professional identity on it. But higher education is not a panacea for social conflict and greed. We have seen what happens when the public does not share an ability to evaluate different kinds of evidence and truth claims, and a basic orientation toward intellectual curiosity. Misinformation and disinformation have become a political strategy. One need look no further than the rancid, politically motivated attacks on teaching culturally responsive history, literature, STEM and current events. The attack on what is mislabeled “critical race theory” is an attack on the very idea of humanistic inquiry.

No single intellectual tradition has reason cornered, and that is why humanities education is so vital to public life. Unfortunately, wealth inequality and financial pressures threaten to make humanistic learning in a group an elite privilege. The [*Night School Bar*](https://fundraising.fracturedatlas.org/night-school-bar/campaigns/4584) in Durham, N.C., is one organization trying to make social inquiry available through pay-as-you-can classes.

Most of my research advocacy has been for higher education, but education is a continuum. The inequalities that show up in college begin much earlier in the pipeline. [*The Carter G. Woodson School*](https://cartergwoodsonschool.org/school-donate-today-duplicate/) in Winston-Salem, N.C., is continuing a 25-year mission to serve the area’s Black and Latino students. The school involves families in a comprehensive curriculum that includes a school farm program, a robotics program and a very competitive soccer team. It also has a balanced approach to comprehensive K-12 education that de-emphasizes testing and emphasizes caring for the whole child. Because the school offers so many comprehensive services to students and to families of modest means, it has a lot of financial needs.

Finally, on a larger scale, [*Mother Health International (MHI)*](http://motherhealth.org/highlights/we-are-mother-health/)offers a way to give that is very personal to me. One of the essays in my book “Thick” describes my experience of going into preterm labor — it was the most traumatic health experience of my life. However, what I don’t detail in that essay is the fact that it was far from the only traumatic or negative interaction I have had with U.S. health care. Our health care system is no picnic for most people, but it’s even worse if you’re a woman. Caroline Criado Perez, the writer and feminist economist, is good on this. Her book “Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men” is an infuriating survey of how data across many domains — from seatbelt measurements to pharmaceutical testing — fail to account for women’s health.

And those failures are [*compounded*](https://www.thelily.com/how-would-you-change-your-obgyn-visits-this-tweet-got-3000-responses/) by race and class and sexual identity and ability. The most glaring consequence of these systematic health inequalities is the domestic and international mortality rates for Black children and Black pregnant people. MHI trains midwives in the United States and in Uganda who are culturally responsive advocates for vulnerable women and babies.

A mutual aid community will make your corner of the world better this holiday season. Giving to the Night School Bar, the Carter G. Woodson School or Mother Health International will increase their capacity to provide vital services to others. Happy holidays and conscientious giving to you all.

This article is part of [*Times Opinion’s Holiday Giving Guide 2021*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/15/opinion/charitable-gift-ideas.html). The author has no direct connection to the organizations mentioned. If you are interested in any organization mentioned in the Times Opinion’s Giving Guide 2021, please go directly to its website. Neither the authors nor The Times will be able to address queries about the groups or facilitate donations.

Tressie McMillan Cottom (@[*tressiemcphd*](https://twitter.com/tressiemcphd)) is an associate professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science, the author of “Thick: And Other Essays” and a 2020 MacArthur fellow.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Diana Ejaita FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 17, 2021

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[***The Cinderella Myth We Can't Quit***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6428-JDJ1-JBG3-602R-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Rhonda Garelick

**Body**

The same woman who stars as the embodiment of poverty in Netflix's ''Maid'' is a brand ambassador for one of the world's largest luxury companies. How very 2021.

Margaret Qualley has attained mega-celebrity of late, in two very disparate roles: She is the star of ''Maid,'' a bingeable Netflix series (based on Stephanie Land's namesake memoir) about a young single mother's struggle with grinding poverty, homelessness and hunger. And she is a ''brand ambassador'' for Chanel, representing one of the world's most exclusive luxury labels.

How do we make sense of these two gigs, which feel light-years apart?

In ''Maid,'' Ms. Qualley's character, Alex, flees an abusive partner, takes refuge in a women's shelter and winds up scrubbing toilets for a living, barely able to feed herself and her young daughter -- all while looking after her troubled mother (movingly played by Ms. Qualley's actual mother, Andie MacDowell).

Though the series has an uplifting end, the overall message remains bleak: It's a story about America's inadequate social safety net, generational cycles of poverty and addiction, and hard-working people always just a few dollars away from extreme hunger or eviction. As Alex, Ms. Qualley downplays her striking beauty, with minimal makeup, a haphazard ponytail and a wardrobe of shapeless, used clothes, including her drab maid's uniform.

An accomplished actress with ballet training, Ms. Qualley is highly adept at creating compelling expressions and evoking strong emotion with her voice, face and body. It takes nothing away from these talents to acknowledge that they do not exist independently of her beauty. Knowing how to use one's physical instrument is a sine qua non of both modeling and acting. Ms. Qualley has a conventional fashion physique -- tall and slim -- with a cinema face: mobile with sharply defined features; wide, almost childlike blue eyes; and a wide, charismatic smile to match.

In ''Maid,'' we root for Alex, admiring her grit and determination. And part of our attachment to her is undeniably visual: It's pleasurable to watch Ms. Qualley, and that pleasure encourages us to follow -- to consume -- her story and hence the series.

Hollywood has been pegging narrative to women's beauty for over a century now. It's a process integral to the star system; and Ms. Qualley is a star. The way she wears her beauty is woven into the experience of ''Maid'' -- inextricable from the story. In a sense, Ms. Qualley is also wearing the story; the narrative is draped on her shoulders, like clothes on a fashion model. And even as we follow Alex's near-constant crises and catastrophes, we are sustained by the expectation of her salvation and uplift in the end, in part because of her beauty.

Centuries of fairy tales, novels and films have conditioned us to expect that the beautiful, downtrodden young woman will be saved -- revealed as a secret princess, plucked from obscurity, rescued by a prince or, as with the more contemporary twist in ''Maid'' (spoiler alert): recognized for her writing talent and granted a college scholarship.

It's still the ancient Cinderella narrative baked into virtually all of women's popular culture. (In a tragic, thwarted-Cinderella subplot, Alex's mother, Paula, a beautiful artist, tries and fails repeatedly to find a decent man to save her from poverty.)

Planet Chanel feels light-years away from the world of ''Maid.'' As the brand's ambassador, Ms. Qualley uses her face and figure to conjure the classic Chanel fantasy landscape of ultra-French luxury and elegance -- a place where no one worries about gas money or food stamps. Here, Ms. Qualley's beauty is more overt, her glam quotient dialed up to ''stun.'' As the literal ''face'' of Chanel, Ms. Qualley is on offer as another consumable commodity, positioned against backdrops designed to convey global sophistication, refinement and indulgence.

Last July, for example, Chanel showed its fall 2021 collection at the Palais Galliera, the neo-Renaissance mansion and fashion museum in Paris's ultraposh 16th Arrondissement. There, Ms. Qualley glided out for the finale, resplendent in a showstopper bridal gown: a white silk confection whose silhouette -- fitted waist, flaring voluminous skirt and slightly puffed shoulders -- telegraphed ''storybook princess.'' Beaming beneath a sequined mesh veil, Ms. Qualley made a radiant, if fictional, bride.

Concluding a runway show with a bride is an old-fashioned tradition, which Chanel has practiced throughout the years. Presenting a wedding dress as the finale confirms its status as the most powerful and transformational element of a woman's wardrobe, the signal of her social elevation to wifedom. And the creative director Virginie Viard's spectacular princess-style gown only amplified this, punctuating her collection with a happily-ever-after grace note. Here again, Ms. Qualley was anointed a modern-day Cinderella.

Sometimes, the fantasy power of fashion doesn't even require clothes. Two weeks ago, Ms. Qualley posted a photograph of herself on Instagram, rising from the ocean, nude but for five strategically placed Chanel handbags. Had Botticelli's Venus stopped by Rodeo Drive? Was this a holiday selfie taken by a lady of leisure? (Who else would risk these bags in saltwater? Prices start at about $4,000 and go up to $10,000.)

The photo was taken by Cass Bird for Hommegirls magazine, and as with most luxury fashion images, the point was not to make sense but to associate the desirability of the celebrity with the desirability -- and buyability -- of the commodity. The objects are placed next to, or directly on, the beautiful feminine body, to indicate that consuming them -- buying the bags -- will somehow transfer the pleasure of that scene to viewers, inducting them into that carefree vista of sea, sex, beauty and wealth.

No brand understands this process better than the Maison Chanel, a corporation whose founder, Coco Chanel, used fashion to elevate herself from poverty to global-billionaire status. And here is where we begin to see that Ms. Qualley's two -- apparently discordant -- professional roles are actually intimately related: Like Alex the maid, Coco Chanel spent her youth struggling to survive utter destitution and miserable low-wage jobs.

But she designed her way out of it. She created an entire luxury signaling system: the CC logo, the tweeds, the pearls, the perfume, meant to lend an aura of charmed belonging to herself, which she then marketed to her millions of customers. And rather than reject her ***working-class*** past, Chanel mined it for design inspiration, basing many of her most successful fashions on workers' clothing. Most famously, her little black dress recalls the typical uniform worn by French housemaids at the time.

As an avatar of the Maison Chanel, Ms. Qualley turns out to be the perfect casting choice for the star of ''Maid,'' for just beneath the luxury of the Chanel brand lies a story not unlike that of ''Maid,'' a story of extreme deprivation and ambition -- which spurred the creation of the entire company. In other words, there's an Alex-the-maid hovering just out of sight in every Chanel ad.

The reverse can be true, too. Sometimes, that is, Ms. Qualley helps us see the Chanel-esque luxury element hiding within Alex the maid. In one episode for example, Alex ''borrows'' an expensive cashmere sweater from Regina (played by Anika Noni Rose), a wealthy housecleaning client, and wears it to entertain a date in Regina's home, which she pretends is her own.

Wrapped in beige cashmere, fully made up, seated on expensive furniture with wineglass in hand, Ms. Qualley looks like she belongs there. She looks, that is, as if she might be the kind of woman who can afford many Chanel bags.

''Maid'' uses such moments to prepare us for Alex's eventual escape from poverty. ''See?'' it seems to reassure us, ''Alex belongs to this other, finer world. That world you've seen her (or this actress) representing in magazine ads.'' In the series' last episode, a college-bound Alex tries to return the cashmere sweater, but Regina insists she keep it, noting it cost $1,400. Alex gives in and accepts the gift, and with it, her own inevitable upward mobility. She is accepting princess status from a queen -- the aptly named Regina.

From opposite sides of the pop-culture continuum, ''Maid'' and the Maison Chanel contemplate different strata of women's lives, social class, aspiration, the desire for escape and indulgence, and the way society commodifies images of femininity and inserts them perpetually into fairly narrow, even predictable narratives. In her unique position representing simultaneously the extreme ''rags'' and ''riches'' poles of the classic princess story line, Ms. Qualley reminds us of just how close those two sides remain.

Rhonda Garelick is the dean of the School of Art and Design History and Theory at Parsons/The New School and the author of ''Mademoiselle: Coco Chanel and the Pulse of History.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/style/cinderella-myth-maid-netflix.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/style/cinderella-myth-maid-netflix.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, Margaret Qualley as Alex in the Netflix series ''Maid.'' Right, Ms. Qualley as a bride in Chanel's fall 2021 haute couture show in Paris. Below, the fashion designer Coco Chanel, shown in Paris in 1944, was something of a Cinderella figure herself. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICARDO HUBBS/NETFLIX

VALERIO MEZZANOTTI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** November 11, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A Neighborhood Revels in the Spotlight***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62WN-SBJ1-JBG3-63TF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 11, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 11

**Length:** 1036 words

**Byline:** By Sandra E. Garcia

**Body**

As throngs of residents watched, the stars of the movie, set in Washington Heights, walked a sunny yellow carpet outside the United Palace.

At the Plaza de las Americas in Washington Heights, fruit and vegetable vendors usually sell produce until dusk. But on Wednesday, it was transformed into a replica of any other block in the neighborhood. There was a mock bodega, decorated with three Dominican flags that hung from an awning, a faux fire hydrant and a plastic fruit stand. Underneath the entire set ran a yellow carpet.

The reproduction served as a backdrop for the luminaries attending for the premiere of ''In the Heights,'' the big-screen adaptation of Lin-Manuel Miranda and Quiara Alegría Hudes's Tony-winning Broadway show. The sunny carpet welcomed the cast and crew back to the Upper Manhattan neighborhood where it was filmed. The premiere, which also served as opening night of the 20th Tribeca Festival, was held at the United Palace, a majestic 91-year-old theater with a projection system that, years earlier, before his success on Broadway, Miranda had helped raise money to buy and then helped install.

While the actors, producers and executives streamed down the yellow carpet, pausing for pictures with photographers and interviews with the news media, the real Washington Heights whirred behind them. Waitresses at Malecon, a Dominican restaurant across the street from the plaza, peered outside the windows in between serving heaps of rice, stew chicken and beans, trying to figure out why crowds had formed in front of their restaurant on a sticky 90-degree day.

Diners at El Conde Nuevo, another Dominican restaurant across the street, stood on the corner also trying to decipher the rumpus outside. And then, Miranda -- wearing a pale blue, long-sleeve chacabana, jeans and the same Nike Air Force 1s, often called Uptowns in the City, that he wore to the Broadway opening of ''In the Heights'' -- arrived with his family, and everyone erupted in cheers.

Jorge Peguero, 71, was on his way home when he stopped and became a proud member of the crowd.

''I've lived here my whole life, and this is fantastic,'' said Peguero, a resident of Washington Heights since 1969. ''It's a big deal that Tribeca chose to represent the Dominican community, and it's the first time ever that we see anything like it.''

Miranda, who still lives in Washington Heights, had hoped to premiere the movie where it is set.

''All I ever wanted was this neighborhood to be proud of themselves and the way they are portrayed,'' said Miranda, who was within walking distance of his home and his parent's home. ''I still walk around here with my headphones on, and everyone is just like well, Lin-Manuel is writing.''

''I feel safe here,'' he added.

Many Washington Heights residents have not yet had their encounter with Miranda in the neighborhood. Eglis Suarez, 48, was hoping to change that.

''I want to see Lin,'' she said. ''We are so proud, this is progress for this community and for the city.''

Exuberant and critically adored, ''In the Heights,'' directed by Jon M. Chu, is a look at the shifts that happen between first- and second-generation immigrants. The elders hope to make it out of the neighborhood they left home for, while their younger counterparts plan to stay in the neighborhood they call home. It is a story that has occurred a million times over in the area and one that Hudes, who also lives there, encountered daily while filming.

''This isn't about a hero or a protagonist, it's about what happens when a community holds hands together and life kind of pushes those hands apart,'' said Hudes, who wore large hoops and a flower-print jumpsuit. ''It's about these blocks and these living rooms where you go after school and do your homework or play bingo during a blackout, it's all here.''

Washington Heights has been home to middle- and ***working-class*** Dominicans since the 1960s. In the 1980s, the neighborhood, like many others in the city, was flooded with cocaine and crack, making it unsafe for the community. Those days are past now and some residents say it's time to move on from a narrative in countless movies and rap songs that no longer fits the neighborhood.

''I'm so proud of this movie,'' said Sandra Marin Martinez, 67, a lifelong Washington Heights resident. ''Who wouldn't be? At least there's no shooting.''

''Everything is dancing, these are my people, I grew up dancing here,'' she added as she waited for a glimpse of the cast walking into the theater.

Yudelka Rodriguez, 51, was standing with her daughter waiting for the cast to arrive. She was excited to see her hood in the movie and herself represented.

''I am so emotional,'' Rodriguez said as she leaned on a metal gate. ''This is the most beautiful thing, to see that your barrio is involved in this; it's the best feeling.''

That feeling is something Paula Weinstein, an organizer of the Tribeca Festival (which dropped ''film'' from its name this year), hoped to replicate all over the city with this movie.

''This is what we've been dreaming of -- New York is back,'' Weinstein said. ''This is a tribute to the Dominican community, this is what is the best of New York. Every generation of immigrants start one place and move into the community, That's what's great about New York, that's what we want to celebrate.''

In the theater, Robert De Niro, a founder of the festival, introduced Miranda, who then introduced the rest of the cast. The energy was electric from the stage to the seats. When a title card that read ''Washington Heights'' appeared on the screen, the crowd whooped and applauded.

When the movie's star, Anthony Ramos, arrived, the makeshift set was surrounded by a small crowd. As he stepped out in black-and-white cheetah-print pants, with a matching shirt and jacket, gingerly placed on his shoulders, the crowd at the corner of 175th and Broadway thundered with applause and cheers.

''I didn't grow up even going to Broadway, and most New York people don't grow up going to Broadway,'' said Ramos, who is a Brooklyn native. ''To tell a New York story about a community that's so familiar and so special to people from New York is particularly special for me.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/10/movies/in-the-heights-premiere.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/10/movies/in-the-heights-premiere.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top from left: Gregory Diaz IV and Jimmy Smits

Dascha Polanco

and Lin-Manuel Miranda and Anthony Ramos at the premiere of ''In the Heights.'' Above, the United Palace, a 91-year-old theater in Washington Heights and the site of the premiere. Right, Maritza Luna, left, and Eglis Suarez were among the fans waiting outside the theater for a glimpse of the stars. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NINA WESTERVELT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 11, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Expecting a Surge; The Morning Newsletter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:649S-4XR1-JBG3-60X3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1711 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** We look at the latest on Omicron.

**Body**

We look at the latest on Omicron.

Get ready for the Omicron surge, and take it seriously. But remember that the vaccines appear to provide strong protection against what matters most: severe Covid illnesses.

That’s my reading of experts’ reactions to the latest developments on the Omicron variant. Today, I will walk through them.

Highly contagious

The news over the past few days — both scientific studies and real-world data — has added to the evidence that Omicron is [*more contagious*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/omicron-coronavirus-variant.html) than any previous version of the Covid-19 virus.

In South Africa, where Omicron was first identified, the recent rise has been steeper than during any previous surge. “When Omicron enters a community, the increase in case numbers looks like a vertical line,” Dr. Paul Sax of Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston said.

In Britain, new cases also [*hit a record yesterday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/world/europe/uk-covid-record-cases.html). In the U.S., Omicron has not yet spread as widely, but scientists believe it’s only a matter of time.

One reason that Omicron seems to spread so quickly is that it causes more cases among the vaccinated than earlier variants, although they are likely to be mild. “There will be a lot of breakthrough cases,” Dr. Jennifer Lighter, an epidemiologist at N.Y.U. Langone Health, told me.

Dr. Muge Cevik, an infectious-disease expert at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, [*noted on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/mugecevik/status/1471112266523320323) that much about Omicron remains uncertain, but its infectiousness seems clear:

The only thing I am sure of is that Omicron will spread so quickly through the population, making it likely impossible to contain even with the most stringent measures and giving us very little time over the next few weeks. So get your vaccines and boosters!

I know that some readers will find this news extremely alarming. And it is alarming in several respects: Unvaccinated adults are at even greater risk than they were a few weeks ago, and about 15 percent of American adults [*remain unvaccinated*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/covid-19-vaccine-doses.html). (The global share of unvaccinated adults is probably not much higher; many of the world’s unvaccinated people are children, and serious Covid illness remains extremely rare in children.)

The large number of unvaccinated adults means that Omicron may lead to spikes in Covid hospitalizations and deaths, which in turn could overwhelm some hospitals. This prospect is why Cevik emphasized the importance of the next few weeks. Persuading more vaccine skeptics in both [*the U.S.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/08/briefing/covid-death-toll-red-america.html) and [*other countries*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/01/briefing/vaccine-hesitancy-africa-omicron.html) to get shots — before the Omicron surge has fully arrived — can save a lot of lives.

“I have been telling my unvaccinated patients that it is extremely urgent for them to start a vaccine series as soon as possible,” Dr. Aaron Richterman of the University of Pennsylvania said.

The power of vaccines

The most encouraging news about Omicron is that it does not appear to cause more severe illness than earlier versions of the virus.

Some evidence even suggests Omicron is less severe. A new study from Hong Kong, for example, found that Omicron replicated itself less efficiently than Delta inside the lungs, which could make it less likely to cause acute symptoms. But many scientists say it is too soon to be confident.

Either way, the crucial question for most people is not whether Omicron is less severe than earlier versions of the virus; the question is whether Omicron is more severe. So far, the answer is no.

If that continues to be true, it will mean that Omicron — like earlier variants — presents only a very small risk of serious illness to most vaccinated people. It is the kind of risk that people accept every day without reordering their lives, [*not so different*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/12/briefing/when-will-covid-end.html) from the chances of hospitalization or death from the flu or a car crash.

Unfortunately, there are some vaccinated people for whom any Covid case remains a threat. Those whose health is already vulnerable — like the elderly, people undergoing cancer treatments, people who have received organ transplants and some other groups — can become extremely ill from a Covid case that is mild in a technical sense. Their bodies are weak enough that any infection can cause major problems. It’s the same reason that the seasonal flu kills tens of thousands of Americans annually.

These are the people, in addition to the unvaccinated, who [*need the most attention*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/briefing/covid-age-risk-infection-vaccine.html) now that Omicron has arrived.

Next steps

What can be done? A few things, experts say:

* Anybody [*eligible for booster shots*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/09/us/politics/pfizer-boosters-16-17-year-olds.html) — Americans 16 and older who received their second vaccine dose at least six months ago — should get one. Boosters appear to make a major difference against Omicron, as Dr. Anthony Fauci and experts at the World Health Organization [*emphasized yesterday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/health/omicron-vaccine-severe-disease.html).

1. Even if your health is not vulnerable, a booster can reduce the chances you contract Covid and pass it on to somebody who is vulnerable. Likewise, vaccinating children can protect their grandparents.
2. [*Rapid tests*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/24/briefing/thanksgiving-covid-rapid-test.html)— more widely available than a few months ago — can help, too. If you’re socializing with somebody who is medically vulnerable, try to take a test beforehand. And the Biden administration [*can do more*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/12/14/joe-biden-home-covid-testing-public-health-failure/) to cut the tests’ costs, many experts say.

We will learn more about Omicron in coming weeks, and the facts could still become either more worrisome or less so. For now, the variant seems to represent a step toward the future of Covid. It will not disappear, but there are many ways to lessen its toll — and live as normal a life as possible.

As Dr. Monica Gandhi and Dr. Leslie Bienen, two public health experts, wrote in [*a recent Times Opinion article*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/11/opinion/why-hospitalizations-are-now-a-better-indicator-of-covids-impact.html), “America is in the slow process of accepting that Covid-19 will become endemic — meaning it will always be present in the population at varying levels.”

THE LATEST NEWS

The Virus

* The Covid death toll in the U.S. [*has surpassed 800,000 people*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/15/world/covid-omicron-vaccines/covid-deaths-in-the-united-states-surpass-800000).

1. N.Y.U. joined other colleges in [*canceling events*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/15/world/covid-omicron-vaccines#nyu-events-canceled-covid).
2. Broadway shows [*are canceling performances*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/theater/broadway-coronavirus-cancellations.html), and the Metropolitan Opera [*will soon require boosters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/arts/music/met-opera-coronavirus-booster-shots-mandate.html) for attendees.
3. The C.D.C. found that its tests from early in the pandemic [*had a basic design flaw*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/health/cdc-covid-tests-contaminated.html).
4. A lawsuit [*accused the radio broadcaster Dave Ramsey*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/14/us/dave-ramsey-lawsuit-covid.html) of firing an employee for wearing masks and for wanting to work from home.

Politics

* Loyalists in Congress [*fought to keep Donald Trump in office*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/us/politics/trump-meadows-republicans-congress-jan-6.html) by pressuring government officials and plotting to disrupt the Jan. 6 election certification.

1. The Federal Reserve will wind down its economic stimulus more quickly [*to fight inflation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/business/economy/inflation-fed-fomc-meeting-december-2021.html). (Here’s why Jerome Powell, the Fed chair, [*pivoted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/upshot/jerome-powell-inflation-pivot.html).)
2. The Senate passed a [*$768 billion defense bill*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/us/politics/defense-spending-bill.html).

Other Big Stories

* Last week’s tornadoes in Kentucky destroyed historic buildings and an iconic clock tower. [*See photos of the devastation*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/15/us/mayfield-kentucky-tornado-damage.html).

1. High winds and tornadoes swept through the middle of the U.S., knocking out power and causing [*dust storms and wildfires*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/15/us/midwest-storms-tornado-news#kansas-fire-wind-storm).
2. Derek Chauvin [*pleaded guilty*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/us/derek-chauvin-civil-rights-guilty-plea.html) to violating George Floyd’s civil rights. He also admitted to violating the civil rights of a 14-year-old in 2017.
3. A Chicago woman whom police officers forced to stand naked while they searched her apartment [*will receive*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/us/anjanette-young-chicago-police-settlement.html) a $2.9 million settlement.
4. Bruce Springsteen [*sold his music catalog to Sony Music Entertainment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/arts/music/bruce-springsteen-sells-music-catalog.html). The transaction’s value may exceed $500 million.

Opinions

Gun owners should have to keep their weapons stored [*in a safe, locked place*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/opinion/michigan-school-shooting.html), Gail Collins argues.

The N.F.L.’s [*silence about Dan Snyder*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/2021/12/15/roger-goodell-daniel-snyder-nfl-investigation/) reeks, Sally Jenkins writes in The Washington Post.

MORNING READS

Anne Rice: Shortly before she died, the “Vampire Chronicles” author [*spoke to the Book Review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/books/review/anne-rices-final-interview-i-am-known-to-be-passionate.html) about reading and writing.

Uninvited house guests: 80,000 honey bees. [*In a shower wall*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/us/bee-hive-shower.html).

Tech Fix: Four resolutions for [*a healthier tech life in 2022*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/technology/personaltech/relationship-with-technology.html).

A Times classic: How to make friends [*while traveling alone*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/16/travel/how-to-make-friends-while-traveling-solo.html).

Lives Lived: bell hooks, who used all lowercase letters in her name, pushed feminism to include the voices of Black and ***working-class*** women. She [*died at 69*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/books/bell-hooks-dead.html).

ARTS AND IDEAS

A year of looking back

In 2021, so many [*cultural moments involved reassessing the past*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/arts/music/britney-spears-woodstock-recent-past.html) through a contemporary lens.

Music documentaries examined the rise of [*Alanis Morissette*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/18/movies/jagged-review.html) and [*Woodstock ’99*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/23/movies/woodstock-99-peace-love-and-rage-review.html) — itself a reboot of the 1969 festival. On TV, [*“Impeachment: American Crime Story”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/01/business/media/american-crime-story-streaming.html) recast Monica Lewinsky as the heroine of the Bill Clinton sex scandal. Documentaries, including by The Times, spotlighted how the media and the public mistreated both [*Britney Spears*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/12/arts/music/britney-spears-documentary-media.html) and [*Janet Jackson*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/malfunction-the-dressing-down-of-janet-jackson.html). And Rolling Stone [*updated*](https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-lists/best-songs-of-all-time-1224767/) its popular “500 Greatest Songs of All Time” list to try to correct earlier racial and gender biases.

As Lindsay Zoladz writes in The Times, “A bit of cultural flotsam from the last 25 years would suddenly drift back up to the top of our collective consciousness and spread wildly, demanding renewed attention in the context of the present.”

Beyond the past quarter-century, other projects helped shine a light on overlooked pieces of history. The documentary “Summer of Soul” [*introduced new viewers to the Harlem Cultural Festival,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/movies/questlove-summer-of-soul-harlem-cultural-festival.html) concerts performed by Nina Simone, Stevie Wonder and others in 1969 as the Black Power movement grew increasingly prominent.

“The lesson to be taken from all these reconsiderations is not necessarily how much wiser we are now,” Lindsay writes, “but how difficult it is to see the biases of the present moment.” — Sanam Yar, a Morning writer

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

Pomegranate and chicken were made for each other in [*this vibrant Iranian stew*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1022792-khoresh-morgh-nardooni-pomegranate-chicken-stew?action=click&amp;region=Sam%20Sifton%27s%20Suggestions&amp;rank=4).

Trend Alert

[*Corsets are back*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/style/corset-comeback.html).

What to Listen to

Some classical music! Here are recordings by Mozart and Brahms, [*as well as new stuff*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/arts/music/best-classical-music-opera-recordings.html).

Late Night

The hosts [*discussed Mark Meadows*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/16/arts/television/colbert-mark-meadows-contempt.html).

Now Time to Play

The pangram from yesterday’s Spelling Bee was formula. Here is today’s puzzle — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Perfectly timed (five letters).

If you’re in the mood to play more, find [*all our games here*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. — David

P.S. New York Times Games and Cooking both [*reached one million subscribers*](https://www.nytco.com/press/both-cooking-and-games-reach-1-million-subscriptions/). Thank you, players and chefs!

Here’s [*today’s print front page*](https://static01.nyt.com/images/2021/12/16/nytfrontpage/scan.pdf).

“[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about abortion. On “[*Popcast*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/14/arts/music/popcast-best-albums-2021.html),” the best albums of the year.

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Ashley Wu and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](mailto:themorning@nytimes.com).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

PHOTO: A line at a London vaccination site. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Andrew Testa for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 16, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Cinderella Myth We Can’t Quit; face Forward***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6422-X891-DXY4-X15C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1549 words

**Byline:** Rhonda Garelick

**Highlight:** The same woman who stars as the embodiment of poverty in Netflix’s “Maid” is a brand ambassador for one of the world’s largest luxury companies. How very 2021.

**Body**

The same woman who stars as the embodiment of poverty in Netflix’s “Maid” is a brand ambassador for one of the world’s largest luxury companies. How very 2021.

Margaret Qualley has attained mega-celebrity of late, in two very disparate roles: She is the star of “[*Maid*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/01/arts/television/review-maid-netflix.html),” a bingeable Netflix series (based on Stephanie Land’s namesake memoir) about a young single mother’s struggle with grinding poverty, homelessness and hunger. And she is a “brand ambassador” for Chanel, representing one of the world’s most exclusive luxury labels.

How do we make sense of these two gigs, which feel light-years apart?

In “Maid,” Ms. Qualley’s character, Alex, flees an abusive partner, takes refuge in a women’s shelter and winds up scrubbing toilets for a living, barely able to feed herself and her young daughter — all while looking after her troubled mother (movingly played by Ms. Qualley’s actual mother, Andie MacDowell).

Though the series has an uplifting end, the overall message remains bleak: It’s a story about America’s inadequate social safety net, generational cycles of poverty and addiction, and hard-working people always just a few dollars away from extreme hunger or eviction. As Alex, Ms. Qualley downplays her striking beauty, with minimal makeup, a haphazard ponytail and a wardrobe of shapeless, used clothes, including her drab maid’s uniform.

An accomplished actress with ballet training, Ms. Qualley is highly adept at creating compelling expressions and evoking strong emotion with her voice, face and body. It takes nothing away from these talents to acknowledge that they do not exist independently of her beauty. Knowing how to use one’s physical instrument is a sine qua non of both modeling and acting. Ms. Qualley has a conventional fashion physique — tall and slim — with a cinema face: mobile with sharply defined features; wide, almost childlike blue eyes; and a wide, charismatic smile to match.

In “Maid,” we root for Alex, admiring her grit and determination. And part of our attachment to her is undeniably visual: It’s pleasurable to watch Ms. Qualley, and that pleasure encourages us to follow — to consume — her story and hence the series.

Hollywood has been pegging narrative to women’s beauty for over a century now. It’s a process integral to the star system; and Ms. Qualley is a star. The way she wears her beauty is woven into the experience of “Maid” — inextricable from the story. In a sense, Ms. Qualley is also wearing the story; the narrative is draped on her shoulders, like clothes on a fashion model. And even as we follow Alex’s near-constant crises and catastrophes, we are sustained by the expectation of her salvation and uplift in the end, in part because of her beauty.

Centuries of fairy tales, novels and films have conditioned us to expect that the beautiful, downtrodden young woman will be saved — revealed as a secret princess, plucked from obscurity, rescued by a prince or, as with the more contemporary twist in “Maid” (spoiler alert): recognized for her writing talent and granted a college scholarship.

It’s still the ancient Cinderella narrative baked into virtually all of women’s popular culture. (In a tragic, thwarted-Cinderella subplot, Alex’s mother, Paula, a beautiful artist, tries and fails repeatedly to find a decent man to save her from poverty.)

Planet Chanel feels light-years away from the world of “Maid.” As the brand’s ambassador, Ms. Qualley uses her face and figure to conjure the classic Chanel fantasy landscape of ultra-French luxury and elegance — a place where no one worries about gas money or food stamps. Here, Ms. Qualley’s beauty is more overt, her glam quotient dialed up to “stun.” As the literal “face” of Chanel, Ms. Qualley is on offer as another consumable commodity, positioned against backdrops designed to convey global sophistication, refinement and indulgence.

Last July, for example, Chanel showed its fall 2021 collection at the Palais Galliera, the neo-Renaissance mansion and fashion museum in Paris’s ultraposh 16th Arrondissement. There, Ms. Qualley glided out for the finale, resplendent in a showstopper bridal gown: a white silk confection whose silhouette — fitted waist, flaring voluminous skirt and slightly puffed shoulders — telegraphed “storybook princess.” Beaming beneath a sequined mesh veil, Ms. Qualley made a radiant, if fictional, bride.

Concluding a runway show with a bride is an old-fashioned tradition, which Chanel has practiced throughout the years. Presenting a wedding dress as the finale confirms its status as the most powerful and transformational element of a woman’s wardrobe, the signal of her social elevation to wifedom. And the creative director Virginie Viard’s spectacular princess-style gown only amplified this, punctuating her collection with a happily-ever-after grace note. Here again, Ms. Qualley was anointed a modern-day Cinderella.

Sometimes, the fantasy power of fashion doesn’t even require clothes. Two weeks ago, Ms. Qualley posted a photograph of herself on Instagram, rising from the ocean, nude but for five strategically placed Chanel handbags. Had Botticelli’s Venus stopped by Rodeo Drive? Was this a holiday selfie taken by a lady of leisure? (Who else would risk these bags in saltwater? Prices start at about $4,000 and go up to $10,000.)

The photo was taken by Cass Bird for Hommegirls magazine, and as with most luxury fashion images, the point was not to make sense but to associate the desirability of the celebrity with the desirability — and buyability — of the commodity. The objects are placed next to, or directly on, the beautiful feminine body, to indicate that consuming them — buying the bags — will somehow transfer the pleasure of that scene to viewers, inducting them into that carefree vista of sea, sex, beauty and wealth.

No brand understands this process better than the Maison Chanel, a corporation whose founder, Coco Chanel, used fashion to elevate herself from poverty to global-billionaire status. And here is where we begin to see that Ms. Qualley’s two — apparently discordant — professional roles are actually intimately related: Like Alex the maid, Coco Chanel spent her youth struggling to survive utter destitution and miserable low-wage jobs.

But she designed her way out of it. She created an entire luxury signaling system: the CC logo, the tweeds, the pearls, the perfume, meant to lend an aura of charmed belonging to herself, which she then marketed to her millions of customers. And rather than reject her ***working-class*** past, Chanel mined it for design inspiration, basing many of her most successful fashions on workers’ clothing. Most famously, her little black dress recalls the typical uniform worn by French housemaids at the time.

As an avatar of the Maison Chanel, Ms. Qualley turns out to be the perfect casting choice for the star of “Maid,” for just beneath the luxury of the Chanel brand lies a story not unlike that of “Maid,” a story of extreme deprivation and ambition — which spurred the creation of the entire company. In other words, there’s an Alex-the-maid hovering just out of sight in every Chanel ad.

The reverse can be true, too. Sometimes, that is, Ms. Qualley helps us see the Chanel-esque luxury element hiding within Alex the maid. In one episode for example, Alex “borrows” an expensive cashmere sweater from Regina (played by Anika Noni Rose), a wealthy housecleaning client, and wears it to entertain a date in Regina’s home, which she pretends is her own.

Wrapped in beige cashmere, fully made up, seated on expensive furniture with wineglass in hand, Ms. Qualley looks like she belongs there. She looks, that is, as if she might be the kind of woman who can afford many Chanel bags.

“Maid” uses such moments to prepare us for Alex’s eventual escape from poverty. “See?” it seems to reassure us, “Alex belongs to this other, finer world. That world you’ve seen her (or this actress) representing in magazine ads.” In the series’ last episode, a college-bound Alex tries to return the cashmere sweater, but Regina insists she keep it, noting it cost $1,400. Alex gives in and accepts the gift, and with it, her own inevitable upward mobility. She is accepting princess status from a queen — the aptly named Regina.

From opposite sides of the pop-culture continuum, “Maid” and the Maison Chanel contemplate different strata of women’s lives, social class, aspiration, the desire for escape and indulgence, and the way society commodifies images of femininity and inserts them perpetually into fairly narrow, even predictable narratives. In her unique position representing simultaneously the extreme “rags” and “riches” poles of the classic princess story line, Ms. Qualley reminds us of just how close those two sides remain.

Rhonda Garelick is the dean of the School of Art and Design History and Theory at Parsons/The New School and the author of “Mademoiselle: Coco Chanel and the Pulse of History.”

PHOTOS: Above, Margaret Qualley as Alex in the Netflix series “Maid.” Right, Ms. Qualley as a bride in Chanel’s fall 2021 haute couture show in Paris. Below, the fashion designer Coco Chanel, shown in Paris in 1944, was something of a Cinderella figure herself. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICARDO HUBBS/NETFLIX; VALERIO MEZZANOTTI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

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**End of Document**



[***Domestic Terrorism***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:611D-KW41-DXY4-X123-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1835 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** And what else you need to know today.

**Body**

And what else you need to know today.

Want to get The Morning by email? [*Here’s the sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Good morning. The Nobel Peace Prize goes to the World Food Program. Trump says no to a virtual debate. And the F.B.I. foils a plot to kidnap Michigan’s governor.

Three years ago, the polling firm YouGov asked Americans whether they thought it could ever be justified for their political party to use violence to advance its goals. The overwhelming response was no. Only 8 percent of people said anything other than “never.”

This year, YouGov asked the same question — and the share saying that political violence could be somewhat justified roughly doubled. The increase spanned both Democratic and Republican respondents.

I thought of that alarming finding yesterday, after law enforcement officials [*charged 13 men with a violent plot*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) that included storming the Michigan State Capitol and kidnapping Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. Conservative groups have criticized Whitmer for her attempts to control the coronavirus by restricting normal activities. In April, President Trump [*tweeted, “LIBERATE MICHIGAN!”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)

Yesterday’s arrests are the latest evidence that a small but meaningful number of Americans believe that violence is the only answer to the country’s political divisions. “We’re seeing more and more citizens expressing openness to violence as more and more partisan leaders engage in the kinds of dehumanizing rhetoric that paves the way for taking violent action,” Lee Drutman, one of the political scientists who oversaw the YouGov poll, told me.

Since May, more than 50 people have driven vehicles into peaceful protesters. Armed protesters [*shut down*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) the Michigan legislature in May. Armed groups on the left and right have done battle in Oregon and Wisconsin. Extremists have attacked journalists, including [*an instance in Brooklyn on Wednesday night*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

“Political violence in democracies often seems spontaneous: an angry mob launching a pogrom, a lone shooter assassinating a president,” Rachel Kleinfeld of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace [*recently wrote in The Washington Post*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). “But in fact, the crisis has usually been building for years.” She added, “This is where America is now.”

It’s important to note that the problem is bipartisan — and also that it is not equally bad on both sides: The American right today has a bigger violence problem than the American left. Of the 42 killings by political extremists last year, [*right-wing extremists committed 38*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), according to the Anti-Defamation League.

And top Republican politicians have encouraged violence in ways no prominent Democrat has. Greg Gianforte, a Republican congressman now running to be Montana’s governor, [*pleaded guilty to assaulting a reporter*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) who asked a question he didn’t like in 2017.

Trump, for his part, has encouraged violence against protesters at his rallies and has often refused to condemn violent white-supremacist groups, including during last week’s debate. Whitmer, speaking after the arrests yesterday, cited that debate: “Hate groups heard the president’s words not as a rebuke, but as a rallying cry, a call to action,” she said.

Political scientists emphasize that the drift toward violence is not inevitable. When political leaders denounce violence, it often influences public opinion, [*research suggests*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). These denouncements are especially effective when leaders — or individuals — criticize their own side for engaging in violence. Condemning the other side is easy.

“Outbreaks of political violence are a real threat,” [*Brendan Nyhan, a government professor at Dartmouth, has written*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). “Every person of good faith in either party must speak up.”

For more on Michigan: [*The Detroit News reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) that some of the plot’s conspirators met during a Second Amendment rally at the Michigan State Capitol in June. And one expert [*told The Detroit Free Press*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) that Michigan “has always been a hotbed for militia activity.”

THE LATEST NEWS

* Trump threw the schedule for the two remaining presidential debates into doubt. He [*refused to take part in Thursday’s debate*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) after its organizers announced the event would be held virtually, to prevent spreading the virus. In response, Joe Biden’s campaign said it would hold a televised town hall instead.

1. Asked about the vice-presidential debate, Trump [*referred to Senator Kamala Harris as a “monster.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) Biden called the comment “despicable,” and said Trump “has great difficulty dealing with strong women.”
2. Biden, Harris and Vice President Mike Pence all [*traveled to Arizona yesterday*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), a sign that both campaigns believe the historically Republican state is up for grabs in November. Polls show Biden leading narrowly there.
3. Daily polling diary: Biden’s share of the vote is up to 52 percent in The Times’s average of polls, [*an unusually high level for a candidate*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) at this stage in the race. And [*Nate Silver of FiveThirtyEight wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), “More polls are coming in showing Biden up double digits than not at this point.”

* The World Food Program, a United Nations agency, [*was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize today*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), during a pandemic that has “contributed to a strong upsurge in the number of victims of hunger in the world,” the committee said in a statement.

1. The White House physician said Trump had completed his treatment for Covid-19 and could [*resume public events*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) as soon as Saturday, after the president revealed early last Friday that he had tested positive.
2. Trump suggested that Gold Star families — those whose relatives have died in military conflicts — [*could have spread the virus at a White House event*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) last month. There is no evidence for the claim.
3. Mitch McConnell, the Republican leader of the Senate, said he had not been to the White House since early August because of its resistance to masks and social distancing. “Their approach to how to handle this is different from mine,” [*McConnell said*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
4. Mark Meadows, the White House chief of staff, hosted a 70-person indoor wedding for his daughter in May, [*The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). At the time, local public health rules limited gatherings to 10 people or fewer. Photographs showed none of the guests wearing masks.

* Forecasters expect [*Hurricane Delta to hit the Louisiana coast today*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), bringing high winds and heavy rains to a state that has already been battered this storm season.

1. Federal prosecutors charged Elliott Broidy, a top fund-raiser for Trump, with [*violating foreign lobbying laws*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to benefit Chinese and Malaysian interests.

* A Morning read: Online orders have surged for retailers in the pandemic, as curbside pickup helps Americans satisfy their desire to hop in a car and drive to the store. What started as a coronavirus stopgap is likely to have [*a permanent impact on the way people shop*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
* Lives Lived: He was the son of a public school custodian and an emergency room nurse who grew up to become one of the great chroniclers of New York life. He crusaded against injustice and covered 9/11, the police, the subway, the coronavirus and more for six daily newspapers. [*Our colleague Jim Dwyer has died at 63*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

IDEA OF THE DAY: What Trump obscures

Carlos Lozada, a Pulitzer Prize-winning book critic for The Washington Post, set himself a daunting (and arguably masochistic) task a few years ago: He decided to read every book that said something meaningful about the Trump era.

Ultimately, he has read more than 150 — books by the president’s most ardent defenders and harshest critics, as well as those about the larger forces that helped create Trumpism. Lozada has just published his own book about the experience, “[*What Were We Thinking*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).” One of its central points is that the best Trump books aren’t the obvious Trump books.

“The books I found most useful and enlightening in the Trump area have not necessarily been about Trump himself, but about the fights the country has always had in defining and redefining itself,” Lozada told me. Those books include Jennifer Silva’s “We’re Still Here,” about the rural ***working class***; Erika Lee’s “America for Americans,” about immigration; and others you can find mentioned [*toward the end of this excerpt*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). (He lists 12 in his epilogue.)

Some parts of Trumpism may quickly fade when his presidency ends. But many of the toughest arguments will not, Lozada suggests: What’s the right level of immigration? What should the future of policing look like? And what about voting rights, the Supreme Court and the state of America’s democracy?

For more: [*The Times review*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) calls Lozada’s book “crisp, engaging and very smart,” and [*The New Yorker Radio Hour*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) has interviewed him.

PLAY, WATCH, EAT, TART

Dessert first

Monday is Thanksgiving for Canadians. These [*delicious butter tarts,*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) a Canadian specialty, are an ideal treat regardless of where you live. Small and sweet, with hints of butterscotch and caramel, each bite delivers three textures: flaky crust, chewy top, gooey center. Adding pecans or raisins helps cut some of the sugar.

The French Open plays on

The French Open is approaching its final weekend, without fans. In the men’s draw, both Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic have reached the semifinals. (Here’s [*an analysis of Djokovic,*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) the youngest and least predictable of the Big Three of men’s tennis, which includes Nadal and Roger Federer.) The women’s final features Sofia Kenin, an American, and Iga Swiatek, an unseeded 19-year-old from Poland.

A TikTok competitor pays

When talk of a possible TikTok ban began in July, [*a small social video app called Triller*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) saw an opportunity. To attract users, the company set its sights on TikTok’s biggest names and shelled out. It rented Los Angeles mansions for top creators and paid for housekeeping, food and production equipment. When 16-year-old Charli D’Amelio, TikTok’s most-followed star, joined Triller, it provided her with a leased Rolls-Royce.

Diversions

* In [*this week’s Modern Love*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), a young man wonders — after losing his best friend, at 29, to the coronavirus — if love is worth the cost of grief.

1. The late-night comedy hosts were still focused on [*the fly at Wednesday’s vice-presidential debate*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Games

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), and a clue: Fast food chain with buckets (three letters).

Or try [*this week’s news quiz*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

[*You can find all of our puzzles here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you on Monday. — David

P.S. The word “[*whitesplainers*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)” appeared for the first time in The Times yesterday — in an article about [*Black communities on LinkedIn*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) — as noted by the Twitter bot @NYT\_first\_said.

You can see [*today’s print front page here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Today’s episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)” is about the campaign for Pennsylvania’s ***working-class*** voters. The Modern Love podcast is going to sound a little different this season. [*Listen to the trailer*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) and tune in every Wednesday starting next week.

Ian Prasad Philbrick and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

PHOTO: Demonstrators outside Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s office at the Michigan State Capitol in April. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Seth Herald/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 9, 2020

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[***How We Conduct Our Poll***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6076-W101-DXY4-X18K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 710 words

**Byline:** By Nate Cohn

**Body**

This week, The New York Times/Siena College released its first national survey of the 2020 election cycle, as well as polls of the six states likeliest to decide the presidency: Arizona, Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

As a reporter on the Upshot desk, I write about elections, polling and demographics, and I guided the methodological choices on the poll. Here's a rundown of how the poll works, the choices we made on its design and why you should consider trusting it despite all that happened four years ago.

What is the Times/Siena poll?

It's a telephone survey of registered voters, which starts with a list of everyone registered to vote in a state, with rich data like age and party registration on each voter. We get these voter registration files from L2, a nonpartisan voter data vendor. Many voters provide their phone number on their registration forms. In other cases, the numbers have been matched from commercial records. We draw a sample of these numbers, and our friends at Siena College and at call centers across the country dial away. And yes, we call cellphone numbers. About two-thirds of our interviews are usually completed on cellphones.

Does anyone pick up the phone anymore?

Some do. We usually complete interviews with about 1 or 2 percent of the voters we try to reach. Low response rates pose a serious challenge to survey research, and there are some known response biases among people who take phone surveys. But for now, it does not appear that the people who take phone surveys are vastly different politically from those who do not.

Why care about your polls after 2016?

This may be hard to believe, but we felt pretty good about our polling in 2016. The final Times/Siena polls, in Florida and North Carolina, had President Trump ahead or tied over the last 10 days of the race. Only one other live-interview pollster found the president leading in top-tier battleground states over the final stretch.

When we analyzed our data after the election, we saw opportunities to refine the way we poll but were satisfied with many of our findings, like results showing Mr. Trump with a wide lead among white ***working-class*** voters.

In 2018, we conducted a greater number of political surveys than we had in 2016. We had an average error of around only three points over nearly 50 polls of House races over the final three weeks, with virtually no bias toward either party. Over the final 10 days, the average error was just over two points. Out of more than 400 pollsters, the Times/Siena poll is one of only six to earn an A+ rating from the analysis website FiveThirtyEight.

Why do you think these polls are good?

One, we use voter files and account for partisanship. Perhaps our greatest advantage over even other high-quality pollsters is that we can adjust for the partisan makeup of the electorate, using data available on voter registration files. We can ensure we have the right number of registered Republicans or Democrats, the right number of people who voted in the 2020 Democratic primary, the right number of precincts that voted heavily for Mr. Trump. This is possible only because we start our poll with a voter registration file (not all pollsters do). It doesn't ensure our results are perfect (and a poll can still be top-notch without this step), but it gives us extra confidence that we're not fundamentally missing Democrats or Republicans, who may at times become more or less likely to respond to surveys.

Two, we adjust for education. Our samples are adjusted to properly represent voters without a college degree, based on census data. Many state pollsters still don't adjust their samples by education, and this is considered one of the major reasons that state polls overestimated Hillary Clinton's standing in 2016.

Three, we contact hard-to-reach groups. We spend a lot of money to complete interviews with groups that all pollsters struggle to reach: low-turnout voters like younger people or Hispanics. These groups are always important, but properly representing low-turnout voters was an essential part of why our polls were closer to the mark than most other polls in our postelection analysis of 2016 surveys -- another reason for confidence in our approach.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/25/reader-center/26a2\_insider-poll.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/25/reader-center/26a2_insider-poll.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A voting station in Brooklyn. The Times/Siena College survey draws from registered voters. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AMR ALFIKY/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 27, 2020

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[***Ocasio-Cortez Builds Progressive Campaign Arm to Challenge Democrats***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y85-6WT1-DXY4-X456-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1471 words

**Byline:** Catie Edmondson

**Highlight:** Ms. Ocasio-Cortez endorsed a slate of progressive challengers to Democratic candidates and incumbents, working to create a liberal counterweight to the party’s official campaign arm.

**Body**

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez endorsed a slate of progressive challengers to Democratic candidates and incumbents, working to create a liberal counterweight to the party’s official campaign arm.

WASHINGTON — Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez on Friday endorsed an all-female slate of progressive candidates through her new political action committee, using her clout in the insurgent left and the considerable campaign funds she has drawn to counter the Democratic establishment in key races around the country.

The endorsements of the congressional candidates — including one who is challenging Senate Democrats’ preferred candidate in Texas — amount to a powerful stamp of approval for a diverse group of newcomers. They also are a clear sign that Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, a celebrity of the liberal left, intends to leverage her influence among activists to try to reshape the Democratic Party.

The move also underlines the struggle among Democrats that is defining the race for the presidency, which is pitting Senator Bernie Sanders, the self-described democratic socialist, against more moderate candidates who are presenting themselves as better able to appeal to a broad section of voters in taking on President Trump. Ms. Ocasio-Cortez has traversed the country to campaign for Mr. Sanders, and her efforts to pull Congress to the left parallel his bid to deploy his progressive message to emerge as the Democratic nominee, an effort that has [*instilled fear*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/12/us/politics/bernie-sanders-democrats.html) in many centrist lawmakers who believe it could cost them their seats.

“One of our primary goals is to reward political courage in Congress and also to help elect a progressive majority in the House of Representatives,” Ms. Ocasio-Cortez said in an interview. “There’s kind of a dual nature to this: One is opening the door to newcomers, and the other is to reward members of Congress that are exhibiting very large amounts of political courage.”

Her own upset victory in 2018 over a 20-year Democratic congressman has inspired a slew of Democratic primary challenges across the nation targeting powerful incumbents — though many have little chance of winning. Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, who toppled a top party leader in her primary election, has carefully selected the races in which she is intervening with an eye for districts where her seal of approval would help the primary challenger prevail.

“Anyone can show up one day and say, ‘I support all these policies; that makes me a progressive,’” she said. “But one of the things that is really important to us is winning.”

In the committee’s first slate of endorsements, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez is backing seven women running for congressional seats, including Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez, a labor and voting rights activist who is running against the candidate endorsed by Senate Democrats’ campaign arm, M.J. Hegar, to take on a Republican, Senator John Cornyn. Three others — Teresa Leger Fernandez in New Mexico, Samelys López in New York, and Georgette Gómez in California — are running for open seats in Democratic districts; Ms. Gómez has also been endorsed by Mr. Sanders. Another, Kara Eastman, is challenging Representative Don Bacon, Republican of Nebraska, for a second time.

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez has already announced her support for primary challengers to a pair of her House Democratic colleagues: Marie Newman, who is running against Representative Daniel Lipinski of Illinois, and Jessica Cisneros, who is seeking to oust Representative Henry Cuellar of Texas.

Democratic strategists say that Ms. Ocasio-Cortez could shape the terrain for congressional candidates in powerful ways.

“We’ve never seen somebody break onto the scene with this amount of potential and ability to drive the conversation and drive financial commitments from supporters,” said Ian Russell, a former deputy executive director of House Democrats’ campaign arm. “The challenge for her is determining where she wants to spend her capital.”

Leveraging her name recognition and ability to bring in an avalanche of donations with a single post on Twitter, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez began the Courage to Change political action committee in January, pledging to elect “***working-class*** champions” and explicitly framing the enterprise as a progressive counterweight to House Democrats’s campaign arm.

“When community leaders, activists, and ***working-class*** candidates try to run for office, organizations like the D.C.C.C. discourage them,” read a fund-raising pitch for the committee, using the acronym for the campaign arm, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. “These potential progressive leaders are asked: ‘Can you raise $300,000 from your friends and family? If not, don’t bother trying.’”

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez said she saw her role as breaking down the barriers to entry for the kinds of Democrats who should be serving.

“It’s important for us to create mechanisms of support because so much of what is happening in Washington is driven by fear of loss,” she said in the interview. “We can really create an ecosystem that makes people more comfortable into making the leap to make politically courageous choices.”

The endorsements reflect a careful calculus by Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, who came to Congress vowing to take down Democrats who were not sufficiently progressive, but she has since [*tempered that zeal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/12/us/politics/bernie-sanders-democrats.html). In both cases where she has thrown her support behind a challenger to a sitting lawmaker, the incumbents have broken with key Democratic orthodoxies; Mr. Lipinski opposes abortion rights, while Mr. Cuellar has an “A” rating from the National Rifle Association.

She has not yet endorsed a candidate vying to oust any of the party elders, including the leaders of several high-profile committees who are facing primary challenges, like Representative Richard E. Neal of Massachusetts, the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Representative Jerrold Nadler of New York, who leads the Judiciary Committee, or Representative Eliot L. Engel of New York, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

The House Democratic campaign arm [*infuriated progressives last year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/12/us/politics/bernie-sanders-democrats.html) when   [*it formalized a policy barring campaign vendors*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/12/us/politics/bernie-sanders-democrats.html) from conducting business with a primary opponent of a sitting Democrat, a move intended to shield incumbents. Democratic leaders defended the policy, arguing it was reasonable to afford incumbents that level of protection.

Top progressive lawmakers in the House in January [*signed onto a temporary détente*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/12/us/politics/bernie-sanders-democrats.html), but Ms. Ocasio-Cortez made clear she would continue to refuse paying the party dues and press forward with her own fund-raising.

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee has “always been the gatekeeper and to some extent it still is,” Mr. Russell said.

But, he added, “we are seeing new forces like AOC on the scene, breaking through the gates.”

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez raised $1.4 million in January, according to her campaign, with nearly 20,000 contributions directed specifically to the political action committee. The average contribution was about $17.

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez’s star power has already surged as she campaigns for Mr. Sanders, drawing thousands to rallies and raising larger questions about what she will do next.

“Alexandria is a real political talent,” said Representative Ro Khanna, Democrat of California, and an ally of Ms. Ocasio-Cortez’s. “She has made an enormous impact on the Green New Deal, and I predict she will be governor or senator in the near future and then off to the races after that.”

Mr. Trump [*made a more provocative prediction this month*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/12/us/politics/bernie-sanders-democrats.html), writing on Twitter that Ms. Ocasio-Cortez would mount a primary challenge to Senator Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York and the minority leader, and win because of “how badly” he said Mr. Schumer had handled impeachment. A spokesman for Mr. Schumer declined to comment.

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez said that she was not sure what her next move in politics would be — and that she sometimes wondered how long she would stay in politics. Until then, she said she would work to elect more people like herself to serve in the House and Senate.

“While I think sometimes a lot of people see this as a huge amassing of influence or power or money or what have you, my personal experience does not feel that way — it can feel very lonely,” she said. “I think my ambition right now is to be a little less lonely in Congress.”

PHOTOS: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has traveled the country campaigning for Bernie Sanders, which has increased her political star power. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AMY KONTRAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Ms. Ocasio-Cortez is supporting seven women through a political action committee, including Jessica Cisneros, at left, who is challenging the Democratic congressman Henry Cuellar in Texas, and Teresa Leger Fernandez, right, who is running for an open seat. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CALLAGHAN O’HARE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; RAMSAY DE GIVE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Confronting Jabs About Where He Lives, Adams Goes on the Offensive***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62WN-SBJ1-JBG3-63TW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 11, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 19

**Length:** 1096 words

**Byline:** By Anne Barnard and Mihir Zaveri

**Body**

The leader in the N.Y.C. mayoral race decided to join in the debate he had earlier said he would skip. His supporters said they were standing firm.

Eric Adams on Thursday vigorously fought off accusations that he has misled New York City voters about his residency, a daylong defense that included a last-minute decision to join four of his mayoral rivals in a debate that he had intended to skip.

The day included his release of a year's worth of E-ZPass statements, meant to prove that he was not regularly commuting from a home he co-owns in Fort Lee, N.J., and an appearance in South Brooklyn with transit workers who endorsed him, saying they did not care where he lived, slept or visited as long as he worked for their interests.

It concluded with his surprise appearance at the debate, which he had said he would skip for a vigil honoring a 10-year-old killed in gun violence. But by Thursday morning, the brouhaha had grown to the point that, Mr. Adams said, his attendance at the vigil for Justin Wallace, the 10-year-old killed in a shooting in Queens over the weekend, would be ''a painful distraction.''

Mr. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president and a leading mayoral candidate, blamed his opponents for trying to ''politicize'' the vigil.

But even after three days of scrutiny -- including the unusual spectacle on Wednesday of reporters peering into the refrigerator and closets of a basement apartment in a building he owns in Brooklyn, where he said he lives -- there was still not much clarity on whether voters should be worried about revelations reported in Politico New York of apparent discrepancies in his official residence and his reportable income as a landlord.

The E-ZPass toll records revealed a smattering of trips to New Jersey, presumably to the apartment that he co-owns with his partner across the George Washington Bridge from Upper Manhattan. But there was nothing to cement rivals' accusations that he was living there, or even visiting on a weekly basis.

Questions also centered on Mr. Adams's failure to report rental income on his federal tax returns; Mr. Adams has blamed his accountant, and said he would release amended returns, but did not provide them on Thursday.

And even if Mr. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, was not living in New Jersey, it appeared that he was spending overnights in Brooklyn Borough Hall -- an oddity given that his position is largely ceremonial and would not seem to require extended overnight hours even with the added pressure of campaigning, as he has suggested.

Indeed, if Mr. Adams did live in New Jersey, it would be unlikely to affect his eligibility to be mayor. State law only says that he has to be living in New York City on Election Day in November, according to the state Board of Elections.

So the controversy about his residence and work habits, at least for now, comes down to a battle of perceptions. And it was a battle where Mr. Adams appeared so far to be holding his own.

By Thursday afternoon, Mr. Adams seemed to be relishing the confrontation, cheerful and surrounded by steadfast supporters from the transit workers' union.

''A question came up, and I answered it,'' he said as he trotted to his car after speaking to city bus drivers at a depot in southern Brooklyn. ''I did it the New York way. I didn't run from it. I confronted the problem head on, the same way I confronted bad guys as a police officer.''

The divide that was emerging was between rivals and critics who saw the confusion as a sign that Adams was evasive and possibly ethically challenged, and supporters who saw the whole issue as ginned up by rivals to distract from his appeal to ***working-class*** New Yorkers.

Was he sleeping in Brooklyn's Borough Hall, or New Jersey, to evade taxes, while running as a lifelong public servant and dyed-in-the-wool New Yorker -- at worst violating laws, at best displaying poor time management and disorganization that might not bode well for running the city?

Or was his chaotic-seeming lifestyle something more ordinary and relatable, the eccentric habit of a man with a life devoted to work and politics and overflowing, like so many other people's, with conflicting commitments to professional, personal and family life?

The latter take was how Roberto Martinez, a bus driver and a former police officer, saw it. At the bus depot with fellow members of Transport Workers Union Local 100, he called the candidate ''a New Yorker true and blue.''

''It doesn't matter,'' he said of the residency question. ''If you're in Manhattan, you can see New Jersey. If that's the best they've got, forget it. The president of the U.S. lives in Washington, D.C. That doesn't mean he doesn't represent the people in Washington, D.C., and the people in New Hampshire. If he wants to go spend the weekend in Jersey with his girlfriend, it's not going to matter to me.''

Election law experts said that the law was on Mr. Adams's side.

The state law governing residency states that ''residence'' means a ''place where a person maintains a fixed, permanent and principal home and to which he, wherever temporarily located, always intends to return.''

Courts have generally allowed candidates to have two residences, and they can select one as their ''political home,'' said Martin Connor, an election lawyer who was a state senator for 30 years until 2008.

Mr. Connor, who is not working for any of the mayoral candidates, said courts have typically been generous with candidates, at times allowing people to claim a place as their residence even if they stay there only two nights a week. He said that Mr. Adams' choice to stay with his girlfriend in New Jersey ''doesn't obviate his Brooklyn residence.''

''Usually you're OK if you got an apartment, you got a bed, you got a refrigerator, particularly if you own the building,'' he said.

Mayor Bill de Blasio also sided with Mr. Adams.

''I've known Eric Adams for decades,'' he said during his daily news briefing on Thursday. ''He's a Brooklynite. He's a New Yorker. He's served the city in many different capacities. I just don't see an issue here.''

Carl Murray, 65, of Manhattan, called controversies like this one ''what I hate about politics,'' adding, ''You've got somebody doing something good, and you want to tarnish them.''

''I mean, doctors live out of town,'' Mr. Murray said. ''Lawyers live out of town. Judges live out of town.''

Mr. Murray said his criteria for a mayor are, ''You come here, do your job, be on time.''

Michael Rothfeld, Sean Piccoli and Dana Rubinstein contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/10/nyregion/eric-adams-apartment-debate.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/10/nyregion/eric-adams-apartment-debate.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Eric Adams said he had reconsidered his decision to attend a vigil for a slain 10-year-old, accusing his rivals of politicizing the event. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Dave Sanders for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 11, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Fireworks Are Back in N.Y.C. Are We in for Another Loud Summer?; New York Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62WN-CJH1-DXY4-X3P5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 11, 2021 Friday 19:42 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1075 words

**Byline:** Troy Closson

**Highlight:** It&#39;s a seasonal tradition in the city&#39;s streets, but the displays might not have the same energy they had last year.

**Body**

[Want to get New York Today by email? [*Here’s the sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).]

It’s Friday. [*Early voting*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) begins tomorrow. Check your [*polling site here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

Weather: Today, mixed clouds and sun, with a scattered shower and a high in the mid-70s. Much the same over the weekend.

Alternate-side parking: In effect until June 19 (Juneteenth).

The bright flashes, at times, filled neighborhood streets and skies from late afternoon to the hours before dawn.

[*Fireworks*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday), an entrenched tradition of New York City’s streets, drew greater attention than usual last year: The bangs and fizzles served as a release for some people after months of seclusion during the pandemic, but grumbles over them grew.

Mayor Bill de Blasio announced this week that a [*fireworks*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) task force that includes several local agencies would ([*again*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)) work to limit the movement of illegal pyrotechnics into the city — with a focus on sellers.

“There’s a real problem with the wrong kind of fireworks,” he said, referring to a [*3-year-old boy*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) who was injured last June when an illegal firework was shot off near the boy’s apartment window in the Bronx.

Here are a few things to know:

Complaints surged last year.

Fireworks are illegal to buy, sell or ignite in New York, but they have [*long been common in the summer*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday), especially in ***working-class*** neighborhoods and around July 4.

Last summer, coronavirus cases began to slow for the first time in the city. And amid a wave of protests following the murder of George Floyd, some New Yorkers said the displays — from firecrackers to louder explosions — served as a celebration of the respite from monotony and a demonstration of defiance toward the police.

The setting off of fireworks began earlier in the season than normal. And the [*grievances rose alongside them*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday): In the first half of June, 80 times as many complaints had come into the city’s 311 system as during the same period in 2019.

Loud summer nights are back, but they might be tamer.

The city’s reopening and far different place in the pandemic makes it unclear whether the same energy will erupt around fireworks displays this year. And vendors [*across the country*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) and [*in the region*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) are facing supply shortages for fireworks, which could limit their presence.

Still, on [*social media*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday), New Yorkers [*across the city*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) have shared recently that [*booms have returned*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) some evenings. While complaints have again risen long before July 4, totals are much lower than the loudest weeks of 2020.

And in other fireworks news …

Another (and for some, more welcome) show of pyrotechnics takes place on July 4 over the East River: Macy’s annual fireworks display. It will [*return this year*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) in its full, grand scale after changes last year, the mayor said this week.

From The Times

[*Top Mayoral Rivals Attack Adams and Clash on Policing and Ethics*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*Why Some Orthodox Jewish Women Won’t Get Vaccinated*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*Under Fire Over Residency, Eric Adams Goes on the Offensive*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*New York Rents Appear Close to Bottom*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*‘In the Heights’ Premiere Celebrates the Neighborhood That Started It All*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*No Broadway Shows? No Problem. Walking Tours Fill a Void.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

Want more news? [*Check out our full coverage*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

The Mini Crossword: Here is [*today’s puzzle*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

What we’re reading

More businesses are adopting requirements for patrons to show proof of vaccination. But the decisions have spurred backlash at times. [[*Eater New York*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

How trends in subway ridership are changing across the boroughs — and why Manhattan’s numbers remain particularly low. [[*The City*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

If you missed New York City’s rare partial solar eclipse yesterday morning, here’s more on the event and the next time it may occur. [[*NBC 4 New York*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

And finally: Your social weekend

The Times’s Melissa Guerrero writes:

While people are still connecting through virtual events and programs, as the summer season approaches and more people are getting vaccinated, venues and organizations are holding in-person events. Here are suggestions for maintaining a New York social life this weekend:

In person: Spring Zine Fair

On Saturday at 11 a.m., visit St. Marks Place between First and Second Avenue for a zine fair with exhibitors, poetry readings, composting workshops, performances and more.

For more information, visit the [*event page.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

In person: ‘In the Future our Asian Community is Safe’ mural

Celebrate the unveiling of a mural by the artist and film director Jess X. Snow on Saturday at 4 p.m. Enjoy an afternoon of music, poetry and performances, with a lineup of Asian American and Pacific Islander artists and activists, at 11 Mosco Street.

Register for free on the [*event page*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday). Donations are welcome.

Virtual: Queer history of Greenwich Village

On Saturday at 8 p.m., join the scholar and author Andrew Lear for an online tour of the West Village to learn about the neighborhood’s roots in New York City’s queer history.

Purchase tickets ($20) on [*event page*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

It’s Friday — time to celebrate.

Metropolitan Diary: Out and in

Dear Diary:

My husband decided that we would no longer park our car in the garage and pay the monthly fee but would instead park it on the street. By we, of course, he meant me.

At the time, I was a stay-at-home mom with one young child and another on the way. Roughly every day, I would wake up, take our child and move the car. Most days, I would spend over an hour just waiting for the street sweeper to come by.

As time passed, I made a few parking buddies on the block. It was a tightknit group, and we would defend one another’s spots if strangers came along and tried to grab them, and make sure cars that parked left enough space for others to squeeze in.

My husband decided to join me on my alternate-side-of-the street escapade one morning. As we sat in the car and I waved at the familiar faces, he was introduced to a new part of my life.

When the street sweeper appeared, he told me to drive around the block.

“Are you crazy?” I snapped at him. “I’ll never get a spot again.”

At that point, he turned and saw the line of cars behind me, like a rolling ocean wave or a baseball falling perfectly into a well-oiled mitt, pulling out into the street to make way out for the street sweeper and then backing into their empty spots.

“You do this every day?” my husband asked.

“No,” I said. “Not Wednesdays, snow days or legal holidays.”

— Leora Lambert

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What would you like to see more (or less) of? Email us: [*nytoday@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Amr Alfiky/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 20, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Free of Protesters, Paris Theaters Reopen With Little Imagination; Theater Review***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62WF-5DS1-DXY4-X27R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 10, 2021 Thursday 00:22 EST

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 1218 words

**Byline:** Laura Cappelle

**Highlight:** After more than two months of occupation by arts workers, the Odéon Theater returned to business with a prepandemic production that feels out of step with the current moment.

**Body**

After more than two months of occupation by arts workers, the Odéon Theater returned to business with a prepandemic production that feels out of step with the current moment.

PARIS — When the Odéon Theater reopened to audiences here with a staging of “The Glass Menagerie” at the end of May, its familiar columns looked somewhat naked. For two-and-a-half months, they had been adorned with large protest signs made by [*the arts workers occupying the theater*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/11/theater/france-theater-protests-pandemic-shutdown.html). Shortly before they left, one sign read: “Reopening: The Great Comedy.”

Inside occupied theaters around France, the situation grew increasingly tense in May after the government announced plans to allow performances to resume. On the one hand, a key goal of the protesters — the return of cultural life — was met. On the other, [*the occupations had morphed by then*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/11/theater/france-theater-protests-pandemic-shutdown.html) into a larger social movement with demands beyond the arts, including the withdrawal of coming changes to unemployment benefits.

That set protesters on a collision course with frustrated theater administrators. Yet as fast as they had spread in early March, the occupations stopped. Students at the Colline and T2G theaters left during the first week of June, while some elsewhere were forced out. The Odéon’s occupiers moved to a friendlier Paris venue, the Centquatre.

While watching “The Glass Menagerie,” though, it was hard to forget them. The Odéon didn’t help its case by reopening with a prepandemic, star-led production that felt worlds away from everything that has happened over the past year.

With the prominent director Ivo van Hove in the driver’s seat, “The Glass Menagerie” premiered shortly before the first French lockdown in March 2020. Its main selling point was the presence of Isabelle Huppert, taking the role of Amanda Wingfield, the former Southern belle teetering on the edge of reality, for the first time.

It was a work in progress when I saw it then, but it now looks as aimless as Amanda herself. The drab sets, by Jan Versweyveld, trap the cast inside brown walls decorated with the silhouette of Mr. Wingfield, Amanda’s absent husband, who abandoned the family years before.

The play’s characters are appropriately miserable in that décor, yet the actors often appear to be playing from different scores, in part because Huppert is an idiosyncratic stage presence these days. As Amanda, she is restless, even funny, as she repeatedly attempts to keep her son, Tom, from leaving by clinging to his legs. Van Hove feeds her over-the-top moments, including a scene in which she appears to masturbate on the kitchen counter while reminiscing about her youth.

Yet the performance often makes the production seem overly conscious of her aura, of her sheer Huppert-ness, to the point that her partners adjust to her energy when she is onstage.

The best scenes actually come when Laura, Amanda’s fragile daughter, is left alone with Jim, her old high-school crush. Cyril Gueï makes a kind, gentle Jim, and van Hove’s choice of a Black actor for the role reinforces the racial dynamics implicit in Amanda’s rose-tinted vision of the Old South. Gueï’s connection with Justine Bachelet’s Laura is genuine enough that for a second, a happy denouement seems within reach.

Laura, played as touchingly muted by Bachelet, briefly comes alive before resigning herself. Van Hove has given her a classic French song to sing as she gives Jim her glass unicorn as an adieu: Barbara’s 1970 “L’Aigle Noir” (“The Black Eagle”), about a traumatic childhood memory that feels exactly right for Laura’s character.

While capacity remained limited until this week to 35 percent of seats, a number of other theaters here rushed to reopen as soon as it became possible. At the tiny À La Folie Theater, the actress and director Laetitia Lebacq debuted a rare production of Jean-Paul Sartre’s 1946 play, “The Respectful Whore,” which is set, like “The Glass Menagerie,” in the American South.

While Sartre wrote a number of plays, they have mostly fallen out of fashion on the French stage. It’s a shame, because “The Respectful Whore,” while occasionally over-explanatory, sets up its central conflict in a compact, efficient manner. It takes place entirely at the home of a prostitute, Lizzie, who is caught up in a case of blatant racial discrimination. Two Black men are accused of raping her as a way of exculpating the white son of a senator, who shot one of them.

Lizzie herself is overtly racist, yet refuses to falsely testify that she was raped — until the senator and his son force her hand. Lebacq navigates the role of Lizzie without smoothing over her contradictions and occasional foolishness, and Baudouin Jackson brings pathos to the resignation of one of the nameless accused in the face of normalized racism. Philippe Godin, as the smooth-talking senator, and Bertrand Skol, who plays his repressed son, also make an excellent case for Sartre’s character development.

As summer nears, some venues have also turned to alfresco theater to draw audiences. At the Théâtre de la Tempête, Thomas Quillardet brought two shows adapted from movies by the Nouvelle Vague filmmaker Éric Rohmer. He was renowned for the quality of his dialogue, and both “Where Hearts Meet” (inspired by two films, 1984’s “Full Moon in Paris” and 1986’s “The Green Ray”) and “The Tree, the Mayor and the Mediatheque” flow and fizz like good champagne.

“The Tree, the Mayor and the Mediatheque,” based on the 1993 film of the same name and performed in a park just behind the venue, also stands out for its political relevance. This story of a small-town mayor whose plans to build a multimedia library run into opposition from green activists might unfold similarly today, down to its left-wing divisions on climate issues. It even features a song praising the joys of working from home — three decades before Covid-19 made that a widespread necessity.

Plays like this are a reminder of what we’ve gained as cultural institutions reopen in France, yet the experience remains in some ways bittersweet. For over two months, from March to May, occupiers essentially reclaimed venues, like the Odéon, that usually play host to a small subset of the French population.

According to the latest large-scale [*study of cultural habits in the country*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/11/theater/france-theater-protests-pandemic-shutdown.html), in 2018, only 12 percent of France’s ***working class*** had attended a theater performance in the previous year. The audience for prestige productions such as van Hove’s “Glass Menagerie,” especially, is hardly representative of French society at large.

After a year of upheaval, more imaginative offerings would have been welcome. What if directors around the country had given occupiers a chance to hold their own on the stages they spent so much time around? It’s not the social revolution protesters were gunning for, but it might have been a start.

The Glass Menagerie. Directed by Ivo van Hove. Odéon – Théâtre de l’Europe. Further performances planned in Tokyo, Athens and Amsterdam from September through November.

The Respectful Whore. Directed by Laetitia Lebacq. A La Folie Théâtre, through June 20.

Where Hearts Meet / The Tree, the Mayor and the Mediatheque. Directed by Thomas Quillardet. Théâtre de la Tempête, through June 20.

PHOTO: Isabelle Huppert in “The Glass Menagerie,” directed by Ivo van Hove at the Odéon. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jan Versweyveld FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 11, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Under Fire Over Residency, Eric Adams Goes on the Offensive***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62WH-6ST1-JBG3-639D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 10, 2021 Thursday 09:01 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1116 words

**Byline:** Anne Barnard and Mihir Zaveri

**Highlight:** The leader in the N.Y.C. mayoral race decided to join in the debate he had earlier said he would skip. His supporters said they were standing firm.

**Body**

The leader in the N.Y.C. mayoral race decided to join in the debate he had earlier said he would skip. His supporters said they were standing firm.

[*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/eric-adams-mayor-nyc) on Thursday vigorously fought off accusations that he has misled [*New York City*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/19/nyregion/voting-guide-mayors-race-new-york-city.html) voters about his residency, a daylong defense that included a last-minute decision to join four of his mayoral rivals in a debate that he had intended to skip.

The day included his release of a year’s worth of E-ZPass statements, meant to prove that he was not regularly commuting from a home he co-owns in Fort Lee, N.J., and an appearance in South Brooklyn with transit workers who endorsed him, saying they did not care where he lived, slept or visited as long as he worked for their interests.

It concluded with his surprise appearance at the debate, which he had said he would skip for a vigil honoring a 10-year-old killed in gun violence. But by Thursday morning, the brouhaha had grown to the point that, [*Mr. Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/18/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-primary.html) said, his attendance at the vigil for Justin Wallace, the 10-year-old killed in a shooting in Queens over the weekend, would be “a painful distraction.”

Mr. [*Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/nyregion/who-is-eric-adams.html), the Brooklyn borough president and a leading mayoral candidate, blamed his opponents for trying to “politicize” the vigil.

But even after three days of scrutiny — including the unusual spectacle on Wednesday of reporters peering into the refrigerator and closets of a basement apartment in a building he owns in Brooklyn, where he said he lives — there was still not much clarity on whether voters should be worried about revelations reported in [*Politico New York*](https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/albany/story/2021/06/08/burning-the-midnight-oil-eric-adams-mysterious-whereabouts-off-the-campaign-trail-1385412) of apparent discrepancies in his official residence and his reportable income as a landlord.

The E-ZPass toll records revealed a smattering of trips to New Jersey, presumably to the apartment that he co-owns with his partner across the George Washington Bridge from Upper Manhattan. But there was nothing to cement rivals’ accusations that he was living there, or even visiting on a weekly basis.

Questions also centered on Mr. [*Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/nyregion/who-is-eric-adams.html)’s failure to report rental income on his federal tax returns; Mr. Adams has blamed his accountant, and said he would release amended returns, but did not provide them on Thursday.

And even if Mr. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, was not living in New Jersey, it appeared that he was spending overnights in Brooklyn Borough Hall — an oddity given that his position is largely ceremonial and would not seem to require extended overnight hours even with the added pressure of campaigning, as he has suggested.

Indeed, if Mr. Adams did live in New Jersey, it would be unlikely to affect his eligibility to be mayor. State law only says that he has to be living in New York City on Election Day in November, according to the state Board of Elections.

So the controversy about his residence and work habits, at least for now, comes down to a battle of perceptions. And it was a battle where Mr. Adams appeared so far to be holding his own.

By Thursday afternoon, Mr. Adams seemed to be relishing the confrontation, cheerful and surrounded by steadfast supporters from the transit workers’ union.

“A question came up, and I answered it,” he said as he trotted to his car after speaking to city bus drivers at a depot in southern Brooklyn. “I did it the New York way. I didn’t run from it. I confronted the problem head on, the same way I confronted bad guys as a police officer.”

The divide that was emerging was between rivals and critics who saw the confusion as a sign that Adams was evasive and possibly ethically challenged, and supporters who saw the whole issue as ginned up by rivals to distract from his appeal to ***working-class*** New Yorkers.

Was he sleeping in Brooklyn’s Borough Hall, or New Jersey, to evade taxes, while running as a lifelong public servant and dyed-in-the-wool New Yorker — at worst violating laws, at best displaying poor time management and disorganization that might not bode well for running the city?

Or was his chaotic-seeming lifestyle something more ordinary and relatable, the eccentric habit of a man with a life devoted to work and politics and overflowing, like so many other people’s, with conflicting commitments to professional, personal and family life?

The latter take was how Roberto Martinez, a bus driver and a former police officer, saw it. At the bus depot with fellow members of Transport Workers Union Local 100, he called the candidate “a New Yorker true and blue.”

“It doesn’t matter,” he said of the residency question. “If you’re in Manhattan, you can see New Jersey. If that’s the best they’ve got, forget it. The president of the U.S. lives in Washington, D.C. That doesn’t mean he doesn’t represent the people in Washington, D.C., and the people in New Hampshire. If he wants to go spend the weekend in Jersey with his girlfriend, it’s not going to matter to me.”

Election law experts said that the law was on Mr. Adams’s side.

The state law governing residency states that “residence” means a “place where a person maintains a fixed, permanent and principal home and to which he, wherever temporarily located, always intends to return.”

Courts have generally allowed candidates to have two residences, and they can select one as their “political home,” said Martin Connor, an election lawyer who was a state senator for 30 years until 2008.

Mr. Connor, who is not working for any of the mayoral candidates, said courts have typically been generous with candidates, at times allowing people to claim a place as their residence even if they stay there only two nights a week. He said that Mr. Adams’ choice to stay with his girlfriend in New Jersey “doesn’t obviate his Brooklyn residence.”

“Usually you’re OK if you got an apartment, you got a bed, you got a refrigerator, particularly if you own the building,” he said.

Mayor Bill de Blasio also sided with Mr. Adams.

“I’ve known Eric Adams for decades,” he said during his daily news briefing on Thursday. “He’s a Brooklynite. He’s a New Yorker. He’s served the city in many different capacities. I just don’t see an issue here.”

Carl Murray, 65, of Manhattan, called controversies like this one “what I hate about politics,” adding, “You’ve got somebody doing something good, and you want to tarnish them.”

“I mean, doctors live out of town,” Mr. Murray said. “Lawyers live out of town. Judges live out of town.”

Mr. Murray said his criteria for a mayor are, “You come here, do your job, be on time.”

Michael Rothfeld, Sean Piccoli and Dana Rubinstein contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Eric Adams said he had reconsidered his decision to attend a vigil for a slain 10-year-old, accusing his rivals of politicizing the event. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Dave Sanders for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 23, 2021

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[***‘In the Heights’ Premiere Celebrates the Neighborhood That Started It All***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62WG-63M1-JBG3-632W-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1091 words

**Byline:** Sandra E. Garcia

**Highlight:** As throngs of residents watched, the stars of the movie, set in Washington Heights, walked a sunny yellow carpet outside the United Palace.

**Body**

As throngs of residents watched, the stars of the movie, set in Washington Heights, walked a sunny yellow carpet outside the United Palace.

At the Plaza de las Americas in Washington Heights, fruit and vegetable vendors usually sell produce until dusk. But on Wednesday, it was transformed into a replica of any other block in the neighborhood. There was a mock bodega, decorated with three Dominican flags that hung from an awning, a faux fire hydrant and a plastic fruit stand. Underneath the entire set ran a yellow carpet.

The reproduction served as a backdrop for the luminaries attending for the premiere of “[*In the Heights*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/16/arts/dance/in-the-heights-dance.html),” the big-screen adaptation of Lin-Manuel Miranda and Quiara Alegría Hudes’s [*Tony-winning Broadway show*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/16/arts/dance/in-the-heights-dance.html). The sunny carpet welcomed the cast and crew back to the Upper Manhattan neighborhood where it was filmed. The premiere, which also served as opening night of the 20th [*Tribeca Festival*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/16/arts/dance/in-the-heights-dance.html), was held at the United Palace, a majestic 91-year-old theater with a [*projection system*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/16/arts/dance/in-the-heights-dance.html) that, years earlier, before his success on Broadway, Miranda had helped raise money to buy and then helped install.

While the actors, producers and executives streamed down the yellow carpet, pausing for pictures with photographers and interviews with the news media, the real Washington Heights whirred behind them. Waitresses at Malecon, a Dominican restaurant across the street from the plaza, peered outside the windows in between serving heaps of rice, stew chicken and beans, trying to figure out why crowds had formed in front of their restaurant on a sticky 90-degree day.

Diners at El Conde Nuevo, another Dominican restaurant across the street, stood on the corner also trying to decipher the rumpus outside. And then, Miranda — wearing a pale blue, long-sleeve chacabana, jeans and the same Nike Air Force 1s, often called Uptowns in the City, that he wore to the Broadway opening of “[*In the Heights*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/16/arts/dance/in-the-heights-dance.html)” — arrived with his family, and everyone erupted in cheers.

Jorge Peguero, 71, was on his way home when he stopped and became a proud member of the crowd.

“I’ve lived here my whole life, and this is fantastic,” said Peguero, a resident of Washington Heights since 1969. “It’s a big deal that Tribeca chose to represent the Dominican community, and it’s the first time ever that we see anything like it.”

Miranda, who still lives in Washington Heights, had hoped to premiere the movie where it is set.

“All I ever wanted was this neighborhood to be proud of themselves and the way they are portrayed,” said Miranda, who was within walking distance of his home and his parent’s home. “I still walk around here with my headphones on, and everyone is just like well, Lin-Manuel is writing.”

“I feel safe here,” he added.

Many Washington Heights residents have not yet had their encounter with Miranda in the neighborhood. Eglis Suarez, 48, was hoping to change that.

“I want to see Lin,” she said. “We are so proud, this is progress for this community and for the city.”

Exuberant and [*critically adored*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/16/arts/dance/in-the-heights-dance.html), “In the Heights,” directed by Jon M. Chu, is a look at the shifts that happen between first- and second-generation immigrants. The elders hope to make it out of the neighborhood they left home for, while their younger counterparts plan to stay in the neighborhood they call home. It is a story that has occurred a million times over in the area and one that Hudes, who also lives there, encountered daily while filming.

“This isn’t about a hero or a protagonist, it’s about what happens when a community holds hands together and life kind of pushes those hands apart,” said Hudes, who wore large hoops and a flower-print jumpsuit. “It’s about these blocks and these living rooms where you go after school and do your homework or play bingo during a blackout, it’s all here.”

Washington Heights has been home to middle- and ***working-class*** Dominicans since the 1960s. In the 1980s, the neighborhood, like many others in the city, was flooded with cocaine and crack, making it unsafe for the community. Those days are past now and some residents say it’s time to move on from a narrative in countless movies and rap songs that no longer fits the neighborhood.

“I’m so proud of this movie,” said Sandra Marin Martinez, 67, a lifelong Washington Heights resident. “Who wouldn’t be? At least there’s no shooting.”

“Everything is dancing, these are my people, I grew up dancing here,” she added as she waited for a glimpse of the cast walking into the theater.

Yudelka Rodriguez, 51, was standing with her daughter waiting for the cast to arrive. She was excited to see her hood in the movie and herself represented.

“I am so emotional,” Rodriguez said as she leaned on a metal gate. “This is the most beautiful thing, to see that your barrio is involved in this; it’s the best feeling.”

That feeling is something Paula Weinstein, an [*organizer of the Tribeca Festival*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/16/arts/dance/in-the-heights-dance.html) (which dropped “film” from its name this year), hoped to replicate all over the city with this movie.

“This is what we’ve been dreaming of — New York is back,” Weinstein said. “This is a tribute to the Dominican community, this is what is the best of New York. Every generation of immigrants start one place and move into the community, That&#39;s what’s great about New York, that’s what we want to celebrate.”

In the theater, Robert De Niro, a founder of the festival, introduced Miranda, who then introduced the rest of the cast. The energy was electric from the stage to the seats. When a title card that read “Washington Heights” appeared on the screen, the crowd whooped and applauded.

When the movie’s star, Anthony Ramos, arrived, the makeshift set was surrounded by a small crowd. As he stepped out in black-and-white cheetah-print pants, with a matching shirt and jacket, gingerly placed on his shoulders, the crowd at the corner of 175th and Broadway thundered with applause and cheers.

“I didn’t grow up even going to Broadway, and most New York people don’t grow up going to Broadway,” said Ramos, who is a Brooklyn native. “To tell a New York story about a community that’s so familiar and so special to people from New York is particularly special for me.”

PHOTOS: Top from left: Gregory Diaz IV and Jimmy Smits; Dascha Polanco; and Lin-Manuel Miranda and Anthony Ramos at the premiere of “In the Heights.” Above, the United Palace, a 91-year-old theater in Washington Heights and the site of the premiere. Right, Maritza Luna, left, and Eglis Suarez were among the fans waiting outside the theater for a glimpse of the stars. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NINA WESTERVELT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 16, 2021

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[***Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews George Saunders; The Ezra Klein Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66TH-DX01-JBG3-618W-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** PODCASTS

**Length:** 10589 words

**Highlight:** The Nov. 8, 2022 episode of “The Ezra Klein Show.”

**Body**

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, like [*today’s episode with George Saunders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/08/opinion/ezra-klein-podcast-george-saunders.html). Listen [*wherever you get your podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/how-to-listen-ezra-klein-show-nyt.html).

Transcripts of our episodes are made available as soon as possible. They are not fully edited for grammar or spelling.

[MUSIC PLAYING] EZRA KLEIN: I’m Ezra Klein. This is “The Ezra Klein Show.” So this episode is going to come out on Election Day 2022. That’s a hard episode to program for. You don’t want to sit around speculating. You don’t want to go so far off topic because that’s where people’s minds are right now, or my mind is right now.

And so what do you do? Well, elections, they’re an expression of more than just a vote, right? There are national psyche at war with itself. There are divisions in our desires. And I think they’re particularly, the way we think about and talk about and understand each other. I mean, elections are stories coming into collision.

And so I had the thought to ask George Saunders back on the show. Saunders is one of the great storytellers of the time. He’s one of my favorite writers of short fiction, of essays. He wrote the beautiful novel “Lincoln in the Bardo,” which won the 2017 Booker Prize.

His work has always been very political, including his nonfiction. He has covered Trump rallies for The New Yorker. He did great work back in the day on homelessness, before the real turn to that in political media.

He wrote an essay in the early 2000s called “The Braindead Megaphone,” which we talk about a lot here that I think is still maybe the best thing for understanding how deranged our models of political communication are today. I had him on the podcast about a year and a half ago. We’ll link that episode in the show notes. That was a really beautiful conversation around the craft of storytelling and kindness and mindfulness and meditation and consciousness. It’s really one of my favorite episodes.

And he’s got a new collection of short stories out, “Liberation Day,” which are really interesting, chilling and more, I think, directly political, particularly when you put them all together, than a lot of his other collections are. In a way, I think of Saunders’s entire career as revolving around this question of whether the language we use and hear can increase the quotient of compassion and understanding we bring to the world — and whether that can, in turn, do a bit of good.

And so in this conversation, we spend some time just ambling around. I would actually say we’re trying to figure out what this conversation is. And then something emerged in it, some really beautiful, difficult ideas that I think are going to linger in my mind for quite some time. As always, my email, [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com)

George Saunders, welcome back to the show.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Nice to be here, Ezra.

EZRA KLEIN: Tell me about the story “Love Letter.” Who’s writing it? Who are they writing to? What is that construct?

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Sure. It’s maybe set some number of years in the future — five, ten, we don’t know. And it’s a grandfather writing to his grandson. And you get the sense that a big political shift has happened. And now we’re living in autocracy.

And basically the grandfather very sweetly kind of a like nice grandpa is telling the story to the grandson of how things got to be this way, kind of apologetically. But his subtext is he wants this kid not to be political and to just sort of sit on his hands and enjoy life without engaging. And over the course of the story, we kind of find out that this grandson has possibly a lover who’s been imprisoned by this system.

So for me, at first, it was just an event, you know. It was before the election. And I just was kind of agitated and kind of boiling over with grief, really, that, you know, I thought, are we really going to give this system up as easily as we seem to be, you know?

And so I just were like, ah, I got to get this out of my system. So I just went to write kind of a screed, really. And then, screeds are OK. But I like to assign them to a character. So once I had said my piece. I gave it to this grandfather. And then you kind of just let it play out.

And what happened during writing that was interesting to me was that he makes a pretty good case in a time like that to just be quiet. But even as he’s making the case, he’s kind of talking himself out of it. So in my reading of it, by the end of the thing, he’s not quite sure. In fact, he’s offering his grandson money to do whatever he needs to do.

EZRA KLEIN: There’s a paragraph in that burrowed pretty deep for me and I’ve been reflecting on. I’d like to have you read it. It’s one beginning with, “What would you have had us do?”

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Sure. “What would you have had me do? What would you have done? I know what you will say. You would have fought. But how? How would you have fought? Would you have called your senator? In those days, you could still at least record your feeble message on a senator’s answering machine without reprisal. But you might as well have been singing or whistling or passing wind to it for all the good it did.

Well, we did that. We called. We wrote letters. Would you have given money to certain people running for office? We did that as well.

Would you have marched? For some reason, there were suddenly no marches. Organized a march? Then and now, I did not and do not know how to arrange a march.

I was still working full time. This dental thing had just begun. That rather occupies the mind. You know where we live. Would you have had me drive down to Watsonville and harangue the officials there? They were all in agreement with us at that time.

Would you have armed yourself? I would not and will not. And I do not believe you would either. I hope not. By that, all is lost.”

EZRA KLEIN: That paragraph opens a question that remains open in that piece and that honestly I think about a lot. And I want to say very clearly here I am not saying that America is about to tip into autocracy and people need to pick up weaponry. That’s really not what I’m saying.

But it does happen to systems. They do fall apart. History’s full of that. And I do wonder what you do in those moments. What is the answer to that for you?

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Well, this is where I slip out of it by being a fiction writer, because Dylan said in “Chronicle,” he said, sometimes I write what I to be true. Sometimes I write what I know to be false. Sometimes I write, and I don’t know whether it’s true or false.

So one of the blessings of being a fiction writer, especially if you’re kind of a neurotic like I am, is you can just summon up a viewpoint like we just heard. And then you assign it. So is that true? In some absolute sense, I have no idea. It’s true for this guy.

And then hopefully the story, in some way, complicates or opposes it. So I think reading that, I agree with him, you know, that violence is never — is not the way. I also can understand that his grandson might feel that is sort of a concession. And as you point out, there are times when systems fall apart. And so I think that for me, the blessing of being a fiction writer is you can have it always at once. In fact, you’re supposed to have it always at once. Chekhov said a story doesn’t solve problems. It formulates them correctly.

So I enjoy the part where a voice inside me appears. And then I really enjoy the part where I make that voice hard to refute. But I don’t necessarily agree with the viewpoint.

And the way that a story starts to get complicated and to really speak to our deeper nature is when I would say when it’s self contradicting. There’s a beautiful Chekhov story called “Gooseberries.” And there’s a very persuasive argument that says that happiness is decadent. And it only comes at the expense of others. And Chekhov says, every happy man should have an unhappy man in his closet with a hammer to convince him by his constant tappings that not everyone is so happy and that sooner or later, life will show him his claws.

So you read this. And you’re like, I never thought that my happiness was a decadent act. Thank you, Mr. Chekhov, for convincing me. But then in the same story, that guy who made that speech is shown joyfully, selfishly, swimming in this pond in a rainstorm, just exulting in happiness. So you hold those two things against one another. What’s Chekhov saying about happiness? Is happiness good or bad?

And Chekhov goes, yeah, da. So for me, that’s the magic of fiction is it in that moment, your normal mind that judges so easily and so happily gets tricked, really, and suspended. So for a few seconds there you really don’t know what to think about happiness. And therefore you see it more fully, actually. You see I’m dodging your question?

EZRA KLEIN: I do. I see that. Yes, so I’m thinking about how to pull you back into it. A lot of your stories — here’s my try. And I guess I would contrast a question it raises with another one you often raise. I think a lot of your stories are about how do people act, how should they act — and we’ll talk about this — in a system they should hate but might be complicit in or might believe they’ve chosen to join. A lot of that systems are, for you, I think often capitalism or very extreme forms of capitalism.

But this story, it seems to me, to be about when do you stop abiding by the rules and norms of a system you might love? And that’s often the question of liberal democracy. You have a beautiful line in that piece: “We were not prepared to drop everything in defense of a system that was to us like oxygen, used constantly, never noted.”

But more than that, there’s a way where defending a system of liberal toleration, in ways that are illiberal or intolerant, is this essential contradiction that people face all over the world, not just here and not even primarily here. And that contradiction feels very important to me, that kind of sense that it is worth doing anything to defend this, and also that the point of this system is you’re not supposed to do anything. You’re supposed to have rules and guidelines and norms and boundaries.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: I think it’s kind of a question of, which manifestation of the system are you defending? So my gut — again, this is just not a political statement, a personal statement is, I really abhor violence. And I think violence cross contaminates. Like, when I was covering those Trump rallies, I saw exactly one woman on each side punched by someone on the other side. It’s sickening.

The time I saw it in San Jose, there was a Trump supporter, older woman punched to her knees. And I helped her up. She’s almost in tears. The person who hit her is in tears. There’s nothing noble about the violence. It’s just ugly.

So I think I agree with the grandfather in this case. If you say I’m defending a liberal system by illiberal means, then you’re not. And so then I think that’s important to say that because then we’re going to be more creative and energetic about defending it in the correct ways.

EZRA KLEIN: The story “Liberation Day,” the opening story of the book, is about — well, why don’t you describe what it’s about because I’m not sure how I would describe it.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: I’m not sure how I would either. My stories, I kind of start them by just trying to get lost, trying to make some world I don’t recognize, and then gradually fleshing it out. But in this one, the opening image for me was kind of related to an earlier story in mine called “The Semplica-Girl Diaries.”

And in that story, there was a world where people were hanging up women from poor countries in their yards as lawn ornaments. And they were kind of perceiving it as a win-win because they got this beautiful thing in the yard, and the women were paid. So in this story, it’s a sort of a similar thing, except that people hung up are in your house in a studio, not unlike this. And their brains have been messed with so that some of them can speak at a very high level, super articulate on command.

So you as the owner can kind of dial in, tell me something about nautical. And the person will riff on that. Tell me something about city. And then there’s another group of people who are singers, who have sort of a similar skill. So the idea is you’re kind of a suburban guy, wants a hobby, and you’ve got a mixing board. And you can make these people put on these incredible presentations, that old trope.

EZRA KLEIN: And the reveal of the story is that people are choosing, in a way, to be there. They have signed up to be memory wiped and be made into a speaker or to be made into a singer.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Right.

EZRA KLEIN: They don’t remember that they’ve done this. The person who owns them believes or is able to rationalize that they have done nothing wrong. These people voluntarily entered into this arrangement so that the money they made from it would go to somebody else. And it’s this very, I think, profound question that is in a lot of your work of, what does it mean if people agree to be treated inhumanely because that seems to them to be their best option.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Right. Presumably the guy was in a terrible shape, bad enough shape that he agreed to have his memory wiped. Yeah, that, to me, is — I don’t really know why it’s interesting to me, but it does resonate with my early working years, the idea that we had our kids at home. And I was so happy to have a job.

But it was a 10 - or 12-hour a day job being away from them, doing something I had very little interest in. And so just lightly that kind of Terry Eagleton, capitalism plunders the sensuality of the body, that was just very lightly hitting me. The idea that in order to honor love, I had to be away from the object of love, doing something that didn’t interest me.

So I’m sure that’s in there somewhere. But honestly, my stuff — here’s my thought is, art serves a really important function, which is partly to get us temporarily free of rationality or of habitual rationality. For the producer of the art, me, to do that, I really have to be clear of concepts when I’m working.

So the whole game — and it sounds sort of simplistic but — is to find a voice or a riff or a little tiniest bit of a notion that will confuse me and also excite me so I can keep going day after day. So you’re really turning yourself over to a kind of a counter-rational process in the hopes that in the end, you’ll produce something that will put your reader through something that will be fun, first of all. And I would maybe tack on be beneficial, although that’s sort of an option.

I hope it says something complicated and contradictory that leaves you basically in the same state you’re in when you get off a roller coaster. Like, sheesh, what the what? Then, you might afterwards talk about it. That third curve was really something. But the essential thing happened in those three seconds after you got off the ride.

EZRA KLEIN: So I’m a horribly literal nonfiction writer, who has all the concepts always at the front of my brain and just sits there arranging them like pieces on the chessboard. And the term that — the one that often comes up to me in your work, “The Semplica-Girl Diaries,” particularly, which is one of my favorite stories of yours, is an old term that used to be very common in critiques of capitalism, which is wage slavery. And we don’t talk about wage slavery anymore because we very much adopted the idea that if you consent to a job, if an employer offers you money, and you have agreed to do the thing for the money, whatever your conditions are, that is a freely chosen agreement.

And as such, we’re all good in all directions. But there’s a long running view, on the left, particularly, that people are often not in condition to consent. That when the alternative is indigency or your daughter cannot get the health care she needs, that the things people will do should often be understood as inhumane, whether or not they will say yes to them.

Maybe it’s better than the alternative. But that’s because the alternative is a kind of horror. And that just seems to me to be a very present concern for you, that question of, when should our consent be good enough?

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Right. For me, it’s just interesting to watch and see what does the work do to your spirit? That’s really the question. If you can take joy in it, great. I know when I was working the tech writing job, I found a way to take joy in it because that was a survival mechanism. And it wasn’t the gulag. But there is a way in which I could say, well, I would rather be elsewhere. But thank god I’m not somewhere worse.

I would say we’re very, very tolerant of misery now for our workers. The idea that somebody would work three jobs and not be able to afford a house is pretty crazy. And that’s been a slow drift that I think was enabled, in my experience, in the Reagan years, where you were never to complain about working conditions and so on.

So I think that’s in the stories. And it’s in my life. I’ve seen it — when I was a kid, I kept a diary. And I found it a few years ago. And this was during the periods when I felt so like a hippie, free and easy, just traveling all over. Every page is about money. I need this much money. I borrowed this much money. I have to pay it back. I borrowed this guy’s shoes, and I ruined them, literally.

So I think that’s the great background story of America. And I don’t think we can simply say, all work is brutality. But some work is more brutal than others.

EZRA KLEIN: Have you ever read the late David Graeber’s book “Bullshit Jobs?”

GEORGE SAUNDERS: I have not, no.

EZRA KLEIN: So his book is about this idea of jobs that the people doing them think need not exist.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Mm. Mm.

EZRA KLEIN: There are many jobs. And you can poll people, and they will tell you this, where they think that what they are doing is useless. For some reason, somebody’s paying them to do it. And that there is a violence to the soul to do something that even you think has no real value.

And one of the things this often points to, to me, is that we seem to me, to be within, let’s call it, 100 years of a pretty profound rupture in what we are trying to achieve here, which is I think most politics, and particularly most left politics, but not only, is actually very built around the idea that everybody should have a good job. And they should have a good job, and that should be enough for a good life.

And then there’s this other — there’s long been a strain of politics, but it’s always lurking in the background of the robots and automation and A.I. conversation, the “Star Trek” politics. Maybe the point of life is not to have a job. Maybe the point of life is to get past the point. Because one of the horrors, I think, the tough things to face up to in the world is that a lot of truly terrible jobs are not bullshit jobs.

Coal mining is how we built modernity. Lithium mining today is how we are building the decarbonized future many of us are hoping to see. But possibly someday we will be able to offload a lot of work, much more so than we can even imagine now, onto robots and automation, onto other things. And it’s a really interesting question that keeps recurring of whether or not this would be a tragedy or a triumph, a dystopia or a utopia.

How do you think about that, not as a policy question, but as a question of what role work —

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Yeah, it’s interesting.

EZRA KLEIN: — does or has to play in our lives?

GEORGE SAUNDERS: My guess is that some people would mess that up too. You know what I mean? People are people. So if you give all of us a life of pure contemplation, some people are going to mess it up.

EZRA KLEIN: I would go completely insane.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Yeah. I would too.

EZRA KLEIN: But is that because I was socialized to think that every day has to be — I have a derangement, where if I cannot basically justify my day on my own to-do list, it’s very hard for me to feel like I merited my day on Earth. I’m not good at just —

GEORGE SAUNDERS: No, I’m the same way.

EZRA KLEIN: — at the Sabbath.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: We just sold the house upstate. And I went up there. And for three straight weeks I did 15-hour days of just work, physical work. And I have not been that happy in years. It was — I had a very simple do list every day, which is just go. Like, don’t even think, just go.

Went to bed totally exhausted. And I felt so happy. So I don’t know. I think the main thing is, as you suggest, I think we have a national malaise that has to do with national purpose.

What’s our purpose? Why are we special? What’s different about us? It’s all there in the founding documents actually, what a thing. We’re going to let every being, no matter who they are, have the dignity of being safe and free and happy. That’s pretty awesome.

But I think politics so-called now has become an industry, certainly. And somehow it’s obscuring that. It’s obscuring that very beautiful idea within that. What’s the individual’s purpose? I would say it’s to burn through delusion, try to figure out what’s actually happening in this mind, in this body.

For example, why am I so convinced that I exist as a person, that I exist permanently, and that I’m central to everything in the world? Well, we kind of know why. It’s because of thinking. And it seems fairly urgent that we should get to the bottom of that because death is coming. And it’s going to shock the shit out of you when it does come.

So those are — you can imagine a country that, first of all, really walk the walk of everybody’s valuable, and we’re going to protect it radically — everybody, no exceptions. And second of all, somewhere in there, there is an idea that the point of all of this was to come to a more profound understanding of who we are, which I think is going to cause us to realize that we’re here to have affection for one another. So that would be a great setup.

And whenever I see political problems, political dissent, political violence, I think it’s because the system has a different goal than those. It has a goal that we in our hearts, we know is not really in our interest. So to have a system that valued us, wanted us free and happy, and wanted us to be aspiring to the highest goal and materially made that possible, then I think we’d all be pretty in sync with our system. But in so many ways — and some of them you’re suggesting — the capitalist system and our current sort of cockeyed form of democracy works against these individual interests.

EZRA KLEIN: A lot of your stories seem to me to posit another tension or reason that politics and people go awry, which is a conflict that often emerges between the care we have for those near to us and the consequences that might have for those far from us. So to go back to “The Semplica-Girl Diaries,” that is built as a diary of a father who is intensely concerned with his daughter’s happiness.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Right.

EZRA KLEIN: And she wants to be seen as cool and rich. And she comes from a successful family. And he is basically trying to assemble these doll slaves to help her. And he sees himself as functionally failing her as a father when he’s not able to do that.

In “Liberation Day,” you have a story that is about this guy wants to create art for his neighbors and be an artist. And again and again, it seems to me that you posit this question of, when is our concern for those near to us a path to a deep immorality? When is that the tool that a system can use — or we can use — to get us to rationalize some truly horrible things?

You have another story in there about a mother whose son is lightly but nevertheless assaulted. And her desire to have justice for him in a way that doesn’t go great. You’ve said some of the most moving things I have heard on fatherhood. So I’m curious about this particular obsession of yours, this fear that love of family, love of those near to you can become a disconnection and instrumentalization of those far from you.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Yeah. I read somewhere when we first had our kids — I can’t remember who said it. But it was a very beautiful statement about how maybe the best we can do is imagine a little pod, and the people we love are in it. And it would be a very noble work of a lifetime just to keep that pod safe. And I thought, that’s so true.

And then I thought, except it kind of isn’t. What you actually have to do is imagine that your pod is just as real as my pod. And the people of value in your pod are exactly equal to mine. And if not, we’re going to get into the situation you’re talking about, where I’m going to say, we really need x. Now, it’s going to come out of your pie. But it’s my family.

So that’s something that I’ve struggled with a lot because the realest thing in my life has been the love for my wife and kids and extended family. And like, I think, so many Western people, you do have that slight feeling of piggishness sometimes when you’ve realized that you’ve erred on the side of protecting your pod. And you can look around, and you can see that other pods are affected.

So that’s definitely something I think about. And I don’t think — one of the things I tend to write about are things that concern me and that I don’t really see as simple answer to. I think it’s totally natural for people to protect them and theirs. That’s Darwinism 101.

It’s also perfectly natural to feel guilty about it because you see that it is a little bit selfish. And I guess my thought was with fiction, with writing it and with reading it, you don’t get to an answer. But if the story is well told, you increase the power of the opposition in your own mind.

You have the two forces are now both very strongly represented, as they are, I think, in “The Semplica-Girl Diaries.” And at the end, you don’t have an answer. But you have a new respect for the question.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: So a lot of the stories in the new book are about the role of language. Or at least a central feature in them is people are losing language, or they can only use language when they’re turned on in a certain way, that there is something that controls or binds their language. They’re not allowed to say things. If they do say things, they’ll be violently punished. Tell me about that preoccupation for you in this collection?

GEORGE SAUNDERS: So I think these days, it seems like we are having languages imposed on us. I mean, the fact that you have a social media that tells you how many characters to use, this is language imposition. You have to wonder about the agenda there. Why does anyone want to restrict the full range of my language? What’s the game there?

Say with social media, we are receiving stories in a different way than we’ve received them in the past, I think. For hundreds of thousands of years, we receive stories at a certain frequency, let’s say. Now they’re coming in faster, more staccato. They’re malformed in their syntax because of the method of delivery.

They’re designed to agitate, to attract attention in this kind of strange way. So all these things are happening. And as those stories come in, I don’t think we’re quite able to process them.

And so we are, in a sense, having languages imposed on us that are not necessarily the best language to get to truth. They’re languages that are essentially designed to get us to do something. And it’s a kind of a new rhetoric, actually.

EZRA KLEIN: Imposed is a really interesting word there because there are these constraints imposed on us. And then we work within them and feel that we are the one in control of them. And you get into this very Marshall McLuhan-esque territory of whether or not the medium is changing our message or whether or not we use mediums for our own purposes.

I’ve become, like, a very big McLuhanite in recent years. And I’ve seen you say that, quote, “These days, it’s 100 percent true that the medium is the message.” So tell me how you understand the medium is the message idea and why you’ve come to feel more strongly about it.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: OK. I mean, I can talk from the vantage point of somebody who spent my whole life working with these six - and seven-page literary texts that were typically composed over many months. The process is to go in to the first draft, micro edit it over and over and over again.

And the article of faith is that by doing that, I’m doing two things. One is I’m infusing more myself into the text, in a way that I’m not planning. Second of all, the whole document is elevating its rhetoric to become more nuanced, more ambiguous, hopefully funnier, more persuasive, surprising. So that’s something I really love because it gets me to be somebody other than this guy. The end result of eight months of work on a short story is that there’s a presence there behind it that’s more intelligent than I am. So that’s pretty cool.

Now, we compare that to this new form of storytelling that we’re being subjected to. It’s obviously got wonderful features and all that. But if you have a form of storytelling that has a constraint imposed on it in terms of number of characters and/or it has a hidden agenda, which is to attract likes or whatever, it has another hidden agenda, which is to agitate, to get a sort of facile, superficial attention. It’s written quickly and so on, the familiar suite of things.

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah. You can’t edit it.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Right.

EZRA KLEIN: These are all decisions.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Right. So my thing is just look at your mind when you’re doing the one and when you’re looking at the other. Look at your mind when you begin a Chekhov story and when you finish it. What kind of things have been evoked?

Go on Twitter for 40 minutes, the same time it takes read a Chekhov. Where’s your mind there? The medium is a message because if I have said to you, here’s the way in which you can communicate, that’s going to limit what you can say. It’s going to limit the state of your mind while you’re saying it. If you think about the sheer volume of our social media interactions, it’s got to change the national moment. We can see that it as kind of fun, affable toxin, really.

EZRA KLEIN: I spent a lot of my 20s, maybe even in my early 30s building up a social media presence. And at a certain point, I had a million Facebook followers and 2.7 million Twitter followers. And it’s very —

GEORGE SAUNDERS: That’s pretty good.

EZRA KLEIN: Thank you. Yeah, no, I’m amazing. And slowly, I’ve left both platforms. And people always assume I did it because somebody said something mean to me. And I’ll get emails from people I really like and really respect. And they’ll say, I hope you come back. I find your work there a value. I’m sorry — they’ll just assume somebody’s offended me.

And the reason I left wasn’t because somebody said something mean to me. It’s that I became more and more sure I would say something mean to somebody.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Mm.

EZRA KLEIN: That there is a way in which my thinking would become more and more like the averaged out system, medium. Maybe it’s a weakness on my part. There’s certainly people who are there and do not seem to fall prey to this.

But I feel like the great insight of McLuhan is this question of, do you want to be acted upon like this? That we’re always told that we act upon the mediums, right? We can put whatever we want on Instagram. We can put whatever we want on Twitter. We can put whatever we want on Facebook. But that in fact, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, whatever are in those periods putting what they want on you. They’re making you more like them.

And so the question of, do you want to be more like them, do you want that attention span, whatever it might be becomes a really — and this is true for cable news. It’s true for everything, right?

There’s nothing that it isn’t true for. But the question of, do you feel well changed? I always think about a lot of media literacy. There’s constantly talk now about media literacy. And it’s all about how to evaluate typically sources and what you’re seeing. And I don’t feel much of it gets at this question often enough, of being attentive to how you are becoming, understanding yourself as malleable.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: No, that’s beautiful. And in this Russian book “A Swim in a Pond in the Rain,” the reading model that I find myself using is simply this. You start the story in a neutral state and just watch — watch the inflection of your mind. Then at the end, you get spit out, and you’re in a different place.

Then on the second read, you can go back, and you can be pretty precise about where your mind inflected. That is kind of an exercise that works for everything, certainly would work for social media. Just start with a nice happy mind. Go into it and see.

And I think, as you’re pointing out, it’s not necessarily that you come out vitriolic. But it’s an interesting exercise to kind of see because that’s one thing we can really control is where our minds are. We can put ourselves into through different things that elevate or de-elevate the mind.

EZRA KLEIN: You wrote this essay some time ago that I think about a lot called “The Braindead Megaphone.” And in it, you have this the central metaphor, an image of a party, and then a person at a party with a megaphone. Can you just talk a bit about the setup there?

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Yeah. So the idea is if you’re at a party and everybody is having nice human interactions and talking from their own experience and exploring, mutually exploring, and then somebody comes in with the megaphone and starts talking about anything, the bushes outside the house, for example — the voice is loud. It’s overpowering. And it presumes a kind of a frame of reference, that it assumes that these bushes outside the house are very important.

And soon we’re going to see that people start responding to that. They’re noticing it. Then they themselves start having opinions about this megaphone. So basically this person who’s got a loud, perhaps not entirely intelligent and perhaps agenda-laced program is going to sort of distort the ongoing conversations.

EZRA KLEIN: The reason that essay’s really stuck with me is that I think it ends up being very prescient about something that was not as true when you wrote it, as it would become true later. It was hard to get that much volume before the algorithms, before you could get 200,000 retweets on something or you could get a million readers for it on Facebook — that we actually created this megaphone. And what’s even weirder, though, is it’s like we set up a megaphone at the front of the national room. And it’s a competition to get it.

And so it’s not just that there’s somebody with a megaphone, but that now everybody wants the megaphone. And you have to do what the megaphone wants you to do to be megaphoned. And then everybody else who wants to compete for the megaphone learns from what the last person said and has to say something a little bit more like that in tone and volume.

And I think of the central feature of the social media age as this kind of recognition or this reality that what matters is how often you are behind the megaphone. And what people think of you behind the megaphone doesn’t matter. In some cases, everybody hating you behind the megaphone just gives you more turns at the megaphone. And ultimately, then everybody knows your name, and everybody’s talking about you. And just that, that fully separate dimensionality of volume, is just, to me, a very defining feature of our communications era.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Yeah. And it’s interesting because it’s anti-nuance. And in fiction, the beautiful thing is you write yourself always into a state of higher-level confusion or ambiguity. So the power, I would allege, is that you become less certain.

You’re making a finer and finer point. And the result of that is the person might just sort of feel a state of holy befuddlement, like, yeah, it’s really hard to be good in this world. It’s hard to be in the right position. It’s hard to be affectionate enough. It’s hard to stick by one’s values.

So fiction is a quiet — it’s a very quiet thing. You put two people in a room. You give one of them a slight problem. You go into each of their heads. You follow them around.

At the end of it, you have something maybe that doesn’t look like power, which is uncertainty. But I think for all of the moments in my life, I would rather be a little uncertain, actually. I’d rather be a little less certain and less powerful because in the world that you’re describing, these tremendous power of that megaphone means you can make a small mistake and cause a great disaster.

EZRA KLEIN: I read you say in a recent interview that you feel — that essay coming out when it did, now quite long ago, that it’s missing a lot. And you’ve been kicking around ideas for a sequel. And I wanted to see what are some of those ideas? What are those intuitions towards the sequel?

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Well, I’ll tell you a thought experiment. And I haven’t thought through this all the way through. But it feels right to me. So let’s imagine you had a baseball stadium. And you sent out invitations, and you said, OK, if you’re a Republican, wear red. If you’re Democrat, wear blue. Come to the stadium.

Everybody comes. There’s a podium in the middle. And there’s a guy up there who’s going to make a very incendiary speech about immigration. Pro or con doesn’t matter.

So you know how that’s going to turn out. People are going to fight. There’s going to be maybe physical violence, lots of rancor.

Now, rewind, same people, forget the costuming. Come to the baseball stadium. Same people come. They sit in the same seats. Instead of a podium, there’s a game, the Pirates and the Reds or whatever.

Those same people are behaving in completely different ways. Why? Well, social cues partly. We know how to behave at a baseball game. We might joke a little bit, but it’s nothing serious.

So then I want to work backwards and say, all right, so same people, same day, fights, no fights. Why? So to my way of thinking, one is you prioritize the red-versus-blue identity. You told the person to think that way about themselves. Then in their path or in their view you put what you knew would agitate them. And they responded to the cue.

Also, you sort of implicitly said, this is political. And by the way, political has to do with immigration, abortion. You named four or five other things. In the other one, the context was baseball. We know how to be civil in baseball.

So I’m just trying to think how it can be — what is the culture doing that is causing the partisanship? There’s something in that model that’s valuable because these aren’t different people. They’re manifesting differently. The people in the second stadium are somehow — through some means, they’re manifesting a different version of the multitude they contain to make a happier circumstance. So I guess I’m just thinking about what we are doing culturally to encourage the first model and discourage the second, if that makes sense.

EZRA KLEIN: Let me offer a thought maybe.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Yeah, please.

EZRA KLEIN: Go back to the megaphone, right? So one of the things in the original story is that the megaphone is neutral, in the sense that it’s held by a guy. The megaphone doesn’t have any thoughts about the situation. And that feels to me like what changed and speaks to that second thought experiment.

So imagine that in the stadium, different people get to choose what happens at the floor, right? And somebody goes out, and there’s a baseball game. And somebody — and runs a baseball game. And somebody goes out and gives an incendiary speech about immigration and so on and so forth.

But that somehow, whoever it is or whatever it is letting you out, that is giving you access to the megaphone or access to the field, it really cares what the audience response is. But it doesn’t care about the audience. All it feels is how much the audience feels, how angry, how happy, how funny, how sad. And all it has a preference for as extreme. All it has a preference for is a lot.

And I think in general, it’s easier to make people really pissed off quickly than it is to make them really pleased. And so a preference begins to emerge. If you get people really upset, you get to come back and back and back and back and back. And that it’s about, to me, this feedback loop we’ve created as a society between somebody making you mad and that somebody being in your face more often.

Marjorie Taylor Greene, she is not a particularly powerful member of the House of Representatives. She is in the minority party, at this moment anyway. She does not chair any committees. She’s not well-liked by her colleagues.

I cover the House. I have for years. She is not internally influential as a legislator. When I say her name, virtually everybody listening will know who she is.

They will know who she is because she’s extremely, extremely agitating to a lot of people. And because she is agitating, unlike some of her colleagues who — like, I’m not a Republican. I disagree with many of her colleagues on many things. But there are members of the Republican House minority who just show up to work and they try to do things that they believe in. And they’re maybe not what I believe in. But they work with their colleagues and whatever. They show up, and they do their jobs. They’re not trying to make everybody else infuriated. So their names are functionally unknown. And that’s the trick here now that we’ve gotten ourselves locked in this game of if I can arouse you in some way or another, you will see me more.

And a really, really fast path to arousal is annoyance. So that seems to me to be the twist, that the megaphone is a preference. And you get more turns at it if you really, really enrage people. And so we are just being fed a constant sense of what specifically enrages us. And we don’t like it and yet are somehow locked in this relationship to it. It’s very, very maddening. It’s very weird too.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Do you know that David Foster Wallace essay from years ago? And he was the first person to sense this. He covered — I can’t remember the name of the piece. But he covered a right-wing political radio host in the early days of talk radio.

And his conclusion was that it wasn’t the politics that people were tuning in for. But it was the agitation and the suspended narratives that would provoke outrage. You know, the kindergarten teacher who stomped on the American flag — more tomorrow. And so oh, you can’t believe she stomped on the American flag. You come back tomorrow. So it was clearly commerce.

The listenership went up every time they would put a cliff-hanging agitation or outrage story on. So to me, it’s interesting. Of course, it’s all money. And I think this is where I don’t know enough to really speak. But it seems to me that the world is lavishing a lot of money on the partisan divide.

It’s lucrative. It’s a quick, easy narrative. It’s very lucrative. And it’s very damaging. I have no idea how you back out of it. Maybe you do. But I don’t — it seems that it’s — at the core of it, there’s a lot of people who are making very nice livelihoods to stoke that fire. And the other fire, which is about nuance and ambiguity and curiosity about the way things actually work and actually improving the lives of individual citizens, that maybe is less sexy, less lucrative.

EZRA KLEIN: The reason I love McLuhan and the reason I was interested when he came up in your work is that I think he understood something pretty upsetting, which is that we are very fundamentally malleable and that we change. And to the very interesting, I think, thought experiment of the stadium, the more we are confronted with things that upset us, the more upset we become. The more we see things that make us angry, the more angry we become. I think sometimes there’s an illusion that our political selves are not our real selves. But I don’t really believe we have real selves.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: For me, it comes down to storytelling. And you’re absolutely right. No self is solid and exists. But we can force different selves to the fore.

So in traditional storytelling, in literary storytelling, the reader is agreeing to go through something, which is to, first of all, assume that the character in the story is on a continuum with her, no matter who the character might be. Then also that the writer is on a continuum with her. So the three of us are going to join together. We’re going to contemplate this imaginary being.

And in doing that, we’re going to get more interested in her. We’re going to make an identification between ourselves and that person. This stance is always leaning in. Like, is there anything else I need to know about this person? This is just me on a different day.

So that whole process brings out a self that I would say it’s more generous. It’s more interested. It’s more open. It’s less sure of what’s actually happening. And since the world itself is so fundamentally unknowable to us — the mind is always just making little scale models. For my money, to work at that kind of storytelling, to immerse ourselves in it almost as a ritual or as a sacrament, is a way to become more realistic about what’s actually happening.

Whereas this megaphone-type thing, it’s strange. In its system, it bears very little resemblance to what’s actually happening. As you pointed out, it’s just a thing that thrives on power. We respect the power because the power is powerful kind of thing.

So I mean, I don’t know what the answer is. For me, personally, I’m watching the mind and saying, if I spend a few hours with Chekhov or Tolstoy or Dostoyevsky or Toni Morrison, Grace Paley, there are things woken up in me that I want to be active. The self that comes forward then is the self that feels actually more powerful than any other self, so.

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah. You have a beautiful story in the book that I think hints at an answer to this, which is “The Sparrow.” Can you talk a bit about what’s happening in “The Sparrow?”

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Yeah. I started that story. A little voice came to me literally when I was sleeping. And it was the first few lines of the story. And I found myself narrating this woman, who, at least in the words of the story, she’s kind of nothing. She’s not very interesting. She’s never original. She only says the things that are expected.

And so the narrative voice that I was in was kind of looking down on her quite a bit and getting some laughs out of her. And then about halfway through the story, I wrote the line, “and then, of course, a fall had to come for her.” It’s funny because the brain just divides. And part of me just went, does it really? Does it really have to? Or is that just a habit of yours as a writer?

So I just started subtly trying to do something else. And in the end, it becomes kind of maybe the first love story I’ve ever written, where she is kind of a dull person. And she meets this guy who is kind of an egomaniac. And yet the two of them kind of bind.

So that early voice that was mocking her I assigned to the community basically, which then left me and the reader to figure out who she really was. It was an example of the story showing my own mind to me. I was in the habit of starting off with a character and then knocking them down the stairs at the end. And my mind said, you’ve done that a lot. Is there some way we could have her not go down the stairs, which then open up a whole kind of world of possibilities for her.

EZRA KLEIN: But the particular love story you tell, there’s something very quiet about it, but quietly powerful, I thought, which is it seemed to me to be about the way we change as people when someone else tells a nice story about us to us. She tells a story to this guy, who may be a bit of an egomaniac, but also is a guy who works at a grocery that his mom owns. And his mom’s sort of an overbearing, tough person.

And people are not probably that nice to him. And here’s this woman who’s really impressed by him and thinks he’s really funny and thinks he’s really great and always tells him he’s right about stuff. And he flourishes under that. And he loves being adored. And so he adores her. And she flourishes under that. And I don’t know. One of the things —

GEORGE SAUNDERS: That’s a really lovely reading, by the way. I love that.

EZRA KLEIN: One of the things I was reflecting on it after was how often we think we will change people by telling them what’s wrong with them, and how often that doesn’t work, and how often you change people by believing in what’s right about them. And that’s true in an individual level, and it’s true in — I don’t want to go too far with this. And I’m not suggesting any of this as a political answer.

But I do think there’s something true about it politically, too. Some of the great politicians see a better country or see a better version of ourselves and we see in ourselves. And for a minute at least, we sort of wake up to that.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Yeah. I see it in my teaching. And one of the benefits of teaching a long time is you start to see the way it really works. So when you’re a young teacher of creative writing, you think your job is a kind of circle the goiters — cut this, fix this. Why did you do that?

And as I’m getting older, it’s just both really valuable and really difficult to praise something precisely. Maybe the story has got some issues. But if you can find two or three places where the writer has come into her own fully and spend most of your time praising that and not just hyperbolically, but really saying specifically what it did to you, you can see the writer light up. And it gives a person something to aspire to. But somehow it’s harder to do that.

It’s easier to just sort of list your complaints. But you have to be very confident and very inside the material to go back and recreate where you were positively inflected. And I think it sort of activates certain things in your mind that wouldn’t otherwise be activated.

EZRA KLEIN: It was my wedding anniversary a couple of days ago.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Oh, happy anniversary.

EZRA KLEIN: Thank you. And something I’ve thought about as I’ve been married longer, something I think about in my relationships to other family members, something I think about all the time with my children — so basically every important relationship in my life is what I’m saying — is that there’s often this inflection point in a particular conflict, in a particular moment, where something’s going wrong, at least wrong by my own lights. And you’re faced with this question of, am I going to be kinder to this person who is doing something that is upsetting me? Or am I going to really —

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Let them have it.

EZRA KLEIN: — tell them what’s up here? And children often force us in a really interesting and complicated way, where if my 3-and-1/2-year-old is having a tantrum, does he need to be put on time out? Or does he need to be hugged?

If I’m hugging him, am I helping this behavior? If I put him in time out, am I actually keeping him from being able to calm down? And I don’t know. I think that I used to believe more in the curative powers of a good stern talking to. And as I’m getting a little bit older and maybe a little bit wiser — and this is true for me too, like how it seems to work to treat me — that I’ve become less confident in it.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Yeah, it’s very perceptive because in the end, I was the one who decided to be more gentle with her because I was going to throw her to the wolves. Something held me back. And the phrase I always think about in the context of what you’re saying is abide with. I think it’s from my Catholic youth.

But you abide with somebody, which means you just don’t judge yet. You let them talk. You let them do it as they have to do. The idea is that if you give someone enough rope, they’ll shut the rope off. They’ll be better.

So in that story, it was interesting because I resolved to be patient with her, which in a narrative sense mean I held off on making something bad happen to her for a few paragraphs. But I think that I really believe in what you’re saying. I think if you — it’s a mark of confidence and I think sometimes of age to trust that things will play out, which is another way of saying that you trust the person is on a continuum with you, that you don’t have to correct.

A person will — I guess the assumption is people want the same thing. They want to be happy. They want to be loved. So to the extent that we can extend our patience, some people some of the time will reward that. And in fiction, this is kind of what you’re always doing. It’s what rewriting is, actually, is you’re saying, I know how I want the story to come out. I know what I think of this character. Let me abide with it longer by rewriting it and see if there’s anything deeper I want for that person, see if there’s anything deeper they want to do on their own.

A young writer will tend to lop all that off because I guess they don’t like the anxiety of waiting. But as an older writer, waiting is actually what you’re doing when you’re rewriting. Just like with your kids, you’re kind of waiting with a slightly affectionate attitude.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: In this conversation, we’ve talked, and specifically you’ve talked a bunch about storytelling. And something that has been in the back of my mind has been that storytelling for you and storytelling for me mean very different things. That storytelling in politics tends to be about the question of, how can I tell a story that makes you understand that I’m right or that makes you like me?

And the kind of storytelling and the craft of storytelling you’re talking about is much more about a kind of story that someone else can inhabit, right? You need me to not agree with your story. You need me to want to inhabit your story. I want to see if you could riff a bit on the distinction there because that question of closed and open storytelling strike me as maybe actually like the dominant theme of this conversation.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Yeah, I love that idea. I think with the kind of stories that I want to tell, the goal is that you become the character. You are reading it. And I’ve designed it so it’s so intense that you can’t not first sympathize with, then become the character. And I think part of that is an open-endedness about agenda.

It’s not really about you liking the character or me or any of that. It’s about the identification with the character. And then I don’t even know why. I don’t know why that’s a good thing. I don’t know what that’s going to make you feel.

But 99 percent of what I do is to try to make you have that ride through the story, such that you don’t have any objections to it. On the contrary, you want to get back to it. You experience the curves and the dips and the drops. At the end, you’re deposited out in a slightly different mind-set.

It’s interesting because we talked about the megaphone. I actually don’t care that much what exactly you’re feeling. But I care that you’re feeling something intensely. And I have the faith that if I’ve done my job, the thing you’re feeling intensely I want to say it’s going to be good for you. I don’t really want to say that.

But it’s going to put you in a position that’s elevated compared to where you started. The only agenda is connection. I’m going to start telling you this story. And somehow in revision, I’m going to be really good at anticipating your resistances, anticipating the little expectation cloud that formed over your head and servicing that at every moment so that you can’t think of any excuse to bail.

And then at the end, you and I are kind of bonded. You’re like, oh, George, wow, how’d you do that? You got me through this whole story. You’re bonded with the characters in some complicated way. And then I think, for me, I have to kind of say, that’s it. Now, I don’t always stop there. I have a whole schtick about the beneficial effects of fiction. But in my most honest place, the wild ride, the temporary bonding, and we’re done.

EZRA KLEIN: It makes me think a bit about our earlier conversation about “Love Letter” because there was no answer to that. And one of the things I think is true in politics is that there are times when you can get into a reality where there is no good answer. By the time the question is, you’re looking back from autocracy. And should you have taken up arms or not?

That might have been worse. It might have been better. But it could have been worse. Once you got there, you were out of good answers. Maybe there was a better one than you chose. But you’re out of good answers. And I do wonder how much a way to think about this period is there’s a pretty desperate need for a story that enough people see themselves in and see enough connection in that you don’t get to the point where the question was really should you have taken up arms or not?

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Here’s a thought about this, I guess, literary storytelling.

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: When I wrote that book about the Russians, I was really surprised to find out how much specificity had to do with it. So the move is often is you start with a broad category — bored suburban housewife. Then just in the revision process, you’re assigning specific speeches and characteristics and even just hand gestures and tendencies and history to this person.

And in the process, she is still maybe bored suburban housewife. But she’s also Wendy. And she’s got a whole bunch of often contradictory traits that you’ve laden her with. The move, then, for some weird reason, is the human mind confronted with specificity grows, let’s say, fond. It doesn’t mean you necessarily like, but you’re kind of fond of this person. So that move to take a broad indicator and then specify it, you see more clearly. You feel more fond.

But there’s another thing that happens, which is you understand her problems with more nuance. You might be able to imagine turning the axis slightly. You’re a bored suburban housewife. But you’re also an aspiring choreographer with a bad left foot, whatever. OK. This now makes me manifest differently towards you. It’s just the adjustment in the concepts.

So if we adjust our concept, our projection about somebody else from abroad, and in politics, often at least somewhat dismissive position, we place that with increasing levels of nuance. My contention is that actually makes you certainly more affectionate. It’s probably a happier place to be from your point of view to feel affection.

But also, if there is a political issue, what we call a political issue, my contention is you’re actually in a more powerful place to make a change because you’ve abandoned the conceptual projections that made the trap so rigid in the first place. So in our country now, if someone says — I mean, I’m left of Gandhi. If someone says to me, what should we do about those Trump supporters? Well, I have a pretty limited answer to that.

Now, if we start specifying an individual person, then possibilities — I don’t think they necessarily work. I covered the Trump rallies, and I persuaded exactly zero people. But somehow in my gut, I feel like there’s more — it’s more open. The more specific you can be, the more you can abide with somebody. Then I think you actually become more powerful politically because you’re actually responding to things as they are — reality in all its complicated dimensionality — as opposed to your perhaps too simplistic projection of it, which is not going to budge at some point.

EZRA KLEIN: Well, isn’t this always what Barack Obama’s particular storytelling genius was? I mean, you go back to the ’04 Boston D.N.C. speech. The line that always lingers in my mind from that, which I’ll get wrong in memory a bit, but he says something like, we worship an awesome God in blue states. And we don’t like federal officials poking around our libraries in red states. I always think Obama’s great political genius wasn’t in the fact that he got people to like him. But he was able to convince people that he liked them, which is often much more important.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Right.

EZRA KLEIN: There’s a very, very famous political polling result that you always — the pollsters always ask it, right? Do you find this politician likable? And I’ve always thought it gets it actually backwards, that the much more important question in politics is, do you think the politician likes you? That’s the threshold condition to whether or not you’re going to like them.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Yeah, which is another way of saying, does the politician see you?

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: So the thing is, I remember in 2016 just being so, sort of, shocked. And the world had gone insane. But actually, as a fiction writer, I finally got back to the point where I said, the world is fine. The world is what it is. It’s just an energy system proceeding to some end.

But you didn’t know enough. I didn’t know enough about the way conditions actually were. So it seems shocking and the world was broken [INAUDIBLE]. So one of the things that cures me, actually — and again, having to do with being a writer — is it’s my job to know how things actually are, even though I never will.

And even at a time like this, I take a lot of comfort in that, that, OK, I may have misunderstood everything. We all may have. Who would have imagined that we would have a big political partisan fight about a pandemic? That’s incredible.

But the fact that I didn’t see it doesn’t mean it isn’t true. So fiction, maybe as opposed to political thought — or art — is in the full-time business of getting us to drop our deceptions and see the way things actually are, which to me is an inherently hopeful kind of thing, even if we can never actually get there. So Obama, to me, is somebody who when he’s speaking to somebody, and they feel seen by him, he’s touching on the idea that even if he totally disagrees with you, you don’t disagree with you.

The world makes sense from your perspective. And you’re going to make progress with that person by trying to understand what to you seems irrational. And his willingness to accept that is sort of a bonding thing.

EZRA KLEIN: I think that’s a good place to end. Always our final question, what are the three books that have influenced you that you would recommend to the audience?

GEORGE SAUNDERS: I have just been reading Luke Mogelson’s “The Storm is Here,” which I think is a tremendous insider look at the stuff leading up to Jan. 6. And it’s just an incredible — he must be a great reporter because people talk to him. They tell him all the specifics.

And also I read a really wonderful novel called “Sugar Street” by Jonathan Dee that I haven’t been troubled by a novel in a long time and kind of, like, really, really jolted by it. And the ending of that book really did it. It’s kind of a really insightful look at, I guess you’d say, conditions on the ground in ***working class*** America. And the other book I’m really loving is “Marlena” by Julie Buntin. And it’s just kind of a real detailed, strangely joyful look at ***working-class*** America and addiction that really surprised me in a few places.

EZRA KLEIN: George Saunders, your new story collection is “Liberation Day.” Thank you very much.

GEORGE SAUNDERS: Thank you, Ezra.

EZRA KLEIN: “The Ezra Klein Show’s” produced by Emefa Agawu, Annie Galvin, Jeff Geld and Rogé Karma. Fact checking by Michelle Harris and Mary Marge Locker. Original music by Isaac Jones and Sonia Herrero. Mixing by Jeff Geld. Audience strategy by Shannon Busta. And special thanks to Kristin Lin and Kristina Samulewski.

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**End of Document**



[***A Reunion of Two Sisters; One Is Refined, One Isn’t; Movie Review***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5MWJ-98Y1-JBG3-60D6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 640 words

**Byline:** A.O. Scott

**Highlight:** Nancy Savoca’s “Union Square” is the tale of two sisters, played by Mira Sorvino and Tammy Blanchard, divided by temperament, geography and class.

**Body**

“Union Square,” Nancy Savoca’s long-awaited return to feature filmmaking, is the tale of two sisters divided by temperament, geography and class. The first one we meet is Lucy (Mira Sorvino), a whirlwind of attitude and emotion who blows into Manhattan with her smartphone, her lap dog and no small amount of emotional baggage. After a bunch of angry texts and phone conversations with her married lover (who is never seen and barely heard) and a bout of extreme shopping in the discount emporiums on [*14th Street*](http://www.villagevoice.com/slideshow/shopping-on-14th-street-92023/), Lucy arrives at the apartment of her sister, Jenny (Tammy Blanchard).

The welcome could hardly be chillier, and it takes the viewer a moment to comprehend that these women are related by blood. It’s not just that Lucy is noisy, tall and blond, while Jenny is diffident and darker-haired. Jenny, it seems, has turned herself into a point-by-point rebuttal of everything her sister represents. If you listen closely, you might hear a hint of their ***working-class*** Bronx background in Jenny’s voice; with Lucy, it’s about as subtle as a car horn in heavy traffic. Jenny, whose future in-laws think she grew up in Maine, acts out a daily caricature of repressed, genteel propriety, words that no one would think to apply to her sister.

It has been three years since Jenny and Lucy last saw each other, and the details of their estrangement are both vague and a little implausible. But Ms. Savoca, who wrote the script with Mary Tobler, is less concerned with shoehorning the characters into a neat story than in watching them bounce around in a confined space filled with unruly, unwelcome feeling.

As Thanksgiving approaches, secrets spill out, grudges are aired, and a great deal of organic vodka is drunk, some of it in the company of Sara (Daphne Rubin-Vega), a friend from the old neighborhood who mortifies Jenny almost as much as Lucy does. Jenny’s fiancé, Bill (Mike Doyle), square-jawed and well bred, is a gracious if somewhat baffled host, though Jenny seems a little afraid of him. It may just be that she is terrified that her elaborate, fragile charade will be wrecked by her sister. It may also be that such wreckage is precisely what Lucy intends.

Not that Lucy would have the discipline to carry out even the simplest plan. She is too chaotic to be an effective manipulator of anyone else and either blind or indifferent to the mortifying impact her presence has on Jenny, who has devoted her life, above all, to maintaining order and decorum. Her tidy apartment — it serves as headquarters for the mail-order health food company she and Bill run together — is a temple of rules: no shoes, no smoking, no meat, no loud voices or messy feelings.

The place is just not big enough for Lucy’s personality, and the same might be said about “Union Square” itself. [*Ms. Sorvino,*](http://www.villagevoice.com/slideshow/shopping-on-14th-street-92023/) a naturally warm and funny actress, has been too scarce a presence on movie screens in recent years, and her brassy, heartfelt performance cries out for melodrama on a larger scale. Ms. Savoca makes the most of limited resources — a small cast, a few locations, a digital camera — and she too could have used more room to stretch out.

Her first three features — “True Love” (1989), “Dogfight” (1991) and the splendid [*“Household Saints”*](http://www.villagevoice.com/slideshow/shopping-on-14th-street-92023/) (1993) — are at once modest and richly imagined, with a novelistic sense of character and detail. “Union Square” has the busy, hemmed-in talkiness of a theater piece, with too much forced to happen in too short a time. But it also has a lively, nervous energy and an expansive sympathy for the mismatched women at its heart.

“Union Square” is rated R (Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian). It includes strong language and hard feelings.

PHOTO: Tammy Blanchard, left, as Jenny, and Mira Sorvino as her sister, Lucy, in Nancy Savoca’s “Union Square.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY GERARDO SOMOZA/DADA FILMS)

**Load-Date:** July 13, 2020

**End of Document**



[***5 Movies From Round the World to Watch Now***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62W1-7201-JBG3-64X0-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1225 words

**Byline:** By Devika Girish

**Body**

Explore the world on your screen with these new selections.

This month's picks include a dystopian Greek movie about a mysterious disease, a sobering film about Britain's Windrush scandal, a harrowing drama from Colombia, a modern Indian take on Shakespeare and a dazzling stop-motion opera from China.

'Kala Azar'

Stream it on Mubi.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Janis Rafailidou's unsettling movie introduces its lead characters via a sex scene, although it's not immediately clear what we're watching. All we see are fragments of fleshy, entangled limbs, filmed so up-close that it's impossible to discern any recognizable shapes or forms. This is Rafailidou's modus operandi throughout ''Kala Azar'': to peer at familiar objects and bodies so closely, and from such unusual angles, that their contours become strange.

The story unfolds in a desolate, somewhat dystopian Mediterranean landscape, though the setting is never explicitly identified. There are distant mountains, scraggly fields and dusty construction sites where crews of South Asian laborers toil away. Penelope (Penelope Tsilika) and Dimitris (Dimitris Lalos) are pet cremators who drive through this terrain, stopping by homes to pick up deceased dogs, cats and fish, assuring their owners that they will be disposed of with ceremony and care.

Fragments of narrative emerge as the couple clash with the director of the pet crematory over the mysterious roadkill they encounter on their journeys. But ''Kala Azar'' invests less in plot than in a sensuous, tactile mood, drawing on the morbid implications of its title (the name of a lethal parasitic fever) to conjure a melancholic world where life and death are no longer in equilibrium. It's a particularly haunting watch in our current coronavirus-afflicted times.

'Sitting in Limbo'

Stream it on Netflix.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Anthony Bryan's mother arrived in London in the 1960s as part of the ''Windrush generation'' of Caribbean immigrants: ***working-class*** men and women who were encouraged to move to Britain in the postwar decades to fill labor shortages. Bryan was all of 8 when he joined his mother, and by 2015 he had lived and worked in London for nearly 50 years, when, suddenly, he was declared an illegal immigrant and threatened with deportation.

Bryan was among the hundreds of immigrants wrongly targeted in Britain's Windrush scandal. In ''Sitting in Limbo,'' which dramatizes Bryan's hellish experience, the director Stella Corradi captures the spiritual toll of this injustice. Bryan (Patrick Robinson) goes from his modest but full life with his partner, children and friends to making the labyrinthine rounds of immigration offices, courtrooms and prisonlike detention centers. Any legal relief, procured by his family at great cost, proves short-lived.

Corradi renders both Bryan's downs and eventual ups with the same muted, evenhanded style, mirroring the truth that Robinson conveys forcefully with his weary, hardening face. No matter the outcome of his ordeal, Bryan has lost something that he will never recover: a sense of belonging. Yet ''Sitting in Limbo'' isn't all grim. Corradi takes care to highlight the intimacy, love, and solidarity of Bryan's community, paying tribute to not just their suffering but also their resilience.

'Valley of Souls'

Stream it on Mubi.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

''Valley of Souls'' opens in 2002 as José (José Arley de Jesús Carvallido Lobo), a wizened old fisherman, canoes down Colombia's Magdalena river. The night is dark, the river is vast and menacing voices can be heard in the distance. The United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, the far-right paramilitary army that wrought terror in the region in the late 1990s and 2000s, is rounding up locals. When José returns to his hut in the morning light, his sons have been taken.

So begins the harrowing Sisyphean drama of Nicolás Rincón Gille's film. Josés unerring resolve to find his sons becomes all the more tragic when you realize that the best he can hope for is their corpses. He's fighting not for their lives but to grant them dignity in death.

Like the river at its center, ''Valley of Souls'' proceeds with a quiet, steady rhythm that quickens occasionally to reveal the horrors beneath its placid surface. Lobo is magnificently stoic, and Rincón Gille follows him with a patient, observational lens, turning José into a kind of patron saint of all the victims of Colombia's violent civil conflict who remain lost in watery graves.

'Joji'

Stream it on Amazon Prime.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Three brothers share a home with their fearsome father on a verdant rubber estate in the South Indian state of Kerala. When the grizzled patriarch (whom we first meet as he's doing age-defying pull-ups) suffers a debilitating stroke, Joji (Fahadh Faasil), the youngest, good-for-nothing son realizes that this might be his only chance to seize the life he desires. And so he does, setting off a chain of murderous lies and betrayals.

Mixing shades of ''Macbeth'' and ''King Lear,'' the director Dileesh Pothan enlivens universal themes of greed, ambition and familial conflict by firmly rooting his film in its time and place. The power plays in ''Joji'' draw on the caste and class inequities, religious animosities and feudal dynamics of rural Kerala, while the accouterments of the pandemic -- masks, quarantines, protective gear -- all become chess pieces in the narrative.

''Joji'' reminded me of HBO's ''Succession,'' with its tightrope walk between suspense and dark humor. The twists are entertaining and unpredictable, but the pleasure of the film lies in watching its carefully drawn characters squirm as they try to keep up appearances in absurd situations, such as a funeral service where the speeches are excuses to trade barbs. My takeaway? There are few things as universal across cultures as passive-aggressive families.

'S He'

Stream it on Mubi.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

In Zhou Shengwei's ''S He,'' a single mother fights to raise and feed her daughter in a man's world. Except the ''mother'' in this instance is a glossy red pump with a crown of green vines, and the ''men'' are shiny black loafers with wide mouths and pointy teeth.

It's hard to do justice to the dazzling craft of Zhou's stop-motion movie with just words. You have to see it to appreciate the visual and thematic richness the director achieves using everyday objects. Shoes, socks, pins, nails, fruit and more become characters in an operatic battle of the sexes. The pump murders the loafer who keeps her locked up, Mrs. Rochester-style, and then ventures into the forbidden realm of male shoes, imagined here as a cross between a smoking lounge and a sweatshop. There, she must battle roving mechanical eyes and murderous keys to steal food -- i.e., socks -- to feed her offspring.

A dystopian screed against misogyny and capitalism unfurls against the backdrop of plastic seas and furry sunsets, but ''S He'' isn't merely an exercise in symbolism. With his interplay of light, movement and sound, Zhou choreographs grand emotions and stirring pathos: the rage of a woman scorned, the desperation of a protective mother, the lost innocence of a forsaken child. For all its elaborate artistry, ''S He'' reminds us that the magic of the movies lies in their power to make us feel.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/movies/international-movies-streaming.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/movies/international-movies-streaming.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top: From left, Pippa Bennett-Warner, Patrick Robinson, Nadine Marshall and C. J. Beckford in ''Sitting in Limbo''

José Arley de Jesús Carvallido Lobo in ''Valley of Souls''

and a scene from ''Kala Azar,'' directed by Janis Rafailidou. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DES WILLIE/LEFT BANK PICTURES, VIA BBC

MUMBI)

**Load-Date:** June 8, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Another Caucus Is Coming. But Nevada Will Look Completely Different.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y6P-1VD1-JBG3-653J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Isabella Grullón Paz

**Highlight:** Nevada is more diverse than Iowa and in many ways more reflective of the Democratic Party. And it has a different take on how caucuses should work.

**Body**

Nevada is more diverse than Iowa and in many ways more reflective of the Democratic Party. And it has a different take on how caucuses should work.

After the chaos in Iowa, Nevada Democrats want to show the country what a caucus should look like.

Nevada holds the next Democratic nominating contest, on Feb. 22, and the differences with Iowa will go far beyond how the results are tabulated. Nevada’s caucuses will be the first to offer early voting, which begins Saturday. Many caucus sites will be on the Las Vegas Strip to cater to the state’s large urban population. And this year’s caucuses will be trilingual.

Perhaps most significant, the caucuses will simply look different: Iowa is more than [*90 percent white*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218), but Nevada’s population is nearly 30 percent Latino and 10 percent black. Asian-Americans are the   [*fastest-growing ethnic group*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218) in Clark County, which includes Las Vegas. Caucus cards will be printed in Tagalog to serve a large Filipino-American population.

Nevada became one of the Democrats’ four early-voting states in 2008, a relative newcomer compared with Iowa, which has held the first-in-the-nation caucuses since the 1970s. The move was championed by former Senator Harry Reid, who argued that Nevada was a better model of what America looks like. “I don’t think it matters what happens in Iowa or New Hampshire because those states are not representative of the country anymore,” [*he said last year*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218).

Now, with [*critics noting that Iowa bears little resemblance*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218) to a diverse Democratic Party — and with many party leaders   [*contemplating a calendar change*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218) after the botched caucuses there — Nevada is branding itself as the more accessible, representative caucus state.

The caucuses next week will pose a test for former Mayor [*Pete Buttigieg*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218) and Senator   [*Amy Klobuchar*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218), who are coming out of Iowa and New Hampshire, also largely white, with political momentum but who have yet to make inroads with nonwhite voters. Senator   [*Bernie Sanders*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218), the winner in New Hampshire, could benefit; he has   [*led among Latino voters*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218) in many polls.

“Nevada is arguably the first true indicator of the electability of these Democratic candidates,” said Dan Lee, an assistant professor of political science at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. “If a candidate like Buttigieg wins Iowa, what does that say? That he has the support of a lot of white voters. That doesn’t mean he’s going to do well in Nevada.”

Iowa and New Hampshire have set expectations for decades, Professor Lee said. But Nevada opens a sequence of far more diverse contests, including South Carolina, where African-American voters are expected to make up a majority of the Democratic electorate, and the 15 Super Tuesday states and territories.

“I think that Nevada has a really unique story to tell for any candidate that wins here,” said Shelby Wiltz, the caucus director for the Nevada Democratic Party. “The states that follow Nevada are just as diverse, so we can offer a unique perspective for candidates and how they’ll fare in the rest of the primary calendar and on Election Day.”

Beyond the differences in racial makeup between Nevada and Iowa, there are economic and geographical differences as well. Nevada, anchored by Las Vegas, is a service-industry state, [*with much of its labor force*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218) working in areas like food preparation, sales, transportation and maintenance. That reflects an American ***working class*** that is   [*increasingly based in the service sector*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218). Iowa has a   [*much larger manufacturing sector*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218), an industry more associated with what the ***working class*** used to look like.

[*Roughly 19 percent*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218) of Nevada’s population was born outside the United States, the fifth largest share in the country; in Iowa, the share is about 5 percent, according to the Census Bureau.

Organized labor is a huge political force in Nevada: In 2019, union members accounted for [*14.6 percent of workers in the state*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218). The Culinary Workers Local 226, which represents tens of thousands of workers in Las Vegas, has helped set up early-voting sites for casino and hotel employees.

That union’s endorsement helped Barack Obama win the Nevada caucuses in 2008. But on Thursday, the union [*announced it would not endorse*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218) a candidate in this year’s contest.

Alana Mounce, the executive director of the Nevada Democratic Party, said it was working closely with organizations like the culinary workers’ union to “reach voters we may miss otherwise or that campaigns miss in their outreach.”

About 60 percent of Nevada voters cast their ballots early in general elections, Ms. Mounce said. It made sense, she said, to add early voting to the caucus process.

“We are finding opportunities to ensure that every community has options for participation and that we are really finding ways to engage people who traditionally haven’t had their voices heard in this process,” she said.

From Saturday through Tuesday, Nevada Democrats can vote early in more than 80 locations. They can go to any early-voting location in their county; many of them are on the Las Vegas Strip, and a 24-hour voting site behind the Bellagio Hotel caters to casino and hotel workers. The party also set up an early-voting site at a Cardenas Market in East Las Vegas, a predominantly Latino area.

Voters will be able to ask for preference cards in English, Spanish or Tagalog and rank up to five candidates. The state party will then transmit those results to precinct captains on caucus day.

“I think campaigns need to understand that in order to be successful here in Nevada, not only do you need to engage with every single community, but you need to hire staff that can work and engage in those communities in English or Spanish,” Ms. Wiltz, the caucus director, said.

Ms. Mounce said the party had been working with community groups, unions and other organizations to train campaigns, voters and volunteers to work with a multi-language caucus.

“If you’re a candidate that does well in Nevada, you can tell voters that you’re a candidate that can beat Donald Trump because of our diversity and because of our electorate looking like the rest of the country,” she added.

Seeking to avoid Iowa’s fate, the Nevada party has abandoned its plans to use the app technology that caused so many problems in the caucuses last week. Officials [*announced Thursday*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218) that they planned to provide precinct chairs with iPads and would rely on a calculator and Google forms for tabulations, but the plan has done little to soothe anxious campaigns.

Creating a political culture around caucuses in Nevada is hard, to say the least.

“Nevadans aren’t as politically engaged as they are in Iowa and New Hampshire. Both of those states have been early states for decades,” Professor Lee said. “It’s part of their culture to get that political attention and to be engaged, especially in Iowa.”

Professor Lee said Nevada was a transient state, with people moving in and out frequently. That usually leads to a lack of engagement among voters and low turnout, he added.

“Running a campaign is a lot harder in a state like Nevada versus Iowa or New Hampshire, because you’ve got to run a bilingual campaign and you have to work harder to reach voters, and even harder to actually convince those voters to caucus,” he said.

But the campaigns can make a difference. “Looking at the 2018 midterms, turnout in Nevada was actually quite high because candidates were running really robust campaigns in Nevada to get people engaged,” Professor Lee said. In 2018, [*63 percent of eligible voters cast ballots*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218), a 17 percentage point increase from   [*four years earlier*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/IA,US/RHI125218).

Among the 2020 Democratic candidates, Senator Elizabeth Warren and Mr. Sanders have campaigned in the state frequently since the summer. Some past contenders, like Senators Kamala Harris and Cory Booker and the former housing secretary Julián Castro, put significant resources into Nevada, hoping that the state could cushion a potential blow from Iowa and New Hampshire. But those three, who were some of the most prominent candidates of color in the race, dropped out before the Iowa caucuses.

PHOTO: Supporters of Senator Bernie Sanders in Nevada lined up to be counted while caucusing in 2016. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MAX WHITTAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Gallery Weekend Brings London’s Art Scene Back to Life***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62VV-F4C1-JBG3-64GT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 7, 2021 Monday 08:46 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 1226 words

**Byline:** Scott Reyburn

**Highlight:** The event, spread out through the city’s dealerships, brought a model tried elsewhere to one of the sector’s major capitals.

**Body**

The event, spread out through the city’s dealerships, brought a model tried elsewhere to one of the sector’s major capitals.

LONDON — “I met her on a dating app … I met her in a pub,” said Ellie Pennick, 24, director and founder of [*Guts Gallery*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/), recalling on Friday how she had discovered some of the young artists whose work she was selling from a pop-up space near Carnaby Street during the debut edition of [*London Gallery Weekend*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/).

Pennick, who describes herself as a “***working-class***, queer Northerner with no art background,” was one of more than 130 London-based dealers holding live exhibitions during this collaborative three-day initiative from June 4-6, which aimed to reinvigorate the British capital’s contemporary art scene after months of coronavirus-induced lockdowns.

Unable to afford the fees to study sculpture at [*London’s Royal College of Art*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/) and frustrated by the art world’s prevailing systems, Pennick said she decided to become a nomadic dealer who uses pop-up shows and the internet to promote edgy new talent.

“I looked at the business model and saw that the main expense was space. So I thought I’d take that out,” Pennick said. Her participation in Gallery Weekend was supported by the renowned London dealer Sadie Coles, who lent her a small retail unit in Soho.

Pennick exhibited 10 works by artists she is “championing” (she prefers the term to “representing”). Seven of them sold at the Friday opening, led by “6 Red Chillies,” an expressionistic self-portrait by the London-based Saudi Arabian artist [*Shadi al-Atallah*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/). That mixed-media painting was bought by a London collector for 8,500 pounds, or about $12,000.

Gallery weekends, which encourage art lovers to wander from showroom to showroom across a city, have become a successful formula for dealers in venues such as [*Berlin*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/) and [*Zurich*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/), which, unlike London, don’t host the major art fairs and auctions that in the past have been magnets for international visitors.

But the double punches of [*Brexit*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/) and [*the pandemic*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/) have damaged London’s position as the capital of the European art market. At the end of May, the 12-month total for auction sales at Christie’s, Phillips and Sotheby’s in London was $1.7 billion, $1 billion down on the equivalent total in 2019, according to [*Pi-eX*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/), an art market research company. Some [*major-name galleries in the city have closed*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/), and travel restrictions threaten to turn a destination international fair such as [*Frieze London*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/) in October, if it goes ahead at all, into a scaled-down event.

Jeremy Epstein, co-founder of London Gallery Weekend, said, “Galleries and artists alike have had to update their relationship with their audience.” He acknowledged that a local crowd, rather than a global one, would be visiting the event, but said he hoped that, in the future, it would become as important an attraction for international collectors as the dealer shows that coincide with Frieze.

Judging by the exhibitions on view, North American-based artists still regard London as an important gateway to recognition — and acquisition — in Europe. Painting, particularly figurative painting, predominated, as it currently does at [*big-ticket international auctions*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/).

[*White Cube*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/) gave over its central London gallery to a show of 20 recent works by the lauded Brooklyn-based French artist, Julie Curtiss, whose surreally stylized figure paintings of women, often focused on shoes and hair, have sold for more than $400,000 at auction.

The centerpiece of the exhibition, Curtiss’s first in London, was a circular 2021 canvas, “Le Futur,” showing blank-faced figures on a riverbank that updated Georges Seurat’s Pointillist masterpiece, “A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte.”

On a rainy Friday morning, the White Cube show attracted a steady trickle of local visitors, including Patsy Prince, a London-based actress and collector.

“It’s been a nightmare. We’ve been starved,” Prince said. “I can’t look at any more art online. I want to smell it. I want to taste the creativity. You can’t do that on Zoom.”

Curtiss’s paintings were priced between $40,000 and $170,000, and all had found buyers, according to Paul Garaizabal, a sales executive at White Cube.

Jaclyn Conley, a Canadian figurative painter working in New Haven, Conn.; [*Leidy Churchman*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/), a Maine-based painter whose work is suffused with Buddhist philosophy; and [*Alvaro Barrington*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/), a New York- and London-based multimedia artist, born in Venezuela and influenced by rap culture, are all names that have yet to make much impact at auction. But their works have been exhibited in prestigious museums, and that fact appeals to buyers who want to stay ahead of the market curve.

New works by Conley, whose paintings have been collected by Barack and Michelle Obama, attracted multiple offers at the [*Skarstedt*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/) gallery in central London. Not far away, the [*Rodeo*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/) gallery found buyers for all 12 of its 2020 paintings by Churchman. Over in East London, [*Emalin*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/) had takers for all 12 of its new works by Barrington, made in London during the lockdown, featuring paintings in sculptural concrete frames inscribed with rap lyrics. Prices at those shows ranged from $12,000 to $95,000. Most of the works were acquired by buyers who had not seen the pieces in person. “People have become more relaxed about buying from JPEGs,” said Katy Green, Rodeo’s London director.

Thanks to the wonders of the internet, works by such sought-after names could, conceivably, have sold out at any gallery weekend, even if held in much smaller outposts of the art world. So where does this leave London?

The British capital is a very big city with a large number of dealerships scattered across a wide area. Unlike more compact centers, such as Berlin, Zurich or Paris (which last week held [*a similar event*](https://gutsgallery.co.uk/)), London is not a city that lends itself to the gallery trail format. Yet in reality, these events, like so much that now goes on in the art market, have become live/digital hybrids.

“Sales are mostly online. Even our London collectors buy over the internet,” said Krittika Sharma, co-founder of Indigo+Madder, one of a cluster of new galleries that has sprung up over the last two years in the Deptford district of southeastern London, not far from Goldsmiths, the college where famous British contemporary artists including Damien Hirst studied.

By the Saturday of London’s Gallery Weekend, Indigo+Madder, which specializes in contemporary art from South Asia and its diaspora, had sold 10 out of 13 multimedia paintings made during lockdown by the London-based artist Haroun Hayward. Influenced by electronic music, African and Middle Eastern textiles and 20th-century English landscape painting, these meticulous, eclectic images were priced between £3,950 and £650. One sold to a Swiss collector.

Hayward said that he was optimistic about London’s ability to remain a vibrant artistic hub.

“I’ve been kicked out of two studios by developers,” said Hayward, who now works from home in East London. “But London’s pretty wild. It will always have a punk streak. The kids are getting it done, but not in the places we know about.”

PHOTO: A capsule performance of Jean Dubuffet’s Coucou Bazar outside the Pace gallery on Friday, part of the inaugural London Gallery Weekend. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jean Dubuffet/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris; Jeremie Souteyrat for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 8, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Flawed Fiction of 'Asian American'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62VK-WPN1-DXY4-X30G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 6, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 3; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1212 words

**Byline:** By Viet Thanh Nguyen

**Body**

One is not born an Asian American. It's an identity that is inherently political, and must be chosen. Before college, I had never even heard of the term, but I vividly remember the moment that I became Asian American.

I was raised in multicultural San Jose, Calif., during the late 1970s and 1980s, among Mexican Americans and ***working-class*** white people. My family and I were refugees from Vietnam and the war fought there, but all I knew of the history that had brought us and many of our neighbors to the United States was what Hollywood told me. It confused me and shamed me to see people who looked like my parents being reduced to wordless masses, condemned to be killed, raped, rescued or silenced.

When my parents talked about Americans, they meant other people, not us, but I felt American, as well as Vietnamese. My parents could use ''Oriental'' without self-consciousness, but I could not. Something struck me as wrong about that word, but I didn't know what it was until I studied Asian American history and literature at the University of California, Berkeley. There I learned about the Chinese Exclusion Act, the internment of Japanese Americans, the colonization of the Philippines, the annexation of Hawaii, the often forgotten presence of Korean and Indian immigrants in the early 20th century, the signs that said ''No dogs or Filipinos allowed'' and the experiences of Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian and Hmong people during and after the Indochina wars.

That's when I became Asian American. And the overwhelming emotion that I felt on learning this history was rage. Muhammad Ali said that ''writing is fighting'' -- and I wanted to write and fight, especially after I discovered that Asian Americans had been writing and fighting in English since the late 19th century: the sisters Sui Sin Far and Onoto Watanna, Carlos Bulosan, John Okada, Frank Chin, Maxine Hong Kingston and many more.

I didn't learn about them before because racism isolates us, disempowers us and erases our history. One solution is to find others and discover strength in our stories and our numbers. In high school, my Asian friends and I jokingly called ourselves ''the Asian invasion'' because that was all the language we had. In college, I joined the Asian American Political Alliance. There I learned that the term ''Asian American'' was invented in California by Yuji Ichioka and Emma Gee when they formed the group in 1968.

''Asian American'' was a creation, and those who say that there are no ''Asians'' in Asia are right. But neither is there an ''Orient'' or ''Orientals'' -- those fantastic figments of the Western imagination, as Edward Said argued. Against this racist and sexist fiction of the Oriental, we built the anti-racist, anti-sexist fiction of the Asian American. We willed ourselves into being, but as with every other act of American self-conjuring, we became marked by a contradiction between American aspiration and American reality.

On the one hand, Asian Americans have long insisted that we are patriotic and productive Americans. This self-defense often leans on the model minority myth and the idea that Asian Americans have succeeded in fields such as medicine and technology because we immigrated with educational credentials and we raise our children to work hard. But Asian Americans are also haunting reminders of wars that killed millions of people and generated many refugees. And Asian Americans have come to satisfy the American need for cheap, exploitable labor -- from working on railroads to giving pedicures. We were and are perceived to be competitors in a capitalist economy fractured by divisions of race, gender and class and the ever-widening gap of inequality that affects all Americans.

These roles that we play, and the contradictions they represent, aren't going anywhere. As long as the United States remains committed to aggressive capitalism domestically and aggressive militarism internationally, Asians and Asian Americans will continue to be scapegoats who embody threat and aspiration, an inhuman ''yellow peril'' and a superhuman model minority.

No claim to American belonging will end the vulnerability of Asian Americans to racism and cyclical convulsions of violence. And what does it even mean to claim belonging in the United States? If we belong to this country, then this country belongs to us, every part of it, including its systemic anti-Black racism and its colonization of Indigenous peoples and land. Like wave after wave of newcomers to this country before, Asian immigrants and refugees learned that absorbing and repeating anti-Black racism helps in the assimilation process. And like the European settlers, Asian immigrants and refugees aspire to the American dream, whose narrative of self-reliance, success and property accumulation is built on the theft of land from Indigenous peoples.

''Asian American'' has now morphed into a newer fiction: the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, or A.A.P.I. But again, there are contradictions inherent in this identity. Pacific Islanders -- Hawaiians, Samoans, the Chamorro of Guam -- were and remain colonized by the United States, with Hawaii and Guam serving as sites for major American military bases that project power in the Pacific and Asia. ''A.A.P.I.'' is a staple of the lofty rhetoric and pragmatic corporate language of diversity and inclusion, but it also tends to gloss over the United States' long history of violence and conquest. It's not only railroads and internment that are central to A.A.P.I. experience; so is the colonization of Hawaii, masked by the tourist fantasy of an island paradise.

Now we applaud the success stories of Asian American billionaires, politicians, movie stars and influencers and the popularity of our cultural commodities, from boba to BTS. We raise each other up through networking -- in the hope that embracing global capitalism, the idea of meritocracy and corporate culture will make us belong in the United States. But belonging will get us only so far, for belonging always involves exclusion.

We should look to other ideals: solidarity, unity and decolonization. Colonization and racism divide and conquer, telling the subjugated that they have nothing in common. That's why unity is crucial, and a broader unity can grow from the solidarity we have expressed with one another as Asian Americans, the force that pulled together such disparate peoples and experiences. That will to find kinship can be the basis for further solidarities -- with everyone else shaped by colonization's global impact, its genocide and slavery, racism and capitalism, patriarchy and heteronormativity.

This is the only way that an Asian American-Pacific Islander coalition makes sense -- pointing the way toward alliances with other groups, from Black Americans to Muslims, Latinos to L.G.B.T.Q. people. Asian Americans are one political identity among the many that must come together for decolonization.

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**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS VIA GETTY)

**Load-Date:** June 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Five International Movies to Stream Right Now***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62VC-N421-JBG3-62FV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 5, 2021 Saturday

The New York Times on the Web

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**Section:** Section ; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk

**Length:** 1225 words

**Byline:** By Devika Girish

**Body**

Explore the world on your screen with these new selections.

This month's picks include a dystopian Greek movie about a mysterious disease, a sobering film about Britain's Windrush scandal, a harrowing drama from Colombia, a modern Indian take on Shakespeare and a dazzling stop-motion opera from China.

'Kala Azar'

Stream it on Mubi.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Janis Rafailidou's unsettling movie introduces its lead characters via a sex scene, although it's not immediately clear what we're watching. All we see are fragments of fleshy, entangled limbs, filmed so up-close that it's impossible to discern any recognizable shapes or forms. This is Rafailidou's modus operandi throughout ''Kala Azar'': to peer at familiar objects and bodies so closely, and from such unusual angles, that their contours become strange.

The story unfolds in a desolate, somewhat dystopian Mediterranean landscape, though the setting is never explicitly identified. There are distant mountains, scraggly fields and dusty construction sites where crews of South Asian laborers toil away. Penelope (Penelope Tsilika) and Dimitris (Dimitris Lalos) are pet cremators who drive through this terrain, stopping by homes to pick up deceased dogs, cats and fish, assuring their owners that they will be disposed of with ceremony and care.

Fragments of narrative emerge as the couple clash with the director of the pet crematory over the mysterious roadkill they encounter on their journeys. But ''Kala Azar'' invests less in plot than in a sensuous, tactile mood, drawing on the morbid implications of its title (the name of a lethal parasitic fever) to conjure a melancholic world where life and death are no longer in equilibrium. It's a particularly haunting watch in our current coronavirus-afflicted times.

'Sitting in Limbo'

Stream it on Netflix.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Anthony Bryan's mother arrived in London in the 1960s as part of the ''Windrush generation'' of Caribbean immigrants: ***working-class*** men and women who were encouraged to move to Britain in the postwar decades to fill labor shortages. Bryan was all of 8 when he joined his mother, and by 2015 he had lived and worked in London for nearly 50 years, when, suddenly, he was declared an illegal immigrant and threatened with deportation.

Bryan was among the hundreds of immigrants wrongly targeted in Britain's Windrush scandal. In ''Sitting in Limbo,'' which dramatizes Bryan's hellish experience, the director Stella Corradi captures the spiritual toll of this injustice. Bryan (Patrick Robinson) goes from his modest but full life with his partner, children and friends to making the labyrinthine rounds of immigration offices, courtrooms and prisonlike detention centers. Any legal relief, procured by his family at great cost, proves short-lived.

Corradi renders both Bryan's downs and eventual ups with the same muted, evenhanded style, mirroring the truth that Robinson conveys forcefully with his weary, hardening face. No matter the outcome of his ordeal, Bryan has lost something that he will never recover: a sense of belonging. Yet ''Sitting in Limbo'' isn't all grim. Corradi takes care to highlight the intimacy, love, and solidarity of Bryan's community, paying tribute to not just their suffering but also their resilience.

'Valley of Souls'

Stream it on Mubi.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

''Valley of Souls'' opens in 2002 as José (José Arley de Jesús Carvallido Lobo), a wizened old fisherman, canoes down Colombia's Magdalena river. The night is dark, the river is vast and menacing voices can be heard in the distance. The United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, the far-right paramilitary army that wrought terror in the region in the late 1990s and 2000s, is rounding up locals. When José returns to his hut in the morning light, his sons have been taken.

So begins the harrowing Sisyphean drama of Nicolás Rincón Gille's film. Josés unerring resolve to find his sons becomes all the more tragic when you realize that the best he can hope for is their corpses. He's fighting not for their lives but to grant them dignity in death.

Like the river at its center, ''Valley of Souls'' proceeds with a quiet, steady rhythm that quickens occasionally to reveal the horrors beneath its placid surface. Lobo is magnificently stoic, and Rincón Gille follows him with a patient, observational lens, turning José into a kind of patron saint of all the victims of Colombia's violent civil conflict who remain lost in watery graves.

'Joji'

Stream it on Amazon Prime.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Three brothers share a home with their fearsome father on a verdant rubber estate in the South Indian state of Kerala. When the grizzled patriarch (whom we first meet as he's doing age-defying pull-ups) suffers a debilitating stroke, Joji (Fahadh Faasil), the youngest, good-for-nothing son realizes that this might be his only chance to seize the life he desires. And so he does, setting off a chain of murderous lies and betrayals.

Mixing shades of ''Macbeth'' and ''King Lear,'' the director Dileesh Pothan enlivens universal themes of greed, ambition and familial conflict by firmly rooting his film in its time and place. The power plays in ''Joji'' draw on the caste and class inequities, religious animosities and feudal dynamics of rural Kerala, while the accouterments of the pandemic -- masks, quarantines, protective gear -- all become chess pieces in the narrative.

''Joji'' reminded me of HBO's ''Succession,'' with its tightrope walk between suspense and dark humor. The twists are entertaining and unpredictable, but the pleasure of the film lies in watching its carefully drawn characters squirm as they try to keep up appearances in absurd situations, such as a funeral service where the speeches are excuses to trade barbs. My takeaway? There are few things as universal across cultures as passive-aggressive families.

'S He'

Stream it on Mubi.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

In Zhou Shengwei's ''S He,'' a single mother fights to raise and feed her daughter in a man's world. Except the ''mother'' in this instance is a glossy red pump with a crown of green vines, and the ''men'' are shiny black loafers with wide mouths and pointy teeth.

It's hard to do justice to the dazzling craft of Zhou's stop-motion movie with just words. You have to see it to appreciate the visual and thematic richness the director achieves using everyday objects. Shoes, socks, pins, nails, fruit and more become characters in an operatic battle of the sexes. The pump murders the loafer who keeps her locked up, Mrs. Rochester-style, and then ventures into the forbidden realm of male shoes, imagined here as a cross between a smoking lounge and a sweatshop. There, she must battle roving mechanical eyes and murderous keys to steal food -- i.e., socks -- to feed her offspring.

A dystopian screed against misogyny and capitalism unfurls against the backdrop of plastic seas and furry sunsets, but ''S He'' isn't merely an exercise in symbolism. With his interplay of light, movement and sound, Zhou choreographs grand emotions and stirring pathos: the rage of a woman scorned, the desperation of a protective mother, the lost innocence of a forsaken child. For all its elaborate artistry, ''S He'' reminds us that the magic of the movies lies in their power to make us feel.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/movies/international-movies-streaming.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/movies/international-movies-streaming.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: From left, Pippa Bennett-Warner, Patrick Robinson, Nadine Marshall and C.J. Beckford in ''Sitting in Limbo.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY Des Willie/Left Bank Pictures, via BBC FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Bring Back the Tomboys***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YV5-D401-JBG3-63R1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 11, 2020 Tuesday 21:03 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1379 words

**Byline:** Lisa Selin Davis

**Highlight:** Once they were all over pop culture. When they retreated, an expanded view of what girlhood could look like was obscured, too.

**Body**

Once they were all over pop culture. When they retreated, an expanded view of what girlhood could look like was obscured, too.

Everybody loved Jo. With her mane of brown hair and disdain for convention, the tomboy who spoke her mind and had no need for high society, she was adored by little girls across America.

You might think I speak of Jo March from “Little Women,” Louisa May Alcott’s 1868 novel (recently adapted for the screen by Greta Gerwig), which has never been out of print. It rocked the literary landscape and elevated tomboys to the top of the heroine heap, as Jo March inspired generations of early feminists to be forthright and assertive, and to reject traditional, passive femininity.

But I’m not — the tomboy I refer to is Jo Polniaczek, from the 1980s sitcom “The Facts of Life.” That Jo was a ***working-class*** kid on scholarship at a fancy girls’ boarding school. Her signature hairstyle was two little ponytails that connected to a big one in the back. Her signature outfit was a leather jacket — once she even dressed up as Peter Fonda in “Easy Rider” for Halloween — and jeans. Her signature ride was a motorcycle — which she fixed herself. Like most fictional tomboys until then, Jo was a white, ***working-class*** brunette with a blond, rich girly-girl nemesis, Blair.

When Jo joined “The Facts of Life” in 1980 for its second season, she was among many tomboys on the big and small screen in that era. There was Addie Loggins in “Paper Moon” (1973) and Amanda Whurlitzer in “The Bad News Bears” (1976), both played by Tatum O’Neal. Laura Ingalls in “Little House on the Prairie” and the short-haired drummer Watts in the 1987 romantic comedy “Some Kind of Wonderful.” Jodie Foster and Kristy McNichol tomboyed it up in almost any role they played.

They were outspoken, confident and indifferent to the silent or explicit rules of gender around them, often dressing and acting “like boys.” They stood in stark contrast to the ingénues and highly feminine characters girls and women were often restricted to. For me and many Gen X girls (and boys), the tomboys of the 1970s and &#39;80s expanded the possibilities of what girlhood could look like. I have met only one woman who liked Blair better than Jo.

These were often my favorite characters, living examples of the feminist zeitgeist that told me I did not have to be feminine to be female: I could, and maybe should, dress and act like boys and have access to their domains. In her book “Pink and Blue: Telling the Boys From the Girls in America,” the historian Jo B. Paoletti points to Sears catalogs in the 1970s that displayed size conversion charts so girls could shop more easily in the boys’ section. During that same period, Title IX mandated girls have parity with boys in all aspects of federally funded education.

But this kind of tomboy began to recede in the mid-1980s. Hostility to feminism emerged in that decade, with the rise of the New Right and shows like “Thirtysomething,” in which educated women were sent back to the domestic realm, as Susan Faludi charted in her book “Backlash.” This was followed by the pink-hued “Girl Power” of the 1990s, which moved away from the more masculine-presenting tomboy toward an image that seemed to comfort the male gaze. Jo gave way to Sporty Spice, Xena, Buffy — coifed, petal-lipped and sometimes baring midriff — with the message that one didn’t need to sacrifice femininity to have power.

It was an understandable counter to the somewhat limiting message of the earlier tomboy era, which implied that while masculinity was good for boys and girls, femininity was bad for both. But it also edged out a certain kind of acceptable masculinity in young girls, and came with its own confinements — namely the idea that girls could be strong, so long as they were also pretty.

Their inherent flaws aside, ideally, both identities should be able to coexist. But having spent the last year writing a book about the history, science and psychology of tomboys, I’m acutely aware of how modern girls who resemble the tomboys of my youth are now underrepresented.

In the years that followed the tomboy heyday, gender polarization effectively swallowed childhood. The combination of declining birthrates, prenatal sex testing, the phenomenon of gender-reveal parties and other cultural shifts helped cultivate the pink and blue divide that now colors most toys, games and clothes: pink and blue pens, bikes, snacks, toothbrushes! There has been a return to the pre-tomboy idea that femininity and females are conjoined, likely because companies found they could [*sell more of the same items*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/23/opinion/sunday/gender-based-toy-marketing-returns.html) if they came in pink and blue versions.

This extreme division has perpetuated gender stereotypes in children’s media. When I bought a kids’ edition of the Kindle Fire in 2017, it forced me to select a gender for my child, and then edited out almost anything “masculine” (apps, videos and books about sports or adventure) if I chose “girl,” and anything “feminine” (princesses, fairy tales, flowers) if I selected “boy.” A [*report*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/23/opinion/sunday/gender-based-toy-marketing-returns.html) revealed that females made up only 38 percent of main characters on American kids’ TV shows in 2017. While boys use physical power and STEM skills to solve problems on these shows, girls tend to use magic.   [*Another study*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/23/opinion/sunday/gender-based-toy-marketing-returns.html) found that higher TV exposure for 4-year-olds contributed to a higher likelihood that they’ll believe men and boys are better than women and girls.

We do have laudable, modern young female characters. Nella the Princess Knight, Moana and Katniss Everdeen, among others, represent a certain kind of intra-feminine diversity, and far more racial diversity than that of 1970s and 1980s tomboys. The Canadian kids’ TV creator J.J. Johnson has many STEM-minded, less stereotypically feminine female characters on his shows, including “Annedroids” and “Dino Dana.”

We also have more diverse representations of gender identity, including the nonbinary actor Ellie Desautels playing the transgender student Michael Hallowell on NBC’s “Rise,” to the nonbinary character Syd on Netflix’s “One Day at a Time” reboot. [*GLAAD found that*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/23/opinion/sunday/gender-based-toy-marketing-returns.html) in 2017 and 2018, there were more representations of L.G.B.T.Q. characters than at any time before. These important additions to the cultural landscape are to be celebrated, and continued.

But we shouldn’t let the old-school tomboys in pop culture fade away in the process. The pop star [*Billie Eilish*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/23/opinion/sunday/gender-based-toy-marketing-returns.html) offers a refreshing twist: Through her affinity for oversize hoodies and pants and her confident, offbeat swagger, she provides girls an alternative to the overtly sexualized pop singer. I’d like to see even more of this — the return of Jo and her descendants, alongside the representations of strong, feminine girls and nonbinary and trans people. Girls who claim all the traditional traits of masculinity they want, girls who fix motorcycles or play drums or wear short hair.

I loved “The Facts of Life,” but I know it wasn’t a great show. While it tried to deal with class and race and gender, often, especially by today’s standards, it failed. (In the pilot episode, the housemother Mrs. Garrett has to assuage a different tomboy character’s insecurities by assuring her she’s not gay.) But Jo was an important character, even if, like many tomboys, including Jo March, she was often “tamed” — feminized and paired up with a man.

Let’s bring the tomboy back, without taming her. Let’s have feminine boys and masculine girls amid the varied depictions of gender identities and presentations. In today’s world of exponentially expanding media, and exponentially expanding understanding of the complexity of gender, we have room for all of them.

Lisa Selin Davis ([*@LisaSelinDavis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/23/opinion/sunday/gender-based-toy-marketing-returns.html)) is the author of the forthcoming book “   [*Tomboy: The Surprising History and Future of Girls Who Dare to Be Different*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/23/opinion/sunday/gender-based-toy-marketing-returns.html).”

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/23/opinion/sunday/gender-based-toy-marketing-returns.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some   [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/23/opinion/sunday/gender-based-toy-marketing-returns.html). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/23/opinion/sunday/gender-based-toy-marketing-returns.html).

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PHOTO: Nancy McKeon as Jo Polniaczek in “The Facts of Life,” 1982. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Herb Ball/NBCU Photo Bank, via Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 6, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Was the Writing on the Wall? No, Krzyzewski Dictates His Own Exit.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62V5-9541-JBG3-6010-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 4, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Sports Desk; Pg. 10; ON COLLEGE BASKETBALL

**Length:** 1185 words

**Byline:** By Billy Witz

**Body**

Some signs that the end might be near came last season. But Krzyzewski has remained steadfast in his program's tenets even as his teams adapted to the game.

Maybe the signs were there all along last season that Mike Krzyzewski was ready for an exit: scolding a student journalist for an innocuous question, having an N.B.A. prospect quit midseason to prepare for the draft, and openly questioning whether there should be a season while the coronavirus was rampant in the United States.

And, of course, Duke being absent from the N.C.A.A. men's basketball tournament for the first time in 26 years -- a circumstance set up by a 13-11 start and cemented by a late-season virus outbreak within the program.

Those episodes, all taken together, made it seem plausible that for Krzyzewski, with his five national championships, record 1,170 victories over his career at Army and Duke and standing as a lion of the coaching fraternity, enough was enough.

It wasn't quite that way, though, Krzyzewski said Thursday at Cameron Indoor Stadium during an hourlong news conference that was in equal parts pep rally, farewell tour kickoff and confirmation that, like almost everything else about Duke men's basketball in the last 41 years, Krzyzewski's exit would be dictated on his terms.

Krzyzewski, 74, will coach one more season because he still relishes his job -- who wouldn't given a roster primed for another crack at a national championship? Then he will vacate his seat for one of his assistant coaches, Jon Scheyer, so he can spend time doting on his grandchildren and working as an adviser and an ambassador for the university.

''I love what I do,'' he said Thursday in reply to a question from Jake Piazza, the Duke Chronicle reporter he'd scolded last season. ''If you work at what you love it's not work. I've never looked at it like I've got a bad job. I've got a great job. And I think about it all the time.''

The last coach to retire after winning a national championship was Marquette's Al McGuire, who quit at age 48 in 1977 and became a broadcast personality. Two years before that, John Wooden -- the only coach to win more championships than Krzyzewski -- retired after winning his 10th title at U.C.L.A. Wooden, then 64, told his team after its semifinal victory that the championship game would be his final game.

Just as Wooden was bidding adieu, Krzyzewski was starting his career at Army.

He'd grown up in a ***working-class*** Polish neighborhood west of downtown Chicago, and he cut his teeth in basketball playing for a demanding young coach at Army: Bobby Knight. He was so unknown when he was hired at Duke -- his last team at Army in 1979-80 had a 9-17 record -- that he had to spell his name for the reporters who showed up at his introductory news conference.

And by the end of the 1983 season, while Duke had languished with back-to-back losing records, getting walloped by Princeton and losing at home to Wagner, its local rivals -- North Carolina and North Carolina State -- had celebrated consecutive national championships.

But that season also marked the arrival of a recruiting class headlined by a pair of high school All-Americans: Johnny Dawkins, a slithering point guard from Washington D.C., and Mark Alarie, a bruising forward from Phoenix, who by their senior season would carry Duke to the national championship game, which it lost 72-69 to Louisville.

''He was good at Xs and Os, but his greatest gift was to take kids who were already gifted -- academically, socially and in basketball -- and make those guys hungry,'' said Jim Calhoun, who coached against Krzyzewski in the '70s when his Northeastern teams played Army, and later in a handful of memorable N.C.A.A. tournament games, including the 1999 championship game, when Connecticut battled Duke. ''He created a culture of toughness and pride.''

Calhoun said the way his team lost to Duke in 1990 in the round of 8 -- on an overtime buzzer beater by Christian Laettner -- was symbolic.

''It works because they'd worked on it in practice, no question,'' Calhoun said in a phone interview. ''The difference between the two teams was so finite because both us tried to get the other team to quit, to out-will the other team.''

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

That culture manifested itself most famously in Krzyzewski's crowning achievement -- when Duke shocked unbeaten Nevada-Las Vegas in a 1991 national semifinal. The Blue Devils were led by two stars -- Laettner and Bobby Hurley -- who were embarrassed by U.N.L.V. in the title game the previous season. That defeat, by a championship game-record 30 points, marked the fourth time in five seasons that Duke reached the Final Four but went home without a title.

As exacting as Krzyzewski could be, he was not unyielding.

His teams changed how they played with the times -- from ones built on a bedrock of rebounding and defense to his current ones that play at great pace and hunt 3-pointers. Last season, they turned to a zone defense.

He also changed how he recruited. Krzyzewski once bristled at schools whose players left early for the N.B.A., and refused to allow players who did not graduate to have their jersey numbers hung in the rafters of Cameron Indoor Stadium. In 2015, he won his last championship with three one-and-done freshmen.

Over the years, Duke also began to look less squeaky clean -- embracing the role of college basketball's heel, and also occasionally drawing scrutiny over how a player (Lance Thomas) could afford $100,000 worth of jewelry, how jobs were procured for players' parents (Chris Duhon and Carlos Boozer) or how court testimony suggested a star player's family (Zion Williamson) was being plied with money.

Krzyzewski said on Thursday that what changed most was he began to listen more, which helped give him balance. As he grew older -- and he still had college-aged players -- it became a necessity. He learns from them about music, sneakers and pop culture, he said, quipping that he wears his athletic apparel ''a little tighter than my body would probably want.''

''But I don't adapt the principles of the program,'' he said, adding. ''Those will never die.''

One of those principles is at the heart of the succession plan: loyalty.

Scheyer, who grew up in suburban Chicago and captained the 2010 championship team, has something in common with every other Duke assistant in the last 24 years -- he has played for Krzyzewski. The most successful of Krzyzewski's progeny is one who left long ago, Quin Snyder, who is now coaching the Utah Jazz, the N.B.A.'s top regular-season team this year.

Scheyer is taking on recruiting duties this summer because Krzyzewski said it wouldn't be right for him to recruit players he won't coach.

Instead, Krzyzewski will pour himself into working with players for this year's team, who return to campus for summer school this weekend. Now that an end date has been set, Krzyzewski spoke as a man who could easily shrug off all the reasons it is time to go. He sounded on Thursday like someone who was less intent on reaching the finish line than sprinting through it.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/03/sports/ncaabasketball/mike-krzyzewski-duke.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/03/sports/ncaabasketball/mike-krzyzewski-duke.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Mike Krzyzewski will try to end his dynasty at Duke with a sixth national championship. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TOM PENNINGTON/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** June 4, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Five International Movies to Stream Right Now***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62V6-C0S1-DXY4-X1G7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 4, 2021 Friday 00:14 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1262 words

**Byline:** Devika Girish

**Highlight:** Explore the world on your screen with these new selections.

**Body**

Explore the world on your screen with these new selections.

This month’s picks include a dystopian Greek movie about a mysterious disease, a sobering film about Britain’s Windrush scandal, a harrowing drama from Colombia, a modern Indian take on Shakespeare and a dazzling stop-motion opera from China.

‘Kala Azar’

[*Stream it on Mubi.*](https://mubi.com/films/kala-azar)

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://mubi.com/films/kala-azar)]

Janis Rafailidou’s unsettling movie introduces its lead characters via a sex scene, although it’s not immediately clear what we’re watching. All we see are fragments of fleshy, entangled limbs, filmed so up-close that it’s impossible to discern any recognizable shapes or forms. This is Rafailidou’s modus operandi throughout “Kala Azar”: to peer at familiar objects and bodies so closely, and from such unusual angles, that their contours become strange.

The story unfolds in a desolate, somewhat dystopian Mediterranean landscape, though the setting is never explicitly identified. There are distant mountains, scraggly fields and dusty construction sites where crews of South Asian laborers toil away. Penelope (Penelope Tsilika) and Dimitris (Dimitris Lalos) are pet cremators who drive through this terrain, stopping by homes to pick up deceased dogs, cats and fish, assuring their owners that they will be disposed of with ceremony and care.

Fragments of narrative emerge as the couple clash with the director of the pet crematory over the mysterious roadkill they encounter on their journeys. But “Kala Azar” invests less in plot than in a sensuous, tactile mood, drawing on the morbid implications of its title (the name of a lethal parasitic fever) to conjure a melancholic world where life and death are no longer in equilibrium. It’s a particularly haunting watch in our current coronavirus-afflicted times.

‘Sitting in Limbo’

[*Stream it on Netflix.*](https://mubi.com/films/kala-azar)

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://mubi.com/films/kala-azar)]

Anthony Bryan’s mother arrived in London in the 1960s as part of the “Windrush generation” of Caribbean immigrants: ***working-class*** men and women who were encouraged to move to Britain in the postwar decades to fill labor shortages. Bryan was all of 8 when he joined his mother, and by 2015 he had lived and worked in London for nearly 50 years, when, suddenly, he was declared an illegal immigrant and threatened with deportation.

Bryan was among the hundreds of immigrants wrongly targeted in Britain’s [*Windrush scandal*](https://mubi.com/films/kala-azar). In “Sitting in Limbo,” which dramatizes Bryan’s hellish experience, the director Stella Corradi captures the spiritual toll of this injustice. Bryan (Patrick Robinson) goes from his modest but full life with his partner, children and friends to making the labyrinthine rounds of immigration offices, courtrooms and prisonlike detention centers. Any legal relief, procured by his family at great cost, proves short-lived.

Corradi renders both Bryan’s downs and eventual ups with the same muted, evenhanded style, mirroring the truth that Robinson conveys forcefully with his weary, hardening face. No matter the outcome of his ordeal, Bryan has lost something that he will never recover: a sense of belonging. Yet “Sitting in Limbo” isn’t all grim. Corradi takes care to highlight the intimacy, love, and solidarity of Bryan’s community, paying tribute to not just their suffering but also their resilience.

‘Valley of Souls’

[*Stream it on Mubi.*](https://mubi.com/films/kala-azar)

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://mubi.com/films/kala-azar)]

“Valley of Souls” opens in 2002 as José (José Arley de Jesús Carvallido Lobo), a wizened old fisherman, canoes down Colombia’s Magdalena river. The night is dark, the river is vast and menacing voices can be heard in the distance. The United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, the far-right paramilitary army that wrought terror in the region in the late 1990s and 2000s, is rounding up locals. When José returns to his hut in the morning light, his sons have been taken.

So begins the harrowing Sisyphean drama of Nicolás Rincón Gille’s film. Josés unerring resolve to find his sons becomes all the more tragic when you realize that the best he can hope for is their corpses. He’s fighting not for their lives but to grant them dignity in death.

Like the river at its center, “Valley of Souls” proceeds with a quiet, steady rhythm that quickens occasionally to reveal the horrors beneath its placid surface. Lobo is magnificently stoic, and Rincón Gille follows him with a patient, observational lens, turning José into a kind of patron saint of all the victims of Colombia’s violent civil conflict who remain lost in watery graves.

‘Joji’

[*Stream it on Amazon Prime.*](https://mubi.com/films/kala-azar)

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://mubi.com/films/kala-azar)]

Three brothers share a home with their fearsome father on a verdant rubber estate in the South Indian state of Kerala. When the grizzled patriarch (whom we first meet as he’s doing age-defying pull-ups) suffers a debilitating stroke, Joji (Fahadh Faasil), the youngest, good-for-nothing son realizes that this might be his only chance to seize the life he desires. And so he does, setting off a chain of murderous lies and betrayals.

Mixing shades of “Macbeth” and “King Lear,” the director Dileesh Pothan enlivens universal themes of greed, ambition and familial conflict by firmly rooting his film in its time and place. The power plays in “Joji” draw on the caste and class inequities, religious animosities and feudal dynamics of rural Kerala, while the accouterments of the pandemic — masks, quarantines, protective gear — all become chess pieces in the narrative.

“Joji” reminded me of HBO’s “Succession,” with its tightrope walk between suspense and dark humor. The twists are entertaining and unpredictable, but the pleasure of the film lies in watching its carefully drawn characters squirm as they try to keep up appearances in absurd situations, such as a funeral service where the speeches are excuses to trade barbs. My takeaway? There are few things as universal across cultures as passive-aggressive families.

‘S He&#39;

[*Stream it on Mubi.*](https://mubi.com/films/kala-azar)

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://mubi.com/films/kala-azar)]

In Zhou Shengwei’s “S He,” a single mother fights to raise and feed her daughter in a man’s world. Except the “mother” in this instance is a glossy red pump with a crown of green vines, and the “men” are shiny black loafers with wide mouths and pointy teeth.

It’s hard to do justice to the dazzling craft of Zhou’s stop-motion movie with just words. You have to see it to appreciate the visual and thematic richness the director achieves using everyday objects. Shoes, socks, pins, nails, fruit and more become characters in an operatic battle of the sexes. The pump murders the loafer who keeps her locked up, Mrs. Rochester-style, and then ventures into the forbidden realm of male shoes, imagined here as a cross between a smoking lounge and a sweatshop. There, she must battle roving mechanical eyes and murderous keys to steal food — i.e., socks — to feed her offspring.

A dystopian screed against misogyny and capitalism unfurls against the backdrop of plastic seas and furry sunsets, but “S He” isn’t merely an exercise in symbolism. With his interplay of light, movement and sound, Zhou choreographs grand emotions and stirring pathos: the rage of a woman scorned, the desperation of a protective mother, the lost innocence of a forsaken child. For all its elaborate artistry, “S He” reminds us that the magic of the movies lies in their power to make us feel.

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top: From left, Pippa Bennett-Warner, Patrick Robinson, Nadine Marshall and C. J. Beckford in “Sitting in Limbo”; José Arley de Jesús Carvallido Lobo in “Valley of Souls”; and a scene from “Kala Azar,” directed by Janis Rafailidou. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DES WILLIE/LEFT BANK PICTURES, VIA BBC; MUMBI)

**Load-Date:** June 8, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Lenny Kravitz, Michael J. Fox, Cicely Tyson and Gabriel Byrne — All in Their Own Words; Audiobooks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61XT-18G1-JBG3-61G1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 5, 2021 Friday 15:56 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 915 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Reese

**Highlight:** Listen to the latest celebrity memoirs in (mostly) their own recognizable voices.

**Body**

To read or to listen to a book? It can be a tough choice, but when it comes to memoirs of entertainers — especially those who narrate their own work — the answer is easy: Listen. These are authors who bring not just insight, but professional chops and innate charisma to the job. You needn’t be an ardent fan of the celebrity memoirists below to appreciate hearing their personal stories in their famous voices.

No one could recount the saga of a brooding, introverted Irish actor like Gabriel Byrne with more soul than the brooding, introverted Irish actor Gabriel Byrne. In WALKING WITH GHOSTS (Recorded Books, 6 hours, 57 minutes), Byrne revisits his childhood in hardscrabble, hard-drinking mid-20th-century Dublin, introducing us to formative characters like Mrs. Gordon, an elderly friend of his family’s, whose locket held her late husband’s whiskers and who used to regale Byrne with tales of banshees, fairies and famine. He discusses his sister’s mental illness, his early vocation as a priest (“I can’t help but imagine how different my life could have been”) and his struggles with alcoholism (“I started young”). There are Hollywood-era snapshots of his life tucked into the book as well: whiskeys with Richard Burton (“Give it all you got,” he advises Byrne, “but never forget it’s just a bloody movie, that’s all it is. We’re not curing cancer”), a harrowing account of the depression that struck after it became clear “The Usual Suspects” was going to be a hit, and Byrne a star.

Listening to this book in the car was like taking a road trip with a friend sharing his slightly mournful stories in a soft brogue from the passenger seat.

It’s been decades since “Family Ties” made him a household name in the 1980s, but at almost 60 — and having lived with Parkinson’s disease for half his life — Michael J. Fox still has that Alex Keaton buoyancy. Fox’s fourth book, NO TIME LIKE THE FUTURE (Macmillan Audio, 5 hours, 59 minutes), delves into his acting career and philanthropy, his improbable passion for golf, and his worsening health. In 2018 (“my annus horribilis,” he says), Fox underwent surgery for a spinal tumor unrelated to Parkinson’s, an ordeal that tested his characteristic optimism and left him struggling to walk. “Back in the days of carefree ambling, I would have considered the topic of walking to be rather pedestrian,” Fox jokes. Sometimes the quips seem forced, but Fox’s positivity — rooted in the love of his family — is hard-won and inspiring. Although Parkinson’s has affected his speech, after the first few minutes I stopped noticing as his storytelling, suffused with warmth and emotion, drew me in. And only in the audiobook can you hear him choke up while recounting a tender moment with his wife of more than 30 years, the actress Tracy Pollan.

The rocker Lenny Kravitz never chokes up in LET LOVE RULE (Macmillan Audio, 6 hours, 40 minutes), but he does periodically break into song, making for startlingly lovely interludes in this bighearted autobiography. The son of a white Jewish father and a Black mother, Kravitz grew up spending weekdays with his ***working-class*** maternal grandparents in Brooklyn and weekends at nightclubs with his parents in Manhattan. “I’d have to call it a golden childhood,” he says, ever able to find beauty even in bitter experiences. After his mother, Roxie Roker, was cast in “The Jeffersons,” the family moved to Los Angeles, where his parents’ marriage foundered and Kravitz left home at 16, bunking down in a rented Ford Pinto. His musical career blossomed after he fell in love with the actress Lisa Bonet — seeing her for the first time on a TV Guide cover, he announced, “I’m gonna marry that girl” — and the songs came pouring out. The memoir, coauthored with David Ritz, ends with the release of his first album in 1989 and the welcome words: “To be continued.”

Kravitz credits five Black godmothers with helping shape his character — among them the actress Cicely Tyson, who died last week at 96, days after the publication of her own memoir, JUST AS I AM (HarperAudio, 16 hours, 9 minutes). Tyson reads the introduction to her book, pausing to chuckle at her own anecdotes, before turning the narration over to the brilliant Robin Miles. (The foreword, read by Viola Davis, was intimate and powerful, and piqued my interest in the book before I even got going.) Cowritten with Michelle Burford, Tyson’s is a juicy, rags-to-riches opus with an unforgettable, tart-tongued heroine who used her craft to render fully the lives of Black women, “the most deeply misunderstood human beings in history.”

The daughter of West Indian immigrants, Tyson grew up in Harlem in the 1920s and ’30s, became a teenage mother and wife, stumbled into modeling and then acting, becoming an American icon for performances in “Sounder” and “The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman.” She was friends with Diahann Carroll and Sidney Poitier and Maya Angelou; married and divorced Miles Davis (“He was so full of the Devil, that Miles”); and took stands that were radical at the time, like embracing her natural hair on television. She describes it all with vivid recall, wit and monumental charm. If I hadn’t been listening to this book, I would have called it a page-turner.

Jennifer Reese’s work has appeared in the Book Review and The Washington Post.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Christy Lundy FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Related Articles**

* [*When It Comes to Living With Uncertainty, Michael J. Fox Is a Pro*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/13/books/michael-j-fox-no-time-like-the-future.html)

1. [*This Time, He Stars In His Own Story*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/07/books/gabriel-byrne-walking-with-ghosts.html)

**Load-Date:** August 11, 2023

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[***Biden Is Right To Go Big***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61XS-WY21-DXY4-X54G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 5, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 27

**Length:** 948 words

**Byline:** By David Brooks

**Body**

This could be the moment of social repair.

Joe Biden ran on unity and bipartisanship. His goal was to restore the soul of America and make Washington work again. His first major proposal was a $1.9 trillion Covid relief bill. Ten Republicans countered with a $618 billion plan.

They could have negotiated for even a week to see if they could settle on a compromise. Republicans and Democrats have already cooperated to pass about $4 trillion in Covid relief. It's plausible to think some of them could have cooperated to pass a fifth trillion.

Biden would have shown that a bipartisan political process can still work. He would have divided the G.O.P. between the Republican normies and the Trumpian crazies. He would have taken a giant step to depolarize our politics, restore political legitimacy and make Congress function. That would have been a huge accomplishment.

But it wasn't even attempted. There are many reasons, including the size of the Republicans' offering, but the core is that most Democrats, outside Joe Biden, don't trust Republicans and don't believe in bipartisanship right now. We are too close to the horrors of the Trump presidency and the trauma of Jan. 6. With some justification, Democrats have contempt for Republicans and don't want to work with them. The Democratic Party is not emotionally ready to enact the kind of government Biden promised.

I think this is a mistake, but you can't argue with an emotion. You can't turn on trust like a light switch. It takes time.

So that accomplishment is out of the question, but there are equally big accomplishments within reach.

First, we can restore America's faith in itself. If you came of age in the 21st century, you have seen America fail at almost everything -- from the Iraq war to controlling the pandemic. If the U.S. can finish strong -- especially as Europe continues to flub its vaccine rollout -- that would save lives, boost national pride, restore trust in our institutions and remind us that we can do big things. It's worth spending a lot of money to do that -- to build the vaccine infrastructure, to refurbish schools and all the rest.

Second, we can use this $1.9 trillion package to repair the social decay that has plagued us for two generations.

I'm not impressed by arguments that we need to spend $1.9 trillion to repair the economic effects of Covid-19. Thanks in part to earlier relief, the economy is already doing much better than anticipated. The Congressional Budget Office projects that the economy will grow by 4.6 percent this year and add a torrid 521,000 jobs a month, even without the Biden measure. Higher unemployment will linger, but the economy is projected to reach prepandemic size by midyear.

Jeff Cox of CNBC notes that bank deposits are up to nearly $16.2 trillion, an increase of 21.3 percent over a year ago. Retail sales last fall were up significantly since the same period the year before.

The economist Michael R. Strain of the American Enterprise Institute estimates there will be a $420 billion output gap in 2021 because of the pandemic. We don't need to spend $1.9 trillion to fill it. We don't need to send money to people who never lost their jobs so they can put it in their savings accounts.

But I am impressed by the scale of the social crisis all around us -- the regions of America left behind; the lagging wages; people, particularly women during the pandemic, dropping out of the labor force; children in poverty; the hard lives of the working poor; the rising rage and populism that flow from these ills.

The Biden team is absolutely right to go big if we can use Covid as a pretext to alleviate some of that.

As my colleague Neil Irwin from the Upshot has noted, if the Biden bill passes, it, along with the $900 billion passed in December, will create the biggest surge in spending in modern American history. We're basically conducting a giant and unprecedented experiment. We're borrowing huge amounts of money and pouring it into an economy that grew at an annualized rate of 4 percent in the fourth quarter last year.

If this experiment fails, we will see a rise in inflation, we will have put ourselves under a crushing debt burden, we'll have sparked another bust in the boom-and-bust cycle.

But if this experiment succeeds, we will have an economy that is growing faster than most economists thought possible 10 years ago. We will see white-hot labor markets, rising wages for the ***working class***, people sucked back into the work force, a decline in child poverty and a boost to marriage rates as more couples enjoy financial stability.

We will have taken a large step toward social repair. The risks are worth it. The economy was still humming along in 2019 but the predicted inflation never came. We've been borrowing a lot of money, but the debt load is not yet crushing because interest rates remain low.

When your great nation is facing decline because of rising inequality, insecurity, distrust and alienation, you don't just sit there. You try something big.

It would be helpful if Democrats changed the bill to laser in on the nation's core problems. Basically, cut any spending proposal that would go to households making over the median income of $69,000 a year. Increase spending on households earning less.

Democrats, God put you on this earth to spend government money on the disadvantaged. Now, please go do it.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/04/opinion/biden-stimulus-package.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/04/opinion/biden-stimulus-package.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Stefani Reynolds for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Cash Cushions For Americans Start to Shrink***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6481-SKB1-DXY4-X05V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 8, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1713 words

**Byline:** By Talmon Joseph Smith

**Body**

The drop in cash reserves has vast implications for the ***working class*** and could dampen consumer spending, a large share of economic activity.

Infusions of government cash that warded off an economic calamity have left millions of households with bigger bank balances than before the pandemic -- savings that have driven a torrent of consumer spending, helped pay off debts and, at times, reduced the urgency of job hunts.

But many low-income Americans find their savings dwindling or even depleted. And for them, the economic recovery is looking less buoyant.

Over the past 18 months or so, experts have been closely tracking the multitrillion-dollar increase in what economists call ''excess savings,'' generally defined as the amount by which people's cash reserves during the Covid-19 crisis exceeded what they would have normally saved.

According to Moody's Analytics, an economic research firm, these excess savings among many working- and middle-class households could be exhausted as soon as early next year -- not only reducing their financial cushions but also potentially affecting the economy, since consumer spending is such a large share of activity. Additionally, many pandemic-era federal programs expired in September, including the federal supplement to unemployment benefits.

In April 2020, after the pandemic's outset, the nation's personal saving rate -- the percentage of overall disposable income that goes into savings each month -- jumped fourfold from its February 2020 level to 34 percent. Some of that spike in savings resulted from government checks of up to $1,200 sent to most Americans; some simply stemmed from reduced spending by firmly middle-class or affluent households during lockdowns.

The rate peaked again at 26 percent this past spring after another round of direct federal payments.

But the personal saving rate doesn't account for how those savings are distributed. Wealthy households, for instance, have saved the most.

''We do tend to see these broad-brush-stroke economic figures and assume that they apply to the broadest part of the populace,'' said Mark Hamrick, the senior economic analyst at Bankrate, a personal finance company. ''There's a significant cross-section of the American public which is financially fragile.''

New research by the JPMorgan Chase Institute, which assesses the bank accounts of 1.6 million families, found that low-income families experienced the ''greatest percent gains'' during each round of stimulus, yet also exhausted their balances faster. That's in part because those households went into the crisis with the thinnest financial buffers.

The median balance among higher-income families (defined as those earning more than $68,896) was roughly 40 percent higher in September than two years earlier. The typical low-income family (those earning less than $30,296) experienced a much larger increase in relative terms -- 70 percent -- but that represented a total cash balance of only about $1,000.

And households making $30,296 to $44,955 also made significant gains compared with 2019, yet typically had less than about $1,300 in cash on hand. In a silver lining, the report found that the cash balances of families with children appear to have been helped by the three rounds of monthly child tax credit payments that began in July, which provided up to $300 per child under 6 and up to $250 per child 6 to 17.

''I've been trying to ask myself this question: Is this a lot or is this a little?'' said Fiona Greig, a co-president of the JPMorgan Chase Institute. Ms. Greig said that when reviewing the data, she was torn between hope -- when seeing that ''families had a doubling of balances in some cases when they received their stimulus checks'' -- and disappointment knowing ''there are some families for whom this is really all they have.''

By October, the U.S. personal saving rate, which had peaked above 30 percent, had reverted to its December 2019 level of 7.3 percent.

Technically, most households are financially better off now than before the crisis by several measures, an anomaly after a recession. Still, the fading impact of pandemic aid is quickly being felt. In July, one in three Americans reported having less money to fall back on in an emergency than before the pandemic, according to a Bankrate survey. Only one in six reported having more.

In a commentary published on a Federal Reserve Bank of New York blog in April, four economists argued that ''although large by historical standards, the savings accumulated by U.S. households during the pandemic do not appear to be 'excessive' when set against the extraordinary need of many American families.''

Millions of Americans could be buffeted by financial volatility again with little safeguard as new variants of the virus emerge. For some, that reality has already begun.

''It was hard even before the pandemic hit,'' said Maria Patton, a 57-year-old former real estate agent whose finances were ruined by a recent divorce. ''And when the pandemic hit, it became impossible, almost.''

Ms. Patton, who has a teenage son, had just been hired at Nordstrom in Los Angeles when the virus surged and she was laid off. Despite immediately applying for unemployment insurance in March 2020, she went more than two months without receiving benefits. She tried to find work as a nanny -- which had been her most recent employment -- but wound up moving home to Tennessee, where she figured the cost of living was more affordable.

As she was moving in the middle of last year, she received back payments for all the weeks she was eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance -- an emergency federal program to help freelancers and others who do not ordinarily qualify for state benefits -- which amounted to a lump sum of $15,000. Much of that cash, Ms. Patton says, went to paying down debt, as well as ''paying for medical insurance out of my pocket'' because she can't afford health care coverage, and living in a hotel because landlords in Nashville didn't like her credit situation.

Ms. Patton used more of her savings in January to move the two of them to Denver for a $25-an-hour nanny job she found online, which went well until she got Covid-19 and had to quit. Now she and her son work for Amazon Fresh, the grocery delivery service, making $15 an hour. Her savings dried up in September.

''Now, I'm right back where I was,'' she said. ''I feel like a loser. I feel like a failure.'' Making too much to qualify for assistance but too little to afford stable housing, she fears she and her son will be living out of her car soon after the holidays.

The drawing down of households' cash will test competing theories about the extent to which those savings have increased worker power and wages and how much they contributed to labor shortages, inflation and even supply chain snags.

There has been wide agreement among business leaders and economists that after decades of wage and income stagnation, the burst in savings has eased poverty while giving employees and job seekers more leverage. But there is less agreement about whether this development has had unintended, negative consequences.

The cash buffer ''gives people some discretion over whether they take the first job that's available or if they want to leave the work force altogether for a time,'' said James K. Galbraith, a progressive economist at the University of Texas at Austin.

''There may well be long-term lasting benefits,'' Dr. Galbraith argued. ''If in the short run, in order to bring people back into the work force, employers raise the low wages that they're offering, then they're probably not going to be in a position to cut them'' down the road.

Wages were up 4.8 percent overall in November from a year earlier and were much higher in sectors like leisure and hospitality.

Many investors and business owners are wary of these wage gains continuing, contending that companies may pass more of their labor costs on to customers and that they may threaten companies' profitability -- or even their viability. With job openings at record levels, a large share of business groups remain hopeful that more people will accept wages at their current levels as their savings diminish.

A crop of high-profile economists in both major political parties contend that measures like the aid package from the spring, while well intentioned and effective in warding off some impoverishment, have caused consumer spending to outstrip supply this year as the economy reopened, worsening inflation and straining supply chains.

''From a macroeconomic perspective, it would certainly be helpful if consumer demand were to cool off,'' said Michael R. Strain, an economist at the American Enterprise Institute, a right-leaning think tank. ''Rooting for low-income households to have less savings is not great, but I think it's important to remember low-income households are the ones who are hurt the most by inflation. It doesn't sit well thinking, 'Boy, it'd be great if households burned through their excess savings.' But we're not in a normal period.''

A Bank of America report in November noted that price increases for some goods, especially in food and energy categories, were ''cutting the spending power of less-educated households by 4.6 percent on an annualized basis, compared to 3 percent for more-educated households.''

Still, a report from J.P. Morgan points out that consumers are likely to ''eat into their accumulated excess savings to offset rising prices,'' suggesting that vulnerable households could potentially face an even greater inflation challenge if those savings were absent.

Moody's Analytics estimated that there was still $2.5 trillion left in overall excess savings as of October and that the total would decrease by $50 billion a month on average through the end of next year -- with the fastest declines among those with the lowest incomes.

That mathematical modeling, by its nature, renders in statistics what many are feeling in more palpable ways. ''The people looking at the data aren't the people trying to put food on the table,'' said Ms. Patton, the real estate agent turned Amazon Fresh worker. ''The people that are writing this and thinking this have never struggled right now.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/business/pandemic-savings.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/business/pandemic-savings.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A store in Manhattan last month. With job openings at record levels, many business groups remain hopeful that more people will accept wages at their current levels as their savings diminish. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEENAH MOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

**Load-Date:** December 8, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Have Three Children? No Way, Many Chinese Say.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62TH-MHC1-DXY4-X2NR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** WORLD; asia

**Length:** 1096 words

**Byline:** Vivian Wang

**Highlight:** Intense workplace competition, inadequate child care and widespread job discrimination against pregnant women have made childbearing an unappealing prospect for many.

**Body**

Intense workplace competition, inadequate child care and widespread job discrimination against pregnant women have made childbearing an unappealing prospect for many.

After China said it would [*allow couples to have three children*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/31/world/asia/china-three-child-policy.html), the state news media trumpeted the move as a major change that would help stimulate growth. But across much of the country, the announcement was met with indignation.

Women worried that the move would only exacerbate discrimination from employers reluctant to pay maternity leave. Young people fumed that they were already hard-pressed to find jobs and take care of themselves, let alone a child (or three). ***Working-class*** parents said the financial burden of more children would be unbearable.

“I definitely will not have another child,” said Hu Daifang, a former migrant worker in Sichuan Province. Mr. Hu, 35, said he was already struggling, especially after his mother fell ill and could no longer help care for his two children. “It feels like we are just surviving, not living.”

For many ordinary Chinese, the news about the policy change on Monday was only a reminder of a problem they’d long recognized: the drastic inadequacy of China’s social safety net and legal protections that would enable them to have more children.

On Weibo, users complained of mounting education expenses, sky-high housing prices and unforgiving work hours. They pointed out China’s shortage of child care services, which forces many young parents to rely on their own parents to watch their children.

“I recommend you first fix the most basic problems with maternity rights and the discrimination women will inevitably face in the workplace, and then encourage them to have children,” read the most popular comment under an article about the policy change by Xinhua, the state news agency.

Another commenter was more direct: “Get out of here! Will you help us take care of the kids? Will you give us a house?”

In response to a poll by Xinhua that was titled: “Are you ready for the three-child policy?” just a tiny fraction of respondents chose “I’m ready, I can’t wait.” Of roughly 22,000 people who had responded to the poll at one point, 20,000 chose “I won’t consider it at all.” The poll was quickly deleted.

In its announcement, the government promised to help families with education costs and child care, but gave little detail.

China has long promised to overhaul policies that affected families, but changes had been slow. The only real shift in the last five years, said Lu Hongping, a professor of population studies at Hebei University, had been a lengthening of statutory maternity leave to around 160 days in most areas. But even then, he said, it was too short.

“They haven’t done it well. Essentially, they haven’t done it,” Professor Lu said of the reforms. “And if it’s not done, then the costs are too high, and many people will feel that they can’t afford too big of a family.”

For Mr. Hu and his wife, one child had already been enough. But his parents exhorted them to have a second to help support the couple in their old age. They reluctantly agreed, knowing that rural pensions paid only a pittance.

Mr. Hu’s mother had initially helped watch his two children, ages 4 and 9, while he traveled to factories in southern China for better work, but that was no longer possible after her health faltered. Mr. Hu and his wife recently moved back to their hometown in a small county in Sichuan and opened a street food shop to get by.

He was now straining to pay for his mother’s medical expenses — her insurance had covered little of it — and to give his children good educations.

“I don’t want my children to have the same path I did, always working. I don’t want my children to work in a factory,” he said. “So the pressure is still pretty high.”

For the more affluent, the pressures may weigh differently, but no less heavily.

On the same day that the government announced it would relax birth limits, Li Li, a middle-level manager at a technology company in Beijing, was approached by her boss. He anxiously asked Ms. Li, 35, who is pregnant with her second child, how long exactly she would be away on maternity leave.

She quickly reassured him that she would be gone only three or four months and that she could work during the tail end of her leave, if necessary.

[*Pregnancy discrimination is widespread in China*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/31/world/asia/china-three-child-policy.html), with women reporting being fired or demoted after telling their bosses they were expecting a child. Some women have even reported being [*forced to sign contracts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/31/world/asia/china-three-child-policy.html) promising not to get pregnant within a certain period at new jobs.

“As a woman, you’re inherently at a disadvantage in the workplace,” Ms. Li said.

Ms. Li said she was sympathetic to her boss’s concerns. She did believe that as a manager, her absence would be inconvenient for the company. She acknowledged that she herself, when interviewing candidates, would sometimes wonder whether a new hire would soon leave to give birth.

It was nonetheless unfair to women, Ms. Li said. She said the government should reimburse employers for maternity pay, [*as some other countries do*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/31/world/asia/china-three-child-policy.html), and mandate paternity leave, so women would not be singled out for being parents.

In an acknowledgment of the problem, the government said on Monday that it would “protect the legitimate rights and interests of women in employment.”

Some women pointed out that the government [*had already barred employers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/31/world/asia/china-three-child-policy.html) from asking women about their marital or childbearing status in 2019, and the problem was weak enforcement. The government has often encouraged women to retreat to more traditional gender roles, in an effort to increase the birthrate.

“Our government is very good at empty talk,” said Lu Pin, a Chinese feminist activist. “It’s meaningless to just look at a few things they said.”

Ms. Lu expected workplace discrimination against women to get worse. Employers might fear that women would want to have a third child — even if, she added, that was unlikely to be the case, given broader trends.

The lack of social support may discourage those who would otherwise want more children, but a more fundamental issue may be a lack of interest among younger, better educated women who have declared a preference for small families. Even if the government did offer more benefits, Ms. Li said, she would not want to have a third child.

“Two is pretty good,” she said. “There’s no point to having too many.”

Joy Dong contributed research.

Joy Dong contributed research.

PHOTO: A park in Beijing on Tuesday. Many mothers in China complain about a lack of social support. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GILLES SABRIÉ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 2, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Flood Insurance Overhaul Faces Roadblock***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:627R-WXX1-JBG3-63T8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 19, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1106 words

**Byline:** By Christopher Flavelle and Emily Cochrane

**Body**

The Senate leader is objecting to a plan that would raise costs for some of his constituents by bringing flood insurance rates in line with climate risks.

WASHINGTON -- One of the federal government's main efforts to push Americans to prepare for climate threats is in question after the Senate majority leader's office objected to a plan to adjust flood insurance rates.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency was preparing to announce new rates for federal flood insurance on April 1, so that the prices people pay would more accurately reflect the risks they face. The change would very likely help reduce Americans' vulnerability to floods and hurricanes by discouraging construction in high-risk areas. But it would also increase insurance costs for some households, making it a tough sell politically.

Last week, the office of Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the Democratic majority leader, pushed back on the changes, according to several people familiar with the discussion. That pushback has caused FEMA to pause the rollout of the new rates.

Senator Schumer objected to the flood-insurance overhaul when it was first announced in 2019, citing its potential to raise costs for people on Long Island. The new system would mean steeper rates for some high-value homes, and the southern shore of Long Island includes the Hamptons, which have some of the most expensive real estate in the country.

Senator Schumer's office told FEMA that the new rates could have a ''severe impact'' on some communities in New York, according to a person familiar with the conversation. The person said that the senator's office had asked FEMA to reconsider going forward with the plan and asked the agency for a follow-up meeting, which, as of Wednesday, had not been scheduled.

''FEMA shouldn't be rushing to overhaul their process and risk dramatically increasing premiums on middle-class and ***working-class*** families without first consulting with Congress and the communities at greatest risk to the effects of climate change,'' Alex Nguyen, a spokesman for Senator Schumer, said in a statement. ''Congress and the Biden administration must work together in a collaborative and transparent process'' for what he called ''affordable protection'' in communities nationwide including Brooklyn and Queens.

In a statement, a FEMA spokesperson, who asked not to be identified, said the agency would continue to work with Congress to implement the plan, saying the changes would make insurance rates ''better reflect an individual property's unique flood risk.''

The objections from Senator Schumer's office create a political dilemma for the Biden administration, which has committed to address climate change. Unlike rejoining the Paris Agreement or banning drilling on public lands, moves that have broad Democratic support, increasing the cost of flood insurance is unlikely to generate a positive response from voters.

But flood insurance is one of the most powerful tools the federal government has to limit the damage done by climate change, by influencing how and where Americans build homes. And even if the administration succeeds at reducing United States greenhouse gas emissions, the buildup of those gases already in the atmosphere means that floods and hurricanes will continue to worsen for the foreseeable future.

That means the government must focus on warning homeowners about the flooding threat, according to climate and disaster experts. That encourages people to take steps to reduce their exposure, like elevating their homes or moving.

''Premiums should be based on risk, so people can have accurate signals about the nature of the hazards they face,'' said Chad Berginnis, executive director of the Association of State Floodplain Managers. ''I really hope Congress is able to engage constructively here.''

Under the new approach, 23 percent of households with flood insurance would see their rates fall right away, by an average of $86 a month, according to data provided by FEMA, because the updated formula shows they have been overpaying based on their risk. Another 73 percent would see either no change or an increase of no more than $20 a month.

But for some of the remaining households, costs would go up significantly, according to others briefed on the changes.

Congress prevents FEMA from increasing a household's flood insurance premiums by more than 18 percent a year. Under the new system, some households would face that maximum annual increase for 10 years or more. As a result, their rates could increase at least fivefold over that time.

Those big rate increases would mostly apply to higher-cost homes, which under the current formula tend to underpay for insurance. Many of the people that would see a decrease live in lower-cost homes.

The pushback from Senator Schumer is important because, as Senate leader, he can exert significant influence over FEMA. He controls the Senate floor, so he holds sway over the timing of critical confirmation votes -- including Deanne Criswell, the Biden administration's nominee for FEMA administrator -- and other senior roles.

FEMA also depends, like every agency, on congressional approval for its annual funding and must persuade Senate leaders to support any requests for additional money or authority for new programs -- for example, to better respond to disasters or prepare for the effects of climate change. For reasons like these, the agency's relationship with the Senate leadership is particularly important.

The dispute is only the latest delay for the overhaul.

When FEMA announced the change, in 2019, the new rates were supposed to take effect in October 2020. But the Trump administration pushed back the new rates until this year, worried in part that increasing premiums shortly before the election would hurt President Donald J. Trump politically, according to a person familiar with the discussions.

But opposition also came from Congress, including from Senator Schumer.

After FEMA first said it would it would overhaul rates to reflect the full flood risk homeowners faced, Senator Schumer held a news conference criticizing the plan.

''How can we ram through a national flood insurance plan that could unfairly put a bull's-eye on the backs of Long Island and New York homeowners without more consultation?'' Senator Schumer said at the time, citing the potential effects on property values. The Long Island coastline is home to everything from modest bungalows and suburban communities to multimillion-dollar waterfront estates.

Senator Schumer's message for FEMA, he said then, was simple: ''Halt. Stop. Stop this plan.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/climate/chuck-schumer-fema-flood-insurance.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/climate/chuck-schumer-fema-flood-insurance.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Beach homes in Brookhaven, N.Y., in 2014. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Karsten Moran for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 19, 2021

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[***Places in New York City Where G.O.P. Candidates Even Now Stand a Chance***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6404-NVK1-JBG3-6010-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 1, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

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**Byline:** By Katie Glueck

**Body**

In some New York City Council races, supporting former President Donald Trump is seen as a positive by voters.

For most Democratic candidates running in New York City, criticizing former President Donald J. Trump hardly requires making a studied campaign strategy decision -- it's already a given.

But in one of the few competitive races in New York City this year, the Democratic candidate for City Council will not even say how he voted for president, insisting that at the local level, voters in his Brooklyn district still care more about municipal matters.

That candidate, Steven Saperstein, is running in one of the few Trump-friendly districts in the city, and as he campaigned down a breezy stretch of boardwalk in Brighton Beach last Sunday, not far from the Trump Village housing complex where he grew up, he couldn't seem to escape partisan politics.

''I'm Republican,'' one woman declared.

''One hundred and twenty percent,'' another proclaimed, before allowing that she would consider Mr. Saperstein anyway.

''They're trying to make it about the presidential election,'' Mr. Saperstein said of his Republican opponent, Inna Vernikov, for whom Donald Trump Jr. has recorded a robocall. ''People in this district understand and they know that national elections are one thing, but on the local level you have to vote for the person.''

Indeed, for years, New York City voters who favored Republicans for president often still elected Democrats in local races. But in the final days of the fall campaign, Republicans are working to change that in the 48th Council District of Brooklyn, which is home to many Orthodox Jews and Russian and Ukrainian immigrants.

If they succeed, that victory will offer one more example of just how polarized, and nationalized, even ultra-local American politics has become.

That seat is one of a smattering of City Council districts where there is evidence of Republican life in an otherwise overwhelmingly Democratic city -- and it is not the only one attracting attention from major national figures. Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the Senate majority leader, was slated to campaign on Sunday for a fellow Democrat, Felicia Singh, who is seeking to flip the last Republican-held Council seat in Queens (though the event was pulled following a security threat, Ms. Singh's campaign manager said).

The Republican candidates in New York's competitive races differ from one another in tone, experience and the local issues that reflect their distinctive districts.

But all of those contests, party officials and strategists say, are shaped by the continued salience of public safety in the minds of voters, discussion of education matters like the gifted and talented program that Mayor Bill de Blasio wants to phase out, and intense feelings over vaccine mandates. Some Republicans even argue that the challenging national environment that Democrats appear to be facing may be evident in a handful of city races, too.

''This has a lot of likenesses to 2009, when Obama came in on hope and change and then fell flat,'' said Nick Langworthy, the chairman of the New York Republican State Committee. ''In 2009 we had great gains at the local level, and then had a cataclysm in 2010. Are we facing that, or is there going to be flatness all the way around?''

Whatever the turnout, Republicans are virtually certain to be shut out of citywide offices. Indeed, by nearly every metric, the Republican Party has been decimated in the nation's largest city. They are vastly outnumbered in voter registration and have struggled to field credible candidates for major offices.

At the City Council level, Republican hopes boil down to a matter of margins.

The most optimistic Republican assessment, barring extraordinary developments, is that they could increase their presence to five from three on the 51-seat City Council, as they did in 2009. But even that would require a surprise outcome in a sleeper race -- and it is possible they retain only one seat (setting aside the candidates who are running on multiple party lines).

Officials on both sides of the aisle believe a more realistic target for the Republicans is three or four seats, a number that could still affect the brewing City Council speaker's race and may indicate pockets of discontent with the direction of the city.

The most high-profile of those contests is the last Republican-held seat in Queens.

Ms. Singh, a teacher who is endorsed by the left-wing Working Families Party, is running against Joann Ariola, the chairwoman of the Queens Republican Party. The race has stirred considerable interest from the left and the right and attracted spending from outside groups.

Democrats argue that Ms. Singh's focus on education, the environment and resources for often-underserved communities best reflects ***working-class*** and immigrant families like her own who have changed the makeup of the district.

Ms. Singh has called Ms. Ariola a Trump Republican and noted her past ties to a district leader who was charged with participating in the Jan. 6 attack on the United States Capitol. Ms. Ariola has said she condemns the insurrection and that no one ''should be guilty by association.''

Ms. Ariola is pressing a message of strong support for the police, protecting and improving the gifted and talented program, and emphasizing quality-of-life issues.

She is casting Ms. Singh as too radical for a district that has been dotted in parts with Blue Lives Matter signage, and she has noted that some of the area's moderate Democratic officials have stayed on the sidelines -- which will surely be a source of tension among Democrats if Ms. Singh loses narrowly.

''The strategy has to be to pull out every single Democrat, knowing there are some Democrats that will shift the other way as well, but I think she's still in a good position,'' said Donovan Richards, the Queens borough president and a Democrat.

The other race widely seen as competitive is for a seat currently held by the Republican minority leader, Steven Matteo, on Staten Island.

David Carr, Mr. Matteo's chief of staff, is the Republican nominee; Sal F. Albanese, once a Brooklyn city councilman who has run unsuccessfully for mayor several times, is the Democratic nominee; George Wonica, a real estate agent, is running on the Conservative Party line.

Unlike in Queens, where there is a clear ideological contrast, the candidates on Staten Island largely agree on several issues roiling New York, including city vaccine mandates, which they oppose. They have also competed vigorously over who is the true law-and-order candidate.

Beyond those clearly competitive races, a number of Democrats are running aggressive campaigns even in presumably safe seats. Councilman Justin Brannan of Brooklyn, a candidate for City Council speaker who won his Bay Ridge-area district narrowly in 2017, has maintained an intense pace. Just this weekend he campaigned with Eric Adams, the Democratic nominee for mayor; Letitia James, the state attorney general, who is now running for governor; and Mr. Schumer.

''Low-turnout elections are always where surprises happen, and we've had a bunch of those in the past few years,'' said Kevin Elkins, the political director for the New York City District Council of Carpenters, which is largely supporting Democratic candidates, as well as Ms. Ariola. ''Most of the elected officials and candidates who have run before have no interest in being next on that list.''

A few districts away from Mr. Brannan's, Ms. Vernikov was in a heavily Orthodox Jewish part of Midwood recently, meeting with volunteers.

She has been a registered Democrat and a Republican, and the better-funded Mr. Saperstein has previously run for office as a Republican, further scrambling the political dynamics of the race.

But in an interview, Ms. Vernikov said she sometimes found voters to be more receptive when she mentioned her current party affiliation.

''When you tell people you're a Republican in this district, it just changes the tone,'' especially with the many voters in the district who fled the former Soviet Union, she said. ''They see the Democratic Party moving this country in a very bad direction.''

Back in Brighton Beach, Mr. Saperstein wanted to talk about parks, the relationships he has with the Police Department, and cleaning up the boardwalk.

That last point was a compelling one for Lidiya Skverchak, a 64-year-old Trump voter. She was slated to receive her next dose of the Moderna vaccine on Election Day and was uncertain whether she would vote, she said. But if she does vote, she will still vote ''Democrat, of course Democrat,'' in the city elections. Asked about her biggest issue in the race, she, like Mr. Saperstein, kept her focus local.

''For this area, there should be more trees,'' she said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/31/nyregion/city-council-nyc-election.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/31/nyregion/city-council-nyc-election.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Felicia Singh, center, a Democrat canvasing in Ozone Park as she seeks to flip the last Republican-held City Council seat in Queens. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JACKIE MOLLOY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Steven Saperstein, a Democrat, believes voters are not hung up on last year's presidential election. Inna Vernikov, a Republican, said voters were more receptive when she shared her party affiliation. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATE PALMER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

NATE PALMER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Biden Is Right to Go Big***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61XR-DK61-DXY4-X50G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 4, 2021 Thursday 00:27 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 955 words

**Byline:** David Brooks

**Highlight:** This could be the moment of social repair.

**Body**

This could be the moment of social repair.

Joe Biden ran on unity and bipartisanship. His goal was to restore the soul of America and make Washington work again. His first major proposal was a $1.9 trillion Covid relief bill. Ten Republicans countered with a $618 billion plan.

They could have negotiated for even a week to see if they could settle on a compromise. Republicans and Democrats have already cooperated to pass about $4 trillion in Covid relief. It’s plausible to think some of them could have cooperated to pass a fifth trillion.

Biden would have shown that a bipartisan political process can still work. He would have divided the G.O.P. between the Republican normies and the Trumpian crazies. He would have taken a giant step to depolarize our politics, restore political legitimacy and make Congress function. That would have been a huge accomplishment.

But it wasn’t even attempted. There are many reasons, including the size of the Republicans’ offering, but the core is that most Democrats, outside Joe Biden, don’t trust Republicans and don’t believe in bipartisanship right now. We are too close to the horrors of the Trump presidency and the [*trauma of Jan. 6*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/capitol-rioters.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-capitol-mob-inline&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_3&amp;context=styln-freeform). With some justification, Democrats have contempt for Republicans and don’t want to work with them. The Democratic Party is not emotionally ready to enact the kind of government Biden promised.

I think this is a mistake, but you can’t argue with an emotion. You can’t turn on trust like a light switch. It takes time.

So that accomplishment is out of the question, but there are equally big accomplishments within reach.

First, we can restore America’s faith in itself. If you came of age in the 21st century, you have seen America fail at almost everything — from the Iraq war to controlling the pandemic. If the U.S. can finish strong — especially as Europe [*continues to flub*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/capitol-rioters.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-capitol-mob-inline&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_3&amp;context=styln-freeform) its vaccine rollout — that would save lives, boost national pride, restore trust in our institutions and remind us that we can do big things. It’s worth spending a lot of money to do that — to build the vaccine infrastructure, to refurbish schools and all the rest.

Second, we can use this $1.9 trillion package to repair the social decay that has plagued us for two generations.

I’m not impressed by arguments that we need to spend $1.9 trillion to repair the economic effects of Covid-19. Thanks in part to earlier relief, the economy is already doing much better than anticipated. The Congressional Budget Office [*projects*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/capitol-rioters.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-capitol-mob-inline&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_3&amp;context=styln-freeform) that the economy will grow by 4.6 percent this year and add a torrid 521,000 jobs a month, even without the Biden measure. Higher unemployment will linger, but the economy is projected to reach prepandemic size by midyear.

Jeff Cox of CNBC [*notes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/capitol-rioters.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-capitol-mob-inline&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_3&amp;context=styln-freeform) that bank deposits are up to nearly $16.2 trillion, an increase of 21.3 percent over a year ago. Retail sales last fall were up significantly since the same period the year before.

The economist Michael R. Strain of the American Enterprise Institute [*estimates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/capitol-rioters.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-capitol-mob-inline&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_3&amp;context=styln-freeform) there will be a $420 billion output gap in 2021 because of the pandemic. We don’t need to spend $1.9 trillion to fill it. We don’t need to send money to people who never lost their jobs so they can put it in their savings accounts.

But I am impressed by the scale of the social crisis all around us — the regions of America left behind; the lagging wages; people, particularly women during the pandemic, dropping out of the labor force; children in poverty; the hard lives of the working poor; the rising rage and populism that flow from these ills.

The Biden team is absolutely right to go big if we can use Covid as a pretext to alleviate some of that.

As my colleague Neil Irwin from the Upshot has [*noted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/capitol-rioters.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-capitol-mob-inline&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_3&amp;context=styln-freeform), if the Biden bill passes, it, along with the $900 billion passed in December, will create the biggest surge in spending in modern American history. We’re basically conducting a giant and unprecedented experiment. We’re borrowing huge amounts of money and pouring it into an economy that grew at an annualized rate of 4 percent in the fourth quarter last year.

If this experiment fails, we will see a rise in inflation, we will have put ourselves under a crushing debt burden, we’ll have sparked another bust in the boom-and-bust cycle.

But if this experiment succeeds, we will have an economy that is growing faster than most economists thought possible 10 years ago. We will see white-hot labor markets, rising wages for the ***working class***, people sucked back into the work force, a [*decline*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/capitol-rioters.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-capitol-mob-inline&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_3&amp;context=styln-freeform) in child poverty and a [*boost to marriage rates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/capitol-rioters.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-capitol-mob-inline&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_3&amp;context=styln-freeform) as more couples enjoy financial stability.

We will have taken a large step toward social repair. The risks are worth it. The economy was still humming along in 2019 but the predicted inflation never came. We’ve been borrowing a lot of money, but the debt load is not yet crushing because interest rates remain low.

When your great nation is facing decline because of rising inequality, insecurity, distrust and alienation, you don’t just sit there. You try something big.

It would be helpful if Democrats changed the bill to laser in on the nation’s core problems. Basically, cut any spending proposal that would go to households making over the median income of $69,000 a year. Increase spending on households earning less.

Democrats, God put you on this earth to spend government money on the disadvantaged. Now, please go do it.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/capitol-rioters.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-capitol-mob-inline&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_3&amp;context=styln-freeform) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/capitol-rioters.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-capitol-mob-inline&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_3&amp;context=styln-freeform). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/capitol-rioters.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-capitol-mob-inline&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_3&amp;context=styln-freeform).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Stefani Reynolds for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 5, 2021

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[***A Times Photographer's Conversation With the World***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63YY-KPM1-JBG3-646S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 31, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MB; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 8

**Length:** 1343 words

**Byline:** By Michelle V. Agins and Charlie Brinkhurst-Cuff

**Body**

A Simple Directive Sparked a Storied Career: 'Now, Take the Picture.'

Michelle V. Agins was only a child when she caught a murder on camera.

She was about 10 or 11 years old, she recently recalled, and was sitting up one night on the top floor of her apartment building on the South Side of Chicago, experimenting with time exposures on some new equipment. She saw a familiar face through her window -- a man named Red, in the alley below, flanked by a man to whom he owed money.

''I heard Mr. Red saying, 'Please don't kill me. Here's all the money,''' Ms. Agins said. ''The guy says, 'No, too late, too late, man.' And he turned him around and shot him in the back of the head.''

The money that had been in Red's hands went everywhere, with some of it floating into Ms. Agins's family's backyard.

Instead of being scared, Ms. Agins did what a particularly pragmatic young person would do: She told her grandmother, whom she lived with, that there was money to be collected downstairs.

And after her grandmother went downstairs to try to understand what Ms. Agins was talking about and saw the body? Well, Ms. Agins explained that she'd actually captured the murder on film. Her grandmother, terrified, took the camera away.

''I didn't see that camera for, like, two or three months,'' Ms. Agins said. But for her, it was a defining moment: a realization that news photography could provide evidence and tell important stories in Black, ***working-class*** neighborhoods like her own.

Ms. Agins, 68, is now one of the longest-serving staff photographers at The New York Times, having started in 1989. Her body of work is set to be honored this fall at the Photoville Festival in New York. The retrospective, created in partnership with Ms. Agins's colleagues at The Times, will reflect on an immense body of work -- and acknowledge the fact that, as one of the first Black photographers at The Times, she served as an emissary for the paper in a way that few Black journalists of previous generations had the opportunity to do. Much like pioneers such as Don Hogan Charles, the first Black photographer hired by The Times, Ms. Agins has spent much of her career documenting Black stories and offering readers a glimpse into Black American life in a way they had never been granted before.

''I like historic storytelling, because our history sometimes disappears,'' she said. ''We forget about people unless they're getting shot down or hurt. I want to bring people into the forefront before any of that stuff happens.''

For The Times, Ms. Agins has photographed celebrated Black figures, from Prince and Herbie Hancock to Serena Williams and Kamala Harris. She's covered breaking news, including the 1989 Bensonhurst protests over the murder of Yusef Hawkins and the 2004 coup in Haiti. She was also part of a team that won the Pulitzer Prize in 2001 for the series ''How Race Is Lived In America.'' She considers her camera to be a part of the ongoing conversation she is having with the world around her, she said.

Ms. Agins recalled how she grew up under the watchful, fearless eye of her Jamaican grandmother, whom she now calls her ''pride and joy,'' and her cigar-smoking, hard-working grandfather. Ms. Agins was known as an intelligent child; her nickname around her neighborhood, she said, was ''professor.'' Her mother, whose father was white, gave her up when she was just two weeks old, apparently in part because of her dark complexion. Her grandmother used to tell her, ''You'll always be my brown baby, no matter what.'' It was this love, Ms. Agins said, that counteracted such an early rejection from her mother -- and the pain of her mother's eventual death, which came when Ms. Agins was only eight.

That same year, her grandmother gave Ms. Agins her first camera. It was a boxy Kodak brownie, which she remembers as having a flashbulb hot enough to burn fingers. Her grandmother bought the camera with winnings from a church social. Ms. Agins immediately took to the streets and started taking pictures. Having a different lens, literally, through which to experience the world changed everything for her. ''The camera really was my first bridge to making friendships in my neighborhood,'' she said.

She still had her original brownie camera in 1964 when the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. came to town to visit Liberty Baptist Church. It was there that she was spotted by John Tweedle, one of the first Black staff photographers at The Chicago Daily News. Mr. Tweedle took a photograph of Dr. King before heading toward Ms. Agins. ''He grabbed me by the scruff and pulled me over. And he said, 'Now, take the picture.''' Of course, she did.

It was the start of a lasting friendship that saw Mr. Tweedle often visiting Ms. Agins's family home. He gave her a professional-quality Nikon camera as a gift, which helped her secure some of her first freelance jobs in the industry.

It wasn't an easy path toward a career at The Times; Ms. Agins faced harsh rejections, starting early. When she tried to join a photography club in the seventh grade, she recalled being told it was ''just for boys.''

While she was in high school, she worked as a copy girl at The Chicago Daily News; later, after graduating with a journalism degree from Rosary College (now called Dominican University), she went back to The Daily News and sought a full-time photography job, having already worked freelance for the paper. As Ms. Agins remembers it, the hiring editor said: '''You were a nice novelty. We really enjoyed having you around. But you're a pretty Black girl. You should go get yourself a nice husband and have you some babies.'''

Ms. Agins instead got a job with the City of Chicago, then became an official photographer in 1983 for Harold Washington, Chicago's first Black mayor. She joined The Charlotte Observer in North Carolina in 1988 and The Times one year later, becoming just the second Black female staff photographer for the paper. (Ruby Washington was the first.)

Her 1994 project for The Times, ''Another America: Life on 129th Street,'' saw Ms. Agins and a reporter, Felicia R. Lee, spend a year building relationships in Harlem. She remembers encountering stories of both heartbreak and love. One woman named Vikki told Ms. Agins about a time when her sister accused their stepfather of sexual abuse and he threw acid on them both. The acid scarred Vikki's arms.

One day, Ms. Agins was with Vikki at a house after the christening of some babies. ''One of the babies started crying. She picked it up and I said, 'Don't move, don't breathe, don't do anything,''' Ms. Agins said. ''When I saw the scars and her holding that baby, it made me think she was going to protect it from the kinds of things she'd gone through.''

In 1991, Ms. Agins decided she wanted to cover the issue of Black children killing each other. Specifically, she wanted to take photographs inside a funeral home. It took her six months to find an undertaker who would give her permission to do that. An undertaker's niece, murdered by a boy she barely knew who was annoyed with the way she looked at him, became her subject. But when the time came to take the photographs, Ms. Agins struggled: She wanted to be sensitive but also to make sure the piece would affect readers on an emotional level.

''I'm sitting there and I said, 'Come on, girl, help me,''' Ms. Agins recalled, speaking of her final moments alone with the body. ''I walked over and realized how many of her friends had put their favorite pictures with her, their favorite candies -- Now and Later -- all the different things that reminded them of her.'' The haunting photograph Ms. Agins took is of the 16-year-old girl's hands crossed in her coffin, covered in that memorabilia.

Often, Ms. Agins's subjects are those she deems ''her people'' -- people just like those whom she grew up with on the South Side of Chicago. Poor people. Black people. Her conversation with them, she said, isn't over. Among hardships, hurdles and successes, she retains the urge to keep telling their stories.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/15/arts/michelle-agins-photoville-photography.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/15/arts/michelle-agins-photoville-photography.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, Vicki, a former drug trafficker, holding one of the many babies who found refuge in her Harlem apartment. The picture was part of a 1994 project for The Times. At left is a campaign event for Kamala Harris in Philadelphia last year.

Above, the final night of the 1992 Democratic National Convention at Madison Square Garden. Left, Vickie Johnson of the New York Liberty in an ice bath in her Los Angeles hotel room after a game in 1998.

Above, Deborah Barton of Brooklyn, helping her daughters, Serina, 10, and Stephanie, 7, prepare for school in 1992. Top, Robert Dunn transforming into Onionhead the clown at the UniverSoul Circus in Brooklyn in 2000. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 31, 2021

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[***Chuck Schumer Stalls Climate Overhaul of Flood Insurance Program***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:627H-N3D1-JBG3-61GJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 18, 2021 Thursday 10:14 EST

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**Section:** CLIMATE

**Length:** 1114 words

**Byline:** Christopher Flavelle and Emily Cochrane

**Highlight:** The Senate leader is objecting to a plan that would raise costs for some of his constituents by bringing flood insurance rates in line with climate risks.

**Body**

The Senate leader is objecting to a plan that would raise costs for some of his constituents by bringing flood insurance rates in line with climate risks.

WASHINGTON — One of the federal government’s main efforts to push Americans to prepare for climate threats is in question after the Senate majority leader’s office objected to a plan to adjust flood insurance rates.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency was preparing to announce [*new rates*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-03-18/climate-advocates-cheer-trump-policy-shift-on-flood-insurance?sref=UBrhZ1ro) for [*federal flood insurance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/24/climate/federal-flood-insurance-cost.html) on April 1, so that the prices people pay would more accurately reflect the risks they face. The change would very likely help reduce Americans’ vulnerability to [*floods*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/28/us/nashville-flooding.html) and hurricanes by discouraging construction in high-risk areas. But it would also increase insurance costs for some households, making it a [*tough sell politically*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/22/climate/flood-insurance-fema.html).

Last week, the office of Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the Democratic majority leader, pushed back on the changes, according to several people familiar with the discussion. That pushback has caused FEMA to pause the rollout of the new rates.

Senator Schumer objected to the flood-insurance overhaul when it was first announced in 2019, citing its potential to raise costs for people on Long Island. The new system would mean steeper rates for some high-value homes, and the southern shore of Long Island includes the Hamptons, which have some of the most expensive real estate in the country.

Senator Schumer’s office told FEMA that the new rates could have a “severe impact” on some communities in New York, according to a person familiar with the conversation. The person said that the senator’s office had asked FEMA to reconsider going forward with the plan and asked the agency for a follow-up meeting, which, as of Wednesday, had not been scheduled.

“FEMA shouldn’t be rushing to overhaul their process and risk dramatically increasing premiums on middle-class and ***working-class*** families without first consulting with Congress and the communities at greatest risk to the effects of climate change,” Alex Nguyen, a spokesman for Senator Schumer, said in a statement. “Congress and the Biden administration must work together in a collaborative and transparent process” for what he called “affordable protection” in communities nationwide including Brooklyn and Queens.

In a statement, a FEMA spokesperson, who asked not to be identified, said the agency would continue to work with Congress to implement the plan, saying the changes would make insurance rates “better reflect an individual property’s unique flood risk.”

The objections from Senator Schumer’s office create a political dilemma for the Biden administration, which has committed to address climate change. Unlike rejoining the Paris Agreement or banning drilling on public lands, moves that have broad Democratic support, increasing the cost of flood insurance is unlikely to generate a positive response from voters.

But flood insurance is one of the most powerful tools the federal government has to limit the damage done by climate change, by influencing how and where Americans build homes. And even if the administration succeeds at reducing United States greenhouse gas emissions, the buildup of those gases already in the atmosphere means that floods and hurricanes will continue to worsen for the foreseeable future.

That means the government must focus on warning homeowners about the flooding threat, according to climate and disaster experts. That encourages people to take steps to reduce their exposure, like elevating their homes or moving.

“Premiums should be based on risk, so people can have accurate signals about the nature of the hazards they face,” said Chad Berginnis, executive director of the Association of State Floodplain Managers. “I really hope Congress is able to engage constructively here.”

Under the new approach, 23 percent of households with flood insurance would see their rates fall right away, by an average of $86 a month, according to data provided by FEMA, because the updated formula shows they have been overpaying based on their risk. Another 73 percent would see either no change or an increase of no more than $20 a month.

But for some of the remaining households, costs would go up significantly, according to others briefed on the changes.

Congress prevents FEMA from increasing a household’s flood insurance premiums by more than 18 percent a year. Under the new system, some households would face that maximum annual increase for 10 years or more. As a result, their rates could increase at least fivefold over that time.

Those big rate increases would mostly apply to higher-cost homes, which under the current formula tend to underpay for insurance. Many of the people that would see a decrease live in lower-cost homes.

The pushback from Senator Schumer is important because, as Senate leader, he can exert significant influence over FEMA. He controls the Senate floor, so he holds sway over the timing of critical confirmation votes — including Deanne Criswell, the Biden administration’s nominee for FEMA administrator — and other senior roles.

FEMA also depends, like every agency, on congressional approval for its annual funding and must persuade Senate leaders to support any requests for additional money or authority for new programs — for example, to better respond to disasters or prepare for the effects of climate change. For reasons like these, the agency’s relationship with the Senate leadership is particularly important.

The dispute is only the latest delay for the overhaul.

When FEMA announced the change, in 2019, the new rates were supposed to take effect in October 2020. But the Trump administration [*pushed back the new rates*](https://www.politico.com/news/2019/11/07/fema-postpones-flood-insurance-rate-revamp-amid-backlash-067505) until this year, worried in part that increasing premiums shortly before the election would hurt President Donald J. Trump politically, according to a person familiar with the discussions.

But opposition also came from Congress, including from Senator Schumer.

After FEMA first said it would overhaul rates to reflect the full flood risk homeowners faced, Senator Schumer held a [*news conference*](https://www.newsday.com/long-island/schumer-national-flood-insurance-fema-1.29259400?_ga=2.176101547.803091741.1615922832-148096341.1615922832) criticizing the plan.

“How can we ram through a national flood insurance plan that could unfairly put a bull’s-eye on the backs of Long Island and New York homeowners without more consultation?” Senator Schumer said at the time, citing the potential effects on property values. The Long Island coastline is home to everything from modest bungalows and suburban communities to multimillion-dollar waterfront estates.

Senator Schumer’s message for FEMA, he said then, was simple: “Halt. Stop. Stop this plan.”

PHOTO: Beach homes in Brookhaven, N.Y., in 2014. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Karsten Moran for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Pandemic and Job Losses May Turn Ohio Back Into a Tossup State***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60CY-8M41-DXY4-X0W4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 19, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

**Length:** 1604 words

**Byline:** By Trip Gabriel

**Body**

Ohio was thought to be an uphill battle for Joe Biden in November. Now there are signs the Trump campaign is on defense, despite continuing Republican advantages in the state.

It wasn't so long ago that Ohio was looking like a lost cause for Democrats, after Donald J. Trump scored a convincing victory there and humiliated the party that had twice carried the state under Barack Obama.

Now, unexpectedly, Ohio looms as a tantalizing opportunity for Joseph R. Biden Jr.

Two prominent polls of the state last month showed the presidential race in a statistical tie. Turnout in the Ohio primary elections in April was higher for Democrats than Republicans for the first time in a dozen years, evidence of enthusiasm in the Democratic base. And the Trump campaign recently booked $18.4 million in fall TV ads in Ohio, more than in any state besides Florida -- a sign that Mr. Trump is on the defensive in a state that until recently seemed locked down for Republicans.

With Democratic leaders urging Mr. Biden, the presumptive nominee, to expand his ambitions to states previously considered out of reach, Ohio offers Democrats the possibility of seizing on suburban gains they have made in the Trump era, while restoring parts of the old Obama coalition.

''The definition of Trump being in trouble is that he's forced to spend $18 million on TV in Ohio and he's mired in a battle for his life here,'' said David Pepper, the chairman of the Ohio Democratic Party.

Mr. Biden's argument to Democrats has always been that he can energize Black voters and reverse defections by the white ***working class***. If he were to make good on that promise and carry Ohio, it would reset the national political map. Not only would Ohio again be a presidential bellwether, but the long-term trend of Northern white voters abandoning the Democrats would, at least for the moment, be paused under a highly divisive incumbent president.

In a state where decades of deindustrialization have created long-term anxiety about jobs, the reality behind Mr. Trump's unmet promises to restore steel, coal and other industrial sectors through trade wars is also being put to the test -- a dynamic that could extend to other states across the Midwest.

''People were looking for someone who wasn't establishment,'' said Tina Comstock, 56, a court employee in suburban Cleveland, explaining Mr. Trump's triumph four years ago. ''They thought as a quote-unquote rich businessman, he could do great things for Ohio.''

Ms. Comstock, who is married to a factory worker who like her is supporting Mr. Biden, said the pandemic had exposed the hollowness of the Trump economy. ''If the economy is so great under him, why is everybody so screwed after just a couple of months of this Covid thing?'' she asked. ''People didn't have enough money in their savings accounts.''

For all the optimism of Democrats, though, the Buckeye State just might be an illusion in the mists. Not only did Mr. Trump win handily in 2016 -- by eight percentage points -- but Democrats also fell short in the 2018 midterm elections in Ohio compared with their gains in the ''blue wall'' states of Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania.

Corry Bliss, a top Republican strategist who has worked in Ohio, said that whatever trouble Mr. Trump appeared to be in now, the election would turn on how voters feel about jobs and the economy in October. The president, he said, still has the upper hand. ''At the end of the day, President Trump will win Ohio,'' he said. ''It'll be closer than it was in 2016. The question is, how does that translate to Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania?''

Mr. Trump won those states by less than one percentage point each in 2016.

Bob Paduchik, Mr. Trump's top adviser for Ohio, said the campaign was spending lavishly there because it had plenty of money to spread around, including in states like Minnesota and New Mexico that tilt blue. ''One way you could look at it is, 'They're spending money in Ohio, they're in trouble,''' he said. ''When you have the kind of resources we have, you can play everywhere.''

It's also unclear how aggressively the Biden campaign intends to compete in Ohio. It has not reserved any TV ads there, according to the firm Advertising Analytics. The Ohio Democratic Party is so financially stretched it sought over $333,000 from the federal coronavirus relief package to help meet its payroll. Only on Friday did the campaign name a state director, Toni Webb, a progressive organizer in Ohio.

Mr. Biden's advisers say that for now they are primarily focused on getting to 270 electoral votes, the minimum needed to be president, and they are directing resources to Northern battlegrounds as well as opportunities in the Sun Belt. On Tuesday the campaign announced a TV ad focused on rising coronavirus cases that will run in Arizona, Florida and -- for the first time -- Texas.

Ohio's early success in flattening the curve of virus infections has reversed, with a new spike in hospitalized patients. The state ''is sliding down a very dangerous path,'' Gov. Mike DeWine, a Republican, warned on Wednesday. While the governor enjoys strong bipartisan support for his response to the outbreak, only four in 10 Ohio voters approved of Mr. Trump's handling of the virus, according to a Quinnipiac University poll last month.

In the pre-Trump era, when Ohio was a perennial swing state, Democrats' formula for statewide victory was to turn out Black voters in Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati, while relying on blue-collar voters in midsize industrial cities. Republican victories ran through the suburbs.

Mr. Trump upended both parties' formulas. Republicans now win large groups of white blue-collar voters, while fighting to limit defections from suburbanites, especially women.

In the 2018 midterms, Democrats flipped six suburban districts in the Statehouse that had been drawn to favor Republicans.

The Trump campaign is seeking inroads with suburbanites, particularly women, with a TV ad aimed at stirring fears over calls by racial justice protesters to ''defund the police.''

The ad, which has aired more than 1,000 times this month in Ohio, portrays the police as unable to respond to rapes and home invasions and warns, ''You won't be safe in Joe Biden's America.''

But running on law and order may not move many suburban voters toward Mr. Trump; recent polls suggest there is a broad understanding that calls to defund the police often mean changing how they operate, not getting rid of departments entirely.

''I don't think Trump's a credible messenger,'' said Elizabeth Brown, a Democrat on the Columbus City Council. ''The voters who may be law-and-order-focused in our suburbs know how to tell when someone is lying. If you're not a trustworthy messenger, even though you're fearmongering, I don't think you can dupe voters.''

Fred Holbein, 63, who is retired from the Navy, is a Trump supporter who endorses some of the president's racially divisive comments, such as his criticism of NASCAR's ban of the Confederate flag. ''I'm not a NASCAR fan anymore,'' he said.

''I think Joe Biden's had 50 years' opportunity to do something and most recently had eight years when he was a heartbeat away from the president and didn't do anything,'' Mr. Holbein, who lives outside Columbus, added. ''I've always maintained that the government needs to be run like a business, and Donald Trump is trying to do that.''

In the end, Mr. Trump's chances in the state are likely to come down to whether voters re-embrace his anti-China, pro-jobs message of four years ago, ignoring not just today's record unemployment because of the coronavirus outbreak, but also the president's unfulfilled promises even before the virus.

In Mr. Trump's first three years before the pandemic, 14,000 new manufacturing jobs were created in Ohio. The gains represent a leveling off of growth from the last three years of the Obama administration, when Ohio manufacturing jobs expanded by 20,000.

The president's tariffs on imported steel did not produce a promised boom in American steelmaking in places like Ohio's Mahoning Valley, and Mr. Trump's Twitter threats to carmakers did not stop General Motors from closing a huge factory near Youngstown, at a cost of 4,400 jobs.

In national and battleground state polls this week, a majority of voters disapproved of Mr. Trump's handling of the economy, a reversal on the issue that had been his greatest strength.

Mr. Paduchik, an Akron native who ran Mr. Trump's Ohio campaign in 2016, said Ohioans would forgive shortfalls between the president's promises and what he has been able to deliver. ''Voters don't expect it to change overnight,'' he said. ''But here's a guy who said he'd fight for them and he has, and it's more than enough for them to give him another four years.''

White ***working-class*** Ohio voters, who according to 2016 exit polls were 56 percent of the electorate, do not appear to be abandoning Mr. Trump. The Quinnipiac University poll of the state last month showed the president with a 21-point advantage over Mr. Biden among white voters without a four-year college degree. The margin was only slightly smaller than Mr. Trump's 24-point edge with the same voters in a Quinnipiac poll of Ohio on the eve of the 2016 election.

''They still think he walks on water,'' said David Betras, a former Democratic chairman of Mahoning County, in northeast Ohio's blue-collar epicenter. ''You try to explain how his policies have hurt the working man, they say that's fake news.''

His advice to Democrats: Add four or five points to Mr. Trump's polling support.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/17/us/politics/ohio-biden-trump.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/17/us/politics/ohio-biden-trump.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Joseph R. Biden Jr. in Columbus in March. Democratic leaders have urged him to woo states like Ohio that were once out of reach. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MANDEL NGAN/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** July 19, 2020

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[***The Beautiful, Flawed Fiction of ‘Asian American’; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62T9-GNY1-DXY4-X11K-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION; culture

**Length:** 1207 words

**Byline:** Viet Thanh Nguyen

**Highlight:** Against the racist and sexist fiction of the “Oriental,” we built the anti-racist, anti-sexist fiction of the Asian American.

**Body**

One is not born an Asian American. It’s an identity that is inherently political, and must be chosen. Before college, I had never even heard of the term, but I vividly remember the moment that I became Asian American.

I was raised in multicultural San Jose, Calif., during the late 1970s and 1980s, among Mexican Americans and ***working-class*** white people. My family and I were refugees from Vietnam and the war fought there, but all I knew of the history that had brought us and many of our neighbors to the United States was what Hollywood told me. It confused me and shamed me to see people who looked like my parents being reduced to wordless masses, condemned to be killed, raped, rescued or silenced.

When my parents talked about Americans, they meant other people, not us, but I felt American, as well as Vietnamese. My parents could use “Oriental” without self-consciousness, but I could not. Something struck me as wrong about that word, but I didn’t know what it was until I studied Asian American history and literature at the University of California, Berkeley. There I learned about the Chinese Exclusion Act, the internment of Japanese Americans, the colonization of the Philippines, the annexation of Hawaii, the often forgotten presence of Korean and Indian immigrants in the early 20th century, the signs that said “No dogs or Filipinos allowed” and the experiences of Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian and Hmong people during and after the Indochina wars.

That’s when I became Asian American. And the overwhelming emotion that I felt on learning this history was rage. Muhammad Ali said that “writing is fighting” — and I wanted to write and fight, especially after I discovered that Asian Americans had been writing and fighting in English since the late 19th century: the sisters Sui Sin Far and Onoto Watanna, Carlos Bulosan, John Okada, Frank Chin, Maxine Hong Kingston and many more.

I didn’t learn about them before because racism isolates us, disempowers us and erases our history. One solution is to find others and discover strength in our stories and our numbers. In high school, my Asian friends and I jokingly called ourselves “the Asian invasion” because that was all the language we had. In college, I joined the Asian American Political Alliance. There I learned that [*the term “Asian American”*](https://time.com/5837805/asian-american-history/) was invented in California by Yuji Ichioka and Emma Gee when they formed the group in 1968.

“Asian American” was a creation, and those [*who say that there are no “Asians” in Asia*](https://time.com/5837805/asian-american-history/) are right. But neither is there an “Orient” or “Orientals” — those fantastic figments of the Western imagination, as Edward Said argued. Against this racist and sexist fiction of the Oriental, we built the anti-racist, anti-sexist fiction of the Asian American. We willed ourselves into being, but as with every other act of American self-conjuring, we became marked by a contradiction between American aspiration and American reality.

On the one hand, Asian Americans have long insisted that we are patriotic and productive Americans. This self-defense often leans on the model minority myth and the idea that Asian Americans have succeeded in fields such as medicine and technology because we immigrated with educational credentials and we raise our children to work hard. But Asian Americans are also haunting reminders of wars that killed millions of people and generated many refugees. And Asian Americans have come to satisfy the American need for cheap, exploitable labor — from working on railroads to giving pedicures. We were and are perceived to be competitors in a capitalist economy fractured by divisions of race, gender and class and the ever-widening gap of inequality that affects all Americans.

These roles that we play, and the contradictions they represent, aren’t going anywhere. As long as the United States remains committed to aggressive capitalism domestically and aggressive militarism internationally, Asians and Asian Americans will continue to be scapegoats who embody threat and aspiration, an inhuman “yellow peril” and a superhuman model minority.

No claim to American belonging will end the vulnerability of Asian Americans to racism and cyclical convulsions of violence. And what does it even mean to claim belonging in the United States? If we belong to this country, then this country belongs to us, every part of it, including its systemic anti-Black racism and its colonization of Indigenous peoples and land. Like wave after wave of newcomers to this country before, Asian immigrants and refugees learned that [*absorbing and repeating*](https://time.com/5837805/asian-american-history/) anti-Black racism helps in the assimilation process. And like the European settlers, Asian immigrants and refugees aspire to the American dream, whose narrative of self-reliance, success and property accumulation is built on the theft of land from Indigenous peoples.

“Asian American” has now morphed into a newer fiction: the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, or A.A.P.I. But again, there are contradictions inherent in this identity. Pacific Islanders — Hawaiians, Samoans, the Chamorro of Guam — were and remain colonized by the United States, with Hawaii and Guam serving as sites for major American military bases that project power in the Pacific and Asia. “A.A.P.I.” is a staple of the lofty rhetoric and pragmatic corporate language of diversity and inclusion, but it also tends to gloss over the United States’ long history of violence and conquest. It’s not only railroads and internment that are central to A.A.P.I. experience; so is the colonization of Hawaii, masked by the tourist fantasy of an island paradise.

Now we applaud the success stories of Asian American billionaires, politicians, movie stars and influencers and the popularity of our cultural commodities, from [*boba*](https://time.com/5837805/asian-american-history/) to [*BTS*](https://time.com/5837805/asian-american-history/). We raise each other up through networking — in the hope that embracing global capitalism, the idea of meritocracy and corporate culture will make us belong in the United States. But belonging will get us only so far, for belonging always involves exclusion.

We should look to other ideals: solidarity, unity and decolonization. Colonization and racism divide and conquer, telling the subjugated that they have nothing in common. That’s why unity is crucial, and a broader unity can grow from the solidarity we have expressed with one another as Asian Americans, the force that pulled together such disparate peoples and experiences. That will to find kinship can be the basis for further solidarities — with everyone else shaped by colonization’s global impact, its genocide and slavery, racism and capitalism, patriarchy and heteronormativity.

This is the only way that an Asian American-Pacific Islander coalition makes sense — pointing the way toward alliances with other groups, from Black Americans to Muslims, Latinos to L.G.B.T.Q. people. Asian Americans are one political identity among the many that must come together for decolonization.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://time.com/5837805/asian-american-history/) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://time.com/5837805/asian-american-history/). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://time.com/5837805/asian-american-history/).

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PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS VIA GETTY)

**Load-Date:** July 9, 2021

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[***Omicron Wave Overwhelming N.Y. Hospitals***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64GM-VP01-DXY4-X2GV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 8, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1827 words

**Byline:** By Sharon Otterman and Joseph Goldstein

**Body**

The current spike in coronavirus cases appears to be less deadly than earlier waves, but some safety-net hospitals are still being severely strained.

At Interfaith Medical Center in Brooklyn, the intensive care unit is full, mainly with Covid patients. In a scene reminiscent of spring 2020, patient beds have been set up in the hallway.

But on Wednesday, when Interfaith asked city officials to divert ambulances to other hospitals, the request was granted for only two hours, the hospital's top executive said. Emergency rooms at neighboring hospitals were also overflowing, or precariously understaffed.

''All hospitals, not just safety net hospitals, in Brooklyn and in other boroughs are stressed,'' the executive, LaRay Brown, said. Ms. Brown is the chief executive at One Brooklyn Health, which runs Interfaith and nearby Brookdale Hospital.

As the Omicron variant of the coronavirus sweeps through New York, many hospitals are being pushed to their limits by twin challenges: spiking numbers of virus cases and growing shortages of nurses, doctors and technicians. Many workers are sick with Covid-19; others who quit amid the pandemic have not been replaced.

While the latest virus wave appears to be less deadly than earlier ones, with many fewer patients on ventilators, even large hospitals with empty intensive care beds are straining to handle the surge in caseloads because so many workers are out, health care officials said.

''I think everyone across the region is struggling,'' said John D'Angelo, who oversees the emergency departments at Northwell Health, the state's largest health system. Because of its own staff shortages, Northwell has had to limit the number of patients it can take from Interfaith and other beleaguered hospitals.

Almost 4,000 Northwell employees, or 5 percent, were out as a result of Covid-19 on Thursday, Dr. D'Angelo said. That was about double the number at the height of the first virus wave. The system can transfer employees between hospitals as needed, but its emergency rooms have been operating at up to twice their normal volume and waiting times are up. Dr. D'Angelo likened the daily effort to keep positions filled to a game of ''whac-a-mole.''

For smaller community hospitals with fewer resources, the situation is more critical. At Interfaith and Brookdale and their affiliated nursing homes, 471 out of 7,000 staff members were out with Covid-19 this week, forcing some nurses to handle double the usual number of patients, Ms. Brown said.

''It is challenging for the hospitals, but it is particularly stressful for our safety net institutions,'' said Kenneth E. Raske, the president of the Greater New York Hospital Association, a trade group. ''A number of them have requested assistance, including staffing assistance from the state. The problem is the cupboard is bare.''

Similar situations are playing out around the country, including in New Jersey, where officials are working with the federal government and the National Guard to deploy medical teams to hospitals that are experiencing severe staff shortages.

Nationally, the number of people hospitalized with the virus reached 116,000 this week, the most in a year. But a significant number who have tested positive for Covid-19 -- anywhere from 20 to 65 percent -- were admitted for other reasons and are not primarily ill with virus symptoms, according to hospital officials in many states.

In interviews, nurses and doctors in New York described scenes of distress, including one of a patient urinating in a trash can because she could not get help, and others involving nurses forced to work entire shifts without a break.

Scheena Iyande Tannis, a critical care nurse at Brookdale, said that she and her colleagues had covered additional shifts, ''working in waves, as each person is waiting for their turn to get sick.'' Still, things seemed better to her than they were in the first virus surge.

''The first time we were just totally decimated,'' Ms. Tannis said. ''This time, we are overwhelmed but not destroyed.''

New York City is served by a complex ecosystem of about 50 hospitals. The best known are major academic hospitals with imposing Manhattan flagships like NewYork-Presybterian/Weill Cornell and NYU Langone Medical Center.

Then there is the safety-net system, the core of which are the 11 public hospitals run by the city. Augmenting that are about a dozen smaller, independent hospitals that are in ***working-class*** neighborhoods outside Manhattan, rely mostly on Medicaid and have been among those hit hardest by the pandemic.

The enormous inequity in the city's hospitals became clear when the pandemic descended on New York in spring 2020. Safety net hospitals like Brookdale were overwhelmed with patients, but had smaller staffs, worse equipment and less access to drug trials and advanced treatments than their better-financed counterparts.

Dr. Dave A. Chokshi, the city's health commissioner, said on Thursday that about 80 percent of the hospital beds in the five boroughs were occupied this week, as the number of patients with Covid-19 reached nearly 6,000. That was about half the peak in the first wave, when ballparks and conference centers were turned into field hospitals.

But Dr. Chokshi and hospital executives said the numbers did not tell the full story, as the number of Covid-19 cases continue to climb and because some hospitals do not have enough employees to open all their beds. Isolation requirements for virus patients also mean some beds cannot be used.

''This is why it is so vital for us to surge resources and support to our health care system, particularly to our safety net and H and H hospitals,'' Dr. Chokshi said, referring to those run by the city's hospitals agency. To that end, the city has expanded a loan guarantee program to help hospitals pay for increased staffing while the Omicron wave persists.

Michael Del Valle, a resident physician at Jacobi Medical Center in the Bronx, one of the city-run hospitals, and a vice president of the union that represents residents, said the emergency room there was so crowded that patients had just a foot or two of space between them.

''If you're in a stretcher, you can touch the person next to you by putting your hand out,'' he said.

Dr. Del Valle, who tested positive for the virus this week, estimated that more than 25 percent of Jacobi's emergency room residents had done the same in recent weeks. With so many patients arriving and so many staff members out sick, it often takes longer than usual for medicine to be administered, he said. Long waits for admission and care have led to angry confrontations.

''There has certainly been an uptick in verbal aggression and physical aggression,'' Dr. Del Valle said, adding that Jacobi had added security officers in the emergency room.

Seeking to address the inequities exposed by the pandemic, state officials in December 2020 instituted a system called load balancing for when patient numbers reach critical proportions and hospitals must seek help from one another.

In recent days, Dr. D'Angelo of Northwell said, his system had accepted about a dozen transfer patients from overwhelmed safety net hospitals, including Jamaica Hospital in Queens, an independent hospital where, state data shows, the intensive care unit is full, and the city-run Queens Hospital Center.

Northwell has also agreed to send nurses to Brookdale and Interfaith. Ms. Brown said she was grateful, but that the hospitals needed many more reinforcements.

The loan guarantee program, which Mayor Eric Adams announced on Wednesday, might help pay for expensive travel nurses to fill some of the gaps, she said. Agencies, she added, were now charging up to $215 an hour for critical care nurses.

''We'll take everything we can get -- as my mother would say, beggars can't be choosers,'' said Ms. Brown.

One Brooklyn Health and other hospital systems have also sought help from state officials. Gov. Kathy Hochul, who declared a health care emergency in late November, has authorized nursing students and out-of-state doctors to assist during the current surge. The state has also deployed 120 National Guard members to nursing homes and had directed federal teams to upstate hospitals experiencing their own crises.

The state has not sent staff reinforcements to downstate hospitals, Mr. Raske said.

Jill Montag, a spokeswoman for the state Health Department, did not dispute that, but she said the state was helping hospitals coordinate their efforts and had secured 50 ambulance teams for New York City from the Federal Emergency Management Agency; 25 are to arrive on Saturday.

The problem has been compounded for community hospitals by the way the Omicron wave has spread, starting in wealthier parts of Manhattan and then moving to low-income neighborhoods that rely on safety net hospitals. This week, the Covid positivity rates topped 40 percent in the South Bronx and parts of Brooklyn and Queens. About 37,000 new cases a day are being reported citywide on average.

Longstanding health care disparities mean patients in poor areas are also arriving at hospitals with more pre-existing conditions, and vaccination rates in these areas tend to be lower, contributing to more severe illness. In the Brooklyn ZIP code where Brookdale is, about 2,500 people tested positive for the virus last week, with a positivity rate of 43 percent.

Not all safety net hospitals say they are being stretched to the limit. The area around St. Barnabas Hospital in the Bronx had nearly the highest test positivity rate in the city this week, above 46 percent. But officials said they were dealing with the higher volume, even with 7 to 9 percent of the work force out with Covid-19 or caring for sick relatives.

Not all of the hospital's intensive care bed are full, and of the 30 patients presently in intensive care at St. Barnabas, only 10 have Covid-19, said Dr. Edward Telzak, the chief of internal medicine. ''Covid-19 is not overwhelming us,'' he added.

It is different at the pediatric emergency room at Montefiore Hospital, a major nonprofit hospital in the Bronx. Julian Grant, a registered nurse, said the small emergency room was often packed with up to 80 patients, with as few as two nurses to help them.

More children, she said, were coming in now complaining of difficulty breathing now than had during previous virus waves, although they were usually well enough to be sent home after being given steroids and other treatments. Whether or not they have Covid-19, all of the patients must wait together, raising the specter of the virus spreading to vulnerable children.

''Things have gotten terrible,'' she said. ''At the end of the day as nurses, it really doesn't feel good when you can't take care of your patients.''

Tracey Tully and Joseph Gambardello contributed reporting from New Jersey.Tracey Tully and Joseph Gambardello contributed reporting from New Jersey.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/07/nyregion/ny-hospitals-omicron-covid.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/07/nyregion/ny-hospitals-omicron-covid.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Brookdale Hospital in Brooklyn is one of several safety-net hospitals that have been struggling.

Mayor Eric Adams on Wednesday announced an expanded loan guarantee program to help hospitals pay for increased staffing. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A10)

**Load-Date:** January 8, 2022

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[***As More Teachers’ Unions Push for Remote Schooling, Parents Worry. So Do Democrats.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64GN-64M1-JBG3-64P0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1812 words

**Byline:** Dana Goldstein and Noam Scheiber

**Highlight:** Chicago teachers have voted to go remote. Other unions are agitating for change. For Democrats, who promised to keep schools open, the tensions are a distinctly unwelcome development.

**Body**

Chicago teachers have voted to go remote. Other unions are agitating for change. For Democrats, who promised to keep schools open, the tensions are a distinctly unwelcome development.

Few American cities have labor politics as fraught as Chicago’s, where the nation’s third-largest school system shut down this week after teachers’ union members refused to work in person, arguing that classrooms were unsafe amid the Omicron surge.

But in a number of other places, the tenuous labor peace that has allowed most schools to operate normally this year is in danger of collapsing.

While not yet threatening to walk off the job, unions are back at negotiating tables, pushing in some cases for a return to remote learning. They frequently cite understaffing because of illness, and shortages of rapid tests and medical-grade masks. Some teachers, in a rear-guard action, have staged sick outs.

In Milwaukee, schools are remote until Jan. 18, because of staffing issues. But the teachers’ union president, Amy Mizialko, doubts that the situation will significantly improve and worries that the school board will resist extending online classes.

“I anticipate it’ll be a fight,” Ms. Mizialko said.

She credited the district for at least delaying in-person schooling to start the year but criticized Democratic officials for placing unrealistic pressure on teachers and schools.

“I think that Joe Biden and Miguel Cardona and the newly elected mayor of New York City and Lori Lightfoot — they can all declare that schools will be open,” Ms. Mizialko added, referring to the U.S. education secretary and the mayor of Chicago. “But unless they have hundreds of thousands of people to step in for educators who are sick in this uncontrolled surge, they won’t be.”

For many parents and teachers, the pandemic has become a slog of anxiety over the risk of infection, child care crises, the tedium of school-through-a-screen and, most of all, chronic instability.

And for Democrats, the revival of tensions over remote schooling is a distinctly unwelcome development.

Because they have close ties to the unions, Democrats are concerned that additional closures like those in Chicago could lead to a possible replay of the party’s recent loss in Virginia’s governor race. [*Polling*](https://dfer.org/press/poll-confirms-education-motivating-issue-for-va-voters-in-2021-election-likely-to-be-major-factor-in-midterms/) showed that school disruptions were an important issue for swing voters who broke Republican — particularly suburban white women.

“It’s a big deal in most state polling we do,” said Brian Stryker, a partner at the polling firm ALG Research [*whose work*](https://thirdway.imgix.net/pdfs/override/Qualitative-Research-Findings-%E2%80%93-Virginia-Post-Election-Research.pdf) in Virginia indicated that school closures hurt Democrats.

“Anyone who thinks this is a political problem that stops at the Chicago city line is kidding themselves,” added Mr. Stryker, whose firm polled for President Biden’s 2020 campaign. “This is going to resonate all across Illinois, across the country.”

More than one million of the country’s 50 million public school students were affected by districtwide shutdowns in the first week of January, many of which were announced abruptly and triggered a wave of frustration among parents.

“The kids are not the ones that are seriously ill by and large, but we know kids are the ones suffering from remote learning,” said Dan Kirk, whose son attends Walter Payton College Preparatory High School in Chicago, which was closed amid the district’s standoff this week.

Several nonunion charter-school networks and districts temporarily transitioned to remote learning after the holidays. But as has been true throughout the pandemic, most of the temporary districtwide closures — including in Detroit, Cleveland, Milwaukee — are taking place in liberal-leaning areas with powerful unions and a more cautious approach to the coronavirus.

The unions’ demands echo the ones they have made for nearly two years, despite all that has changed. There are now vaccines and [*the reassuring knowledge*](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/transmission_k_12_schools.html#sars-cov-2) that in-school transmission of the virus has been limited. The Omicron variant, while highly contagious, appears to cause less severe illness than previous iterations of Covid-19.

Most district leaders and many educators say it is imperative for schools to remain open. They cite a large body of research showing that closures harm children, [*academically*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/28/us/covid-schools-at-home-learning-study.html) and [*emotionally*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/04/briefing/american-children-crisis-pandemic.html), and widen income and racial disparities.

But some local union officials are far warier of packed classrooms. In Newark, schools began 2022 with an unexpected stretch of remote learning, set to end on Jan. 18. John Abeigon, the Newark Teachers Union president, said he was hopeful about the return to buildings but that he remained unsure if every school could operate safely. Student vaccination is far from universal, and most parents have not consented to their children taking regular virus tests.

Mr. Abeigon said that if tests remain scarce, he might ask for remote learning at specific schools with low vaccination rates and high case counts. He agreed that online learning was a burden to working parents but argued that educators should not be sacrificed for the good of the economy.

“I’d see the entire city of Newark unemployed before I allowed one single teacher’s aide to die needlessly,” he said.

In Los Angeles, the district has worked closely with the union to keep classrooms open after one of the longest pandemic shutdowns in the country last school year. The vaccination rate for students 12 and older is about 90 percent, with a student vaccine mandate set to [*kick in this fall*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/18/us/los-angeles-vaccine-mandate-delayed.html). All students and staff are tested for the virus weekly.

Still, the president of the local union, Cecily Myart-Cruz, would not rule out pushing for a districtwide return to remote learning in the coming weeks. “You know, I want to be honest — I don’t know,” she said.

The tensions are not limited to liberal states. In Kentucky, teachers’ unions and at least [*one large school district*](https://www.wdrb.com/in-depth/remote-learning-probable-at-some-point-for-jcps-as-covid-19-cases-surge-pollio-says/article_aae24c48-6e40-11ec-846b-5bdbd3d76870.html) have said they need the flexibility to go remote amid escalating infection rates.

But the Republican-controlled state legislature has granted no more than 10 days for such instruction districtwide, and unions there worry that may be inadequate. Jeni Ward Bolander, a leader of a statewide union, said that teachers may have to walk off the job.

“Frustration is building on teachers,” Ms. Ward Bolander said. “I hate to say we’d walk out at that point, but it’s absolutely possible.”

National teachers’ unions continue to call for classrooms to remain open, but local affiliates hold the most power in negotiations over whether individual districts will close schools.

And over the last decade, some locals, including those in Los Angeles and Chicago, were taken over by activist leaders whose tactics can be more aggressive than those of national leaders like [*Randi Weingarten*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/08/us/schools-reopening-teachers-unions.html) of the American Federation of Teachers and [*Becky Pringle*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/12/us/politics/teachers-union-becky-pringle.html) of the National Education Association, both close allies of President Biden.

Complicating matters, some local unions face internal pressure from their own members. [*In the Bay Area*](https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2022/01/06/covid-oakland-unified-school-district-warns-potential-teacher-sickout/), splinter groups of teachers in both Oakland and San Francisco have planned sick outs, and demanded N95 masks, more virus testing and other safety measures.

Rori Abernethy, a middle-school teacher in San Francisco, organized a sick out there on Thursday. She said the Chicago action had prompted some teachers to ask, “Why isn’t our union doing this?”

In Chicago and San Francisco, ***working-class*** parents of color disproportionately send their children to the public schools, and they have often supported strict safety measures during the pandemic, including periods of remote learning. And in New York, the nation’s largest school district, schools are operating in person with increased virus testing, with limited dissent from teachers.

But the politics become more complicated in suburbs, where union leaders may find themselves at odds with public officials at pains to preserve in-person schooling.

In Fairfax County, Virginia’s largest district, the superintendent has [*a plan*](https://www.fcps.edu/return-school/return-school-safety/navigating-january-2022-covid-surge) for switching individual schools to remote learning in the event of many absent teachers.

Kimberly Adams, the president of the local education association, said her union may want stricter measures. And she said that districts should be planning for virus surges by distributing devices for potential short bursts of online schooling.

But Dan Helmer, a Democratic state delegate whose swing district includes part of Fairfax County, said there was little support among his constituents for a return to online education.

Deb Andraca, a Democratic state representative in Wisconsin whose district lies just north of Milwaukee, where schools went remote this past week, said that Republicans have targeted her seat and that she expected schools to be a line of attack.

“Everyone I know wants schools to stay open,” she said. “But there’s a lot of talk about how teachers’ unions don’t want schools to stay open.”

Jim Hobart, a partner at Public Opinion Strategies, a polling firm that counts several Republican senators and governors as clients, said the school closure issue created two advantages for G.O.P. candidates. It has helped narrow their margins among a demographic they’ve traditionally struggled with — white women between their mid-20s and mid-50s — and it has generally undermined Democrats’ claims to competence.

“A lot of people — Biden, Mayor Lightfoot in Chicago — have said schools should be open,” Mr. Hobart said. “If they’re not able to prevent schools from choosing to close, that shows a weakness on their part.”

Labor officials say that many of their critics are acting in bad faith, exploiting parents’ pandemic-related frustrations to advance longstanding political goals, like discrediting unions and expanding private-school vouchers.

Thus far, neither the critiques nor the broader pandemic challenges appear to have significantly hampered unions’ public standing, even according to [*polls*](https://www.educationnext.org/hunger-for-stability-quells-appetite-for-change-results-2021-education-next-survey-public-opinion-poll/) conducted by researchers skeptical of teachers’ unions.

And if it turns out that Democratic candidates pay a political price for unions’ assertiveness, local labor officials do not consider it to be among their top concerns.

If periods of remote learning this winter hurt the Democratic Party, “that’s a question for the consultants and the brain trusts to figure out,” said Mr. Abeigon, the Newark union president. “But that it’s the right thing to do? There’s no question in my mind.”

Holly Secon contributed reporting from San Francisco.

Holly Secon contributed reporting from San Francisco.

PHOTOS: CHICAGO: Teachers and supporters staged a car caravan protest last week outside City Hall. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ASHLEE REZIN/CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS); FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA.: The union said districts should prepare for short bursts of online learning. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AMANDA ANDRADE-RHOADES/THE WASHINGTON POST, VIA GETTY IMAGES); ATLANTA: Schools went remote this past week, with plans to return in person on Monday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DUSTIN CHAMBERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

**Load-Date:** January 9, 2022

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[***The Places in New York City Where Republicans Still Stand a Chance***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6400-G1G1-JBG3-64XJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Katie Glueck

**Highlight:** In some New York City Council races, supporting former President Donald Trump is seen as a positive by voters.

**Body**

In some New York City Council races, supporting former President Donald Trump is seen as a positive by voters.

[Follow our live [*New York election results*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/11/02/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor.html).]

For most Democratic candidates running in New York City, criticizing former President Donald J. Trump hardly requires making a studied campaign strategy decision — it’s already a given.

But in one of the few competitive races in New York City this year, the Democratic candidate for [*City Council*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/nyregion/city-council-republicans-nyc.html) will not even say how he voted for president, insisting that at the local level, voters in his Brooklyn district still care more about municipal matters.

That candidate, Steven Saperstein, is running in one of the few Trump-friendly districts in the city, and as he campaigned down a breezy stretch of boardwalk in Brighton Beach last Sunday, not far from the [*Trump Village*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/08/10/the-middle-class-housing-empire-donald-trump-abandoned-for-luxury-building/) housing complex where he grew up, he couldn’t seem to escape partisan politics.

“I’m Republican,” one woman declared.

“One hundred and twenty percent,” another proclaimed, before allowing that she would consider Mr. Saperstein anyway.

“They’re trying to make it about the presidential election,” Mr. Saperstein said of his [*Republican*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/us/politics/school-republican-campaign-issue.html) opponent, Inna Vernikov, for whom [*Donald Trump Jr. has recorded a robocall*](https://twitter.com/InnaVForNYC/status/1454649000297213952?s=20). “People in this district understand and they know that national elections are one thing, but on the local level you have to vote for the person.”

Indeed, for years, New York City voters who favored Republicans for president often still elected [*Democrats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/01/nyregion/democratic-party-ny.html) in local races. But in the final days of the fall campaign, Republicans are working to change that in the 48th Council District of Brooklyn, which is home to many Orthodox Jews and Russian and Ukrainian immigrants.

If they succeed, that victory will offer one more example of just how polarized, and nationalized, even ultra-local American politics has become.

That seat is one of a smattering of [*City Council*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/nyregion/city-council-republicans-nyc.html) districts where there is evidence of Republican life in an otherwise overwhelmingly Democratic city — and it is not the only one attracting attention from major national figures. Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the Senate majority leader, [*was slated*](https://secure.ngpvan.com/7oKr9mUE50OnntpdvAUIiQ2) to campaign on Sunday for a fellow Democrat, Felicia Singh, who is seeking to flip the [*last Republican-held Council seat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/07/nyregion/queens-republicans-democrats.html) in Queens (though the event was pulled following a security threat, Ms. Singh’s campaign manager said).

The Republican candidates in [*New York*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/republican-election-results-new-york.html)’s competitive races differ from one another in tone, experience and the local issues that reflect their distinctive districts.

But all of those contests, party officials and strategists say, are shaped by the continued salience of public safety in the minds of voters, discussion of education matters like the gifted and talented program that Mayor Bill de Blasio [*wants to phase out*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/nyregion/gifted-talented-nyc-schools.html), and intense feelings over [*vaccine mandates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/28/nyregion/nyc-police-vaccine-mandate.html). Some [*Republicans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/republican-election-results-new-york.html) even argue that the [*challenging national environment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/23/us/politics/biden-approval-ratings.html) that Democrats appear to be facing may be evident in a handful of city races, too.

“This has a lot of likenesses to 2009, when Obama came in on hope and change and then fell flat,” said Nick Langworthy, the chairman of the New York Republican State Committee. “In 2009 we had great [*gains*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/07/nyregion/07suozzi.html) at the [*local level*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/30/nyregion/30repubs.html), and then had a cataclysm in 2010. Are we facing that, or is there going to be flatness all the way around?”

Whatever the turnout, Republicans are virtually certain to be shut out of citywide offices. Indeed, by nearly every metric, the Republican Party has been decimated in the nation’s largest city. They are vastly outnumbered in voter registration and have struggled to field credible candidates for major offices.

At the City Council level, Republican hopes boil down to a matter of margins.

The most optimistic Republican assessment, barring extraordinary developments, is that they could increase their presence to five from three on the [*51-seat City Council*](https://council.nyc.gov/districts/), as [*they did in 2009*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/06/nyregion/06council.html). But even that would require a surprise outcome in a [*sleeper race*](https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2021/10/30/justin-brannan-s-heated-reelection-battle-among-the-city-council-races-to-watch) — and it is possible they retain only one seat (setting aside the candidates [*who are running*](https://www.thecity.nyc/civic-newsroom/2021/10/17/22731631/new-york-city-council-competition-who-is-running) on multiple party lines).

Officials on both sides of the aisle believe a more realistic target for the Republicans is three or four seats, a number that could still affect the brewing City Council speaker’s race and may indicate pockets of discontent with the direction of the city.

The most high-profile of those contests is the last Republican-held seat in Queens.

Ms. Singh, a teacher who is endorsed by the left-wing Working Families Party, is running against Joann Ariola, the chairwoman of the Queens Republican Party. The race has stirred considerable interest from the left and the right and [*attracted spending*](http://nyccfb.info/VSApps/WebForm_Finance_Independent.aspx?as_election_cycle=2021) from outside groups.

Democrats argue that Ms. Singh’s focus on education, the environment and resources for often-underserved communities best reflects ***working-class*** and immigrant families like her own who have [*changed the makeup of the district*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/07/nyregion/queens-republicans-democrats.html).

Ms. Singh [*has called*](https://twitter.com/FSingh_NYC/status/1444080300791840768?s=20) Ms. Ariola a Trump Republican and noted her past ties to a district leader who [*was charged*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/nyc-elections-2021/ny-nyc-gop-city-council-candidate-joann-ariola-photos-with-alleged-jan-6-rioter-20210923-b3bqiw6j5vfqhd4jw3qciol2au-story.html)with [*participating in*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/23/nyregion/nypd-officer-arrested-capitol-riot.html) the Jan. 6 attack on the United States Capitol. Ms. Ariola has said she condemns the insurrection and that no one “should be guilty by association.”

Ms. Ariola is pressing a message of strong support for the police, protecting and improving the gifted and talented program, and emphasizing quality-of-life issues.

She is casting Ms. Singh as too radical for a district that has been dotted in parts with [*Blue Lives Matter signage*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/07/nyregion/queens-republicans-democrats.html), and she has noted that some of the area’s moderate Democratic officials have stayed on the sidelines — which will surely be a source of tension among Democrats if Ms. Singh loses narrowly.

“The strategy has to be to pull out every single Democrat, knowing there are some Democrats that will shift the other way as well, but I think she’s still in a good position,” said Donovan Richards, the Queens borough president and a Democrat.

The other race widely seen as competitive is for a seat currently held by the Republican minority leader, Steven Matteo, on Staten Island.

David Carr, Mr. Matteo’s chief of staff, is the Republican nominee; Sal F. Albanese, once a [*Brooklyn city councilman*](https://www.nytimes.com/1997/06/25/nyregion/sal-albanese-a-bay-ridge-liberal-runs-for-mayor.html) who has [*run unsuccessfully for mayor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/04/nyregion/sal-albanese-democrat-candidate-mayor.html) several times, is the Democratic nominee; George Wonica, a real estate agent, is running on the Conservative Party line.

Unlike in Queens, where there is a clear ideological contrast, the candidates on Staten Island largely agree on several issues roiling New York, including city vaccine mandates, [*which they oppose*](https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/politics/2021/10/14/nyc-elections-2021-whos-running-staten-island-city-council-district-50-debate). They have also competed vigorously over who is the true law-and-order candidate.

Beyond those clearly competitive races, a number of Democrats are running aggressive campaigns even in presumably safe seats. Councilman Justin Brannan of Brooklyn, a candidate for City Council speaker who won his Bay Ridge-area district [*narrowly*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/07/nyregion/nyc-city-council-election.html) in 2017, has maintained an intense pace. Just this weekend he campaigned with Eric Adams, the Democratic nominee for mayor; Letitia James, the state attorney general, who is now [*running for governor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/29/nyregion/letitia-james-governor.html); and Mr. Schumer.

“Low-turnout elections are always where surprises happen, and we’ve had a bunch of those in the past few years,” said Kevin Elkins, the political director for the New York City District Council of Carpenters, which is largely supporting Democratic candidates, as well as Ms. Ariola. “Most of the elected officials and candidates who have run before have no interest in being next on that list.”

A few districts away from Mr. Brannan’s, Ms. Vernikov was in a heavily Orthodox Jewish part of Midwood recently, meeting with volunteers.

She has been a registered Democrat and a Republican, and the better-funded Mr. Saperstein has previously run for office as a Republican, further scrambling the political dynamics of the race.

But in an interview, Ms. Vernikov said she sometimes found voters to be more receptive when she mentioned her current party affiliation.

“When you tell people you’re a Republican in this district, it just changes the tone,” especially with the many voters in the district who fled the former Soviet Union, she said. “They see the Democratic Party moving this country in a very bad direction.”

Back in Brighton Beach, Mr. Saperstein wanted to talk about parks, the relationships he has with the Police Department, and cleaning up the boardwalk.

That last point was a compelling one for Lidiya Skverchak, a 64-year-old Trump voter. She was slated to receive her next dose of the Moderna vaccine on Election Day and was uncertain whether she would vote, she said. But if she does vote, she will still vote “Democrat, of course Democrat,” in the city elections. Asked about her biggest issue in the race, she, like Mr. Saperstein, kept her focus local.

“For this area, there should be more trees,” she said.

PHOTOS: Felicia Singh, center, a Democrat canvasing in Ozone Park as she seeks to flip the last Republican-held City Council seat in Queens. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JACKIE MOLLOY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Steven Saperstein, a Democrat, believes voters are not hung up on last year’s presidential election. Inna Vernikov, a Republican, said voters were more receptive when she shared her party affiliation. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATE PALMER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; NATE PALMER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 4, 2021

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[***Iowa Poll Shows Biden Leading and Ernst Struggling***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6146-5YB1-JBG3-655G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Jonathan Martin

**Body**

The latest New York Times/Siena College poll shows President Trump struggling in a state he won comfortably in 2016 and Senator Joni Ernst facing a tough re-election challenge.

Joseph R. Biden Jr. has a narrow lead over President Trump in Iowa, a state Mr. Trump carried by more than nine percentage points in 2016, and the high-stakes Senate race there appears even closer, according to a New York Times/Siena College poll released Wednesday.

Mr. Biden leads Mr. Trump 46 percent to 43 percent among likely voters in Iowa, with 7 percent saying they were undecided or refusing to name a preference, according to the survey.

Senator Joni Ernst, a Republican whose re-election race could help determine control of the Senate, is capturing 45 percent support while Theresa Greenfield, her Democratic opponent, has 44 percent.

Mr. Biden, the former vice president, is being propelled by women, younger voters and white voters with college degrees, the same demographics lifting him across the country. Yet he is also running stronger in Iowa among seniors and ***working-class*** white voters than he is in other similarly Republican-leaning states.

Mr. Biden is leading among voters 65 and older, 49 percent to 42 percent, and he is trailing Mr. Trump among white voters without college degrees by only seven points, 48 percent to 41 percent.

The poll, which interviewed 753 likely voters in Iowa by phone from Oct. 18 to 20, has a margin of sampling error of about four percentage points.

Iowa's increasing competitiveness was made clear last week, when Mr. Trump returned to the state for the first time since the start of the year and held a rally at the Des Moines airport. Mr. Biden has not appeared in the state since the Democratic caucuses in February.

That Mr. Biden has an opportunity to contest Iowa at all is striking given its recent political tilt. After former President Barack Obama carried it twice, the state swung decisively to Mr. Trump in 2016, and a well-funded Democratic candidate for governor fell short two years later.

Yet as in other Midwestern states, Mr. Trump's incendiary conduct has alienated many voters and nudged them back to their Democratic roots. The president is viewed unfavorably by more than half of likely Iowa voters, and very unfavorably by over half of women and college-educated voters there.

Charissa Frangione, 34, a small-business owner and City Council member in Marcus, Iowa, voted for Mr. Trump four years ago but said she had soured on him since then. In 2016, ''I just thought, who better to get the economy back in order than a businessman?'' she said.

''Unfortunately, I just don't feel like he's lived up to my expectations as a president,'' Ms. Frangione said. ''Even the good things he does are washed out by his demeanor.'' She has already voted by mail for Mr. Biden.

Unlike Hillary Clinton, who was as unpopular as Mr. Trump in surveys leading up to the 2016 election, Mr. Biden is not as polarizing a figure as the president: Fewer than half of the poll's respondents viewed him unfavorably. And while 47 percent of independent voters had a very unfavorable view of Mr. Trump, just 27 percent of independents felt the same animus toward Mr. Biden.

While Mr. Biden may not ultimately need Iowa's six electoral votes to claim the presidency, the state could prove more pivotal in the battle for the Senate. Should Mr. Biden be elected, Democrats would need to gain three seats to win control of the chamber. And few Senate races appear as closely contested as the one in Iowa, where outside groups are saturating the airwaves on behalf of both candidates.

Ms. Ernst was one of the breakout winners of the 2014 midterm elections, memorably airing an ad recalling her youthful days castrating hogs and promising to cut the pork in Washington. But she has proved vulnerable this year.

She is plainly suffering from Mr. Trump's divisiveness, as made clear by her deficits among women and college-educated white voters in the poll, but she does not enjoy the president's intensity of support from Iowa Republicans. While 73 percent of them have a very favorable view of Mr. Trump, only 57 percent feel the same way about Ms. Ernst.

Ms. Greenfield, a businesswoman and first-time candidate, has benefited from not being very well defined. While 47 percent of Iowans in the survey held an unfavorable view of Ms. Ernst, just 38 percent said the same about Ms. Greenfield.

Yet Ms. Ernst is running stronger than Mr. Trump in part because she is more palatable to independent voters. While Mr. Trump is trailing with these unaffiliated Iowans by 17 points, Ms. Ernst is only down by seven with the same group. Similarly, while Mr. Trump trails among seniors, Ms. Ernst and Ms. Greenfield are tied among older voters.

Both the presidential contest and the Senate campaign remain fluid: Over 10 percent of likely voters in each race said they were undecided or voting for a third-party candidate, or did not want to say whom they were voting for.

Here are the crosstabs for the poll.

Isabella Grullón Paz contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/21/us/politics/poll-iowa-biden-trump.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/21/us/politics/poll-iowa-biden-trump.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Will Trump’s Troubles Turn Ohio Back Into a Tossup State?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60CG-S941-JBG3-63VP-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Trip Gabriel

**Highlight:** Ohio was thought to be an uphill battle for Joe Biden in November. Now there are signs the Trump campaign is on defense, despite continuing Republican advantages in the state.

**Body**

Ohio was thought to be an uphill battle for Joe Biden in November. Now there are signs the Trump campaign is on defense, despite continuing Republican advantages in the state.

Follow our live coverage of the [*2020 election between Joe Biden and President Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html).

It wasn’t so long ago that Ohio was looking like a lost cause for Democrats, after [*Donald J. Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) scored a convincing victory there and humiliated the party that had twice carried the state under Barack Obama.

Now, unexpectedly, Ohio looms as a tantalizing opportunity for [*Joseph R. Biden Jr.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html)

Two [*prominent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) [*polls*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) of the state last month showed the presidential race in a statistical tie. Turnout in the Ohio primary elections in April was higher for Democrats than Republicans for the first time in a dozen years, evidence of enthusiasm in the Democratic base. And the Trump campaign recently booked [*$18.4 million in fall TV ads*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) in Ohio, more than in any state besides Florida — a sign that Mr. Trump is on the defensive in a state that until recently seemed locked down for Republicans.

With Democratic leaders urging [*Mr. Biden, the presumptive nominee*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html), to expand his ambitions [*to states previously considered out of reach*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html), Ohio offers Democrats the possibility of seizing on suburban gains they have made in the Trump era, while restoring parts of the old Obama coalition.

“The definition of Trump being in trouble is that he’s forced to spend $18 million on TV in Ohio and he’s mired in a battle for his life here,” said David Pepper, the chairman of the Ohio Democratic Party.

Mr. Biden’s argument to Democrats has always been that he can energize Black voters and reverse defections by the white ***working class***. If he were to make good on that promise and carry Ohio, it would reset the national political map. Not only would Ohio again be a presidential bellwether, but the long-term trend of Northern white voters abandoning the Democrats would, at least for the moment, be paused under a highly divisive incumbent president.

In a state where decades of deindustrialization have created long-term anxiety about jobs, the reality behind Mr. Trump’s unmet promises to restore steel, coal and other industrial sectors through trade wars is also being put to the test — a dynamic that could extend to other states across the Midwest.

“People were looking for someone who wasn’t establishment,” said Tina Comstock, 56, a court employee in suburban Cleveland, explaining Mr. Trump’s triumph four years ago. “They thought as a quote-unquote rich businessman, he could do great things for Ohio.”

Ms. Comstock, who is married to a factory worker who like her is supporting Mr. Biden, said the pandemic had exposed the hollowness of the Trump economy. “If the economy is so great under him, why is everybody so screwed after just a couple of months of this Covid thing?” she asked. “People didn’t have enough money in their savings accounts.”

For all the optimism of Democrats, though, the Buckeye State just might be an illusion in the mists. Not only did Mr. Trump win handily in 2016 — by eight percentage points — but Democrats also fell short in the 2018 midterm elections in Ohio compared with their gains in the “blue wall” states of Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania.

Corry Bliss, a top Republican strategist who has worked in Ohio, said that whatever trouble Mr. Trump appeared to be in now, the election would turn on how voters feel about jobs and the economy in October. The president, he said, still has the upper hand. “At the end of the day, President Trump will win Ohio,” he said. “It’ll be closer than it was in 2016. The question is, how does that translate to Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania?”

Mr. Trump won those states by less than one percentage point each in 2016.

Bob Paduchik, Mr. Trump’s top adviser for Ohio, said the campaign was spending lavishly there because it had plenty of money to spread around, including in states like Minnesota and New Mexico that tilt blue. “One way you could look at it is, ‘They’re spending money in Ohio, they’re in trouble,’” he said. “When you have the kind of resources we have, you can play everywhere.”

It’s also unclear how aggressively the Biden campaign intends to compete in Ohio. It has not reserved any TV ads there, according to the firm Advertising Analytics. The Ohio Democratic Party is so financially stretched it sought over [*$333,000*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) from the federal coronavirus relief package to help meet its payroll. Only on Friday did the campaign name [*a state director,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) Toni Webb, a progressive organizer in Ohio.

Mr. Biden’s advisers say that for now they are primarily focused on getting to 270 electoral votes, the minimum needed to be president, and they are directing resources to Northern battlegrounds as well as opportunities in the Sun Belt. On Tuesday the campaign announced a [*TV ad*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) focused on rising coronavirus cases that will run in Arizona, Florida and — for the first time — Texas.

Ohio’s early success in flattening the curve of virus infections has reversed, with [*a new spike*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) in hospitalized patients. The state “is sliding down a very dangerous path,” Gov. Mike DeWine, a Republican, warned on Wednesday. While the governor enjoys strong bipartisan support for his response to the outbreak, only four in 10 Ohio voters approved of Mr. Trump’s handling of the virus, according to a [*Quinnipiac University poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) last month.

In the pre-Trump era, when Ohio was a perennial swing state, Democrats’ formula for statewide victory was to turn out Black voters in Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati, while relying on blue-collar voters in midsize industrial cities. Republican victories ran through the suburbs.

Mr. Trump upended both parties’ formulas. Republicans now win large groups of white blue-collar voters, while fighting to limit defections from suburbanites, especially women.

In the 2018 midterms, Democrats flipped six suburban districts in the Statehouse that had been drawn to favor Republicans.

The Trump campaign is seeking inroads with suburbanites, particularly women, with a TV ad aimed at stirring fears over calls by racial justice protesters to “defund the police.”

The ad, which has aired more than 1,000 times this month in Ohio, portrays the police as unable to respond to rapes and home invasions and warns, “You won’t be safe in Joe Biden’s America.”

But running on law and order may not move many suburban voters toward Mr. Trump; [*recent polls suggest*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) there is a broad understanding that calls to defund the police often mean changing how they operate, not getting rid of departments entirely.

“I don’t think Trump’s a credible messenger,” said Elizabeth Brown, a Democrat on the Columbus City Council. “The voters who may be law-and-order-focused in our suburbs know how to tell when someone is lying. If you’re not a trustworthy messenger, even though you’re fearmongering, I don’t think you can dupe voters.”

Fred Holbein, 63, who is retired from the Navy, is a Trump supporter who endorses some of the president’s racially divisive comments, such as his criticism of [*NASCAR’s ban of the Confederate flag*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html). “I’m not a NASCAR fan anymore,” he said.

“I think Joe Biden’s had 50 years’ opportunity to do something and most recently had eight years when he was a heartbeat away from the president and didn’t do anything,” Mr. Holbein, who lives outside Columbus, added. “I’ve always maintained that the government needs to be run like a business, and Donald Trump is trying to do that.”

In the end, Mr. Trump’s chances in the state are likely to come down to whether voters re-embrace his anti-China, pro-jobs message of four years ago, ignoring not just today’s record unemployment because of the coronavirus outbreak, but also the president’s unfulfilled promises even before the virus.

In Mr. Trump’s first three years before the pandemic, 14,000 new manufacturing jobs were created in Ohio. The gains represent [*a leveling off of growth*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) from the last three years of the Obama administration, when Ohio manufacturing jobs expanded by 20,000.

The president’s tariffs on imported steel [*did not produce a promised boom*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) in American steelmaking in places like Ohio’s Mahoning Valley, and Mr. Trump’s [*Twitter threats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) to carmakers did not stop General Motors from [*closing a huge factory*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) near Youngstown, at a cost of 4,400 jobs.

In [*national*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) and [*battleground state polls*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) this week, a majority of voters disapproved of Mr. Trump’s handling of the economy, a reversal on the issue that had been his greatest strength.

Mr. Paduchik, an Akron native who ran Mr. Trump’s Ohio campaign in 2016, said Ohioans would forgive shortfalls between the president’s promises and what he has been able to deliver. “Voters don’t expect it to change overnight,” he said. “But here’s a guy who said he’d fight for them and he has, and it’s more than enough for them to give him another four years.”

White ***working-class*** Ohio voters, who according to 2016 exit polls were [*56 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) of the electorate, do not appear to be abandoning Mr. Trump. The Quinnipiac University [*poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html) of the state last month showed the president with a 21-point advantage over Mr. Biden among white voters without a four-year college degree. The margin was only slightly smaller than Mr. Trump’s 24-point edge with the same voters in a Quinnipiac [*poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/us/elections/biden-vs-trump.html)of Ohio on the eve of the 2016 election.

“They still think he walks on water,” said David Betras, a former Democratic chairman of Mahoning County, in northeast Ohio’s blue-collar epicenter. “You try to explain how his policies have hurt the working man, they say that’s fake news.”

His advice to Democrats: Add four or five points to Mr. Trump’s polling support.

PHOTO: Joseph R. Biden Jr. in Columbus in March. Democratic leaders have urged him to woo states like Ohio that were once out of reach. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MANDEL NGAN/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** July 27, 2020

**End of Document**



[***More Patients, Fewer Workers: Omicron Pushes New York Hospitals to Brink***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64GH-63P1-DXY4-X28G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Sharon Otterman and Joseph Goldstein

**Highlight:** The current spike in coronavirus cases appears to be less deadly than earlier waves, but some safety-net hospitals are still being severely strained.

**Body**

The current spike in coronavirus cases appears to be less deadly than earlier waves, but some safety-net hospitals are still being severely strained.

At Interfaith Medical Center in Brooklyn, the intensive care unit is full, mainly with Covid patients. In a scene reminiscent of spring 2020, patient beds have been set up in the hallway.

But on Wednesday, when Interfaith asked city officials to divert ambulances to other hospitals, the request was granted for only two hours, the hospital’s top executive said. Emergency rooms at neighboring hospitals were also overflowing, or precariously understaffed.

“All hospitals, not just safety net hospitals, in Brooklyn and in other boroughs are stressed,” the executive, LaRay Brown, said. Ms. Brown is the chief executive at One Brooklyn Health, which runs Interfaith and nearby Brookdale Hospital.

As the Omicron variant of the coronavirus sweeps through New York, many hospitals are being pushed to their limits by twin challenges: spiking numbers of virus cases and growing shortages of nurses, doctors and technicians. Many workers are sick with Covid-19; others who quit amid the pandemic have not been replaced.

While the latest virus wave appears to be less deadly than earlier ones, with many fewer patients on ventilators, even large hospitals with empty intensive care beds are straining to handle the surge in caseloads because so many workers are out, health care officials said.

“I think everyone across the region is struggling,” said John D’Angelo, who oversees the emergency departments at Northwell Health, the state’s largest health system. Because of its own staff shortages, Northwell has had to limit the number of patients it can take from Interfaith and other beleaguered hospitals.

Almost 4,000 Northwell employees, or 5 percent, were out as a result of Covid-19 on Thursday, Dr. D’Angelo said. That was about double the number at the height of the first virus wave. The system can transfer employees between hospitals as needed, but its emergency rooms have been operating at up to twice their normal volume and waiting times are up. Dr. D’Angelo likened the daily effort to keep positions filled to a game of “whac-a-mole.”

For smaller community hospitals with fewer resources, the situation is more critical. At Interfaith and Brookdale and their affiliated nursing homes, 471 out of 7,000 staff members were out with Covid-19 this week, forcing some nurses to handle double the usual number of patients, Ms. Brown said.

“It is challenging for the hospitals, but it is particularly stressful for our safety net institutions,” said Kenneth E. Raske, the president of the Greater New York Hospital Association, a trade group. “A number of them have requested assistance, including staffing assistance from the state. The problem is the cupboard is bare.”

Similar situations are playing out around the country, including in New Jersey, where officials are working with the federal government and the National Guard to deploy medical teams to hospitals that are experiencing severe staff shortages.

Nationally, the number of people hospitalized with the virus reached 116,000 this week, the most in a year. But [*a significant number who have tested positive for Covid-19*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/04/health/covid-omicron-hospitalizations.html) — anywhere from 20 to 65 percent — were admitted for other reasons and are not primarily ill with virus symptoms, according to hospital officials in many states.

In interviews, nurses and doctors in New York described scenes of distress, including one of a patient urinating in a trash can because she could not get help, and others involving nurses forced to work entire shifts without a break.

Scheena Iyande Tannis, a critical care nurse at Brookdale, said that she and her colleagues had covered additional shifts, “working in waves, as each person is waiting for their turn to get sick.” Still, things seemed better to her than they were in the first virus surge.

“The first time [*we were just totally decimated,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/01/nyregion/Coronavirus-hospitals.html)” Ms. Tannis said. “This time, we are overwhelmed but not destroyed.”

New York City is served by a complex ecosystem of about 50 hospitals. The best known are major academic hospitals with imposing Manhattan flagships like NewYork-Presybterian/Weill Cornell and NYU Langone Medical Center.

Then there is the safety-net system, the core of which are the 11 public hospitals run by the city. Augmenting that are about a dozen smaller, independent hospitals that are in ***working-class*** neighborhoods outside Manhattan, rely mostly on Medicaid and have been among those hit hardest by the pandemic.

[*The enormous inequity*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/01/nyregion/Coronavirus-hospitals.html) in the city’s hospitals became clear when the pandemic descended on New York in spring 2020. Safety net hospitals like Brookdale were overwhelmed with patients, but had smaller staffs, worse equipment and less access to drug trials [*and advanced treatments*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/us/covid-treatment-ecmo.html) than their better-financed counterparts.

Dr. Dave A. Chokshi, the city’s health commissioner, said on Thursday that about 80 percent of the hospital beds in the five boroughs were occupied this week, as the number of patients with Covid-19 reached nearly 6,000. That was about half the peak in the first wave, when ballparks and conference centers were turned into field hospitals.

But Dr. Chokshi and hospital executives said the numbers did not tell the full story, as the number of Covid-19 cases continue to climb and because some hospitals do not have enough employees to open all their beds. Isolation requirements for virus patients also mean some beds cannot be used.

“This is why it is so vital for us to surge resources and support to our health care system, particularly to our safety net and H and H hospitals,” Dr. Chokshi said, referring to those run by the city’s hospitals agency. To that end, the city has expanded a loan guarantee program to help hospitals pay for increased staffing while the Omicron wave persists.

Michael Del Valle, a resident physician at Jacobi Medical Center in the Bronx, one of the city-run hospitals, and a vice president of the union that represents residents, said the emergency room there was so crowded that patients had just a foot or two of space between them.

“If you’re in a stretcher, you can touch the person next to you by putting your hand out,” he said.

Dr. Del Valle, who tested positive for the virus this week, estimated that more than 25 percent of Jacobi’s emergency room residents had done the same in recent weeks. With so many patients arriving and so many staff members out sick, it often takes longer than usual for medicine to be administered, he said. Long waits for admission and care have led to angry confrontations.

“There has certainly been an uptick in verbal aggression and physical aggression,” Dr. Del Valle said, adding that Jacobi had added security officers in the emergency room.

Seeking to address the inequities exposed by the pandemic, state officials in December 2020 instituted a system called [*load balancing*](https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/commissioner-zucker-issues-letter-hospital-administrators-detailing-directives-expand-capacity) for when patient numbers reach critical proportions and hospitals must seek help from one another.

In recent days, Dr. D’Angelo of Northwell said, his system had accepted about a dozen transfer patients from overwhelmed safety net hospitals, including Jamaica Hospital in Queens, an independent hospital where, state data shows, the intensive care unit is full, and the city-run Queens Hospital Center.

Northwell has also agreed to send nurses to Brookdale and Interfaith. Ms. Brown said she was grateful, but that the hospitals needed many more reinforcements.

The loan guarantee program, which Mayor Eric Adams announced on Wednesday, might help pay for expensive travel nurses to fill some of the gaps, she said. Agencies, she added, were now charging up to $215 an hour for critical care nurses.

“We’ll take everything we can get — as my mother would say, beggars can’t be choosers,” said Ms. Brown.

One Brooklyn Health and other hospital systems have also sought help from state officials. Gov. Kathy Hochul, who declared a health care emergency in late November, has authorized nursing students and out-of-state doctors to assist during the current surge. The state has also deployed 120 National Guard members to nursing homes and had directed federal teams to upstate hospitals [*experiencing their own crises*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/03/nyregion/covid-cases-surge-upstate-ny.html).

The state has not sent staff reinforcements to downstate hospitals, Mr. Raske said.

Jill Montag, a spokeswoman for the state Health Department, did not dispute that, but she said the state was helping hospitals coordinate their efforts and had secured 50 ambulance teams for New York City from the Federal Emergency Management Agency; 25 are to arrive on Saturday.

The problem has been compounded for community hospitals by the way the Omicron wave has spread, starting in wealthier parts of Manhattan and then moving to low-income neighborhoods that rely on safety net hospitals. This week, the Covid positivity rates topped 40 percent in the South Bronx and parts of Brooklyn and Queens. About 37,000 new cases a day are being reported citywide on average.

Longstanding health care disparities mean patients in poor areas are also arriving at hospitals with more pre-existing conditions, and vaccination rates in these areas tend to be lower, contributing to more severe illness. In the Brooklyn ZIP code where Brookdale is, about 2,500 people tested positive for the virus last week, with a positivity rate of 43 percent.

Not all safety net hospitals say they are being stretched to the limit. The area around St. Barnabas Hospital in the Bronx had nearly the highest test positivity rate in the city this week, above 46 percent. But officials said they were dealing with the higher volume, even with 7 to 9 percent of the work force out with Covid-19 or caring for sick relatives.

Not all of the hospital’s intensive care bed are full, and of the 30 patients presently in intensive care at St. Barnabas, only 10 have Covid-19, said Dr. Edward Telzak, the chief of internal medicine. “Covid-19 is not overwhelming us,” he added.

It is different at the pediatric emergency room at Montefiore Hospital, a major nonprofit hospital in the Bronx. Julian Grant, a registered nurse, said the small emergency room was often packed with up to 80 patients, with as few as two nurses to help them.

More children, she said, were coming in now complaining of difficulty breathing now than had during previous virus waves, although they were usually well enough to be sent home after being given steroids and other treatments. Whether or not they have Covid-19, all of the patients must wait together, raising the specter of the virus spreading to vulnerable children.

“Things have gotten terrible,” she said. “At the end of the day as nurses, it really doesn’t feel good when you can’t take care of your patients.”

Tracey Tully and Joseph Gambardello contributed reporting from New Jersey.

Tracey Tully and Joseph Gambardello contributed reporting from New Jersey.

PHOTOS: Brookdale Hospital in Brooklyn is one of several safety-net hospitals that have been struggling.; Mayor Eric Adams on Wednesday announced an expanded loan guarantee program to help hospitals pay for increased staffing. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A10)

**Load-Date:** January 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[***500,000 New Yorkers Owe Back Rent, With Freeze on Evictions Set to End***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:637N-FYS1-JBG3-641D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 28, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 14

**Length:** 1329 words

**Byline:** By Matthew Haag

**Body**

The eviction moratorium is set to come to an end in New York City, setting off alarms about the fate of tenants who owe months of unpaid rent and could face homelessness.

After hitting the pause button during the pandemic, the eviction machinery in New York City, one of the world's most expensive housing markets, will likely soon start firing up again.

For roughly 16 months, the city's renters have been shielded from eviction under broad protections imposed by the federal government and New York State to keep people in their homes during the coronavirus outbreak.

But those safeguards are soon expected to come to an end, setting off alarms about the fate of struggling tenants who owe months of unpaid rent, cannot make their next payments and could face homelessness.

Nearly 500,000 households in New York City have rent arrears that collectively total more than $2.2 billion, according to an analysis of census data by the National Equity Atlas, a research group associated with the University of Southern California.

At the same time, the financial challenges facing many tenants are squeezing smaller landlords who rely on rent to pay their own bills.

When do eviction protections expire in New York?

The federal moratorium, enacted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has been extended several times throughout the pandemic but is now scheduled to expire at the end of July. After an additional one-month extension in June, the agency said that the protections would likely lapse for good this month.

But tenants across New York State will have another month of protections under a state eviction moratorium, which expires at the end of August. New York State officials have not given any indication that the moratorium will be extended again, as it has been multiple times during the pandemic.

What assistance is available for tenants and landlords?

New York State has set aside $2.7 billion in financial aid, largely from the federal government, that tenants can request through an application the state launched in June. If their applications are approved, up to a year's worth of unpaid rent will be covered, as well as a year's worth of unpaid utilities. Lower-income tenants can qualify for an additional three months of rental payments. The payments go directly to the landlord.

There are some restrictions. To qualify, households must earn less than 80 percent of the area median income, or under $95,450 for a family of four in New York City. Landlords who accept the money cannot, in most cases, raise the rent or try to evict the tenant for at least a year.

Both landlords and tenants can start the application process, but property owners, who are required to provide additional information for the application, can choose not to participate. New York City officials are encouraging renters whose landlords opted out to complete the application anyway, saying that it could be used as a defense in housing court.

So far, more than 160,000 completed applications have been filed in New York State, with about three-quarters of them from renters and landlords in New York City, the state said. Yet, the flow of aid to renters has been among the slowest in the country, records show, hobbled by technical glitches and errors that have forced applicants to restart the lengthy process from the beginning.

By the end of June, New York was one of just two states that had not yet sent out financial assistance to renters. As of last week, state officials said, only a small amount had been disbursed -- $117,000 -- in order to test the payment system. But on Monday, another $700,000 in aid was distributed, the state said, and additional payments will be made daily.

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced on Monday that the state would be rolling out a revamped application process to streamline and speed up the process. The state said it would take until the end of August to disburse the funds from the approved applications.

How many eviction cases are pending in housing court?

More than 62,000 eviction cases have been filed in New York City Housing Court since the start of the pandemic, according to the Eviction Lab at Princeton University. The number of cases in New York City represent 20 percent of all eviction cases filed in the 29 cities tracked by the Eviction Lab, a group that includes other large cities like Austin, Houston and Phoenix.

While the courts have allowed cases to be filed during the pandemic, nearly all of them are on pause without scheduled hearings until after the eviction moratorium ends. Lucian Chalfen, a spokesman for the state's Office of Court Administration, said housing courts were preparing for the possibility of reopening in September, after the state moratorium lapses, and resuming in-person trials later that month.

It is too early to estimate how many cases will be on the docket when court reopens. Between 400 to 800 new housing cases are filed in New York City every week, the Eviction Lab said, but the cases in which landlords collect federal rental assistance will not move forward in court.

Which New York City neighborhoods have the most eviction cases?

The same areas in the Bronx that had high rates of eviction cases before the pandemic -- notably the neighborhoods of Belmont, Fordham, High Bridge and Longwood -- remained at the top during the past 16 months. In fact, eight of the Top 10 ZIP codes with the highest rates of eviction cases filed during the pandemic are in the Bronx.

For example, more than 7 percent of the households in the ZIP Code 10468, which encompasses parts of Fordham and Kingsbridge, have had an eviction case filed against them during the pandemic, according to an analysis for the The New York Times by Lucy Block at the Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development, a coalition of housing nonprofits in New York City.

***Working-class*** neighborhoods in the Bronx have been among the hardest hit in the pandemic, as they are home to many residents whose jobs in the service and hospitality industries were some of the first to be eliminated and have been slower to come back.

The overwhelming majority of residents are people of color, underscoring the concerns of housing rights advocates that the city's Black and Latino residents, who bore the brunt of the pandemic's health crisis, are now facing a second crisis: the fear of losing their homes.

''They were ones that were experiencing and struggling with things before the pandemic,'' said Matthew Tropp, the director of housing at the Legal Aid Society's office in the Bronx. ''The pandemic has made things fundamentally worse.''

How much do renters owe in back rent?

Renters who have been sued in housing court owe an average of $8,150 in unpaid rent, according to the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development. But the actual amount is likely much higher because most court cases are not updated to reflect missed payments in the months after the lawsuit was filed.

Khalifa Thiam, who lives in a one-bedroom apartment in the Fordham area of the Bronx, was sued in housing court in December. His landlord said he owed $5,890.06 for not paying his full monthly rent of $990.60 from May to December of last year, according to court records.

But Mr. Thiam, 45, who lost his job at a men's wear shop on Fordham Road in March 2020, has not found a new job and is still unable to afford rent. For several months late last year, after an extra federal unemployment payment of $600 per week expired, Mr. Thiam said he was living on $119 a week after making child support payments.

Before the pandemic, his two children, a son and a daughter who live in Toronto with their mother, would spend the summer with him in New York City. But he has not seen them since summer 2019 because of travel restrictions imposed between the United States and Canada.

''It's very depressing,'' Mr. Thiam said. ''I want to get back to work.''

Mihir Zaveri contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/27/nyregion/evictions-moratorium.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/27/nyregion/evictions-moratorium.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Protesting evictions last year in the Bronx, which has some of the city's highest rates of eviction cases filed during the pandemic. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANGELA WEISS/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** July 28, 2021

**End of Document**



[***What Happens When Your Waiter Can't Afford Rent***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6372-FKJ1-DXY4-X4BX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 25, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1252 words

**Byline:** By Kaya Laterman

**Body**

Many towns in rural New York are bustling with city visitors, pushing up rental costs and pushing out workers.

If LaToya Flood had her way, she would hire an additional five to seven employees at Ruby Mae Soul Food Restaurant, which she has operated for three years in Kingston, N.Y. With her business open now just on Fridays and Saturdays, Ms. Flood and her sole employee, her mother, prepare all week for what could be a thriving, full-time business.

But finding minimum wage workers in Ulster County has become nearly impossible, she said.

Like many parts of the country, including the city and the Hamptons, Ulster County is facing an employment crisis. Since the pandemic, some workers have moved, while others have reassessed their lives and have found other opportunities. But the problem is driven, in part, by a lack of affordable housing.

Ms. Flood said that when she first moved to Poughkeepsie, N.Y., and then to Kingston almost 11 years ago from the Bronx, it was easy to find two-bedroom rental homes for less than $850 a month. But available housing has been dwindling in the county. When the pandemic hit, city dwellers bought up houses or moved into what used to be their second homes, further diminishing availability.

Now a two-bedroom rental in the county averages $1,439 per month, an 11 percent increase from the previous year, according to the county's rental housing survey.

''It's difficult to roll up your sleeves and work hard for minimum wage and feel like you're suffocating because you can't afford rent,'' Ms. Flood said. ''So now I'm at a point where I can't expand my business and am at a loss of what I'm supposed to do next.''

Studies have shown that adding more housing leads to the creation of jobs, but current high building and labor costs, among other things, have led builders nationwide to focus on high-end homes. Construction is at a five-decade low on starter homes, according to Freddie Mac.

Adding to the problem of supply are the homeowners who have opted to rent out their extra rooms or second homes to vacationers instead of to long-term tenants. In Ulster County, slightly over 2,000 rooms and homes were listed as short-term rentals in May, according to AirDNA, a vacation rental data firm. These homeowners averaged $236 in revenue per night's rental, so even if the money netted was half of that figure, it's a profit margin that is too hard to resist.

This coincides with a low vacancy rate for long-term rentals in the county, which was just shy of 2 percent in 2020, according to the rental housing survey. (Housing experts say a rate below 5 percent restricts tenant choice and mobility and gives landlords pricing power.) There were only 180 rental units advertised between January and October 2020, down from 269 units the previous year.

A desperate need for infrastructural improvements in rural towns and cities -- more populous than ever because of the pandemic -- has posed problems for developers. Patrick K. Ryan, Ulster's county executive, says that courting developers of affordable housing is difficult when there aren't enough sewer and water lines to begin with.

''It's been hard to hear about all the potential growth the county could be experiencing because of the lack of infrastructure and therefore housing,'' Mr. Ryan said. ''But what's worse is when you hear about the nurses and grocery store clerks, or those who got us through the pandemic, who are anxiety-ridden because they can't afford to live in the community they just served.''

Throughout Ulster County, community meetings are filled with locals calling for a fix. After months of debate, the Town of Woodstock this week approved a nine-month moratorium on the creation of new lodging, including short-term rentals, which pits a neighbor trying to earn extra money against others being priced out of the community.

''Housing is the No. 1 issue,'' said Mr. Ryan, adding that he and other officials are trying to fast-track affordable housing programs. The Kingston City Land Bank has been fixing up long-vacant housing, there are plans to transform an empty county jail into units for seniors and others, and a tiny-home initiative is also underway. Zoning codes are being reviewed in many towns and villages, and Mr. Ryan said there was a push for quick authorization to build accessory dwelling units, like small cottages or basement apartments.

In light of the affordable housing crunch, many business owners have been forced to rethink how to run their businesses. Tom Smiley, the chief executive of the Mohonk Mountain House, a 250-plus-room resort in New Paltz, cut the availability of hotel rooms and services by a third this year because he couldn't find enough workers. In a normal year, Mr. Smiley hires about 750 employees. This year, he is down to about 630.

For the first time since his family started the business in 1869, Mr. Smiley asked his marketing director to focus on staff recruitment, and not on guest promotions. He spent extra money to advertise available jobs on the radio and billboard space on Route 299 in New Paltz.

Some employees were able to secure cheap lodging at the hotel's worker dorms, but the number of rooms was cut to 45 from about 180, since the pandemic made it necessary to provide private bathrooms instead of shared facilities.

Mr. Smiley said he had been on the hunt for federal and state incentives that would help him build more dorm space, but has had little luck.

''I have employees that say they don't know how much longer they can work here as they struggle to find a place to live,'' he said. ''So now I also worry about employee retention.''

Stew Meyers, a founder of Exago Inc., a software company in Kingston, wonders how his young work force (average age, 29) will be able to keep living in and near Kingston if home prices and rents keep climbing.

''I've been focusing on hiring locally to grow a competitive business here, but if my employees say they can't afford to live here and they all suddenly ask me for an increase in salary, I would be stuck,'' Mr. Meyers said.

Housing activists are warning about the effects of gentrification, which has been happening for at least a decade, and the likelihood of a spike in homelessness among the ***working class***. There have been reports of some people who were pushed out of their homes and are now sleeping in their cars, often in the local train station's parking lot.

Rashida Tyler, a co-founder of the Ulster County Coalition for Housing Justice and the founder of the Real Kingston Tenants Union, said she had been flooded with calls and emails from people asking for her help, which started before the pandemic because of existing economic inequalities in the area involving poorer communities of color. As a third-generation Kingstonian, Ms. Tyler said she used to be able to connect locals in need of affordable housing to a variety of generous landlords. ''But I haven't been able to help anyone in months, as all my resources have dried up,'' she said.

The organization, among other things, has asked local legislators to calculate affordable rents using the area's average hourly wage, currently $13.33, instead of the area's median income, especially now as more affluent New Yorkers have moved into the county.

''When housing prices are too high, it puts too much pressure and makes it harder for people to remain in their community,'' Mr. Meyers said. ''I need and want my employees to stay here, but what happens when they can't?''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/23/nyregion/housing-labor-shortage-new-york.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/23/nyregion/housing-labor-shortage-new-york.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, LaToya Flood, who owns a restaurant in Kingston. Above from left: Tom Smiley, chief executive of Mohonk Mountain House in New Paltz

and Stew Meyers, who owns a software company in Kingston. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SASHA MASLOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 25, 2021

**End of Document**



[***New Life for the Wyeth Legacy Five Miles Out to Sea***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64P2-DRT1-DXY4-X3KK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 2, 2022 Wednesday 12:52 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 1905 words

**Byline:** Meredith Mendelsohn

**Highlight:** Colby College has acquired two islands off Maine that inspired the first family of American art, and will show newly discovered works that Andrew Wyeth drew in secret.

**Body**

Colby College has acquired two islands off Maine that inspired the first family of American art, and will show newly discovered works that Andrew Wyeth drew in secret.

Nestled in the Atlantic Ocean, five miles off the coast of the picturesque town of Port Clyde, Maine, lie two rugged islands with stories to tell. Allen and Benner, as they are called, have witnessed a string of inhabitants over the centuries, from the Abenaki people and English colonists to homesteading lobstermen. And then came Betsy and Andrew Wyeth — mid-coast Maine locals and the most high-profile members of what many consider the first family of American art.

After the death in 2020 at age 98 of [*Betsy James Wyeth*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/26/arts/betsy-wyeth-dead.html), the notoriously formidable adviser, collaborator, business manager, muse, and wife of the realist painter Andrew Wyeth, a [*polarizing figure*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/16/arts/design/unclothed-in-andrew-wyeths-art.html) in American art history, the keys to the castle are now passing to a far younger generation. (He [*died in 2009*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/17/arts/design/17wyeth.html) at 91.)

Colby College of Waterville, Maine, around 75 miles inland from the islands, is set to announce it has acquired Allen and Benner from the family’s two foundations, Up East and the Wyeth Foundation for American Art. The Colby connection could breathe new life into a name that has been lacking in youthfulness for some time.

The islands are rich with wildlife and dotted with vernacular architecture — some buildings that Betsy restored, and some that she designed — that evoke the thriving fishing village that once stood here. In the acquisition, Colby is not just adding a 500-acre island campus to its 700 acres in Waterville; it is also playing an instrumental role in carrying forward the complex Wyeth legacy. While the college is not taking ownership of Andrew’s artworks that were once on the islands, the [*Colby College Museum of Art*](https://museum-exhibitions.colby.edu/exhibition/andrew-wyeth-life-and-death/)will be the first to publicly present more than a dozen drawings he made in the 1990s of his imagined funeral, which he kept secret, according to the painter Jamie Wyeth, Andrew and Betsy’s youngest son.

The recently discovered images on view June 2 through Oct. 16, show Andrew lying in a coffin and the guests who would likely attend, including his wife and friends (who were also his subjects). “Toward the end of his life he got nervous,” Jamie Wyeth said. He had seen a photograph of a friend in a coffin at a viewing and it sent him into a “tailspin,” he added.

The acquisition of the two islands cost the college $2 million, with the rest of the property’s market value — a total of $10 million to $12 million, said Colby College’s president, David Greene — contributed as a gift in kind by the foundations. “We could have held onto the islands, but to see them frozen in amber would be a tragedy,” said J. Robinson West, president of the Wyeth Foundation for American Art.

Betsy purchased Allen Island in 1979 at the suggestion of Jamie, who is now 75 and spends much of his time in Southern Island, which his parents bought in 1978, and Monhegan Island, where he lives in a house built by the artist Rockwell Kent. In 1990, Betsy also bought Benner, the much smaller island next door. She spent May through October here, and her husband did, too, whenever she could lure him by boat from his preferred work space in his childhood home in Port Clyde, in the studio of his father, the legendary illustrator [*N.C. Wyeth.*](https://www.brandywine.org/museum/nc-wyeth-catalogue-raisonne/nc-wyeth-biography)

Allen and Benner were never the kind of illustrious summer getaway one might typically find on Maine’s coast. “Betsy never identified with the summer people,” West said. Her husband did not either. “I like Maine in spite of its scenery,” he told his eventual biographer, Richard Meryman.

Betsy and Andrew, who both grew up summering inshore nearby, shared an appreciation for Maine’s hardscrabble mid-coast ***working class***, the same weatherworn fishermen and farm folk Andrew nearly obsessively depicted. There is no grand estate to behold here, but Betsy did construct a commercial-size dock for local lobstering crews to use as a way station. On approaching the islands, a cluster of cedar-shingled and white clapboard structures emerge in the distance. And then hundreds of brightly hued lobster traps appear stacked in neat towers.

“My mother really did not want the islands to be a museum,” Jamie Wyeth said on a visit to Allen and Benner last month with Greene and a reporter. “She wanted them to be working islands. And they’ll be working even more now.”

Colby has had partial access to Allen Island since 2016 and Greene is working with the foundation to determine the best use of historical buildings on Benner, where the Wyeths lived. The college’s aim is not just about caring for the structures, Greene said. “It’s also a recognition that these islands need to change over time for them to continue to be vital and relevant, and to do so in a way that demonstrates the same care that Betsy had for them.”

Colby is retaining the working lobster wharf while expanding the use of the islands as an interdisciplinary study center. It’s an opportune time to have an island field station; [*data indicates*](https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/news/study-finds-fast-warming-gulf-maine-region) that the Gulf of Maine is warming faster than most of the world’s oceans, and students and faculty are closely observing biodiversity shifts. Colby’s newfound access has enabled the college to spearhead research and attract new faculty and grants, says Whitney King, a chemistry professor. A major study Colby conducted around the economics of the lobster industry and how it might be affected over time is one way that Greene is trying to broaden what the Wyeths started.

Students also have a rich past to dig into. The British explorer George Weymouth landed on Allen in 1605, and a stone cross bearing his name, planted at the island’s edge around 300 years later, is a reminder of his presence. It’s an eerie counterpoint to the shell middens and arrowheads found when Betsy arrived.

If the lobster traps stacked here today were more weathered, they might have been fodder for one of Andrew’s paintings. A household name throughout much of the 20th century, Andrew made paintings that were as beloved by the masses as they were derided by vanguard critics for their realist depictions of rural Maine and Chadds Ford, Pa.

“I called it the ‘Wyeth Curse,’” said Wanda Corn, a historian of American art, referring to the belief that his work was unmodern and more akin to illustration, and his audience “artistically and politically conservative.”

That curse is fading with time, Corn said. On the occasion that they surface at auction, Andrew Wyeth’s top works reliably fetch seven figures. His artistic legacy does face a different obstacle today, however. “The market for Andrew Wyeth is just as steady as always within the same world of people who have always appreciated his work,” said Victoria Manning, whose gallery, Sommerville Manning, near Chadds Ford, handles the Wyeths’ work. “But right now, diversity is important to museums and a younger generation.”

In a 2017 assessment of his paintings of Black people in the Brandywine Valley, the historian Gwendolyn DuBois Shaw questioned [*the power imbalance in his representation of race*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/16/arts/design/unclothed-in-andrew-wyeths-art.html), and also pointed out that in a handful of paintings he had darkened the skin tone of his white model, Helga Testorf, a Chadds Ford neighbor who posed for him in secret for more than a decade.

Betsy’s shrewd management of her husband’s career shaped his popularity and financial success. She critiqued his paintings, wrote books about him, helped determine what to sell and cataloged every scribble. She also named many of his paintings, including the one that catapulted him to international stardom, [*“Christina’s World”*](https://www.moma.org/collection/works/78455) (1948), which was inspired by a vision of their physically disabled, shut-in neighbor and friend Christina Olson, (Betsy introduced them in 1939 and later posed for the picture.)

She also put her influence and resources to work on the islands. “They were her other man,” said Mary Landa, the longtime manager of the couple’s collection. Betsy commissioned ecological research and preservation, and helped found the Island Institute in Rockland, Maine, the first advocacy group for the state’s vast archipelago.

She created pastures, dug out ponds, restored antique buildings — including a few salvaged from the mainland and reconstructed — and designed new ones, often using the patinated bones of old ones. Sometimes she composed Wyeth-esque scenes to inspire her husband to paint. And sometimes he took the bait. His final work, “Goodbye,” 2008, shows Allen Island’s 19th-century sail loft, which Betsy salvaged from the mainland and turned into a gallery, as a ghostly figure sails out of the picture plane.

A very small 19th-century house on Benner where two fishing families once lived served as Andrew’s studio. Their nearby residence, meanwhile, a reproduction of an 18th-century cape house, is decorated sparingly with country antiques and folk art with the stark restraint that marks his paintings. One wonders if Betsy originated the aesthetic.

Reproductions now hang in place of the original temperas and watercolors that once hung here every summer. Paintings from the couple’s collection are now in the holdings of the Wyeth Foundation for American Art, which is announcing details of the estate settlement in March, West said. It’s unlikely that a trove will hit the market like it did when the Wyeths sold Andrew’s pictures of [*Testorf*](https://www.nytimes.com/1986/08/17/arts/helga-s-world-the-secret-art-of-andrew-wyeth.html).

Betsy did leave some parting gifts, including 27 works by the three generations of Wyeth men, Jamie, Andrew, and N. C., to the Farnsworth Art Museum in Rockland, one of the larger repositories of Andrew’s work, along with the Brandywine River Museum of Art in Chadds Ford.

It has yet to be seen how Colby’s arrangement might affect the Colby College Museum of Art, which has a strong American art focus, with nearly 400 works by James McNeill Whistler, around 900 by Alex Katz and six by Andrew Wyeth.

But as the islands change hands, the Wyeth story is moving far beyond museum walls. Greene said that he’d like to be in a position where every student uses the island campus.

For Jamie Wyeth it’s bittersweet. “It’s very tough for me because I spent so much time out here,” he said. “But I think it’s a wonderful future for the islands.”

PHOTOS: Top, the painter Jamie Wyeth motors by Benner Island, where his mother, Betsy Wyeth, restored remnants of a Maine fishing village. Jamie’s father, Andrew Wyeth, completed “Airborne,” above left, on the island in 1996. Above right, Betsy Wyeth built Block House in the 1990s. Colby College’s acquisition of Benner and nearby Allen Island may take the Wyeth name in a new direction. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CIG HARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; ANDREW WYETH/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK) (C1); In Maine, Jamie Wyeth, left, on Benner Island; below, from top, lobster traps on Allen Island; Betsy and Andrew Wyeth at their home in Cushing in 1967; “Pentecost” was the first major work Andrew Wyeth painted on Allen Island. The ghostly fishing nets represented the spirit of a 15-year-old who died when a wave washed her out to sea, Wyeth said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CIG HARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; KIRK C. WILKINSON; ANDREW WYETH/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NY); Middle, Andrew Wyeth’s “Helen Sipala 8” (circa 1991-94) shows his neighbor and frequent model looking into his coffin. Right, a detail of the Wyeth studio on Benner Island. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW WYETH/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NY; WYETH FOUNDATION FOR AMERICAN ART; CIG HARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C7)

**Load-Date:** February 7, 2022

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[***Democrats’ Best News***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YD7-7K01-DXY4-X0PK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** Turnout is up. Way up.

**Body**

Turnout is up. Way up.

This article is part of David Leonhardt’s newsletter. You can [*sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/opiniontoday?action=click&amp;module=Intentional&amp;pgtype=Article) to receive it each weekday.

In 2017 and 2018, Democratic voter turnout surged in one election after another. Those displays of enthusiasm were a leading indicator of the 2018 midterm results, in which Democrats won a resounding victory in House elections.

After the first few contests of the 2020 primary elections, the turnout picture wasn’t so clear, and political commentators wondered whether that was a bad sign for Democrats. But in the last several primaries the picture has become much clearer. The news for Democrats is excellent: Turnout is up, way up.

About 1.7 million Michigan residents cast ballots in the Democratic primary yesterday, up roughly 40 percent from 2016. Turnout has also been [*up substantially*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/opiniontoday?action=click&amp;module=Intentional&amp;pgtype=Article) in California, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and elsewhere.

The surge doesn’t seem to be a result of enthusiasm for any one Democratic candidate. Many Democratic voters, after all, spent months undecided about and uninspired by the current field. Instead, turnout appears to have surged because Democrats have rallied around Joe Biden as the candidate most likely to defeat President Trump — and because they remain very energized about beating Trump.

“From the moment he was sworn in back in January, 2017, Donald Trump has been the Democratic Party’s single greatest get out the vote tool,” [*Joe Walsh*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/opiniontoday?action=click&amp;module=Intentional&amp;pgtype=Article), a Republican former congressman who ran a brief primary campaign against the president, wrote last night.

“Joe Biden is not my candidate. But people saying he isn’t electable are lying to themselves,” the author [*Molly Knight*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/opiniontoday?action=click&amp;module=Intentional&amp;pgtype=Article) wrote. It is “becoming obvious Biden is way more popular than Hillary. Trump lost to her by 3 million votes and needed an inside straight in the electoral college to beat her.”

Biden has performed well among both the white and black ***working class***, [*Richard Yeselson*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/opiniontoday?action=click&amp;module=Intentional&amp;pgtype=Article) of Dissent magazine noted. That pattern suggests that the left’s theory of winning elections is wrong, Yeselson added. (   [*I agree*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/opiniontoday?action=click&amp;module=Intentional&amp;pgtype=Article).)

And the turnout surge isn’t limited to loyal Democrats. In Michigan’s Livingston County, a conservative part of the Detroit suburbs, turnout in the Democratic primary soared yesterday. “That surge in turnout, virtually all of it for Biden, includes Republicans and independents voting for him in the Democratic primary — and presumably ready to vote for him in the general” election, said [*William Kristol*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/opiniontoday?action=click&amp;module=Intentional&amp;pgtype=Article), the conservative writer.

There are still two main reasons for caution:

One, Biden is not the preferred candidate of younger voters. In Michigan, Bernie Sanders won voters under 45 by the whopping margin of 64 percent to 32 percent, [*according to exit polls*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/opiniontoday?action=click&amp;module=Intentional&amp;pgtype=Article). In Washington state (where Elizabeth Warren won some early votes), Biden won   [*only 16 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/opiniontoday?action=click&amp;module=Intentional&amp;pgtype=Article) of that age group. It’s possible that some of those younger voters who turned out to vote for Sanders will stay home in November.

[*Ezra Levin*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/opiniontoday?action=click&amp;module=Intentional&amp;pgtype=Article), a co-founder of Indivisible, a progressive group, argued that Biden now had the responsibility of winning over these voters: “Sanders has built the largest grassroots fundraising engine in American history. He’s had the largest rallies. He has the most enthusiastic supporters. He has a lock on young voters. The question now is whether Biden tries to court this grassroots giant.”

The second reason for caution is that there is still a very long time between now and Election Day. Two weeks ago, the economy was roaring along, and Democrats seemed on the verge of nominating a self-identified democratic socialist who had taken [*multiple unpopular positions*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/opiniontoday?action=click&amp;module=Intentional&amp;pgtype=Article). Given how much has changed in the last two weeks, imagine how much can change in the next eight months.

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PHOTO: People lined up to collect ballots to vote in Michigan’s Democratic presidential primary in Detroit on Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Brittany Greeson for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 11, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Texas Republicans Fight For a Democratic Bastion***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63Y2-TR31-DXY4-X42T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1457 words

**Byline:** By Edgar Sandoval

**Body**

The contest to fill a vacant State House seat in South Texas has exposed the vulnerabilities of a Democratic stronghold.

SAN ANTONIO -- For as long as María Rodríguez can remember, the South Side of San Antonio has just about always elected Democrats, Hispanics like herself who emphasized improving public education and access to health care.

But last week, as she walked out of an early polling site where she had cast a ballot in a tightly contested runoff for an open State House seat, Ms. Rodríguez, 55, wondered whether her once solidly Democratic district might flip.

This time, there was a strong chance that the Republican candidate, a Latino who briefly held the seat in 2016 and received the most votes in last month's five-way special election, could emerge the victor and represent Ms. Rodríguez and about 160,000 of her mostly Latino neighbors.

''I'm nervous,'' she said.

The contest for the vacant seat in the 118th District has exposed the vulnerabilities of a traditionally Democratic stronghold, as Republicans make an all-out effort to gain ground with Latino voters in South Texas. It also has tested the progress of a Republican Party that has openly courted those voters, who have cited a range of grievances, from rising crime and faltering infrastructure to feeling abandoned by Democrats.

None of the three Democrats and two Republicans who ran in the special election received a majority of votes, leaving voters with one candidate from each party -- both Latinos who were raised in the district. Early voting began last week, and Election Day is on Nov. 2.

The Republican candidate, John Lujan, a 59-year-old retired firefighter and former sheriff's deputy who now owns an IT firm, has campaigned on a platform of public safety and job creation. His opponent, Frank Ramirez, a 27-year-old former legislative aide, has zeroed in on investments in public education, aging infrastructure and property tax relief.

In the special election, held to replace a Democrat who resigned this year to take a teaching position at a college, Mr. Lujan garnered nearly 42 percent of the vote and Mr. Ramirez captured about 20 percent. The two other Democrats accounted for a combined 30 percent of the 7,075 votes cast. But in the end, a total of 47 more ballots were cast for Republicans -- enough to give the G.O.P. a slim edge.

''It's really anybody's race,'' said Jon Taylor, a political science professor at the University of Texas at San Antonio who has followed the special election closely.

At the three early voting sites across the district, traffic over the past few days has been steady but slow.

Martin Flores, 57, a longtime Republican who voted for Mr. Lujan, said it was time for a Republican to represent a growing conservative swath of Texas. The issues driving him, he said, are rising taxes and a spike in deadly crime that has plagued major cities. (Homicides were up in San Antonio last year, but overall crime was not.)

''I'm confident that every decision he makes,'' Mr. Flores said of Mr. Lujan, ''he's going to listen to the people.''

Diana Espinoza, who is in her 40s and works in human resources, said she recently had a short and pleasant conversation with Mr. Lujan but was not convinced to vote for him. As the mother of a sixth grader, she said she was most concerned in this contest with increasing access to technology at local schools. She worries that a Republican will have different priorities. She also recognizes that Democrats have largely been stymied at the State Capitol by a Republican majority.

A victory by Mr. Ramirez, she said, could help usher in an era of a long-promised blue wave in an increasingly ethnically diverse state.

''I want the Democrat to win,'' Ms. Espinoza said. ''But if Lujan wins, then I want him to do a good job for us. It shouldn't matter what party you are from.''

With this seat critical to the Republican Party's efforts to make inroads in South Texas, Mr. Lujan has the financial backing of the state's Republican establishment, including Gov. Greg Abbott and a top lawmaker. Through late October, Mr. Lujan had raised more than $500,000 in direct and in-kind donations, according to filings with the Texas Ethics Commission. Mr. Ramirez missed the deadline on Monday to file his campaign report, but through September had raised $60,000.

The district, which includes communities along the fast-growing corridors of Interstates 35, 37 and part of Loop 410, a highway that encircles the city, is about 70 percent Hispanic. It is composed of ***working-class*** families, with about a quarter of households making between $25,000 and $50,000 annually and nearly 15 percent of adults having earned a bachelor's degree or higher, according to a state district profile.

Historically, voters in the district have tilted left. In the 2020 election, 56 percent voted for President Biden, while 42 percent supported Donald J. Trump. (Mr. Biden captured 58 percent of the vote in Bexar County, which includes San Antonio.)

But today, Democrats are increasingly alarmed at what appears to be waning support among Latino voters, once a reliable constituency. In recent polls, Mr. Biden's overall approval rating was in the low-to-mid-40s, and about 50 percent among Latino voters.

In South Texas, where there have been some signs that the Republican Party is making headway with the Latino population, conservative operatives said they wanted to see the national polling numbers translate into votes for their candidates. And San Antonio -- a majority Hispanic city -- has long been seen as the gateway to the rest of the region.

Indeed, farther south in the Rio Grande Valley, along the state's border with Mexico, Republicans have made some progress. Although Mr. Biden won Hidalgo County, which includes McAllen, by 17 percentage points last year, it was a considerably closer contest than Hillary Clinton's 40-point victory. In nearby Zapata County, Mr. Trump won by five points.

The decline among progressives in majority Latino enclaves has pushed the G.O.P. to expand its base beyond an overwhelmingly white political coalition, buoying them to challenge Democrats on their turf. The Republican National Committee now runs offices in San Antonio, McAllen and Laredo, another border city, to court more Latino voters.

''Republicans are doing a much better job at outreaching to Latinos,'' said Sharon Navarro, a political science professor at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

Outside an early polling site last week, Mr. Lujan said he appreciated the task and was up for it. He had been here before, having won a special election for the same seat in January 2016 only to lose it in a general election later that year. ''The trick is holding it,'' he said.

Mr. Lujan, the son of a minister and public school principal, said he had focused on issues that San Antonio residents cared about, like border security and promoting small businesses. He often touts the IT consulting firm he founded with a handful of employees in 1999. Today it employs more than 400, he said. As the father of three adopted sons, he also has focused on strengthening the state's foster care system.

Across the district, Mr. Ramirez said the challenge he faced pushed him to keep knocking on doors. As many residents commented on how young he looked, he reminded them that he had immersed himself in government work since graduating from the University of Texas at Austin in 2016. He had served as a legislative director and chief of staff in the 118th District and, more recently, as a zoning and planning director for a San Antonio councilwoman, a role he left in August to run for office.

On Monday afternoon, Emmanuel Alvarez, 21, took his 65-year-old mother, Maria Jasso, a retired factory worker, to a polling site to pick up campaign pamphlets on each candidate.

They had not made up their minds, though Ms. Jasso, who said improving access to health care and fixing cracked roads across much of her neighborhood were top of mind, was leaning toward Mr. Ramirez. Her son, on the other hand, said it might come down to personality. So far, he has agreed with both candidates and their platforms.

''Both have good ideas,'' he said. ''I'm not liberal or conservative. I fall in the middle.'' The question, he said, was whether to cast a ballot for the less experienced politician or someone who had already served once before but could align himself with the state's Republican majority.

''I don't know yet,'' Mr. Alvarez said. ''Let's see who convinces me before Tuesday.''

J. David Goodman contributed reporting from Houston. Kitty Bennett contributed research.J. David Goodman contributed reporting from Houston. Kitty Bennett contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/26/us/texas-state-house-runoff.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/26/us/texas-state-house-runoff.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: John Lujan, top right, a Republican, and Frank Ramirez, above right, a Democrat, are facing each other in a runoff for a seat in the Texas statehouse. The district has mostly voted Democratic in the past, but the state's Republican party has made Latino voters a priority. And G.O.P. leaders might be getting results: In a special election held last month, Mr. Lujan led the way with 42 percent. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 27, 2021

**End of Document**



[***This Special Election Is Testing Republican Efforts to Court Latino Voters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63XY-BPN1-JBG3-62MT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 26, 2021 Tuesday 18:48 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1564 words

**Byline:** Edgar Sandoval

**Highlight:** The contest to fill a vacant State House seat in South Texas has exposed the vulnerabilities of a Democratic stronghold.

**Body**

The contest to fill a vacant State House seat in South Texas has exposed the vulnerabilities of a Democratic stronghold.

SAN ANTONIO — For as long as María Rodríguez can remember, the South Side of San Antonio has just about always elected Democrats, Hispanics like herself who emphasized improving public education and access to health care.

But last week, as she walked out of an early polling site where she had cast a ballot in a tightly contested runoff for an open State House seat, Ms. Rodríguez, 55, wondered whether her once solidly Democratic district might flip.

This time, there was a strong chance that the Republican candidate, a Latino who briefly held the seat in 2016 and received the most votes in last month’s five-way special election, could emerge the victor and represent Ms. Rodríguez and about 160,000 of her mostly Latino neighbors.

“I’m nervous,” she said.

The contest for the vacant seat in the 118th District has exposed the vulnerabilities of a traditionally Democratic stronghold, as Republicans make an all-out effort to gain ground with Latino voters in [*South Texas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/us/texas-principal-critical-race-theory.html). It also has tested the progress of a Republican Party that has openly courted those voters, who have cited a range of grievances, from rising crime and faltering infrastructure to feeling abandoned by Democrats.

None of the three Democrats and two Republicans who ran in the special election received a majority of votes, leaving voters with one candidate from each party — both Latinos who were raised in the district. Early voting began last week, and Election Day is on Nov. 2.

The Republican candidate, [*John Lujan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/us/elections/john-lujan-san-antonio-house.html), a 59-year-old retired firefighter and former sheriff’s deputy who now owns an IT firm, has campaigned on a platform of public safety and job creation. His opponent, Frank Ramirez, a 27-year-old former legislative aide, has zeroed in on investments in public education, aging infrastructure and property tax relief.

In the special election, held to replace a Democrat who resigned this year to take a teaching position at a college, Mr. Lujan garnered nearly 42 percent of the vote and Mr. Ramirez captured about 20 percent. The two other Democrats accounted for a combined 30 percent of the 7,075 [*votes cast.*](https://ballotpedia.org/John_Lujan) But in the end, a total of 47 more ballots were cast for Republicans — enough to give the G.O.P. a slim edge.

“It’s really anybody’s race,” said Jon Taylor, a political science professor at the [*University of Texas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/us/texas-principal-critical-race-theory.html) at San Antonio who has followed the special election closely.

At the three early voting sites across the district, traffic over the past few days has been steady but slow.

Martin Flores, 57, a longtime Republican who voted for Mr. Lujan, said it was time for a Republican to represent a growing conservative swath of [*Texas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/us/texas-principal-critical-race-theory.html). The issues driving him, he said, are rising taxes and [*a spike in deadly crime*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/us/fbi-murders-2020-cities.html) that has plagued major cities. (Homicides were up in San Antonio [*last year,*](https://www.tpr.org/criminal-justice/2021-09-30/san-antonio-is-the-only-big-four-texas-city-to-see-drop-in-crime-according-to-dps-report) but overall crime was not.)

“I’m confident that every decision he makes,” Mr. Flores said of Mr. Lujan, “he’s going to listen to the people.”

Diana Espinoza, who is in her 40s and works in human resources, said she recently had a short and pleasant conversation with Mr. Lujan but was not convinced to vote for him. As the mother of a sixth grader, she said she was most concerned in this contest with increasing access to technology at local schools. She worries that a Republican will have different priorities. She also recognizes that Democrats have largely been stymied at the State Capitol by a Republican majority.

A victory by Mr. Ramirez, she said, could help usher in an era of a long-promised blue wave in an increasingly ethnically diverse state.

“I want the Democrat to win,” Ms. Espinoza said. “But if Lujan wins, then I want him to do a good job for us. It shouldn’t matter what party you are from.”

With this seat critical to the Republican Party’s efforts to make inroads in South Texas, Mr. Lujan has the financial backing of the state’s Republican establishment, including Gov. Greg Abbott and a top lawmaker. Through late October, Mr. Lujan had raised more than $500,000 in direct and in-kind donations, according to filings with the Texas Ethics Commission.

By contrast, as of Oct. 23, Mr. Ramirez had raised about $220,000 in direct and in-kind contributions, including $70,000 from the Texas Organizing Project, a nonprofit that supports diversity in elections, and from Democratic lawmakers, according to his filings. Most of his donations came during the last month, and he has received a greater share from individual donors than Mr. Lujan has.

The district, which includes communities along the fast-growing corridors of Interstates 35, 37 and part of Loop 410, a highway that encircles the city, is about 70 percent Hispanic. It is composed of ***working-class*** families, with about a quarter of households making between $25,000 and $50,000 annually and nearly 15 percent of adults having earned a bachelor’s degree or higher, [*according to a state district profile*](https://wrm.capitol.texas.gov/fyiwebdocs/PDF/house/dist118/profile.pdf).

Historically, voters in the district have tilted left. In the [*2020 election*](https://wrm.capitol.texas.gov/fyiwebdocs/PDF/house/dist118/r8.pdf), 56 percent voted for President Biden, while 42 percent supported Donald J. Trump. (Mr. Biden captured 58 percent of the vote in Bexar County, which includes San Antonio.)

But today, Democrats are increasingly alarmed at what appears to be waning support among Latino voters, once a reliable constituency. In recent polls, Mr. Biden’s overall [*approval rating was in the low-to-mid-40s,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/23/us/politics/biden-approval-ratings.html) and about 50 percent among Latino voters.

In South Texas, where there have been some signs that the Republican Party is making headway with the Latino population, conservative operatives said they wanted to see the national polling numbers translate into votes for their candidates. And San Antonio — a majority Hispanic city — has long been seen as the gateway to the rest of the region.

Indeed, farther south in the Rio Grande Valley, along the state’s border with Mexico, Republicans have made some progress. Although Mr. Biden won Hidalgo County, which includes McAllen, [*by 17 percentage points*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-texas.html) last year, it was a considerably closer contest than Hillary Clinton’s [*40-point victory*](https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/texas). In nearby Zapata County, Mr. Trump [*won by five points*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-president.html).

The decline among progressives in majority Latino enclaves has pushed the G.O.P. to expand its base beyond an overwhelmingly white political coalition, buoying them to challenge Democrats on their turf. The Republican National Committee now runs offices in [*San Antonio*](https://www.ksat.com/news/local/2021/10/18/republican-national-committee-opens-community-center-in-san-antonio-to-attract-more-hispanic-voters/), McAllen and Laredo, another border city, to court more Latino voters.

“Republicans are doing a much better job at outreaching to Latinos,” said Sharon Navarro, a political science professor at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

Outside an early polling site last week, Mr. Lujan said he appreciated the task and was up for it. He had been here before, having won a special election for the same seat in January 2016 only to lose it in a general election later that year. “The trick is holding it,” he said.

Mr. Lujan, the son of a minister and public school principal, said he had focused on issues that San Antonio residents cared about, like border security and promoting small businesses. He often touts the IT consulting firm he founded with a handful of employees in 1999. Today it employs more than 400, he said. As the father of three adopted sons, he also has focused on strengthening the state’s foster care system.

Across the district, Mr. Ramirez said the challenge he faced pushed him to keep knocking on doors. As many residents commented on how young he looked, he reminded them that he had immersed himself in government work since graduating from the University of Texas at Austin in 2016. He had served as a legislative director and chief of staff in the 118th District and, more recently, as a zoning and planning director for a San Antonio councilwoman, a role he left in August to run for office.

On Monday afternoon, Emmanuel Alvarez, 21, took his 65-year-old mother, Maria Jasso, a retired factory worker, to a polling site to pick up campaign pamphlets on each candidate.

They had not made up their minds, though Ms. Jasso, who said improving access to health care and fixing cracked roads across much of her neighborhood were top of mind, was leaning toward Mr. Ramirez. Her son, on the other hand, said it might come down to personality. So far, he has agreed with both candidates and their platforms.

“Both have good ideas,” he said. “I’m not liberal or conservative. I fall in the middle.” The question, he said, was whether to cast a ballot for the less experienced politician or someone who had already served once before but could align himself with the state’s Republican majority.

“I don’t know yet,” Mr. Alvarez said. “Let’s see who convinces me before Tuesday.”

J. David Goodman contributed reporting from Houston. Kitty Bennett contributed research.

J. David Goodman contributed reporting from Houston. Kitty Bennett contributed research.

PHOTOS: John Lujan, top right, a Republican, and Frank Ramirez, above right, a Democrat, are facing each other in a runoff for a seat in the Texas statehouse. The district has mostly voted Democratic in the past, but the state’s Republican party has made Latino voters a priority. And G.O.P. leaders might be getting results: In a special election held last month, Mr. Lujan led the way with 42 percent. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2021

**End of Document**



[***‘Diamond Sweet 16’ Party Leaves 37 Infected and 270 in Quarantine***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:612M-WFY1-DXY4-X0CF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 14, 2020 Wednesday 10:43 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 803 words

**Byline:** Daniel E. Slotnik and Michael Gold

**Highlight:** More than 80 people attended the birthday event, officials said. A Long Island venue was fined $12,000.

**Body**

More than 80 people attended the birthday event, officials said. A Long Island venue was fined $12,000.

The “Diamond Sweet 16 Package” at the Miller Place Inn, an opulent Long Island catering hall, includes options like virgin frozen daiquiris and a make-your-own-s’mores bar.

But those treats are unavailable for now. The inn has closed temporarily and its owners have been fined after one such party there last month left 37 people infected with the coronavirus and forced over 270 into quarantine, officials said.

More than 80 people attended the Sept. 25 party, officials said, well above the 50-person limit imposed by Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo as part of New York’s broader effort to keep the virus at bay.

As a result, Mr. Cuomo said on Wednesday, what was planned as a celebration turned into a so-called super-spreading event.

“They had a Sweet 16 party,” the governor said at a news conference. “How sweet. Yeah, it wasn’t that sweet. Dozens of people from the Sweet 16 party got sick. It just shows you how one event can generate so many cases.”

The party in Miller Place was at least the second large gathering in Suffolk County, a mix of ***working-class*** and affluent communities on eastern Long Island, to flout the state’s restrictions on crowd sizes.

In July, the state opened an investigation after [*more than 2,150 people attended a charity concert in the Hamptons*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/nyregion/hamptons-chainsmokers-concert-social-distancing.html) that featured the D.J. duo the Chainsmokers and [*the chief executive of Goldman Sachs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/nyregion/hamptons-chainsmokers-concert-social-distancing.html) spinning records in his side gig as a D.J.

Officials said on Wednesday that the concert’s promoter, In the Know Experiences, would be fined $20,000 and that the Miller Place Inn’s owners would be fined $12,000 for violating regulations and increasing the risk that the virus would spread.

Donna and Christopher Regina, who own the inn with family members, did not respond to requests for comment. The inn’s website says it is “Long Island’s Best Wedding Venue” and lists the “[*Diamond Sweet 16 Package*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/nyregion/hamptons-chainsmokers-concert-social-distancing.html)” as perfect for a girl turning 16 or celebrating a quinceañera.

“Let us help you make her special day unforgettable,” the website says.

A lawyer for the family, Anthony P. Gallo, said the Reginas had spent around $10,000 on various safety measures to protect patrons during the pandemic.

“They’ve conducted themselves always within the letter of the law, they’ve never had any problems,” Mr. Gallo said, adding, “They’re just beside themselves with the turn of events.”

But Steven Bellone, the Suffolk County executive, said the Department of Consumer Affairs had previously issued the inn’s owners three written warnings that included descriptions of the state guidelines limiting events there to 50 people.

After the party, he said in an interview, the virus rippled through the county, with the rising number of cases forcing one school to close and leading people connected to 34 other schools into isolation or quarantine.

It was Suffolk County’s first major virus outbreak since the spring, Mr. Bellone said. And without the county Health Department’s swift contact-tracing efforts, he said, “the community spread would be out of control.”

As for the Chainsmokers concert, organizers had described it beforehand as a “drive-in music experience,” where guests would sit outside near their parked cars in spaced-out areas to watch the performers in a “safe and controlled environment.”

But video footage that was widely shared on social media showed crowds of people standing close together, with some of them wearing face coverings improperly.

In The Know Experiences declined to comment on either Mr. Cuomo’s remarks or the fine.

The governor also said that town officials in Southampton, where the concert was held, would not be allowed to issue permits for group gatherings without receiving state approval first.

“I’ve spent time talking to the people in the Town of Southampton,” he said. “Frankly, I don’t know what they were thinking.”

Southampton’s town supervisor, Jay Schneiderman, said in an interview that state officials had not provided details about their plan to regulate the town’s events.

“We haven’t seen anything in writing yet to that regard,” he said. “But that would be holding Southampton to a different standard.”

Mr. Cuomo also threatened on Wednesday to withhold state funds from local governments that failed to enforce school closings and other restrictions in areas with high infection rates, although he did not provide details on how he would act on the threat. (Later in the day, he issued [*an executive order*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/27/nyregion/hamptons-chainsmokers-concert-social-distancing.html) authorizing such moves.)

“Hopefully that will motivate them,” he said.

Jesse McKinley contributed reporting.

PHOTO: More than 80 people attended a Sweet 16 party at the Miller Place Inn last month, well above New York State’s 50-person limit, officials said.  (PHOTOGRAPH BY James Carbone for Newsday FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 15, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Hands On***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61V7-XTD1-DXY4-X012-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 24, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 13; NONFICTION

**Length:** 1007 words

**Byline:** By Deborah Needleman

**Body**

CRAFT An American HistoryBy Glenn Adamson

Are historical re-enactors in a faux-colonial village engaging in craft? Are hobbyists working from a D.I.Y. kit purchased from Hobby Lobby? Is the American Federation of Labor a craft organization? Were the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki products of craft? ''Whenever a skilled person makes something with their hands, that's craft,'' according to Glenn Adamson, a scholar and the former director of the Museum of Arts and Design in New York. So, yes, to all of the above.

Adamson's new book, ''Craft: An American History,'' is less an examination of traditions and techniques than a blow-by-blow chronicle of this country through the lens of craft, from the European settlers to the maker movement and so-called craftivists of today. That no one has ever previously attempted this may be because when we bother to think about craft at all, it is usually through a gauzy haze. Yet Adamson manages to discover ''making'' in every aspect of our history, framing it as integral to America's idea of itself as a nation of self-sufficient individualists. There may be no one better suited to this task.

This is, however, no feel-good quilting circle of a book. ''Craft'' aims to reckon with the shameful way we have treated and viewed those who handbuilt the country: Indigenous people, African-Americans, women and the ***working class***. ''Craft'' tracks a legacy of extermination, decimation, oppression, forced assimilation and marginalization. Even on the upside, Adamson argues, when we try to do better by craft and its practitioners through philanthropic support and education, we are often guilty of idealization, appropriation, fetishization, commercialization and exploitation.

[ Read an excerpt from ''Craft.'' ]

The story begins with the colonists surviving on the know-how of Native people -- remarking on their vital manual skills while disdaining them as uncivilized savages lacking in rational intelligence. A false dichotomy takes hold, involving the denigration of making and the elevation of knowing, and it is one that we have carried nearly intact to the present day. We suffer from a Cartesian dualism of mind and body, between intellect and manual competence.

Even before industrialization, which killed craft as the only way of producing the things we need, we seldom valued the meaning or satisfaction that can be derived from skillful manual work. In 1776, in ''The Wealth of Nations,'' Adam Smith advised that ''skill, dexterity and judgment'' must give way to the imperative of efficiency. In a world where time is money, a sticking point for craft is always time.

Adamson offers the example of wampum, the lengths of patterned beadwork masterfully crafted by the Wampanoag in the Northeast, which were simultaneously a medium of communication and a form of currency. The beads were painstakingly fashioned from the shells of the whelks and clams that sustained their makers. Makers worked the shells on a loom strung with plant fiber and finished them with hide or gut. Wampum were decorative, useful and culturally significant. The English, appreciating the value of wampum solely as currency, tried to fashion the beads into American coinage, but found it too difficult and time-consuming. The English naturalist John Lawson explained in 1714 that the Indians could afford to make wampum because they ''are a people that never value their time.''

When Emerson and Thoreau heralded the slow life in nature, believing that material experience was a means to accessing transcendental truths, they merely turned the old dynamic on its head: They embraced artisanal skills as a way of depreciating modern industrial society. Indeed, none of the myriad well-intentioned but ultimately failed craft revivals of the 19th and 20th centuries, from the Arts and Crafts movement to utopian communes, could bridge the gap between craft and capitalism.

Adamson argues that artisanal work can never have a significant impact on the economy (or the environment), as it is never the most efficient way of producing goods and is impossible to scale. Craft still comes down to one person making one thing at a time. Its value is hidden: Woven into a handloomed blanket are human ingenuity, patience, an understanding of materials and a dialogue of give-and-take with those materials. And invisibly present is the handed-down know-how of weavers past. ''Too little value, too much time,'' the criticism that Adamson says settlers leveled against wampum, still holds sway.

But isn't time something we value more than ever? Craft's current revival is happening in part because making is an essential human impulse with which many of us have lost touch. But another driver may be that modern consumer society has grown dissatisfied with using economic efficiency as a basis for appraising time. Two of the most recent of America's many craft revivals are craftivism, an unappealing term for feminist-inflected craft activism that draws on traditional women's work, like the knitted pink pussy hats, and the largely dude-driven maker movement, which hews to pioneer ruggedness. Both utilize craft as a means to change how we view the world, and how we live and behave in it. And this time around, Adamson is hopeful.

What's new is the digital distribution of ideas and goods through social media and e-commerce. Groups of makers can finally claim their own identities and tell their own stories. They can also sell their wares directly, unimpeded by physical location, middlemen or prejudicial practices. This paradigm shift opens up opportunities and provides market access to makers on their own terms, maybe even offering a way to sidestep what Adamson refers to as Smith's ''imperative of efficiency.'' Perhaps, finally, time is on craft's side.Deborah Needleman is a writer, editor and craftsperson in the Hudson Valley. She was previously editor in chief of T: The New York Times Style Magazine.CRAFT An American HistoryBy Glenn AdamsonIllustrated. 387 pp. Bloomsbury. $30.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/books/review/craft-an-american-history-glenn-adamson.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/books/review/craft-an-american-history-glenn-adamson.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A Tewa Hopi potter painting designs on pottery, circa 1900. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EDWARD S. CURTIS/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

**Load-Date:** January 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A Living Painting of Masculinity***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YD0-RG91-JBG3-62V6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 9, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 4; CRITIC'S PICK

**Length:** 640 words

**Byline:** By Gia Kourlas

**Body**

The Belfast artist Oona Doherty portrays ***working-class*** men in her marvelous piece at the 92nd Street Y.

Oona Doherty's entrance would have been better had it been a surprise; it wasn't, but it was still a doozy. This contemporary choreographer and performer from Belfast is astonishing -- not merely raw, as she is often described, but exactingly articulate. She is in possession of a body with as much flexibility as her mind, as was revealed in her arresting exploration of the young men of her hometown.

On Friday, at the start of Ms. Doherty's ''Hope Hunt and the Ascension Into Lazarus,'' spectators huddled around the entrance of the 92nd Street Y in a cold drizzle and waited for a car to pull up to the door. It was a desperate looking thing, with a garbage bag taped over the back window; one of its occupants, Joss Cotter, got out, lit a rolled cigarette and surveyed the crowd with hunched shoulders before walking around to the back and opening the trunk. Out spilled Ms. Doherty.

Dressed in a baggy blue shell jacket and pants, she crumbled and rose from the pavement with a spooky pliancy as Strength NIA's ''Northern Ireland Yes'' played. Once standing, she held her arms out and swayed to the beat before sliding back down to the sidewalk and crawling between spectators. Rising and buckling backward, sniffing and swiping her nose with the occasional head toss, she maintained a gliding, catlike grace.

After she joined Mr. Cotter and the driver to stand in front of the car -- they raised one fist in the air, then the other and then both to lyrics that included, ''God is a Catholic man from Creggan'' -- her mates abandoned her, driving off as Mr. Cotter muttered something about having to ''see a man about a dog.''

Ms. Doherty was crestfallen, but quickly recovered. ''Get into the theater!'' she yelled with stomping feet. We obliged, making our way to the performance space, Buttenweiser Hall, where she continued once we had settled in and she had traded her Adidas for bare feet. In her nuanced exploration of the misunderstood, hapless, posturing male figures of Belfast, Ms. Doherty -- part vaudevillian, part shape-shifter -- used her voice and body to transform herself into multiple others with a cellular-level intensity.

In her all-too-brief run at the Harkness Dance Festival, Ms. Doherty presented her take on masculinity like a living painting, morphing from a figure of swaggering confidence to one of feigning nonchalance. Rage became fear. Sounds gradually turned into words. All the while, Ms. Doherty's body turned into a wave as she rocked from side to side with her expressions both pained and preening.

No movement or sound went astray; clearly, Ms. Doherty's work is choreographed within an inch of its life, but the material is so deeply embedded in her compact, pliable form that it also seems unpremeditated. It's also strangely natural when, say, her leg sweeps in an elegant rond de jambe before she collapses in a heap. Her balance is uncanny as physical tics -- the sniffs and furrowed brow -- take possession of her face.

There are dark moments here, but the work is not entirely about darkness. It says it all in the title: This is a hunt for hope. In the end, the dance transforms again when Ms. Doherty takes off her dark clothes to reveal an all-white ensemble for a final journey in which she transports her body to a place of vulnerability.

After a finger-pointing snarl, she leans back, and suddenly her face, perfectly still, glows as if she were made of wax. Braiding masculinity and femininity, her arms slowly swirl around her undulating torso. Her presence is beyond eerie: She is the most alone person you have ever seen, and you feel it in your bones.

Hope Hunt and the Ascension Into Lazarus

Performed Friday and Saturday at the 92nd Street Y, Manhattan; 92y.org.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/08/arts/dance/oona-doherty.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/08/arts/dance/oona-doherty.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Oona Doherty began her Harkness Dance Festival performance outside the 92nd Street Y, above, and ended it in the theater dressed in white, right. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREA MOHIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2020

**End of Document**



[***What Happens When Your Waiter Can’t Afford Rent***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:636K-YF91-JBG3-6091-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 23, 2021 Friday 09:00 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1283 words

**Byline:** Kaya Laterman

**Highlight:** Many towns in rural New York are bustling with city visitors, pushing up rental costs and pushing out workers.

**Body**

Many towns in rural New York are bustling with city visitors, pushing up rental costs and pushing out workers.

If LaToya Flood had her way, she would hire an additional five to seven employees at [*Ruby Mae Soul Food Restaurant*](https://www.rubymaesoul.com/), which she has operated for three years in Kingston, N.Y. With her business open now just on Fridays and Saturdays, Ms. Flood and her sole employee, her mother, prepare all week for what could be a thriving, full-time business.

But finding minimum wage workers in Ulster County has become nearly impossible, she said.

Like many parts of the country, including the city and the [*Hamptons*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/26/nyregion/the-hamptons-seasonal-workers.html), Ulster County is facing an employment crisis. Since the pandemic, some workers have moved, while others have reassessed their lives and have found other opportunities. But the problem is driven, in part, by a lack of [*affordable housing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/01/us/politics/ballot-initiatives-voters-voting.html).

Ms. Flood said that when she first moved to Poughkeepsie, N.Y., and then to Kingston almost 11 years ago from the Bronx, it was easy to find two-bedroom rental homes for less than $850 a month. But available housing has been dwindling in the county. When the pandemic hit, city dwellers bought up houses or moved into what used to be their second homes, further diminishing availability.

Now a two-bedroom rental in the county averages $1,439 per month, an 11 percent increase from the previous year, according to the county’s [*rental housing survey*](https://ulstercountyny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/planning/2020_Rental_Housing_Report.pdf).

“It’s difficult to roll up your sleeves and work hard for minimum wage and feel like you’re suffocating because you can’t afford rent,” Ms. Flood said. “So now I’m at a point where I can’t expand my business and am at a loss of what I’m supposed to do next.”

[*Studies*](https://www.nahb.org/News-and-Economics/Industry-News/Press-Releases/2020/04/What-Building-1000-Homes-Means-to-the-US-Economy) have shown that adding more housing leads to the creation of jobs, but current high building and labor costs, among other things, have led builders nationwide to focus on high-end homes. Construction is at a five-decade [*low*](http://www.freddiemac.com/perspectives/sam_khater/20210415_single_family_shortage.page) on starter homes, according to Freddie Mac.

Adding to the problem of supply are the homeowners who have opted to rent out their extra rooms or second homes to vacationers instead of to long-term tenants. In Ulster County, slightly over 2,000 rooms and homes were listed as short-term rentals in May, according to [*AirDNA*](https://www.airdna.co/), a vacation rental data firm. These homeowners averaged $236 in revenue per night’s rental, so even if the money netted was half of that figure, it’s a profit margin that is too hard to resist.

This coincides with a low vacancy rate for long-term rentals in the county, which was just shy of 2 percent in 2020, according to the rental housing survey. (Housing experts say a rate below 5 percent restricts tenant choice and mobility and gives landlords pricing power.) There were only 180 rental units advertised between January and October 2020, down from 269 units the previous year.

A desperate need for infrastructural improvements in rural towns and cities — more populous than ever because of the pandemic — has posed problems for developers. Patrick K. Ryan, Ulster’s county executive, says that courting developers of affordable housing is difficult when there aren’t enough sewer and water lines to begin with.

“It’s been hard to hear about all the potential growth the county could be experiencing because of the lack of infrastructure and therefore housing,” Mr. Ryan said. “But what’s worse is when you hear about the nurses and grocery store clerks, or those who got us through the pandemic, who are anxiety-ridden because they can’t afford to live in the community they just served.”

Throughout Ulster County, community meetings are filled with locals calling for a fix. After months of debate, the Town of Woodstock this week approved a nine-month moratorium on the creation of new lodging, including short-term rentals, which pits a neighbor trying to earn extra money against others being priced out of the community.

“Housing is the No. 1 issue,” said Mr. Ryan, adding that he and other officials are trying to fast-track affordable housing programs. The Kingston City Land Bank has been fixing up long-vacant housing, there are plans to [*transform an empty county jail*](https://ulstercountyny.gov/news/executive/plans-develop-housing-site-former-county-jail-golden-hill-move-ahead) into units for seniors and others, and a tiny-home initiative is also underway. Zoning codes are being reviewed in many towns and villages, and Mr. Ryan said there was a push for quick authorization to build accessory dwelling units, like small cottages or basement apartments.

In light of the affordable housing crunch, many business owners have been forced to rethink how to run their businesses. Tom Smiley, the chief executive of the [*Mohonk Mountain House*](https://www.mohonk.com/), a 250-plus-room resort in New Paltz, cut the availability of hotel rooms and services by a third this year because he couldn’t find enough workers. In a normal year, Mr. Smiley hires about 750 employees. This year, he is down to about 630.

For the first time since his family started the business in 1869, Mr. Smiley asked his marketing director to focus on staff recruitment, and not on guest promotions. He spent extra money to advertise available jobs on the radio and billboard space on Route 299 in New Paltz.

Some employees were able to secure cheap lodging at the hotel’s worker dorms, but the number of rooms was cut to 45 from about 180, since the pandemic made it necessary to provide private bathrooms instead of shared facilities.

Mr. Smiley said he had been on the hunt for federal and state incentives that would help him build more dorm space, but has had little luck.

“I have employees that say they don’t know how much longer they can work here as they struggle to find a place to live,” he said. “So now I also worry about employee retention.”

Stew Meyers, a founder of [*Exago Inc*](https://exagobi.com/)., a software company in Kingston, wonders how his young work force (average age, 29) will be able to keep living in and near Kingston if home prices and rents keep climbing.

“I’ve been focusing on hiring locally to grow a competitive business here, but if my employees say they can’t afford to live here and they all suddenly ask me for an increase in salary, I would be stuck,” Mr. Meyers said.

Housing activists are warning about the effects of gentrification, which has been [*happening*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/07/nyregion/hudson-river-valley-draws-brooklynites.html) for at least a decade, and the likelihood of a spike in homelessness among the ***working class***. There have been reports of some people who were pushed out of their homes and are now sleeping in their cars, often in the local train station’s parking lot.

Rashida Tyler, a co-founder of the [*Ulster County Coalition for Housing Justice*](https://ucchj.squarespace.com/) and the founder of the [*Real Kingston Tenants Union*](https://www.facebook.com/TheRealKTU), said she had been flooded with calls and emails from people asking for her help, which started before the pandemic because of existing economic inequalities in the area involving poorer communities of color. As a third-generation Kingstonian, Ms. Tyler said she used to be able to connect locals in need of affordable housing to a variety of generous landlords. “But I haven’t been able to help anyone in months, as all my resources have dried up,” she said.

The organization, among other things, has asked local legislators to calculate affordable rents using the area’s average hourly wage, currently [*$13.33*](https://www.dailyfreeman.com/local-news/woodstock-considers-help-from-county-on-housing-shortage/article_713fe7b4-9319-11eb-a8d4-3325413b8105.html), instead of the area’s median income, especially now as more affluent New Yorkers have moved into the county.

“When housing prices are too high, it puts too much pressure and makes it harder for people to remain in their community,” Mr. Meyers said. “I need and want my employees to stay here, but what happens when they can’t?”

PHOTOS: Top, LaToya Flood, who owns a restaurant in Kingston. Above from left: Tom Smiley, chief executive of Mohonk Mountain House in New Paltz; and Stew Meyers, who owns a software company in Kingston. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SASHA MASLOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Dianne Morales Faced a Campaign Uprising. Will It Matter to Voters?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62W6-X7C1-JBG3-60X8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 2562 words

**Byline:** Jazmine Hughes

**Highlight:** Ms. Morales is running for New York City mayor on a platform of tackling inequality and shifting resources away from policing. But her campaign has been marred by defections and dysfunction.

**Body**

Dianne Morales Faced a Campaign Uprising. Will It Matter to Voters?

The New York City [*mayoral race*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) is one of the most consequential political contests in a generation, with immense challenges awaiting the winner. This is the eighth in a series of profiles of [*the major candidates*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race).

[Live [*N.Y.C. mayoral race primary results*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race).]

Dianne Morales arrived at a racial justice protest in April, as she had done many times before. This one, however, was different: she was still a Black woman, a mother, an activist — but now, she had become well-known as a mayoral candidate, too.

She was a familiar sight at the Barclays Center, hugging friends and greeting supporters, while a handful of aides flanked her. One speaker warned that the protest was not a “campaign stop.” So Ms. Morales asked a campaign staffer, outfitted in a loud purple T-shirt emblazoned with “DIANNE MORALES FOR N.Y.C. MAYOR,” to turn the shirt inside out.

“I don’t want this to be political — this isn’t just a moment for us,” she said that evening.

From the beginning of her campaign for mayor, Ms. Morales set out to establish herself as the activist-candidate-next-door, the person riding the bus instead of advertising on the side of it. Her long-shot candidacy sought to tap into the zeitgeist of last summer, when the pandemic and protests against police brutality shined a light on New York’s stark racial and economic inequities.

But in recent weeks, Ms. Morales’s campaign has been stalled by [*its own dysfunction*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race). Two high-level staffers resigned following staff misconduct and remaining employees moved to unionize, later going on strike. More than 45 employees were fired, including 40 on Wednesday, [*according to a tweet from a union*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) representing staff members for the campaign. At least four political groups, including the Working Families Party, have rescinded their endorsements, donations slowed to a crawl and her senior adviser has joined a rival campaign.

Over the weekend, [*Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez endorsed Maya Wiley*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race), Ms. Morales’s ideologically closest opponent. The endorsement was the most significant sign that progressive leaders see Ms. Wiley as their last, best hope to prevent a more centrist candidate from becoming mayor.

Ms. Morales, who staked a claim to the “inherently radical” nature of her campaign, is now struggling to explain why her own staff has abandoned her weeks before the June 22 primary and why one of the most prominent left-wing leaders in the country is not supporting her.

Still, she is marching on, holding campaign events and filming an ad in the wake of the walkout. She addressed the accusations last week during a mayoral debate, highlighting her decades of experience as a manager of the operations and staffs of large nonprofits and stressing that she had acted quickly to address personnel concerns.

“We responded, we addressed it and we are moving on, moving forward on this campaign, and I’m looking forward to that,” she said.

Her career path, largely in education and nonprofits, stands out in a field of lawyers, politicians and businessmen. Her background — ***working class***, Afro-Latina, first-generation college graduate — has helped her appeal to traditionally underrepresented groups. And her campaign, with the most left-leaning platform in the race, has drawn in supporters who believed she would eschew politics as usual.

‘She may compromise, but she doesn’t lose’

A native of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, Ms. Morales, 53, was raised by Puerto Rico-born parents. Her mother worked as an office manager for a union, and her father as a building manager. Finances were so tight that Ms. Morales shared a bed with her grandmother until she left for college.

She attended Stuyvesant High School, where one of her teachers was the Pulitzer Prize-winning author Frank McCourt, and Dartmouth College. Ms. Morales has said that she was sexually assaulted during her first week on campus, and she left Dartmouth at the end of [*her freshman year*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race), eventually graduating from Stony Brook University, on Long Island. After college, she worked as a waitress and a special-education teacher; she later received master’s degrees, in social administration and education administration, from Columbia and Harvard.

Ms. Morales then spent two years at the city’s Department of Education, under Michael Bloomberg, as chief of operations and implementation in the Office of Youth Development. She held leadership positions at various nonprofits like The Door, a youth development organization, and Phipps Neighborhoods, the social services arm of Phipps Houses, a housing development group, where she served as chief executive for a decade before filing to run for mayor.

She raised her two children in Brooklyn; both graduated from public schools. Ms. Morales has been transparent about struggles her family has faced: her son, 22, was punched by a police officer at a protest, her daughter, 20, was sexually assaulted, and Ms. Morales had to sue the D.O.E. for what she said was a lack of services provided for her daughter’s learning disability. The city provided the services Ms. Morales requested after six years. In the interim, she placed her daughter in a private school.

“There’s a fierceness about her, and you want that on your side,” said Lutonya Russell-Humes, a professor and longtime friend of Ms. Morales. “She just doesn’t lose. She may compromise, but she doesn’t lose.”

She has talked about how after a career in advocacy work, she wanted to tackle inequity in a bigger, broader way. So in 2019, she filed to run for mayor. Ms. Morales said she was moved to act in part by her disappointment over Donald J. Trump’s victory in the 2016 election, and she pledged to run a campaign that would be heavy on ethics, respect and dignity.

She officially kicked off her campaign in November 2020, amid months of heavy involvement in a mutual aid group in Bedford-Stuyvesant, where she coordinated food distribution efforts, organized a community fund-raiser, and later arranged for vaccine appointments.

As a candidate, Ms. Morales has advocated for rent relief, hazard pay and the release of vulnerable people from Rikers Island. Her staff grew from about a dozen to nearly 100 aides this spring, as Ms. Morales continued to push her central proposal: cutting $3 billion from the police budget, which she says would ultimately lead to greater protection of New Yorkers, especially Black and Latino residents.

Facing the progressive paradox

Almost immediately, Ms. Morales faced the same paradox that has confronted politicians and activists in the progressive left at large: Members of the communities they say they speak for — especially Black and brown New Yorkers — do not always agree with the agendas they propose.

Last year, [*many Black and Latino council members*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) were hesitant to vote yes on a proposal that included, among other things, a pledge to cut $1 billion from the N.Y.P.D., worried that shrinking the police force would adversely affect underserved neighborhoods already marred by violence. Several Black council members vehemently opposed the proposed cut, calling the movement “political gentrification” or likening it to “colonization.”

A recent NY1/Ipsos poll found that [*72 percent of likely Democratic primary voters supported an increased police presence*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race), following an uptick in high-profile incidents of violent crime. Ms. Morales said that many constituents she has spoken to wanted more access to resources and community programs, services she said could be funded by cuts to the police department’s budget.

Her plan for her first 100 days in office includes a citywide rent moratorium for individuals and small businesses, ending the N.Y.P.D.’s relationship with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and providing immediate housing, through hotels and city-leased properties, for homeless people.

The funding for her policies is largely contingent on increasing taxes on wealthy New Yorkers, and reimagining the city’s budget, cutting bloat and overspending.

“I don’t think she identifies as a socialist, but a lot of socialists really like Dianne,” State Senator Jabari Brisport said in March, around the time he endorsed Ms. Morales.

Still, Ms. Morales has battled questions of ideological consistency among activists on the left. She supported charter schools, which many progressives believe exacerbate inequality, as recently as last year. And an [*old interview*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) in which she admitted to voting for Governor Andrew M. Cuomo in the 2018 Democratic primary for governor instead of his progressive challenger, Cynthia Nixon, made waves.

“I’m one of those people that was at the point of feeling like the government wasn’t having an impact on my life on a day-to-day basis, and I went with the familiar,” she said in an interview with The New York Times. “It’s definitely not something I feel great about.”

She’s also faced plenty of scrutiny around her term as the chief executive of Phipps Neighborhoods: Tenant activists deemed its umbrella organization, Phipps Houses, one of the [*worst evictors*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) in New York City in 2018 and 2019. (A Phipps spokesperson said the organization followed through with evictions on less than 1 percent of its tenants each year.)

She emphasized the separation between the development group and the organization she led. “I’m very deeply proud of the work I did,” she said in an interview. “But it’s also true that Phipps Houses is a serious evictor. Those two things are true at the same time.”

In addition to concerns about Phipps’ reputation, Ms. Morales’s reported take-home pay, nearly $350,000 in 2018, was an eye-popping figure for a candidate who has strongly emphasized her ***working-class*** identity, though even as chief executive, Ms. Morales was not the highest paid employee at the organization — filings show that at least three men earned more than she did.

“I’m not going to apologize for making a decent living and being able to provide for my family,” Ms. Morales said. Since she stepped down from that position in January 2020, she says, she has not collected a salary.

A leftist candidate in a liberal town

Running for major office as a leftist is no easy feat, even in a town as overwhelmingly Democratic as New York City. As last summer’s uproar over police brutality, social justice and inequality began to cool, polls mostly placed Ms. Morales in the single-digits, despite some indications that voters were looking for a [*progressive candidate*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race).

She became increasingly focused on capturing voters who felt either excluded by or disappointed with their current representation: people on the front lines of protests and the pandemic.

“It’s surprising to me, given what the appetite felt like a year ago,” Ms. Morales said. “It felt like we were ready for a little bit more of rebel revolution. And now it feels kind of like, we’re like, ‘OK, that’s nice.’”

Gabe Tobias, manager of Our City, a super PAC that supports progressive candidates, pointed to the recent elections of Mr. Brisport and Representative Jamaal Bowman as proof that left-leaning candidates can win. “People in New York are open to voting for people on the left if they like the candidate,” he said. “But the candidates aren’t rallying people.”

Still, Ms. Morales had a devoted, even if small, following that she thought she could grow. Fervent supporters defended her when [*an investigation*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) by The City last month revealed that in 2002, Ms. Morales paid a $300 bribe to a corrupt water inspector to erase a $12,000-plus water meter bill and then lied twice to city investigators.

She was working as a senior employee at the Department of Education at the time, and investigators recommended that she be fired. Instead, Ms. Morales resigned. The water bill turned out to have been fraudulently inflated, and the inspector was later convicted of misconduct.

Ms. Morales sought to turn the negative press into a moment that, once again, reinforced her theme of being an ordinary New Yorker. In [*a statement,*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) she cast herself as a victim, and emphasized how many people were vulnerable to similar scams: “When I say I know what it means to be a New Yorker, I mean it.”

The day after her statement appeared was her best fund-raising day on record: she received over $50,000 from 1,225 people.

Then, later in May, Whitney Hu, Ms. Morales’s campaign manager, and Ifeoma Ike, her senior adviser, resigned to protest what they called weeks of inaction regarding two staff members accused of discrimination and sexual harassment. (Ms. Hu and Ms. Ike did not respond to requests for comment; [*Ms. Ike has since joined Ms. Wiley’s campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race).) The two accused staff members have since been terminated. Allegations of poor management, discrimination, lack of pay and health care and [*a hostile work environment*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) had plagued the campaign for weeks.

Some of her staff members said they felt she was not living up to the lofty ideals she espoused on the campaign trail: A candidate who immediately called for the resignations of Mr. Cuomo and Scott M. Stringer, the city comptroller and mayoral candidate, over allegations of sexual misconduct, was now accused of not addressing it among her own staff.

Many of the remaining members of the staff moved to unionize, striking after Ms. Morales fired four employees associated with the organizing effort and did not provide a reason.

Ms. Morales said she could not agree to many of the union’s demands, some of which — such as for workers to be paid severance after the campaign’s end — she contended violated campaign finance laws. (The Campaign Finance Board handbook disputes this.)

“I’m supportive of the organizing, I’m supportive of folks making good trouble, but I can’t actually tolerate disruptive, undermining behavior, and I think that is an issue that we have to deal with,” she said.

But a week later, after her repeated attempts to bargain with the union were denied, she fired the dozens of employees. “We have reached a point where we can no longer risk possible liability by continuing to pay staff with public funds,” she said in a statement.

The fallout has been particularly damaging for Ms. Morales, whose progressive base of supporters may be less likely to forgive what they see as ethical transgressions.

“Was there anything that could’ve been done differently? I guess so,” said Peter Ragone, a political adviser who has worked on more than two dozen campaigns. “No candidate or their advisers has ever had to manage their way through something like this, so of course it’s a mess,” he added.

But Ms. Morales has embraced the tension within her campaign. In a recent interview with NY1 about the unionization effort, she said: “It’s a beautiful and messy thing.”

PHOTOS: Running for mayor of New York, Dianne Morales has faced ideological questions from the left. (A1); Dianne Morales dancing with a little supporter in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. She plans to pay for her policies, in part, with higher taxes on wealthy New Yorkers. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES); From left, Ms. Morales with her son Benjamin at home in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn; Nia Evans, one of the organizers of a campaign staff union, speaking at a union rally last month; Ms. Morales, who vowed an operation heavy on ethics, respect and dignity, on the campaign trail at a barber shop in Sunset Park. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES; ANNA WATTS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A16)

**Load-Date:** June 23, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Woman’s Search for Her Birth Parents Leads to a Story of Murder***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625P-5KP1-JBG3-61K7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 9, 2021 Tuesday 19:08 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1040 words

**Byline:** Maria Cramer

**Highlight:** Kathy Gillcrist said a DNA test she took in 2017 revealed that her father may have been William Bradford Bishop Jr., a fugitive suspected of killing his wife, mother and three sons in 1976.

**Body**

Kathy Gillcrist said a DNA test she took in 2017 revealed that her father may have been William Bradford Bishop Jr., a fugitive suspected of killing his wife, mother and three sons in 1976.

In 2017, Kathy Gillcrist, newly retired from her job as a high school teacher, was wondering what she would do next.

She had always known she was adopted but had never felt a strong desire to learn about her birth parents. But curiosity and a need to fill her free time overcame that ambivalence.

She took a DNA test, the first step of a genealogical journey that led her to a stunning discovery: Her father was most likely William Bradford Bishop Jr., who vanished in 1976 after bludgeoning his family to death with a sledgehammer, law enforcement officials believe.

“It just was surreal,” Ms. Gillcrist, 63, said on Tuesday. “It still is surreal.”

What began as a casual search through 23andMe, a DNA testing company, led Ms. Gillcrist down a rabbit hole in which she discovered numerous cousins and half-siblings on her biological mother’s side, leading her to reflect on how her own strong and driven personality may have been inherited from a man [*on the F.B.I.’s most wanted list*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/well-known-murder-suspect-from-bethesda-added-to-fbis-most-wanted-list/2014/04/10/ce2eb390-c0a5-11e3-b195-dd0c1174052c_story.html?itid=lk_inline_manual_5).

The search has also resurrected public interest in a horrifying case that the authorities have been unable to solve.

Ms. Gillcrist, who lives in Carolina Shores, N.C., published a [*book*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/well-known-murder-suspect-from-bethesda-added-to-fbis-most-wanted-list/2014/04/10/ce2eb390-c0a5-11e3-b195-dd0c1174052c_story.html?itid=lk_inline_manual_5) about the experience last November and has asked the F.B.I. to let her compare her DNA to Mr. Bishop’s so she can confirm that she is his daughter. Her request was denied.

In a statement on Tuesday, the F.B.I. said that its DNA records were confidential and “restricted to criminal justice agencies for law enforcement identification purposes.”

On March 1, 1976, Mr. Bishop, 39, left his office at the State Department and bought a large hammer on the way to his home in Bethesda, Md., where, according to the F.B.I., he beat his wife, his mother and his three sons to death. The boys were 5, 10 and 14 years old, according to the bureau, which has not described a motive for the killings.

Mr. Bishop drove the battered bodies six hours south and left them burning in a shallow grave in North Carolina, according to the F.B.I.’s reconstruction of the crime. The abandoned, blood-soaked car was discovered hundreds of miles away in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, near Gatlinburg, Tenn.

Then Mr. Bishop disappeared. There were reported sightings of him in Stockholm and Sorrento, Italy, later in the 1970s, but the F.B.I. never tracked him down.

In October 2014, the F.B.I. [*exhumed the body of a John Doe with a striking resemblance to Mr. Bishop*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/well-known-murder-suspect-from-bethesda-added-to-fbis-most-wanted-list/2014/04/10/ce2eb390-c0a5-11e3-b195-dd0c1174052c_story.html?itid=lk_inline_manual_5) who had been killed by a car in 1981 and buried in a pauper’s grave in Alabama.

However, a DNA test determined that the John Doe was not Mr. Bishop.

Mr. Bishop, who had majored in American studies at Yale University and received a master’s degree in Italian from Middlebury College in Vermont, also spoke French, Spanish and Serbo-Croatian, [*according to his F.B.I. profile*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/well-known-murder-suspect-from-bethesda-added-to-fbis-most-wanted-list/2014/04/10/ce2eb390-c0a5-11e3-b195-dd0c1174052c_story.html?itid=lk_inline_manual_5). Officials described him as an avid reader, expert camper and longtime insomniac who may have been receiving psychiatric care.

“Bishop was described as intense and self-absorbed, prone to violent outbursts, and preferred a neat and orderly environment,” the profile says.

Ms. Gillcrist, who was born in 1957, said she believed Mr. Bishop and her mother must have met at a party or bar while he was in college.

“I don’t know whether my birth father knew anything about me,” she said.

Her birth mother identified another man on the birth certificate, Ms. Gillcrist said. She has not revealed her birth mother’s identity because she said she wanted to protect the woman’s other children.

Ms. Gillcrist was adopted by a couple from Stoughton, Mass., who had previously adopted another child, a boy.

As a child, Ms. Gillcrist said, she was dramatic and dreamed of becoming a child star like Shirley Temple. Her disposition was in stark contrast with that of her ***working-class*** parents, who were quiet and humble, she said.

She studied theater at Boston University and eventually became a teacher. She married and had two daughters of her own.

When she took the DNA test in 2017, she found a third cousin, Susan Gillmor, who lived in Portland, Me.

Ms. Gillmor, 71, was an amateur genealogist who helped other adopted children track down their birth parents. She was thrilled to help Ms. Gillcrist, who took a test through [*Ancestry.com*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/well-known-murder-suspect-from-bethesda-added-to-fbis-most-wanted-list/2014/04/10/ce2eb390-c0a5-11e3-b195-dd0c1174052c_story.html?itid=lk_inline_manual_5)to find more relatives.

Ms. Gillmor created multiple family trees and found that one name, St. Germain, kept coming up. Then she found another name: Corder, who married a Bishop in the late 1800s. As she kept researching, she learned of a William Bradford Bishop Sr. who married Lobelia Amaryllis St. Germain. They had one son: William Bradford Bishop Jr.

Ms. Gillmor said she typed the name into Facebook and found the F.B.I. picture of Mr. Bishop.

“I just sat there stunned,” Ms. Gillmor said. “I’m used to finding encyclopedia salesmen. This is the quintessential worst fear of adoptees.”

Ms. Gillmor said she could not find evidence that Mr. Bishop had any other children besides Ms. Gillcrist and his three sons.

Ms. Gillcrist said she tried not to think about them.

“I can’t go there,” she said. “It’s just too heinous for me to imagine.”

After the story was [*reported by WECT News 6*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/well-known-murder-suspect-from-bethesda-added-to-fbis-most-wanted-list/2014/04/10/ce2eb390-c0a5-11e3-b195-dd0c1174052c_story.html?itid=lk_inline_manual_5) last week, Ms. Gillcrist said she began hearing from people connected to the investigation, including the wife and children of the forest ranger who discovered the bodies.

“That traumatized him for the rest of his life,” she said.

Ms. Gillcrist said she has been struck by her physical resemblance to Mr. Bishop, whose nose and mouth appear to be identical to her own. Like Mr. Bishop, she has experienced insomnia and anxiety. She said she believes her flair for the dramatic and her attraction to chaos are qualities that might have come from him.

Ms. Gillcrist said she would be open to meeting Mr. Bishop, who would now be 84, but only under certain circumstances.

“In a supervised setting,” she said. “Do I want him to knock on my door? No, thank you.”

PHOTO: With the help of an amateur genealogist and DNA testing, Kathy Gillcrist of North Carolina discovered a network of relatives and a family destroyed by a brutal crime. (PHOTOGRAPH BY WECT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Past Tense***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61FT-C2G1-DXY4-X0BB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 6, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 31; FICTION

**Length:** 868 words

**Byline:** By J. Ryan Stradal

**Body**

THE END OF THE DAYBy Bill Clegg

In Bill Clegg's magnificent debut novel, ''Did You Ever Have a Family?,'' a diverse group of people, united only by their fleeting connection with the central character, June Reid, stitch together their subjective and incomplete accounts of her life in the wake of an unspeakable trauma. One character in particular, Lydia, admits, ''The truth was something she had hidden or bent all her adult life, and she had suffered and caused others to suffer because of it.''

Clegg's equally remarkable second novel, ''The End of the Day,'' employs a similar notion as a load-bearing wall for the interiority of his characters. However, in this case, unspoken truths carry with them a feeling of menace.

On the surface, ''The End of the Day'' replicates features of its predecessor. Once again, the setting is the fictional town of Wells, Conn., and characters alternate points of view to fill in gaps in one another's accounts. But this time they tend to undermine each other, for good reason -- Clegg's new cast isn't seeking revelation, but pointedly avoiding it. The characters are ignorant of key events that shaped their lives and, while one could argue whether they're better or worse for this, they do come to know devastating secrets.

[ Read an excerpt from ''The End of the Day.'' ]

The first person we meet is the wealthy heiress Dana Goss, the never-married, childless end of her family line, on a mission to show up uninvited at the home of a former friend she hasn't seen in almost half a century. That unlikely friend, a weary, ***working-class*** woman named Jackie, struggles through a rocky marriage to her high school sweetheart. She supported her kids, and later grandkids, with modest resources. The truth Dana seems desperate to reveal is, for Jackie, unnecessary, if not pointlessly destructive, and whether and how Dana will force it upon her anyway is one of the most brilliant tensions in their already heightened dynamic.

This relationship alone would be enough to showcase Clegg's deft handling of class division and privilege, but then he adds a third prominent character: Lupita Lopez, the abused daughter of the Goss family's groundskeeper. Lupita is about the same age as Dana and Jackie, but for much of her childhood, occupies the same world only geographically. From her torturous bus rides to elementary school, where she's as plagued by Jackie's silence as she is by the open racism of a local policeman's daughter, to her teenage years of alienation, envy and agony, any pleasure she captures seems to be fleeting or provisional. Describing a brief, passionate tryst with a local boy, Lupita says, ''She would think back on this hour with him all the rest of her life and remember it as the happiest, most exquisitely perfect and the most misleading.''

In this sense, anyway, Lupita is aligned with her peers. Her account of heartbreaking impermanence echoes two of their observations -- one that Jackie makes about her first year of marriage, and one that Dana makes while reconsidering the compromised happiness of a prominent ancestor. (''You got what you wanted, even if it didn't last for very long,'' Dana thinks, with newfound respect.) Now that Jackie has moved past the ''short, happy period where she only wanted what she had,'' she's failed -- refused perhaps -- to enable a more sustainably happy life. As the lingering memories of that brief, perfect time mock her, Jackie is more than willing to leave the past undisturbed.

Lupita, already a world away from these women when we first meet her, is also loath to accept overtures from anyone connected to her past. The fact of her remoteness soon becomes a comfort, a kind of happy ending told in reverse.

Another important character is Hap, a middle-aged journalist in Philadelphia who has a dying father and a newborn baby, whose connection to the three women is too deliciously plotted to be hinted at. At first, Hap occupies a different realm altogether. He's a man racked with regret, puzzled by what he knows of his family history, willing to upset his life to discover secrets of the past.

As Hap's searching draws his life closer to the women, he comes to share their dilemma: What is the price of disturbing old secrets? Who benefits most from silence? ''You know nothing,'' one character claims near the end, not without envy and wonder. For the beautifully complex characters who populate ''The End of the Day,'' whom or what the truth actually sets free is richly called into question.

With detail and empathy, Clegg is particularly effective at describing the subtleties of relationships. His work is political without being didactic or dogmatic; and, especially in his descriptions of Hap's life, he illustrates the elusiveness of the American dream. In a novel where there are only a few villains, the past is the ultimate antagonist, the memories of others a great army at the gates. Ultimately, there's no old order to be restored -- and, for these four characters, that revelation alone may be a victory.J. Ryan Stradal is the author of ''Kitchens of the Great Midwest'' and ''The Lager Queen of Minnesota.''THE END OF THE DAYBy Bill Clegg320 pp. Scout Press. $28.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/29/books/review/bill-clegg-the-end-of-the-day.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/29/books/review/bill-clegg-the-end-of-the-day.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Bill Clegg (PHOTOGRAPH BY VAN SCOTT-CLEGG)

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[***Ida Delivered New Blow To Jazz Scene***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63JV-6W81-JBG3-60CH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1405 words

**Byline:** By Giovanni Russonello

**Body**

A few historic jazz sites were damaged in the storm. But the bigger blows struck artists and clubs struggling to get back to business after Covid-19 shutdowns.

When Hurricane Ida swept through New Orleans late last month, it took a piece of history with it. The Karnofsky Tailor Shop and Residence, a decrepit red brick building that had served as a kind of second home for Louis Armstrong during his boyhood in the early 1900s, was reduced to rubble.

At the Little Gem Saloon next door, where some of the first jazz gigs were played, a three-story-tall mural paying homage to the pioneering cornetist Buddy Bolden was also ruined.

Most of the city's active music venues fared far better, suffering minor roof and water damage. But the storm was only the latest in a series of blows to the people and places that make up the jazz scene, in a city that stakes its identity on live music.

''We've been without work for over 18 months now,'' Big Sam Williams, a trombonist and bandleader, said in a phone interview from his home in the Gentilly neighborhood. ''It's a struggle and we're just barely making it.''

Doug Trager, who manages the Maple Leaf Bar in the Carrollton neighborhood, said that after 446 days of shutdown because of Covid-19, ''we were just getting going'' again before Ida hit. Now that the storm has created another setback, he said, ''we'll just try to keep waiting it out.''

It has now been a year and a half since the pandemic first prompted a citywide moratorium on indoor performances. On Aug. 16, the city imposed a mandate requiring all patrons at bars and clubs to be vaccinated or recently tested for Covid-19, seeming to open the door to a new phase of reopening.

But as the Delta variant surged, the city's two major jazz festivals, the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival and French Quarter Fest, both already pushed back from their usual springtime schedule, were called off. That meant that, for the second year in a row, musicians would have to do without the most active period of their work year, when hordes of tourists arrive for the festivals and spillover gigs at clubs often provide enough work for area performers to pay the rent for months.

A week and a half after the storm, many in the city's live-music business say they will not be resting easy, even after things come back online.

In interviews, local advocates said that zoning laws had long made small venue operators' lives difficult, and that neighborhood clubs have run into needless red tape during the pandemic as the city has sometimes enforced strict permitting regulations around outdoor entertainment.

''They're counting on the continued presence of the culture bearers and the musicians, and they're mistaken this time,'' said Ashlye Keaton, a co-founder of the Ella Project, which provides legal assistance to and agitates on behalf of New Orleans artists. ''The storm, coupled with Covid, has brought musicians to their knees.''

While some venues have survived since March 2020 with substantial help from federal grants, including the $16 billion Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program, other small and vulnerable clubs, particularly those nestled in the city's ***working-class*** neighborhoods, often lacked the capacity or the wherewithal to apply. Many have held on largely thanks to fund-raisers and whatever performances they can safely pull off without raising the hackles of regulators and neighbors.

In a statement, a spokeswoman for Mayor LaToya Cantrell said the city will continue to enforce permitting for outdoor live entertainment events on a temporary basis, pointing out that the mayor had lifted its usual cap on those permits during the pandemic.

''The Department of Safety & Permits fully supports and is actively working with partners in the City Council to enact legislation which balances the desire for outdoor entertainment, supports local artists and venues as well as preserves the quality of life for the neighbors and residents of each community,'' the statement says.

Preservation Hall, the 60-year-old landmark in the well-protected French Quarter, appeared to have sustained minimal damage in Hurricane Ida, and is slated to reopen once power is restored. Tipitina's, a concert hall uptown, located closer to the water, will require some repairs to its roof.

The New Orleans Jazz Market, a stately performance center in Central City, appears to have held up well, but it was forced to significantly postpone its programming nonetheless -- just days after what was supposed to have been a triumphant reopening for its fall 2021 season.

''This is very reminiscent of Hurricane Katrina, and what we went through during that time, and I know a lot of New Orleans musicians are displaced,'' said the drummer Adonis Rose, the artistic director of the Jazz Market and leader of its resident big band, the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra. He called the storm a ''tragedy, when we were just starting to see some glimmer of hope.''

Kermit Ruffins, a renowned trumpeter who runs Kermit's Tremé Mother-in-Law Lounge, said in an interview on Monday that the electricity had just come back on at the popular neighborhood club, and he planned to get the place ready to rock.

During the pandemic, Ruffins's club served as a gathering spot and a kind of improvised community cafeteria. He moved concerts outside to the club's patio, and cooked free meals of red beans and rice for residents of the surrounding Tremé neighborhood, and for musicians who were out of work.

''I figured if I cooked for myself, I'd cook for the neighborhood,'' Ruffins said.

Howie Kaplan, the proprietor of the Howlin' Wolf, a venue in downtown New Orleans, also began providing meals and other services to musicians in the early days of the pandemic. The program was subsumed into the New Orleans Musicians' Clinic earlier this year; he restarted it at the Howlin' Wolf last month, in response to Hurricane Ida.

''We've got a James Beard Award-winning chef on the grill right now, making these fantastic steaks that came from who knows where,'' Kaplan said in a phone interview, adding that restaurants had come to donate food that they wouldn't be able to prepare because of the power outage.

Shortly after Hurricane Ida passed over the city, Jordan Hirsch -- the editor of the online resource A Closer Walk, which provides detailed information on New Orleans's heritage sites -- set out to determine how the city's most vulnerable music landmarks had held up.

When he got to the Karnofsky shop, on South Rampart Street downtown, he saw that the building had become wreckage and the Bolden mural nearby had crumbled. But other equally old jazz landmarks along the block, the former Eagle Saloon and the Iroquois Theater, had miraculously pulled through. All four structures are on the national historic register; it's safe to say that no single block in the United States today houses more early jazz history.

A Cleveland-based developer, GBX Group, recently bought out most of the addresses on the street, and plans to rebuild it into a center of commerce that will also trumpet its role in jazz history. After the storm, GBX hired workers to collect the Karnofsky shop's bricks, said its C.E.O., Drew Sparacia, hoping to at least partially rebuild the structure using the original materials.

But Hirsch asked why the city had not done more to demand that the owners of these historic places, which to the outside observer appear to be mostly abandoned, keep them protected from the elements.

''Tropical storms and hurricanes were sort of a constant threat for those buildings,'' Hirsch said. ''People have been sounding that alarm for 30 years.''

Some other sites that made it through Hurricane Ida remain deeply endangered, according to preservationists. John McCusker, a jazz historian and photojournalist who has worked to preserve historic buildings in the city, said that Bolden's former home in Central City and the old Dew Drop Inn -- a midcentury music venue, hotel and community hub -- were both in states of relative disrepair.

McCusker lamented that the sites' landlords hadn't been compelled to restore and preserve the buildings.

''We have this wealth of these buildings connected to the birth of this music, and the mechanisms of government have just proven maladroit at protecting them with the same vigor that they would enforce an inappropriate shutter in the French Quarter,'' he said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/08/arts/music/hurricane-ida-new-orleans-music.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/08/arts/music/hurricane-ida-new-orleans-music.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The storm ruined a mural honoring Buddy Bolden at the Little Gem Saloon. (C1)

Clockwise from top left, bricks from the Karnofsky Tailor Shop and Residence, leveled in the storm, are being saved as artifacts

many of New Orleans's jazz venues were spared serious damage

Preservation Hall sustained minimal damage

the concert hall Tipitina's will require roof repairs

Little Gem Saloon and the Karnofsky shop sit on the same block

and the New Orleans Jazz Market had to significantly postpone its programming. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHNNY MILANO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C5)

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[***German Candidate Moves Ahead in Polls by Promising Continuity***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63K2-6191-DXY4-X4R7-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1431 words

**Byline:** By Christopher F. Schuetze and Katrin Bennhold

**Body**

Mr. Scholz, a Social Democrat who is modeling himself as the candidate of continuity, has a fair shot at being Germany's next chancellor.

BERLIN -- When Olaf Scholz asked his fellow Social Democrats to nominate him as their candidate for chancellor, some inside his own camp publicly wondered if the party should bother fielding a candidate at all.

Germany's oldest party was not just trailing Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives but had slipped into third place behind the Greens with a humiliating 14 percent in the polls. As recently as June, the German media was framing the contest to succeed Ms. Merkel as a two-way race between her conservatives and the ascendant Green Party.

But with the Sept. 26 national elections fast approaching, Mr. Scholz and his once-moribund party have unexpectedly become the favorites to lead the next government in Europe's biggest democracy.

''It's really touching to see how many citizens trust me to be the next chancellor,'' a beaming Mr. Scholz told hundreds of supporters at a recent campaign event in Berlin, as he stood in front of a giant screen proclaiming: ''Scholz will tackle it.''

Ten months after Joseph R. Biden Jr. won the U.S. presidency for the Democrats, there is a real chance that Germany will be led by a center-left chancellor for the first time in 16 years. Not since the second term of former President Bill Clinton have both the White House and the German chancellery been in the hands of center-left leaders.

''The atmosphere is just amazing right now -- we're almost in disbelief,'' said Annika Klose, who is a Social Democrat candidate for Parliament and watched Mr. Scholz speak. ''Since I joined the party in 2011, every election result was worse than the last.''

It's not that Germans have suddenly shifted left. Mr. Scholz, who has served as Ms. Merkel's finance minister and vice chancellor for the past four years, is in many ways more associated with the conservative-led coalition government than his own party. Two years ago, he lost the party's leadership contest to a leftist duo, which attacked him for his moderate centrism.

But Mr. Scholz has managed to turn what has long been the main liability for his party -- co-governing as junior partners of Ms. Merkel's conservatives -- into his main asset: In an election with no incumbent, he has styled himself as the incumbent -- or as the closest thing there is to Ms. Merkel.

''Germans aren't a very change-friendly people, and the departure of Angela Merkel is basically enough change for them,'' said Christiane Hoffmann, a prominent political observer and journalist. ''They're most likely to trust the candidate who promises that the transition is as easy as possible.''

With 25 percent in recent polls, Mr. Scholz's Social Democrats have overtaken the Greens, now lagging at 17 percent, and the conservatives at barely over 20 percent. But political analysts point out that this would hardly constitute a convincing victory.

''No one has ever become chancellor since 1949 with so little trust,'' said Manfred Güllner, head of the Forsa polling institute, referring to the founding year of the Federal Republic of Germany after World War II.

''German voters are quite unsettled,'' Mr. Güllner added. ''After 16 years of a Merkel chancellorship that provided a certain sense of stability, we're in a place we've never been before.''

On the campaign trail Mr. Scholz has spoken admiringly of the current chancellor. A slickly produced TV ad by the party shows him walking in front of a projected image of Ms. Merkel.

He has been photographed making the chancellor's hallmark diamond-shaped hand gesture -- the ''Merkel rhombus'' -- and used the female form of the German word for chancellor on a campaign poster to convince Germans that he could continue Ms. Merkel's work even though he is a man.

The symbolism isn't subtle, but it is working -- so well in fact that the chancellor herself has felt compelled to push back on it -- most recently in what might be her last speech in the Bundestag.

Mr. Güllner, the pollster, said at least part of the recent surge in support for the Social Democrats comes from Merkel voters who are not happy with her party's candidate, Armin Laschet, a conservative state governor who has repeatedly fumbled on the campaign trail.

''There is no real Scholz enthusiasm in Germany,'' said Ms. Hoffmann. ''His success is due primarily to the weakness of the other candidates.''

Unlike his rivals, Mr. Scholz hasn't put a foot wrong in the campaign. He takes few risks and is controlled to the point that Germans have dubbed him the ''Scholz-o-mat'' -- or ''Scholz machine.''

Sticking to his message of stability has also made it harder for his opponents to attack him on past blunders, although some have tried. As mayor of Hamburg he took private meetings with a banker seeking a million euro tax deferment, an episode that has become part of a state investigation, and it was on his watch as finance minister that the fraudulent German fintech company Wirecard imploded.

But this has barely surfaced in the campaign. Instead, Mr. Scholz's popularity has continued to rise.

Mr. Scholz was a socialist in the 1970s who gradually mellowed into a post-ideological centrist. First defending workers as a labor lawyer, then defending painful labor-market reforms and now co-governing with a conservative chancellor, his journey in many ways tracks that of his party.

In its 158-year history the Social Democrats have been a formidable political force, fighting for workers' rights, battling fascism and helping to shape Germany's postwar welfare state. But after serving three terms as junior partners to Ms. Merkel, the party's vote share had halved.

Gerhard Schröder, the last Social Democrat to become chancellor, won 39 percent of the vote in 2002. In 2005, when the Social Democrats entered their first coalition with Ms. Merkel, they were still winning 34 percent of votes; by 2017 that had shrunk to 20 percent.

But even as his party sank to a postwar low, Mr. Scholz became one of Germany's most popular politicians.

It helped that as finance minister he controlled the government's purse strings during the pandemic. After years of religiously sticking to Germany's cherished balanced budget rule, he promised to bring out the ''bazooka'' to help businesses survive the pandemic, initially spending 353 billion euros, or about $417 billion, in recovery and assistance funds.

''Scholz has zero charisma but he radiates stability -- and he handed out the money in the economic crisis,'' said Andrea Römmele, dean of the Berlin-based Hertie School of Governance.

If current polls hold, the Social Democrats will finish first but will need two other parties to form a governing coalition. One would almost certainly be the Greens. As for the other, Mr. Scholz has all but ruled out the far-left Left Party, which would leave either the conservatives or -- more likely -- the free-market Free Democrats.

Mr. Scholz has offered some ideas on how he would govern differently, but the changes are relatively modest and might be further watered down by his coalition partners, analysts predict.

He has tried to woo his party's core ***working-class*** voters by using ''Respect'' as one of his main campaign slogans. In his stump speech, he emphasizes that people who earn as much as him should not get tax breaks. Instead, he wants to lower taxes for middle- and low-income earners and raise them modestly for those with incomes of more than 100,000 euros a year.

He promises to raise the minimum wage to 12 euros an hour (instead of the current 9.60 euros), build 400,000 homes a year (instead of the about 300,000 built in 2020) and pass a raft of climate measures, though without getting out of coal before 2038.

''We would not expect changes in taxes and spending to add up to a big additional fiscal stimulus,'' wrote Holger Schmieding, chief economist for Berenberg Bank in a recent analysis of what a Scholz chancellorship would mean for financial markets. In a coalition with the Greens and the Free Democrats, he predicted, ''the pragmatic Scholz himself would likely rein in the leftist inclinations'' of his own party base.

Only the conservatives, desperately under pressure, have been arguing the opposite.

Even Ms. Merkel, who had said she wanted to stay out of the race, has recently felt compelled to distance herself from Mr. Scholz's unabashed attempts to run as her clone.

There is ''an enormous difference for the future of Germany between him and me,'' Ms. Merkel said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/09/world/europe/olaf-scholz-merkel-germany-election.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/09/world/europe/olaf-scholz-merkel-germany-election.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, Olaf Scholz, the Social Democrats' candidate for German chancellor, at a campaign rally on Sunday in Leipzig. Left, the rally. With 25 percent in recent polls, Mr. Scholz's Social Democrats have overtaken the Green Party, now lagging at 17 percent. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GORDON WELTERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***At War With Ourselves***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y14-RKV1-JBG3-60DD-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1483 words

**Byline:** By Jonathan Rauch

**Body**

THE AGE OF ENTITLEMENTAmerica Since the SixtiesBy Christopher Caldwell

In September 2016, a scholar named Angelo M. Codevilla published an article in the conservative Claremont Review of Books ominously titled ''After the Republic.'' The election, he said, would not change the fact that ''the Republic established by America's founders is probably gone'' -- kicked aside by the 1964 Civil Rights Act, ''the little law that ate the Constitution.'' With or without Donald Trump, ''we have stepped over the threshold of a revolution,'' he warned. ''Regardless of who wins in 2016, this revolution's sentiments will grow in volume and intensity, and are sure to empower politicians likely to make Americans nostalgic for Donald Trump's moderation.''

I overlooked Codevilla's article in 2016, but I am paying attention now. As he predicted, American conservatism is moving in an ever angrier, more radical direction, unassuaged by its control of the presidency, the Senate and a majority on the Supreme Court. The sunny optimism of Ronald Reagan's City on a Hill is banished; Steve Bannon, Sarah Palin, Patrick Buchanan and the ghost of George Wallace lead conservatism now. And, of course, Trump. If Christopher Caldwell's new book is any indicator, the movement is only headed deeper into gloom, resentment and white identity politics.

Caldwell warrants attention. He is one of the right's most gifted and astute journalists, noted especially for his thoughtful writings on Europe. ''Western Europe became a multiethnic society in a fit of absence of mind,'' he wrote in his 2009 book on Islam and immigration in Europe, a provocative and pessimistic take that won critical plaudits. His new book, ''The Age of Entitlement: America Since the Sixties,'' is even more provocative and pessimistic.

Like the liberal writer Mark Lilla, Caldwell reinterprets Reagan as an enabler, not an opponent, of Me Generation self-absorption. The ethos of me-first individualism, unrestrained capitalism, opportunistic globalization, liberal immigration and release from traditional sexual norms suited elites of both political parties, but it was not so good for the ***working-class***, tradition-minded Americans who are said to form the country's backbone. Adding insult to injury, they were looked down on by progressives and ignored by conservatives. No wonder they rebelled.

If you think Caldwell sounds like Bannon, the self-appointed tribune of Trumpian ***working-class*** populism, you're right. But the conservative critique of Davos Man has a lot to say that deserves a hearing. Conservative intellectuals like Oren Cass and David Frum and Yuval Levin, along with Republican politicians like Senators Josh Hawley and Mike Lee and Ben Sasse, are rethinking Reagan-Thatcherism from beleaguered workers' and communities' point of view. And not a moment too soon. If Caldwell's book ended there, it would honorably augment that conversation.

But it does not end there, because the real heart of Caldwell's story is race and civil rights. A more descriptive subtitle might be: ''How the Civil Rights Revolution Overturned the Constitution, Divided America and Victimized Whites.''

In Caldwell's telling, the Civil Rights Act, which banned many forms of discrimination, was a swindle. Billed as a one-time correction that would end segregation and consign race consciousness to the past, it actually started an endless and escalating campaign of race-conscious social engineering. Imperialistically, civil rights expanded to include ''people of color'' and immigrants and gays and, in short, anyone who was not native-born, white and straight -- all in service of ''the task that civil rights laws were meant to carry out -- the top-down management of various ethnic, regional and social groups.''

With civil rights as their bulldozer, in Caldwell's view, progressive movements ran amok. They ''could now, through the authority of civil rights law, override every barrier that democracy might seek to erect against them''; the law and rhetoric of civil rights ''gave them an iron grip on the levers of state power.'' And so, today, affirmative action discriminates against whites and then lies about it; public and private bureaucracies trample freedom of association; political correctness stigmatizes dissent and censors language and even thought; ''every single state must now honor'' Martin Luther King Jr., ''and affirm its delight in doing so.''

The civil rights revolution, to Caldwell, is nothing less than constitutional in scope -- or, more precisely, anti-constitutional, because it overturns ''the de jure constitution of 1788, with all the traditional forms of jurisprudential legitimacy and centuries of American culture behind it,'' replacing it with a ''new, minoritarian constitution'' that pushes race-consciousness into every cranny of society. White men, the losers in the new order, responded by adopting their own identitarian, victim-group mind-set. ''They fell asleep thinking of themselves as the people who had built this country and woke up to find themselves occupying the bottom rung of an official hierarchy of races.''

And so here we are, not one country but two, governed by two constitutions, not one. ''Democrats, loyal to the post-1964 constitution, could not acknowledge (or even see) that they owed their ascendancy to a rollback of the basic constitutional freedoms Americans cherished most. Republicans, loyal to the pre-1964 constitution, could not acknowledge (or even see) that the only way back to the free country of their ideals was through the repeal of the civil rights laws. The combination was a terrible one -- rising tensions along with a society-wide inability to talk or think straight about anything.''

Nor is even that miserable dispensation the whole of it. Engaging in what Marxists call ''heightening the contradictions,'' Caldwell argues that the oppressive imperialism of civil rights laws is not incidental. Citizens, he writes, must ''choose between these two orders.'' There never was a moderate, limited way to keep the promises of integration. ''Civil rights was always this way: Dignity was an integral and nonnegotiable part of what was demanded, and a government interested in civil rights must secure it, no matter what the cost in rights to those who would deny it.'' Associational freedoms and property rights were always on the chopping block, incompatible with the 1964 act. Caldwell notices that ''it tended to be segregationists who philosophized in this vein'' -- and yes, he does go there, quoting an old-time Southern segregationist to the effect that a merchant's right not to serve blacks is ''simple justice.''

Perhaps the author should have come up for oxygen when he found himself suggesting that the Southern segregationists were right all along. Reading this overwrought and strangely airless book, one would never imagine a different way of viewing things, one that rejects Caldwell's ultimatum to ''choose between these two orders.'' In that view -- my own -- America has seen multiple refoundings, among them the Jackson era's populism, the Civil War era's abolition of slavery, the Progressive era's governmental reforms and the New Deal era's economic and welfare interventions. All of them, like the civil rights revolution, sparked tense and sometimes violent clashes between competing views of the Constitution and basic rights, but in my version of history, those tensions proved not only survivable but fruitful, and working through them has been an engine of dynamism and renewal, not destruction and oppression. I worry about the illiberal excesses of identity politics and political correctness, but I think excesses is what they are, and I think they, too, can be worked through. Being a homosexual American now miraculously married to my husband for almost a decade, I can't help feeling astonished by a history of America since 1964 that finds space for only one paragraph briefly acknowledging the civil rights movement's social and moral achievements -- before hastening back to ''But the costs of civil rights were high.''

Perhaps most depressingly, Caldwell's account, even if one accepts its cramped view of the Constitution and its one-eyed moral bookkeeping, leads nowhere. It proffers no constructive alternative, no plausible policy or path. The author knows perfectly well that there will be no ''repeal of the civil rights laws.'' He foresees only endless, grinding, negative-sum cultural and political warfare between two intractably opposed ''constitutions.'' His vision is a dead end. Unfortunately, it also seems to be where American conservatism is going.Jonathan Rauch is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. His most recent book is ''The Happiness Curve: Why Life Gets Better After 50.''THE AGE OF ENTITLEMENTAmerica Since the SixtiesBy Christopher Caldwell342 pp. Simon & Schuster. $28.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/17/books/review/christopher-caldwell-age-of-entitlement.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/17/books/review/christopher-caldwell-age-of-entitlement.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Lyndon Johnson signs the 1964 Civil Rights Act and gives a pen to Martin Luther King Jr. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE TAMES/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (BR14)

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2020

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[***Transcript: Ezra Klein and Aaron Retica Discuss the 2022 Midterm Elections; The Ezra Klein Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66TY-B7H1-DXY4-X21M-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, like [*today’s episode with Aaron Retica*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/10/opinion/ezra-klein-podcast-aaron-retica.html). Listen [*wherever you get your podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/how-to-listen-ezra-klein-show-nyt.html).

Transcripts of our episodes are made available as soon as possible. They are not fully edited for grammar or spelling.

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EZRA KLEIN: I’m Ezra Klein. This is “The Ezra Klein Show.”

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Welcome to the show. So we are recording here on Wednesday, and we’re going to do something a little bit different. I’ve asked my revered, honored editor Aaron Retica, the man who makes all of my thoughts somewhat worth thinking, and certainly somewhat worth reading, to come on and to have the conversation with me that we often have sort of every week in politics, but certainly around elections, to try to talk about what mattered, what we think is important, where we think our coverage should go.

But rather than having all that happen in private, we thought that we would do it in public. And it’d be a way to work through an election that we do not yet have all the information on, we should not yet have too much confidence about, but that we at least want to process a little bit in real time. And so I should say as we’re recording, here’s where things stand. The Senate looks like a pretty good shot for Democrats to keep it, if you look at The New York Times needle, which has now stop moving.

It’s at lean Democratic. It’s totally possible that what we’re going to see is the Senate control going to a runoff in Georgia, depending on how things like Nevada turn out. We don’t know yet. The House probably looks like Republicans are going to take control, but it is not nearly as sure a thing as one would have thought. And so overall, you have a lot more stability in this election than many expected.

This election looks like the election the polls promised us, an election where Democrats did a lot better than you would think they would do for a midterm with inflation high and Joe Biden’s approval ratings low. Republicans did a lot worse than you might have thought they would perform. And so the strange thing that has to be explained is not a wild swing in one direction or another, but the absence of a wild swing in one direction or another.

But with that, I’m going to turn this over to Aaron, who will pepper me and interrogate me with all the questions he has brought to bear.

AARON RETICA: So let’s start with a happy Republican, Ron DeSantis. He crushed his opponent. People got very excited about this. During the election itself, on Election Day, the chattering classes, the political chattering classes were freaking out, because Miami-Dade was looking like DeSantis would win, and he did. He rolled out an enormous juggernaut and did incredibly well. So immediately, the narrative, as people like to say — becomes OK, DeSantis is the winner. You have some heterodox thoughts on that. Let’s start there.

How great a night was it for DeSantis?

EZRA KLEIN: Oh, DeSantis. So I don’t want to say I have overly heterodox views on Ron DeSantis. What I have heterodox views on is the narrative. The big narrative of the night is Republicans did poorly everywhere, basically, except for Ron DeSantis, who wrecked Charlie Crist in Florida — won by, I think, around or a bit less than 20 points. And doesn’t this just show that DeSantis is the future of the party? The Trump acolytes didn’t do as well as, certainly, Donald Trump had hoped, certainly as well as they had hoped.

And maybe — maybe, maybe. I guess my question is if there is anything so profound that actually needs to be explained in DeSantis’s victory margin? So just a couple points for comparison here. Marco Rubio, running for Senate in Florida, he beat Val Demings by a pretty close margin to how DeSantis beat Crist. And I think everybody agrees that Val Demings is a fresher and more capable candidate at this point than Charlie Crist.

Go over to Ohio. Mike DeWine won his gubernatorial election by much more than DeSantis won. I mean, last I looked, it was about 25 points. Nobody’s talking about Republican Mike DeWine, who just stomped to victory in Ohio, as the future of all American politics, or some political model that we all need to reckon with at a deep level. Go over to Colorado, on the other side, Jared Polis, the Democratic governor of Colorado — Colorado’s about 80 percent reported as I’m speaking.

It’s been pretty stable in the margin. It could change, so take what I’m about to say with a grain of salt, but he’s up by 15, 17 points. That’s a pretty big win for a Democratic governor in a state that is no bluer than Florida is red, and I think at this point arguably less blue than Florida is red. And he ran ahead of Michael Bennet, who also did quite well and won the Senate election in Colorado. If you go back to 2018, you can see Tom Wolf, the incumbent governor of Pennsylvania, the Democrat back then — that’s a big Democratic year. And Pennsylvania is a closer state than Florida. He wins by almost 20 points.

I say all this only to say that — look, if I were DeSantis, I’d be thrilled. If I were DeSantis, I would be plotting my 2024 run. But I think the narrative is so interested and attuned to Ron DeSantis that we are taking a victory that is quite well within the established boundaries of how incumbent governors run in a state that leans in their direction, in a year that leans in their direction, as some kind of cataclysmic political performance when it just looks like a strong win.

And it looks like strong wins that other governors are putting up around the country, and have put up in the past. So I don’t know. I think that the press is very interested in DeSantis and is making not more out of his win maybe than he deserves, but less out of other people’s wins than they deserve, in a way that is making him look more unique than he is.

AARON RETICA: Let me push back against that a little bit, Ezra. So if he’s winning Miami-Dade, that’s a huge thing, right? If the future of elections in America is in part about who’s going to win the Latino vote in various different places — and obviously, that’s a complicated question. Florida is a very specific Latino vote. It’s always specific. We talk about the Latino vote as if it’s a thing, but it’s a million different things.

But DeSantis runs his culture war playbook. DeSantis keeps his state more or less open, and then is rewarded for it with a gigantic victory. So that’s not nothing, right? It’s something he can work with. My question about this, though, is — like, here’s the part about Trump and DeSantis I don’t understand. Republicans actually have a very narrow margin — way of winning national elections, presidential elections, right?

How does DeSantis, if he somehow manages to defeat Trump — how does he win if Trump says, don’t vote for this guy? Like, even, if 5 percent Trump voters won’t vote for DeSantis nationally, that’s it. So I don’t — I actually find the DeSantis speculation a little weird.

EZRA KLEIN: So on the Miami-Dade question — and so the backdrop to that is that Miami-Dade is a big county in Florida, heavy Hispanic population. Democrats have typically done very well there, and DeSantis won it. And I just don’t exactly know what to make of what we’ve seen in Florida over the past couple of elections. There’s clearly compositional changes in the Florida electorate, even more so after the pandemic. A lot of people went there. People retired there. Then, a bunch of people left there during the hurricane, particularly if they could leave there.

I know people who were living in Florida six months ago who are not living there now. They were Democratic voters. We know Florida’s been trending more and more Republican. If I’m not wrong, Trump’s most significant improvement — certainly, in a swing state from 2016 — was in Florida in 2020. And so I wonder if we have gotten into a position where we should understand Florida as a much redder state than we do, so we are more surprised by close elections there than we should be.

There are clearly dynamics among the Florida Hispanic population that are not the same dynamic you see in every other state. I mentioned Colorado, that’s also got a high proportion of Hispanic voters, and Democrats did very well in Colorado. We don’t really know what has happened in Arizona yet, but it’ll be interesting, and it looks to me like Mark Kelly is at least going to pull it out in the Senate. So I just don’t know how to read Florida.

And how you read Florida has a lot to do with how you read DeSantis, because if you understand Florida as a real swing, and what DeSantis did is turn it red, I mean, that’s a remarkable political achievement. And if you understand Florida as more like Ohio, then it looks more like what Mike DeWine did in Ohio, which isn’t to say it’s not a strong performance. It’s just to say it’s not as unique a performance as people think.

So then you bring up the question of Donald Trump. And yeah, I mean, I think in a lot of ways things play out in the moment are not the way they play out over time. And I’ll give two examples — one sort of the DeSantis example, and one the Joe Biden example, of the way a narrative can in the moment mislead you.

This looks great for DeSantis, right? He’s getting all this coverage. He did great when a lot of Donald Trump’s people did poorly. What this is actually going to do for Donald Trump is make clear that his main competition in the world, the person who could turn him from — in his own mind — winner to loser is DeSantis. And he is going to put everything he has into destroying this person.

So maybe a more normal performance, right — a 10 point win or an 8 point win or something for DeSantis — would have kept him a little bit more out of Trump’s sights for longer, and would have been better for him. Or who knows? Maybe DeSantis crushes Trump and that’s the end of that. But I do think it’s a mistake right now that the narrative in the press is thinking about 2024 as this two man race, because the nature of Trump and DeSantis both being in the game, and possibly destroying each other like Godzilla and Mothra, is that it creates space for other candidates to emerge. It makes for a more multi-candidate race than it otherwise would be.

If it was just Donald Trump or it was just Ron DeSantis, they would have that lane, like, that main lane of the Republican Party right now, that post-Trump lane to themselves. But it won’t be. And they may well split that lane. And that might create space for a Nikki Haley, a Glenn Youngkin, a Tim Scott, somebody we’re not thinking of right now, to win in New Hampshire. And all of a sudden, a snowball effect happens.

And Donald Trump and Ron DeSantis are doing to each other what Chris Christie and Marco Rubio did to each other — what Chris Christie did to Marco Rubio. And so things could just go in very weird ways. And I just — I would really urge people to not get too caught up in just, like, the idea that only DeSantis and Trump — Mike Pence might run. It’s going to be very weird in 2024.

I’ll note there’s a similar thing, I think, with Joe Biden. Biden and the Democrats clearly overperformed compared to what people were expecting in the midterm. And on the one hand, that puts Biden in a stronger position. If Kevin McCarthy, as speaker, is going to have a very narrow majority, there’s a good chance Chuck Schumer will remain majority leader. That puts Biden in a much better governing position. It puts Republicans in a worse position. But it makes it harder for Biden to do what Bill Clinton was able to do after 1994, what Barack Obama was able to do after 2010, and let Republicans create so much chaos and become so unpopular, become this whole pole of American governance that he can stand presidentially against, sort of be the bulwark between the country and Republican cataclysm. And so in a way, I’m not sure this outcome is as strengthening for Biden 2024 as really a worse one would be.

Now, I’m not saying that should make you want a worse outcome, right? I don’t think you should want worse things based on these speculative reads of the future. But I am saying it’s one reason I’m very mistrustful of the political narratives that take hold immediately after an election, because everything that happens creates a counter-reaction. And we’re often looking at the thing that happened without assessing or even knowing what kind of backlash or response it’s going to create in a very, very dynamic system.

And oftentimes, that response ends up mattering as much or more as the original event. So this is where we are today. Where we’re going to be in a year, who knows?

AARON RETICA: Let’s just stay with Trump for a second. What does he do now? How does he read this election? What do you think he sees? I mean, obviously he sees some victories that he’s taking responsibility for. That’s always how he behaves. But in his colder calculus, what does he see?

EZRA KLEIN: The way you phrased that is, I think, impossible. I mean, I think Donald Trump walks around the world, and he looks at the world, and he thinks — that’s me, and that’s also me. And that’s also related to me. And that’s me too. And what level of rationality, what level of cold analysis he has, I’ve never known. And I don’t know that anybody does. I think that the coverage of Ron DeSantis today is going to drive him insane.

I mean, he was already starting to say some very weird things about DeSantis, saying I know more about him than anybody but his wife, and the things I could tell you — like, the sort of threat that he has secret negative information about Ron DeSantis that he will reveal to the public.

AARON RETICA: Plus the nickname.

EZRA KLEIN: Plus the nickname.

AARON RETICA: Ron DeSanctimonious.

EZRA KLEIN: Ron DeSanctimonious, which — also, in the way that Trump is sometimes a little bit of a genius, like a bullying genius at pinpointing somebody’s actual weak spot, it’s not an amazing nickname. It’s not quite as good as like Low Energy Jeb. But Trump has this kind of manic circus charisma where he doesn’t seem to take it all so seriously. He seems a little bit, like, always winking at you. And DeSantis has none of that. It’s like a complete literalization of Trumpism.

Trump is seeing something clearly there that’s I think actually quite interesting. So yeah, I mean, I think the thing Donald Trump wakes up and sees — I don’t think Donald Trump cares about the actual results of things. When not enough people attended his inauguration, he told his press secretary to go out and lie about it. And he might really have believed his own lies. You know, he’s endlessly talked himself into ideas about his Electoral College victory that clearly weren’t true.

Or he would believe a poll result that was actually a subgroup of a random poll in the state. I mean, like everything you ever hear about talking to Donald Trump about the outcome of anything is that you’re talking to somebody living in a world of their own fantasies, spun around tiny grains of sand of truth, right? And after 2020, I don’t know what Donald Trump truly believes about whether or not he won or he lost. But it doesn’t matter. Like, I think he believes what he needs to believe.

And so he has moved forward on the view that he won, and has made everybody else move forward in either agreement or opposition to that view, too. So I don’t think Donald Trump wakes up today, and — whatever he says in public — starts going through the exit polls in private. I think he watches “Fox and Friends,” and I think he flicks through the other cable news channels. And he sees everybody talking about how Ron DeSantis is so great, and Donald Trump’s candidates didn’t do that well.

And it’s Ron DeSantis’s party — and oh, did you notice in the betting markets, all of a sudden, Ron DeSantis is ahead of Donald Trump in the 2024 betting. And I think the guy’s going to have a conniption.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

AARON RETICA: Let’s talk about how we got to where we are today, because it really is mystifying, right? You have a very high inflation rate, which just on its own should have meant that there was much more punishment for Democratic candidates all over the United States. You have gas prices that were very high — fluctuating a little bit, but super high. One thing that people are citing as — an example of that you talked about at the beginning is the idea of calcification.

You just had Lynn Vavreck and John Sides on your show. And Lynn just did a great piece for us on this subject. And the basic idea is that everything is at such parity, everything is so connected, half and half, and the parties have separated ideologically so that there are very few heterodox people within those parties — is that the reason that inflation did not matter as much as it did? Do you think that the calcification controlled voting, polarization prevented a big swing? What happened here?

EZRA KLEIN: So first, I cannot recommend enough that people go listen to that show with Lynn Vavreck and John Sides. So they are political scientists who just wrote this big book, along with another co-author, on 2020. And what they show is that 2020 looks just eerily like 2016. For all that happens, like Donald Trump’s whole first term, impeachments, pandemic, Russia, everything — right, all that craziness we lived through, basically nobody changes their mind about anything. You could have predicted 2020 very, very, very closely just by knowing 2016.

So that is calcification. People are not changing their minds. But the other opposing force is parity. For whatever reason, and this is much more of a mystery than people would think it is — I mean, I actually talked at some length with John and Lynn about it. And we ended up cutting that section of the conversation because the answers are just so unclear — the parties are very closely divided in power. And so on the one hand, huge events in American politics, huge changes, are not shifting large numbers of the vote.

And on the other, you shift one or two or three percentage points of the vote, and control of everything goes the other way, right? I mean, both the 2016 and the 2020 elections could have been flipped, presidentially, by the movement of well fewer than 100,000 voters. And here, too, this stayed very, very closely divided. You’re going to have a 50/50 or 51/49 Senate. You’re going to have a very closely divided House.

And so not many people moved because the parties are very different. But on the other hand, because they are so narrowly matched, those movements could change everything. So then you get into inflation. And inflation was the force that could have made this — or in many of our expectations — would have made this something like 2010, where a bad economy is understood to have created a huge midterm wave for Republicans.

And it didn’t. Now maybe that expectation was wrong. Matt Grossman, who’s a political scientist, tweeted out this chart that was really surprising to me showing that there’s a very weak relationship between the rate of inflation and midterm election results. And he actually also showed there’s a pretty weak relationship between employment and midterm election results.

But now, you might say that’s mediated by something else, so something that Sides and Vavreck show in their book is that the really strong predictor of what happened in the 2020 election was Trump’s approval rating. His approval rating was bad. He did about as badly as that would anticipate. And so yeah, there’s all kinds of weird stuff happening in the economy in 2020, but basically, what ended up mattering is how people absorbed that into their view of the president.

And so at the end of that conversation, I asked them what the fundamentals — sort of presidential approval and the economy — would say about Democrats in 2022. And John says, basically, if I were a Democrat, I’d be terrified. This looks bad. Joe Biden’s approval rating is bad and inflation is high. And so the interesting thing to me is that Democrats did not perform as badly, not just as inflation might have made you think — but yeah, maybe inflation doesn’t work like that in midterms.

Maybe I need to take the Grossman chart more seriously. But they didn’t perform as badly as Joe Biden’s approval rating would have predicted. And that’s the real surprise. There was a decoupling of how people felt about Joe Biden from what they did in the election. And I think that reflects that the driver for Democrats is fear of Republicans.

You don’t have to like Joe Biden or Chuck Schumer or Nancy Pelosi to fear Republicans coming back in power, to fear what they would do to, say, a woman’s right to choose in a post Roe landscape, to fear what would happen if they breached the debt ceiling or have a lot of power over election administration. So negative polarization can be a profound driver of votes. You’ll sometimes hear politicians say things like voting is an act of hope. Yes, sometimes, but voting is also very much an act of fear.

And as the parties become more different, as the Republican Party in my view becomes more deranged and more frightening in terms of how it sees the system, and what it will permit and what it will accept within its own ranks, that fear-based voting becomes more prevalent on the Democratic side. And so you don’t have the collapse in turnout among Democrats in 2022 that you might have expected. I mean, that’s why midterms swing so much. The governing party becomes dispirited and they don’t turn out.

Republicans might have had a little bit of a turnout edge this year. I’ve seen some varying analyzes of that. I don’t think we’re really going to the numbers on that for some time. But what’s clear is Democratic turnout did not collapse. And as such, Democrats were able to hold on.

AARON RETICA: I’m going to say that the debt ceiling was not a big factor in how people voted out of fear.

EZRA KLEIN: You don’t think they read my piece on that? [LAUGHS]

AARON RETICA: [LAUGHS] I don’t know, just a thought. But obviously, fear is critical, right? It’s —

EZRA KLEIN: But wait, what do you think about this, Aaron. What do you think is the driver?

AARON RETICA: It’s really hard to know. I mean, the calcification thing is really weird, right, because it’s not that the parties are static. There’s been tremendous movement from side to side. College educated people have moved out of the Republican Party into the Democratic Party in huge numbers. In smaller numbers, but still significant numbers, Black and Hispanic men in particular have moved, as far as voting goes, from the Democratic column to the Republican column.

So the coalitions have actually changed even though there’s parity, right, which is very strange. So I’m not sure what happened. I do think fear of Republican majorities is there. There’s no question about that. I was joking about the debt ceiling. I don’t think people are too worried about the debt ceiling. I do think it was interesting. The Times/Siena poll said that a lot of people were worried about what Republicans were going to do if they were in control of more of the levers of democracy, but they didn’t actually care that much about it.

But maybe they did. Maybe it had some influence on how people voted. And maybe people understand more than a lot of media chatters think about what the president can and cannot do about inflation, about gas prices — right, because inflation is a worldwide phenomenon. In fact, Western European countries are doing worse in most of the cases than the United States is. So maybe people are more resigned in a way, and so they weren’t voting on that because they didn’t think the president could do anything about it. I don’t know.

EZRA KLEIN: Well, let me add two ideas to that. So one is that I don’t think Republicans ever convinced anybody they had a plan on inflation. And they didn’t pretend to have a theory that they messaged repeatedly and consistently in a clear way, that if you elect us, this is why inflation is going to come down. I mean, in 2010, Republicans really put a lot on the budget deficit. They really put a lot on that what was happening in the economy was Democrats are running up all this debt, and it was making businesses uncertain.

And people — wrongly, often, in my view — but nevertheless intuitively feel like it’s a bad thing when government runs up all this debt. And so they really pushed this sort of view of Republicans as the responsible belt tighteners. And that was going to — something, something, something, and make a better economy. And I disagreed with that view, but it was a message. And the view was that it resonated. I mean the view is that it resonates so much that Barack Obama, then — and his administration — make this, I think, quite ill chosen turn to austerity in the aftermath.

But Republicans didn’t try anything like that this year. So that’s one thing. And the other is that to pull back the curtain on our process a bit, you and I were working — and I was working on this piece for a bit — that was about on the off chance, and it turned out there was an off chance — maybe even still is an off chance — the Democrats end this with control of the House and Senate maintained, what are they going to do? What’s their agenda? What is the positive Democratic agenda going forward?

And I scrapped that column, and I scrapped it in part because I don’t think Democrats actually have any agreed upon positive agenda going forward. I don’t think they were expecting to hold it. I don’t think they will hold the House, for that matter. So that’ll probably prove to be right. But one, there wasn’t an answer there, because they weren’t trying to come up with an answer there. I mean, people talk about child care, this or that. But they didn’t really have anything.

And the second thing is they didn’t have anything in part because they didn’t think that was how they were going to get people to vote for them. They wanted Republicans scariness to be the center of the agenda. And within Republican scariness, I think there’s a miasma of different things, right? I mean, I take your point that they’re not — most people aren’t sitting around being, like, well, we’ve got a debt ceiling coming up, and Congress is going to need to raise that, or the full faith and credit of the blah, blah, blah is going to go down.

What I do think happened, though, was a sense that there’s just a lot of chaos on the Republican side. They are willing to do a bunch of things that are kind of frightening, from elections to abortion to the economy, to just like what the Republican Party is and represents. You can’t cut out from all this the kinds of people they nominated in a bunch of key races, Dr. Oz in Pennsylvania, Herschel Walker in Georgia.

So part of it was a candidate quality issue. Like, people looked at the actual person who might represent them and said, I don’t want this person. But Democrats really chose not to run on a positive agenda. They chose to run functionally on — I mean, you don’t want these maniacs in charge, do you? And that worked.

AARON RETICA: So if the Democrats had been wrecked on Election Day, there would be bitter recriminations going on between the more progressive side and the more centrist side. There would be more inside baseball. There would be the argument between David Shor and Sean McElwee, who are arguing for doing popular things, and other people who think that the party has to orient more around a — whatever race, class narrative, or any of these other things.

But do those conversations get obliterated by what happened here? Are the Democrats going to be missing out on recriminations that would actually benefit them — is really the question I have.

EZRA KLEIN: I think the Democrats did plenty of recriminations about the 2022 election in the weeks leading up to the 2022 election, so they might have actually gotten most of the benefit of it. I mean, they had really turned, I think because they didn’t believe the polls, and the polls were tightening against them, to the view that this is going to be a bloodbath. Emotionally, that’s where they had gone. The thing is that there actually isn’t a ton of strategic questions that are open to the Democrats right now.

If Democrats had gotten wiped out, if they had lost 30 seats in the House and actually five seats in the Senate unexpectedly, losing all of the marginal seats — they lose in Pennsylvania and they lose in Nevada and they lose in New Hampshire, I think the question of whether or not Joe Biden runs in 2024 would — whatever Joe Biden decides — have been opened. And putting aside whether he runs, whether or not there would be a primary in 2024.

But with Biden and the Democrats doing unexpectedly well, so long as Biden wants to run, he’s probably going to have the field to himself. And that means he’s going to run on whatever Joe Biden is, right — Joe Bidenism. He’s got his record. He’s got his political style. It’s the same one it was in — not the same record as in 2020, but the same political style as in 2020. He has mostly done popular things. I mean, the individual component parts of his agenda have been pretty popular.

He’s got weaknesses as a communicator. I mean, we know what Joe Biden is. I think there would be a real question otherwise — right, again, if there had been a bloodbath. I don’t think it would have really been a debate between the so-called popularists and the virallists and the progressives and everybody else. I think it would have been a debate about standard bearers.

And with the possibility that Biden wouldn’t run, or wouldn’t win if he did run in the primary, you would have had people who were out there saying that A.O.C. should run, or saying Jared Polis, the Colorado governor should run — Gavin Newsom and Pritzker clearly seem to be playing around with the possibility of runs, the governors of California and Illinois. There are many, many more people out there like that — Chris Murphy out of Connecticut.

I mean, you can name a bunch of people who look like they would be in a scrum to be the future standard bearer of the party. And those people would be the vehicles, containers, through which that debate would happen. But I think assuming nothing really surprising happens as the results come in from the West, I think that Biden’s position, rightly or wrongly, is quite strengthened.

And as such, I don’t think there’s much of a debate to have, because what’s going to happen over the next two years, particularly if Kevin McCarthy is the House Speaker, which again, I think is the right bet to make right now, Biden will be acting in opposition to House Republicans who are going to be doing a lot of nutty things — and oh my God, Kevin McCarthy’s life is going to be miserable with a tiny House majority, just miserable. He will be led around by Marjorie Taylor Greene and the Freedom Caucus.

I mean, he’s going to be able to say no to nothing. He’s a weak leader already. He’s going to have no margin in the majority if he gets a majority. It’s going to be a disaster, which means he’ll probably end up having to do crazier things like debt ceiling showdowns — which, by the way, Donald Trump is already saying they should do a debt ceiling showdown. And then there’ll be Donald Trump out there. There will be Ron DeSantis out there.

And so you’re going to have all these other poles of politics who Joe Biden is going to be acting as the Democratic safe harbor from. And it could really rebuild his strategy from 2020 of, like, Joe Biden may not be any Democrat’s favorite Democrat, but there’s a sense that he’s acceptable enough to sort of everybody, and so he himself forestalls this debate that might otherwise happen.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

AARON RETICA: Let’s look at two states that are right next to each other, right, Pennsylvania and Ohio. Tim Ryan, people had a brief moment of thinking he was going to do well, but he did not come close to beating Vance. He had one model of how you’re going to have a kind of inclusive, pro-labor, liberal left idea, where you’re kind of knocking the national Democratic Party and you’re going to run next to him. In Pennsylvania, there’s Fetterman, who had a different approach to it, right? It’s more like, I’m like you. I’m a regular person. And he won.

Can we draw any lessons from that, or is this the same situation as Florida, where Ohio is just getting more and more red? And so we can’t actually say anything, because Tim Ryan had no chance.

EZRA KLEIN: I have two thoughts on this. So one, I think Ohio is just way redder than Pennsylvania now. I mean, you can look at that in the 2020 results. Joe Biden wins Pennsylvania and he loses Ohio handily. So Fetterman running in Ohio loses, probably. Now, it’s interesting, right? What is Fetterman’s outcome here if not for the stroke?

So Fetterman runs way behind Shapiro, the Democrat for governor in Pennsylvania. Now, Shapiro is running against a truly crazy candidate, but Dr. Oz was also a pretty weird candidate. So if he had Shapiro’s margin, if he’d run closer to Shapiro, maybe that can make up some of the gaps in a place like Ohio, if you believe it would have held there. So I don’t know. I think there’s too much difference between the states.

But I will say in terms of the difference between Ryan and Fetterman — particularly, again, Fetterman pre-stroke, because — look, the stroke really did impair Fetterman. I mean, there’s been all kinds of commentary about this, and it’s just an auditory processing issue. I’m not his doctor. I’m not inside his brain. But the man suffered a traumatic brain injury, and he is visibly, obviously altered in its aftermath in a way that would reasonably give voters pause about his capacity as somebody to represent them. Now, they still would prefer him to Dr. Oz, which I think says a lot about Dr. Oz.

All that said, and I’m very happy to see Fetterman win, what Fetterman had and has as a candidate, which is different than Ryan — Ryan is a capable politician whose policies and beliefs position him in this older, labor-oriented tradition. He’s always been very skeptical and hawkish on China. He’s very pro organized labor. But he’s not somebody who if you meet him, or you look at him, or you listen to him talk, he bleeds a ***working class*** aesthetic. He’s a big meditator, right? I mean —

AARON RETICA: You don’t imagine John Fetterman doing a lot of yoga.

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah. And he probably does, weirdly enough, knowing a little bit about him. But Fetterman has the aesthetic, right? And this is a place where I think I end up having a real disagreement with the David Shors, and my friend Matthew Yglesias and others, who — I’m a policy guy. I’ve been covering policy my whole career. I think they’ve become too literal about policy, and too literal about how much voters know about policy and how much policy positioning matters.

I think a lot of things are tributaries into this overall gut sense of whether or not this politician is like you, and they like you, which are different ideas. You know, are they like you? Do they come from the world you come from? Do they understand you? And also, how do they feel about you? And Fetterman, who I think in a lot of ways is more liberal than Ryan, Fetterman visually and communicatively signals like he’s a guy who not only would be at the bar, but would be in the bar fight.

And that’s not Tim Ryan. And so Fetterman is a kind of visual of this — rightly or wrongly, whether or not you believe this to be true about him — this sort of ***working-class*** aesthetic. And so will that work in Ohio? It’s interesting. It’s an interesting question. But if you’re comparing the two of them, I think you’re comparing trying to signal whose side you’re on through the positions you take and the things you say versus who you are, how you move through the world, how you dress, what your temperament and comportment as a person are.

And I think at a candidate level, the latter set of qualities tend to trump it.

AARON RETICA: What interests me about that is that most people live — right, you might live in a media bubble, but you live in this world where some people you know support Trump. Maybe they’re at work, maybe they’re your family. Some people you know support Biden. Again, maybe they’re at work, maybe they’re in your family. And the world that you live in is much more like the world as a whole than your political world is, or your media consumption is.

And I think Fetterman was able to work with that in a way. Lots of people who certainly do not have the left wing populist ideas that he had have to have voted for him, because otherwise there’s no way in hell he would have won, right? And so how does he do that? He does it by being who he is. And therefore, even the stroke in a weird way does not hurt him, because as Dr. Oz his campaign is lecturing him about eating vegetables, lots of people are thinking, like, well, that could be me, which I think is an interesting part of it.

This actually brings us to another interesting question. So Democrats made a big deal about democracy. People were perplexed, or at least worried, that the Democrats who helped radical Republican deniers like Bolduc in New Hampshire — he’s probably the best example where the Democratic Party spent really quite a fair amount of money to make sure that he won the primary. So that strategy has moral questions in it, right? If you’re really that worried about democracy, why are you promoting these people. What if they win?

But on the other hand, it does seem as a tactical matter to have worked fairly well on Election Day itself. What do you think about that? Does that mean that Chuck Schumer doesn’t really fear for our democracy if he’s willing to let some of these people run? Or is it just — this is political hardball and that’s what they should be doing?

EZRA KLEIN: I always thought the discourse around this was weird, this idea that because Democrats were trying to push for these weaker but more extreme candidates, it meant they didn’t care about the thing they said they cared about. To your point about there being moral questions — and I know what I’m about to say is very on brand — the moral question is what moral philosophy you follow? Are you a consequentialist, are you into Aristotelian virtue ethics?

Like, what are you — what kind of moralist are you — because if you’re a consequentialist who cares very deeply about democracy, and you believe that the somewhat less crazy Republicans are not actually that non-crazy, and they will go along with what the broader Republican Party wants them to do, which is very often the case and has become more so — I mean, most House Republicans voted against certifying the election.

AARON RETICA: Even after, right — it’s not like they did that in a blue sky, right? They did it after Jan. 6, in the middle of the night, on Jan. 7.

EZRA KLEIN: Yes. So I think the view that there’s a sharp cut between the election denying Republicans, your Kari Lake’s — the good, normal Republicans. I mean, there are some of them, right? Mitt Romney — I don’t think Mike DeWine, who’s been around for a long time, and has a sense of himself, is going to go in for a steal. But for a lot of them, a lot of the ones who are coming up in this era, through this party, they have shown a tendency to be very submissive to what Trump and his base want them to do.

And so if you believe that you have a — let’s put it this way. The difference between a Democrat in these positions and any Republican is so much larger than the difference between a sort of cowardly Republican who has never spoken out against this dimension of the party and a fully bought in, stop the steal Republican, that it becomes a kind of math problem. Like, OK, well, how much likelier is a Democrat to win the seat if you get the more extreme person in?

If you think the more extreme person has x chance of winning the election and you multiply that by — you get into all these very weird consequentialist math problems. But I don’t know what I would have done if I were in strategic charge of this, but I think the people who made it seem like a completely easy question were not actually taking it seriously. And beyond that, I think we’re not taking seriously how complicit the Republican Party has been particularly, post-2020, in Trumpian nonsense.

Look at how Kevin McCarthy interacted with the Jan. 6 commission. Look at what happened to Liz Cheney. The idea that there is this normal Republican Party is just not true anymore. I think I said this in a recent column. I wrote about Democrats being the party of normalcy and Republicans being the party of crisis. But in many ways, the bigger threat to democracy is the Republicans who will go along with the election deniers, rather than the election deniers themselves.

It is that larger mass of cowardly Republicans who create the numbers for really terrible things to happen. So I don’t know. I have much more complicated feelings about this. I understand the position that just, morally, you don’t try to put these people closer to power. But it’s not a choice between two Republicans. It’s a choice of, how do you try to not have either of them in power?

And I understand why people who are actually in charge of making that decision don’t find it easy to say, well, we’re going to give up our chance to win this seat because this particular Republican, despite clearly backing Trump and everything he does, has not literally said the 2020 election was stolen. Yeah, it’s not easy.

AARON RETICA: I want to stay with the democracy thing for a minute, though. A lot of people voted on Election Day. Millions and millions of people voted early, mail in votes. I wonder a little bit if both sides here don’t believe the rhetoric that they spew fully at all, right? Maybe — I mean, I don’t know whether turnout — what to say about that. Does that really mean that people actually believe in democracy, and they’re not that worried about it?

I mean, somebody I work with here I was chatting about retirement. And I was saying like, OK, when I’m 70, I’ll leave right after the 2036 election. And she looked at me, and was like, what makes you so sure there are going to be elections in 2036? And I laughed, but also like, I absolutely think there will be elections in 2036. You know, I’m very concerned about Republican election denialism, and deeply worried about it.

And at the same time, I’m not thinking that 2036 isn’t going to be happening. Another way of thinking about that is that if you are in the ruling party in many other countries — bear with me for a second, I mean, over time, right — Brazil, Turkey, Argentina in different decades and different times. Like, if you’re a politician, you’re having to think like, well, what does the army think about this? And here, no one’s thinking that way, or very, very few people are thinking that way.

So we’re still in a very larval state in terms of going really down the path of being anti-democratic. And yet, you have hundreds and hundreds of people running who claim that the 2020 election was won by someone who didn’t win it. So I’m not sure what to make of all that. It’s very hard to think through. Do you have any thoughts about whether we’re actually living in Rome, 250 A.D., or Rome 350 A.D., and just not realizing what’s around the bend? Or do you think that this is all going to calm down at some point?

EZRA KLEIN: Well, of the two of us, you’re the one who knows the difference between Rome in different periods. So I’ll let you do the historical analogy —

AARON RETICA: What I meant by that was just — I just meant, like, you’re living in a city, and you’re —

EZRA KLEIN: I know, I know. I’m just playing with you.

AARON RETICA: You’re in this empire. And you’re living in this city. And you think, oh, this is going to go on forever, when meanwhile, a mere 200 years from then, your city is going to have half the people in it, and there’s no more empire.

EZRA KLEIN: Human beings, I think, have a lot of trouble living and thinking in probabilities, which is normal. I mean, I do too.

AARON RETICA: Yeah.

EZRA KLEIN: We’re really playing to type here. You’re, like, Rome in 20 — I’m like, well, it’s hard to live in probabilities. This is what all of our conversations are like, people. Look, I think the way to think about the election and sort of democracy crisis is that the near-term possibility for the kind of crisis that can dissolve a system, collapse the system, create violence in the streets, has gone from — I would have said in the ’90s, very, very low, right?

Like, obviously, always something could happen, but a point, two points — to if I said on the 15-year time frame, if you told me 15 percent, I wouldn’t think that was crazy at all, right? A election as unclear as 2000, with the polarization, media institutions, and figures that are dominating the situation of 2022 — I think you rerun 2000 now and there’s blood in the streets. I have no doubt about that, actually.

AARON RETICA: Florida again, by the way, right?

EZRA KLEIN: Florida again. So I think that people thinking about this, what they are saying is not that we have lost our democracy, or we no longer have elections, but that we stand very close. I mean, it is — we stand at a reasonably high probability of a crisis. We do not know how to resolve or whether it would be safely resolved. And yet, I don’t think that’s a majority probability. I don’t think the probability of that is 75 percent or 85 percent.

And this is true in all kinds of things. I mean, we always knew a pandemic respiratory virus was a high probability. I mean, we knew it would happen some time. I mean, back at Vox, we ran a piece from Ron Klain, who at that point was out of office. But he had been the Ebola czar, talking about how we were unprepared for this. I did a video and an interview with Bill Gates about all the damage that a pandemic respiratory flu would do. This is well before the coronavirus.

And even in the early months of the coronavirus, a lot of the people who worry about this most, they still felt — even knowing that this was going to happen eventually, they couldn’t see, because they didn’t have the information or they didn’t want to believe the information yet that it was happening now. And so when it did happen, in many, many ways, we were very unprepared. And so I just think that’s the answer to that. I don’t think these things are — I don’t think it’s revealing that people don’t believe what they say they believe.

I think what people believe is that there is a non-negligible and in fact significant chance of a constitutional or electoral crisis of the kind that can break a system. And yet day to day how you live in that when it’s not happening today is very unclear. I don’t know, like, I’ve got to go to work. I just had — I’ve been thinking a lot — I had somebody I love die recently.

And I’ve been thinking a lot about something George Saunders once said to me in an earlier podcast, where he said — and I’m paraphrasing, but he said, it’s a very strange world. The people you love, the people we love die, and we are supposed to just go back to normal within a couple of months. And that’s both horrifying and necessary.

I mean, that’s kind of how I feel about almost everything. We live in a moment in which there are a hundreds possible cataclysms.

What’s the chance of a nuclear escalation between Russia and Ukraine — not nothing. We could enter into a world of antibiotic resistance. The possibilities of climate change setting off runaway feedback loops are lower than we used to think, but not completely negligible. But also, like, I got to get my kids to school. And I got to record this podcast with you. And I hurt my neck the other day, and I needed to do my stretching.

And so it’s just kind of constant tension between you live the banal, even as you exist amidst the very sacred and the very profane. But to be really open to how wild the world can get is a sort of paralyzing way to exist, and so most people cannot day to day, in truth, maintain it.

AARON RETICA: We’re kind of a long way from the midterms. But I want to stay with your point for a second because it actually is connected to this whole calcification idea. I mentioned this earlier, but it is truly astounding, right, that more than a million people died as a result of the coronavirus pandemic just in the United States alone. And it had almost incalculable effect on the families, on the health care system, on all of this.

But compared to plagues in the past, it had not that much effect on anything political or historical, at least in the short term. Everything is pretty much as it was, which is really very, very strange. So I want to ask you how we’re going to get beyond calcification for a little bit, because what’s truly remarkable — I referred to this earlier, but the coalitions have actually changed somewhat, but the calcification has remained. The parity has remained.

What do you think could possibly happen that would create a shift here, where one coalition could actually dominate — which outside of the late 19th century has actually been the norm in American politics, where one side was up and the other side was more clearly in opposition? Like, what do you think could happen that would either shift things — and not even necessarily which side would be ahead, although obviously that’s part of it. But what do you think could come soon that would alter these coalitions in a way that would alter the politics, and make it no longer so calcified?

EZRA KLEIN: I don’t know that I think the calcification can be broken. And the reason I say that is that we have maintained pretty close parity, despite the fact that the parties have changed very dramatically over the past two decades. So you think of how close the Bush-Gore election was. But the Bush-Gore political parties, the Tweedledee and Tweedledum, as Ralph Nader said at the time, were very, very, very, very, very different than the Obama, George W. Bush parties that went into contest in 2008.

Those were very, very, very different than the Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump parties, which were in turn somewhat different than the Trump, Biden parties. And I bring that up because the two major variables you might imagine as being what you could manipulate here both changed. What the parties believed changed dramatically. I mean, you’ve seen the Republican Party go from, say, humble foreign policy to democracy-promoting neoconservatism, to Trumpian, resentful — not quite isolationism, but a strange, sort of resentful retreat.

AARON RETICA: Isolationism with drone strikes.

EZRA KLEIN: Right, sure. You’ve seen the Democratic Party become much more diverse, much more self-consciously multi-ethnic, move quite far to the left. You’ve seen the Republican Party go from moving quite far to the right economically to becoming less certain about what it stands for economically, but more a party of cultural backlash. And yet through all this, we’ve maintained this incredible razor’s edge of power.

The balance of power in the country is often closer than the votes are, but political parties orient around the system we have, not around a popular vote that often doesn’t matter. And so whatever the force that is keeping the parties near parity is really profound. And then whatever is keeping calcification — right, the fact that the parties are very different. One thing that has maintained through this whole period is the parties are just getting more and more and more different.

The Obama-Bush parties are more different than the Bush-Gore parties were. The Clinton-Trump parties were more different than the Obama-Bush parties were. And now, the Republican Party is becoming, in my view, deranged in its orientation towards the political system itself — right, its orientation towards elections and so on, the kind of temperament it rewards in its people. The Democratic Party has moved quite far left. And post Joe Biden, I expect that to continue.

And so calcification is a byproduct of the parties becoming very different. The choice is so clear that even when you don’t love the party you support, the idea of going to the other party becomes unthinkable in a way that it wasn’t when only half of Americans thought there was a major difference between the two parties at all. And so I don’t really see that changing. Now, things could happen that are so profound — we could go to war with China or a Russian nuclear attack or something.

I mean, you can imagine things that are so unignorable that they reorient American politics. And then I’d also just note that the rise of these populist right parties is happening in a lot of different countries, as my episode with Pippa Norris talked about. And so the sort of appeal of this kind of politics is not some weird quirk of the American system, but something you’re seeing in Italy, something you’re seeing in Germany, something you’re seeing in Switzerland.

Something you’re seeing — and you can go down this list. I mean, the closeness of the Lula-Bolsonaro match up in Brazil — just achingly sad to me. I mean, I’m glad Lula won, but Bolsonaro getting in the very high 40s — like, he’s a terrible leader, did terrible things. A lot of people suffered and even died. What he’s done to the rainforest is appalling, but also just how he treats other human beings, and how he treats the truth, and how he treats his own base is quite appalling.

So taking the more global perspective, there is clearly a lot of space for parties to move into what seem to be extreme directions and maintain a very high level of competitiveness. And so I think it would be foolish for me to suggest that there is some tactic or event that could change it. Maybe if technology changes, communication technology changes dramatically in some way I can’t foresee, maybe that would do it.

But I think we’re kind of stuck in this period of high calcification, high parity, and the central dynamic of politics being the sort of — do you like this diversifying, more individualistic, more freedom oriented future, or do you feel disoriented by it, and you want people who at some level aesthetically and substantively are promising to go back to a world that you understood better and you felt more comfortable in?

AARON RETICA: All right, so I want you for a second to put away the metaphysics and the ethics and imagine that you’re a Democratic strategist, and this election, just happened, and you have to deal with it. What do you take out of this? What lessons do you draw for not just 2024, but for trying to create a coalition that is bigger than the parity that we’ve been talking about? What do you do?

EZRA KLEIN: I think the lesson of the election for Democrats is that the motivating force for Democrats is Republicans. And Republicans are likely to have a very, very ugly bruising primary. They’re likely to have a lot of really wacky candidates, both who are trying to win power in 2024, but also have power from 2022 or before. And you are thinking about how to make them the issue and not get in their way. That’s the key lesson here.

If Donald Trump and the bruising Trump-DeSantis war can be the central topic, I think that’s the question. Then, there’s this issue of what the match-ups end up being, because the issue with Joe Biden, I think, is that he’s a very good match for Donald Trump for a bunch of different reasons, and not as good a match — plausibly, we’ll see about DeSantis — but particularly if the Republican Party goes in a different direction.

And look, I think Democrats need to think seriously about the fact that Joe Biden is in his 80s. And it is taking nothing away from his mental acuity or his governance strategies to say that voters might reasonably have concerns about this job for a guy in his 80s, who shows his age, and not in any abnormal way, but just because he’s a very old man. So I do think that’s the open strategic question for Democrats, and honestly for the Biden administration.

If it’s Trump, then we’re just kind of in this weird rerun with these two old guys who are now, like, known antagonists of each other. But if the Republican Party turns a page on Donald Trump, or looks to be turning the page on Donald Trump, that’s going to be a hard internal question for the Biden administration and the Democratic Party to face up to, that they obviously didn’t have to face up to in 2022.

AARON RETICA: So you’re saying if it’s a generational battle as well, right, if it’s somebody in his 50s or her 50s running against someone who will be over 80.

EZRA KLEIN: Yes. People don’t really like talking about this, but I think it is like burying your head in the sand to not think about this seriously. Also, just for the job itself — like, I don’t know how Joe Biden feels about the question, but the presidency is a very demanding job. Should he be doing it from age 82 to 86? I just think there are very hard questions here that don’t have an obvious way to resolve them.

And because there’s a very strong norm within parties that you don’t challenge an incumbent president in the primaries, there is not, I think, an intention or an expectation that the Democrats are going to test out the Joe Biden question within a Democratic primary where information on it can be gathered and a decision on it can ultimately be made. So this decision is going to be made quietly, and possibly just by Joe Biden and his direct team, but also by the question of whether or not some of the other candidates in the party decide to run when that would be a very dangerous thing for them to do against an incumbent president.

It’s a hard question, but 2024, will not just be 2022 in part because Joe Biden will be on the ballot, or some Democrat will be on the ballot as the presidential nominee. And how they think about that — in many ways, I think there’s a conversation that would have opened here if Democrats did a bunch worse than they did, that may not open. But it doesn’t mean that conversation is irrelevant. But I don’t think anybody in the party quite knows how to have it.

And I’m not saying I even know what the answer to it should be. I just think it has to be had.

AARON RETICA: What’s interesting about that also, though, is that you say that people shy away from talking about. That may be true for professional politicians. But in regular life, people talk about it constantly.

EZRA KLEIN: Yes.

AARON RETICA: Right. Biden’s too old.

EZRA KLEIN: Right. This is, like, a point of elite sensitivity. And that’s exactly what I’m saying — that Democrats can’t pretend that because they don’t like to talk about this — right, elite Democrats can pretend that because they don’t like to talk about this, that the country will not talk about it, or that a capable, younger candidate will not find ways to weaponize it or whatever. And maybe it’s fine, right? I mean, we’ve had a real gerontocracy in this country. It’s not like McConnell or Pelosi or Trump himself are young.

And so maybe the views I have as a 38-year-old, or the worries I have as a 38-year-old are not shared. And in fact, maybe it helps Joe Biden win over older voters, who are very powerful. You can make different arguments about this but. But you have to think about it, both as a political question and then again also as a substantive question. I don’t know how the job feels for Joe Biden. But he’s not out there, like, running around the country in the way he would have as a younger man.

And this is tough. And we’re two years from the election, and then six years from the end of the second term. So that’s a long time in your mid 80s. And so I don’t know. I just think it has to be taken seriously. And the normal way you might imagine this getting worked out, which is a primary, I think has become less likely given the election results. And so — but it will have to be worked out and thought through somehow.

AARON RETICA: Yeah, there’s a — I mean, not that I’m going to be laying down political rules, but there’s an interesting rule here, right? If your public conversations are too out of line with the private conversations, you have a political problem, right, because if people are in the proverbial kitchen tables discussing things that are not being talked about by the politicians themselves, that divergence probably means that you’re not doing things quite the way you should be.

So let me ask you to go into a headspace that’s a little further from where you actually live, which is the Republican strategist just waking up to these results. So they ran on fear, disorder, chaos, senility. They tried to run a very negative campaign. It didn’t work as well as they thought it would. And by the way, getting back to our DeSantis discussion, he didn’t totally do that, right? He had the negative thing, but he also had the sunny side. So if you’re a Republican strategist, what do you take out of this?

EZRA KLEIN: I don’t know that I think Republican strategists have much control over their own party. So I’m not sure what — I mean, you feel depressed, maybe? They can’t control Donald Trump. They can’t get Republican primary voters to vote for the most capable candidates. Once you’ve got Dr. Oz, once you’ve got Herschel Walker, once you’ve got Donald Trump, you’re in trouble.

So I mean, I think what’s going to happen is the party machinery is going to try to organize itself around DeSantis because he’s the best weapon they have against Trump being the standard bearer again. But what is his relationship to that strategic class? What would it mean for him to listen to them more or less? I really don’t know. I mean, what the Republican Party wishes it had was more of the actual structure of a party, where the people who make strategic decisions and run polls and so on had had a little bit more influence over the base.

But they don’t. And so I think what you’re going to have is not so much a bunch of lessons learned here. I think the lesson they have learned is that Ron DeSantis is the one figure in the Republican Party, notwithstanding things I said about other governors who also did quite well — people like Mike DeWine. But Ron DeSantis is in the Venn diagram of a Republican who won very big in 2022 and a Republican who the Republican primary base might support for president.

Now, other weird things could happen in a DeSantis-Trump race, as we talked about. But in terms of who the strategists, I think, are going to try to make a gold rush around, it’s going to be DeSantis. So ultimately, I think a lot now depends on the strategic decisions that Donald Trump and Ron DeSantis make about how to position themselves in the Republican Party. I don’t think the strategists have a big say in this one.

AARON RETICA: I wanted to ask you something. You always ask your guests for three books they would recommend. But I want to try something a little different here, for my little cameo on your show. Could you recommend to your listeners three podcasts that you like to listen to, always listen to, think are important?

EZRA KLEIN: I’m going to do two versions of this. One is what you actually asked. I don’t get to listen to that much. Most of what I listen to is this podcast, or evaluating guests for this podcast. So I listen to random things that people we might want to have on have been part of. But I have been listening to “The Prince” which is an Economist podcast — by the magazine The Economist, about Xi Jinping, the leader of China, who — I think it’s probably fair to say, is the single most powerful person in the world.

And where China goes and what our relationship is with China is probably — I mean, certainly in the top three fundamental questions of this era. And I’m not through the whole show, but I’ve loved it and I really recommend it.

Another show that I just love is Odd Lots, which is a Bloomberg podcast by Joe Wiesenthal and Tracy Alloway. And it’s an economics show, but the thing I love about the way they do Odd Lots is it is specific.

You will have full shows on, what’s going on in the lumber category right now — and super smart, great vibe with the hosts and the guests. I’ve been on it once. But I just think it’s a really good show for actually learning about what’s going on in the economy all the way from the real tangible economy of moving materials around and supply chains, all the way up to the crypto economy. And so I get a lot out of Odd Lots, and I think other people will too.

And then we’ve been doing a lot more climate on the show, but, Volts, the Dave Roberts climate podcast, is a great show. And I’ve gotten a ton on climate and energy and the energy transition out of Volts.

And then I want to recommend a couple — just quickly episodes from my show, because we really — like, they ended up shaping both this conversation and a lot of how I understood the election.

So my podcast with John Sides and Lynn Vavreck about what happened in 2020 and calcification and parity — I mean, we’ve done a kind of a thin job on these ideas in the show, but that’s the place to go to really hear that explained. And I think it is a model of elections that is really helpful right now.

Pippa Norris, also right around just a couple of weeks ago, about cultural backlash and the rise of the populist right.

And then going back a couple of months, we did a series on the right, which we call “The Rising Right.” But the first one was with Matt Continetti all about a sort of alternative history of conservatism, understanding the more conspiratorial, anti-elite, more resentful side of conservatism, not as something that had ever been purged from the right, but was always a life force, and now has become a dominant one.

And I think in thinking about who the Republican Party ran, and what kind of Republican Party we now have, you’re seeing a thread that has always been there flower into — I guess threads don’t flower, you would tell me. You’re seeing a seed that has always been there flower into the dominant plant of the party. And I think that show holds up pretty well and is worth going back to. So we’ll put all of those in show notes.

AARON RETICA: All right, so I’ll mention since you mentioned that — obviously, anyone who wants to understand that should read “The Paranoid Style of American Politics,” famous Richard Hofstadter essay which takes up that question, and is amazingly relevant even though it was written decades ago.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: “The Ezra Klein Show” is produced by Emefa Agawu, Annie Galvin, Jeff Geld, and Roge Karma. Fact checking by Michelle Harris, Rollin Hu, Kristin Lin, and Kate Sinclair. Original music by Isaac Jones, mixing by Jeff Geld and Sonia Herrero. Audience strategy by Shannon Busta. Special thanks to Kristin Lin and Kristina Samulewski.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

This was super fun. I really enjoyed it.

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[***Did the Civil Rights Movement Go Wrong?; nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y0W-CDT1-JBG3-610S-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1509 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Rauch

**Highlight:** In “The Age of Entitlement,” Christopher Caldwell argues that the source of today’s political divisions can be found in the reforms of the 1960s.

**Body**

THE AGE OF ENTITLEMENT

America Since the Sixties

By Christopher Caldwell

In September 2016, a scholar named [*Angelo M. Codevilla published*](https://claremontreviewofbooks.com/digital/after-the-republic/) an article in the conservative Claremont Review of Books ominously titled “After the Republic.” The election, he said, would not change the fact that “the Republic established by America’s founders is probably gone” — kicked aside by the 1964 Civil Rights Act, “the little law that ate the Constitution.” With or without Donald Trump, “we have stepped over the threshold of a revolution,” he warned. “Regardless of who wins in 2016, this revolution’s sentiments will grow in volume and intensity, and are sure to empower politicians likely to make Americans nostalgic for Donald Trump’s moderation.”

I overlooked Codevilla’s article in 2016, but I am paying attention now. As he predicted, American conservatism is moving in an ever angrier, more radical direction, unassuaged by its control of the presidency, the Senate and a majority on the Supreme Court. The sunny optimism of Ronald Reagan’s City on a Hill is banished; Steve Bannon, Sarah Palin, Patrick Buchanan and the ghost of George Wallace lead conservatism now. And, of course, Trump. If Christopher Caldwell’s new book is any indicator, the movement is only headed deeper into gloom, resentment and white identity politics.

Caldwell warrants attention. He is one of the right’s most gifted and astute journalists, noted especially for his thoughtful writings on Europe. “Western Europe became a multiethnic society in a fit of absence of mind,” he wrote in [*his 2009 book on Islam and immigration*](https://claremontreviewofbooks.com/digital/after-the-republic/) in Europe, a provocative and pessimistic take that won critical plaudits. His new book, “The Age of Entitlement: America Since the Sixties,” is even more provocative and pessimistic.

[*Like the liberal writer Mark Lilla*](https://claremontreviewofbooks.com/digital/after-the-republic/), Caldwell reinterprets Reagan as an enabler, not an opponent, of Me Generation self-absorption. The ethos of me-first individualism, unrestrained capitalism, opportunistic globalization, liberal immigration and release from traditional sexual norms suited elites of both political parties, but it was not so good for the ***working-class***, tradition-minded Americans who are said to form the country’s backbone. Adding insult to injury, they were looked down on by progressives and ignored by conservatives. No wonder they rebelled.

If you think Caldwell sounds like Bannon, the self-appointed tribune of Trumpian ***working-class*** populism, you’re right. But the conservative critique of Davos Man has a lot to say that deserves a hearing. Conservative intellectuals like [*Oren Cass*](https://claremontreviewofbooks.com/digital/after-the-republic/) and   [*David Frum*](https://claremontreviewofbooks.com/digital/after-the-republic/) and   [*Yuval Levin*](https://claremontreviewofbooks.com/digital/after-the-republic/), along with Republican politicians like Senators Josh Hawley and Mike Lee and Ben Sasse, are rethinking Reagan-Thatcherism from beleaguered workers’ and communities’ point of view. And not a moment too soon. If Caldwell’s book ended there, it would honorably augment that conversation.

But it does not end there, because the real heart of Caldwell’s story is race and civil rights. A more descriptive subtitle might be: “How the Civil Rights Revolution Overturned the Constitution, Divided America and Victimized Whites.”

In Caldwell’s telling, the Civil Rights Act, which banned many forms of discrimination, was a swindle. Billed as a one-time correction that would end segregation and consign race consciousness to the past, it actually started an endless and escalating campaign of race-conscious social engineering. Imperialistically, civil rights expanded to include “people of color” and immigrants and gays and, in short, anyone who was not native-born, white and straight — all in service of “the task that civil rights laws were meant to carry out — the top-down management of various ethnic, regional and social groups.”

With civil rights as their bulldozer, in Caldwell’s view, progressive movements ran amok. They “could now, through the authority of civil rights law, override every barrier that democracy might seek to erect against them”; the law and rhetoric of civil rights “gave them an iron grip on the levers of state power.” And so, today, affirmative action discriminates against whites and then lies about it; public and private bureaucracies trample freedom of association; political correctness stigmatizes dissent and censors language and even thought; “every single state must now honor” Martin Luther King Jr., “and affirm its delight in doing so.”

The civil rights revolution, to Caldwell, is nothing less than constitutional in scope — or, more precisely, anti-constitutional, because it overturns “the de jure constitution of 1788, with all the traditional forms of jurisprudential legitimacy and centuries of American culture behind it,” replacing it with a “new, minoritarian constitution” that pushes race-consciousness into every cranny of society. White men, the losers in the new order, responded by adopting their own identitarian, victim-group mind-set. “They fell asleep thinking of themselves as the people who had built this country and woke up to find themselves occupying the bottom rung of an official hierarchy of races.”

And so here we are, not one country but two, governed by two constitutions, not one. “Democrats, loyal to the post-1964 constitution, could not acknowledge (or even see) that they owed their ascendancy to a rollback of the basic constitutional freedoms Americans cherished most. Republicans, loyal to the pre-1964 constitution, could not acknowledge (or even see) that the only way back to the free country of their ideals was through the repeal of the civil rights laws. The combination was a terrible one — rising tensions along with a society-wide inability to talk or think straight about anything.”

Nor is even that miserable dispensation the whole of it. Engaging in what Marxists call “heightening the contradictions,” Caldwell argues that the oppressive imperialism of civil rights laws is not incidental. Citizens, he writes, must “choose between these two orders.” There never was a moderate, limited way to keep the promises of integration. “Civil rights was always this way: Dignity was an integral and nonnegotiable part of what was demanded, and a government interested in civil rights must secure it, no matter what the cost in rights to those who would deny it.” Associational freedoms and property rights were always on the chopping block, incompatible with the 1964 act. Caldwell notices that “it tended to be segregationists who philosophized in this vein” — and yes, he does go there, quoting an old-time Southern segregationist to the effect that a merchant’s right not to serve blacks is “simple justice.”

Perhaps the author should have come up for oxygen when he found himself suggesting that the Southern segregationists were right all along. Reading this overwrought and strangely airless book, one would never imagine a different way of viewing things, one that rejects Caldwell’s ultimatum to “choose between these two orders.” In that view — my own — America has seen multiple refoundings, among them the Jackson era’s populism, the Civil War era’s abolition of slavery, the Progressive era’s governmental reforms and the New Deal era’s economic and welfare interventions. All of them, like the civil rights revolution, sparked tense and sometimes violent clashes between competing views of the Constitution and basic rights, but in my version of history, those tensions proved not only survivable but fruitful, and working through them has been an engine of dynamism and renewal, not destruction and oppression. I worry about the illiberal excesses of identity politics and political correctness, but I think excesses is what they are, and I think they, too, can be worked through. Being a homosexual American now miraculously married to my husband for almost a decade, I can’t help feeling astonished by a history of America since 1964 that finds space for only one paragraph briefly acknowledging the civil rights movement’s social and moral achievements — before hastening back to “But the costs of civil rights were high.”

Perhaps most depressingly, Caldwell’s account, even if one accepts its cramped view of the Constitution and its one-eyed moral bookkeeping, leads nowhere. It proffers no constructive alternative, no plausible policy or path. The author knows perfectly well that there will be no “repeal of the civil rights laws.” He foresees only endless, grinding, negative-sum cultural and political warfare between two intractably opposed “constitutions.” His vision is a dead end. Unfortunately, it also seems to be where American conservatism is going.

Jonathan Rauch is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. His most recent book is “The Happiness Curve: Why Life Gets Better After 50.” THE AGE OF ENTITLEMENT America Since the Sixties By Christopher Caldwell 342 pp. Simon & Schuster. $28.

PHOTO: Lyndon Johnson signs the 1964 Civil Rights Act and gives a pen to Martin Luther King Jr. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE TAMES/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (BR14)

**Related Articles**

* [*Strangers in the Land*](https://claremontreviewofbooks.com/digital/after-the-republic/)

1. [*The End of Identity Liberalism*](https://claremontreviewofbooks.com/digital/after-the-republic/)

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[***'Doubling Down on New York' and Bringing a Neighborhood Back***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64DR-4DR1-JBG3-63N9-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Mihir Zaveri

**Body**

The Omicron variant is keeping Manhattan's offices empty. But an influx of residents and a housing boom in neighborhoods like Chelsea hint at a better future.

Not long after graduating from the University of Florida this spring, Emily Locke decided to move to the Chelsea neighborhood in Manhattan.

Ms. Locke, 22, grew up near West Palm Beach, but had long been attracted to the invigorating, unpredictable energy she felt during childhood visits to New York. Chelsea offered the perfect blend of shops and access to multiple subway lines.

She knew of the pandemic's devastating toll in New York and how so many people had fled the city. Still, this summer she jumped at the chance to rent a studio apartment. Fully vaccinated, she has gone to Broadway shows and restaurants close to home, and even has a favorite neighborhood juice shop.

As the pandemic gave rise to scenes of death and desperation across New York, few places emptied out more than the blocks in and around Chelsea, the upscale neighborhood known for trendy restaurants, art galleries and an elevated urban park, the High Line. The outflow of residents from Manhattan fueled headlines about New York's demise and the decline of urban America.

But even as the Omicron variant has once again plunged the city and Chelsea into uncertainty, this year has also fostered a more hopeful narrative: the filling out of once-emptied neighborhoods. Chelsea has been among the leading areas in New York in luring returning and new residents, new findings show, stoking a boom in the housing market and projecting a far more optimistic future than the one conjured by last year's gloomiest predictions. Asking rents have skyrocketed and surpassed prepandemic levels.

''Covid is terrible, and what it's doing to the city is horrible,'' said Ms. Locke, who works at a marketing firm in Manhattan. ''But you can't let it completely stop you from living your life.''

Chelsea has been hit particularly hard in the recent surge. There were 2,600 new cases per 100,000 residents, on average, in the Chelsea area in the past week, according to the latest city data, the highest of any neighborhood in the city.

Ms. Locke, who tested positive this month and has since recovered, said she understood the toll the Omicron variant was taking on the city, but that she was not scared, noting that vaccines seemed to be preventing the worst outcomes for many people.

''It has to end at some point,'' she said.

Chelsea is one of several Manhattan neighborhoods, including Murray Hill, the East Village, the Upper East Side and Greenwich Village, where a rapid exodus driven by the pandemic appears to have largely stopped, and is even slowly reversing in some cases. In one ZIP code in Chelsea, for example, data from the United States Postal Service shows more people moving in than out during several months of this year.

The population is still far from fully recovered and remote work is enabling many employees to live far from their Manhattan offices. The Omicron variant is feeding a resurgent wave of infections and anxiety, raising questions about how much longer office workers and tourists will stay away from New York and hobble its recovery.

And for many ***working-class*** parts of the city, the picture is more dire: unemployment remains high, thousands struggle to pay rent, and the expiration of New York's moratorium on evictions looms just weeks away.

But the resurgence in Chelsea reflects how many of the city's wealthier neighborhoods, which hollowed out as the pandemic began last year, are now slowly rebounding and showing the potential for a vibrant future anchored in what has long made New York attractive and resilient: an abundance of culture, entertainment and social attractions.

''People want to be at the center of the action,'' said Kathryn Wylde, the president of the Partnership for New York City, an influential business organization. ''Work is one piece of that, but there's much more. They want to be where the ball drops on New Year's Eve. They want to be where the art shows open, where fashion is defined, where there are limitless cultural opportunities.''

The pandemic prompted many to abandon cities across the country for suburbs or rural areas. But the outflow appears to be slowing in many urban centers, as more people have gotten vaccinated and schools and businesses have reopened.

And the population shifts have been the most striking in the nation's largest city, which was among the first and hardest-hit places in the early days of the pandemic.

A recent analysis of United States Postal Service data by the New York City Comptroller found that the number of residents leaving the city in 2020 was triple that in 2019. The outflow has also underscored the city's inequality: residents in the wealthiest neighborhoods, many who have white-collar jobs that made remote work easier or had resources to move, were much more likely to have left than other residents, the report found.

This year, a swath of western Manhattan, including Chelsea and Midtown, which saw among the greatest losses in 2020, also saw among the greatest net gain of people who said they planned to stay permanently, the report found.

The Postal Service data, which tracks address changes reported by residents, is incomplete -- for example, it does not account for international migration nor does it capture young adults making a first move after college who may not fill out change of address forms.

A separate analysis by the Partnership for New York City, examining just one ZIP code in Chelsea, and looking at both permanent and temporary moves, showed a net loss in 2020 of more than 2,700 residents, amounting to about 12 percent of the estimated population of the entire ZIP code -- among the highest proportions of people leaving any ZIP code in the city.

The data reflects a brighter picture this year: The net loss through November was about 100. And between April and November, there was even a net gain of 29. That is a notable reversal compared with the corresponding period in 2019, when the ZIP code showed a net loss of more than 530.

''I feel like Chelsea is reviving from the pandemic,'' said Michael J. Franco, a real estate agent with the brokerage Compass who works in the neighborhood.

Mr. Franco said apartment sales have started picking up. In one building in the heart of Chelsea, 15 apartments have sold in 2021, compared with three in 2020, he said.

Rents have been soaring. According to StreetEasy, the median asking rent in November in Chelsea was $4,801, up more than 45 percent over the prior year, and higher than a $4,462 peak in June 2019.

The rising housing prices are driven, in part, by many people who postponed moving and saved up money during the pandemic, brokers and analysts said. Other property owners had taken units off the market because they knew they might not get a good price. Low mortgage rates are encouraging more buying.

''When you have a massive surge in sales activity, part of that is pent-up demand, part of that is extreme confidence about the future, and part of it is normalizing,'' said Jonathan Miller of Miller Samuel, an appraisal company. ''The city has been playing catch-up from the lack of activity.''

Still, Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics, said New York faced immense challenges.

While the return of some residents may buoy particular neighborhoods, he said that overall, the New York City metropolitan area, including Newark and Jersey City, N.J., is still losing population, just at a slower rate.

''I don't think anyone is arguing that New York won't come back,'' Mr. Zandi said, adding that the questions will be ''how quickly, and will it ever get back what it lost during the pandemic.''

Chelsea is drawing both newcomers and residents who left and have come back.

As the pandemic worsened in April 2020, Emily Bracken, 45, moved from her apartment in Harlem to her sister's home in Westchester County. Ms. Bracken enjoyed reconnecting with family. But after a few months, she began missing the small things about life in New York, like interactions at the bodega or overhearing strangers' conversations.

Ms. Bracken had always wanted to buy a place in the city and found a one-bedroom in Chelsea, which she was attracted to because of how easy it was to get to Brooklyn or Greenwich Village, NoMad and other neighborhoods she liked. She declined to give the exact price, but said the apartment fell within her price range of $500,000 to $1 million. The deal closed in September and she moved in around Thanksgiving.

''I liked the idea of doubling down on New York,'' she said.

Yousif Alrasheed, 25, a graduate student at Pace University who is studying remotely, moved in May to a one-bedroom apartment in Chelsea from Boston, where he was living near family. Mr. Alrasheed grew up in Kuwait, and had visited New York City many times in the past. He never considered living anywhere else.

''Coming to the city was amazing compared to Boston,'' he said. ''It was so lively here.''

Mr. Alrasheed said he loves Chelsea's central location and the concentration of nearby bars and restaurants. Among the biggest draws of the apartment, which costs about $3,600 a month: a washer and dryer and a walk-in closet. And he has recently noticed more and more people in the neighborhood.

''Especially when the fall started and summer ended, everyone just came back here,'' he said.

Justin Silver, who had lived in Chelsea for 25 years, moved last winter to Los Angeles, where he was able to stay with friends for free. Mr. Silver, who performs stand-up comedy, enjoyed the weather and the ease of social distancing.

As vaccines became increasingly available, however, Mr. Silver, 45, moved back to his rent-regulated unit in the neighborhood -- an affordable place to stay in a pricey Manhattan neighborhood.

''The ease of just being on this island, it just makes it so much easier to get around,'' he said.

Nate Schweber contributed reporting.Nate Schweber contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/29/nyregion/chelsea-nyc-coronavirus.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/29/nyregion/chelsea-nyc-coronavirus.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Chelsea Market in Manhattan last week. The Chelsea neighborhood has seen an influx of New Yorkers who left during the pandemic, including Emily Bracken, 45, below left, who recently bought a one-bedroom apartment in Chelsea, as well as newcomers like Emily Locke, 22, right, a University of Florida graduate.

The High Line in Chelsea. Covid has not deterred new residents like Ms. Locke. ''It has to end at some point,'' she said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARAH BLESENER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Meet Me Downtown***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66RK-0KT1-JBG3-635T-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Mike Baker, Jack Healy, Rick Rojas, Edgar Sandoval, Julie Bosman, Eliza Fawcett, Emily Cochrane and Campbell Robertson

**Body**

The downtown has long been the beating heart of many American cities. Their jumbles of offices, apartments, theaters and restaurants are braided together by overlapping cultures and histories, where life pulsed to the beats of traffic, construction and crowds.

America's downtowns faced hard times long before the coronavirus pandemic -- troubles brought on by suburban flight, economic dislocation and freeway-construction projects that gutted neighborhoods, among other things. But the blast waves of Covid posed a threat that was new, and even existential, for places where density is part of the DNA. The virus upended where we work and live and play, and confronted cities with rising crime, crisis-level housing shortages and racial and class inequities that raise the question of who it is, exactly, that downtowns are meant to serve.

Reporters and photographers from The New York Times visited 10 cities across the country to examine how the pandemic and its aftershocks have tested and reshaped America's downtowns.

While some downtown areas remain empty and are struggling to bring back workers and tourists at pre-pandemic levels, many say they have come back even stronger and more resilient -- drawing in tourists and new residents, even as many office workers stay home. While there's no simple answer for why some places have rebounded while others limp along, their experiences reveal the challenges and possibilities that lie ahead for the country's cities and towns. -- JACK HEALY

By Eliza Fawcett

At midday on a Monday in August, downtown Hartford was desolate. A scattering of workers ate lunch in Constitution Plaza, the heart of the city's business district. Elevated walkways were eerily quiet. Buses slipped through empty streets.

The pandemic has hollowed out Connecticut's capital, a city of 120,000 about halfway between New York and Boston. The major companies that once secured Hartford's claim to be the ''insurance capital of the world'' have drastically reduced their footprints downtown, as employees opt for remote work. In the past year alone, Travelers Insurance, UnitedHealthcare, Prudential Financial and others have relinquished hundreds of thousands of square feet of downtown office space.

''I worry about it every day,'' said David Griggs, chief executive of the MetroHartford Alliance, the region's chamber of commerce.

Hartford has long been defined by the rhythms of its office workers, with a reputation as a place that rolled up the sidewalks at 5 p.m. Before Covid-19 hit, downtown streets would be busy with tens of thousands of workers in the mornings, at lunchtime and around happy hour. Now, though, with hybrid work schedules at many companies, ''we're not seeing that same influx of corporate workers,'' said Jordan Polon, executive director of the Hartford Business Improvement District.

As remote work cuts off a full-scale revival of the city's business district, local leaders and developers are hoping that deeper investments in residential life and cultural attractions downtown will help fill the void. The pandemic has shown that the city needs to be ''more residential-focused and less dependent on the office,'' said Michael Seidenfeld, chief operating officer at Shelbourne, a commercial landlord with a major stake in the downtown area.

That transition is slowly underway. A $50 million luxury residential development downtown has already attracted tenants, and hundreds more units are scheduled to become available in the area over the coming years. Free events on weekends and in off-hours have begun to lure people back downtown.

One Saturday toward the end of the summer, a dragon boat festival featuring Thai and Vietnamese food drew Jared Carter, 33, to the banks of the Connecticut River.

Hartford is slower and quieter than New York or Boston, he and his friends agreed. But the city, whose population is predominantly Black and Latino, has a diversity that is rare in New England. And there is an ease to life in Hartford, they said, with good breweries and live music on the weekends.

''It's been trying to find its own identity for a long time,'' Mr. Carter said of the city. ''But I think it's slowly coming together.''

A few blocks away on Pratt Street, a D.J. blasted Earth, Wind & Fire as children twirled hula hoops. Storefronts that had sat vacant for years were plastered with the banners of soon-to-arrive occupants: a cocktail lounge, a tattoo-and-coffee shop, a sports bar. A new bakery, Bloom Bake Shop, was primed to open in a spacious storefront, supported by funding from the American Rescue Plan Act.

Rory Gale, the owner of Hartford Prints!, a stationery store on the block, said she hoped the city would finally capitalize on its potential.

''There's always this great momentum, and then a decline, and then great momentum,'' she said. ''We're always almost getting there.''

Many longtime residents say they still feel the sting of what the city has lost, not just during the pandemic but over the decades before it. Waiting for the first pitch of a minor-league baseball game at Dunkin' Donuts Park, Abraham Carrasquillo, 51, recalled the long-dead downtown stores where he used to buy shoes and Christmas presents.

''There's no retail out here anymore,'' he said. ''Just the restaurants trying to survive.''

But it was a warm summer night, and to his childhood friend Jose Mercado, 50, there was still plenty to love about the city. It was Roberto Clemente Day at the ballpark, a time to reconnect. In the outfield, the American and Puerto Rican flags were unfurled side by side.

''You can see all the way around,'' Mr. Mercado said with a smile. ''Any seat is good.''

By Julie Bosman

Mauro Bruno, an owner of Avanti, an Italian cafe in downtown Chicago, stood in his restaurant's dining room and pointed to the empty space where customers used to form lines at lunchtime that stretched from the counter out to the sidewalk.

Finance guys, office workers, administrative assistants, he remembered -- all in a hurry to grab a panini and get back to their desks.

''It was crazy -- we used to have a rock-solid business,'' Mr. Bruno said. ''But if people aren't going to work, they're not going to lunch. I don't think it's ever coming back.''

In this part of the Loop, the heart of Chicago, the scene on Friday afternoons resembles that of the dark, spooky days early in the pandemic, when people rarely ventured out of their homes and office buildings were barely functioning.

Restaurants are quiet now, especially on Mondays and Fridays when working from home is most common, and Mr. Bruno said he was constantly watchful for pickpockets who prey on his few customers. Many nearby storefronts are vacant, with signs in the windows offering leases. One real estate company estimated this year that one-third of Chicago's downtown storefronts were empty.

Venture away from the corporate-office parts of the Loop, however, and Chicago starts to look closer to normal.

Along Lake Michigan and the Chicago River, the areas that are most popular with tourists are bustling with visitors, public art and street musicians. Architectural boat tours of the city are seeing the crowds return. Large trade shows and concerts in the city over the summer brought some downtown hotels their biggest month ever, according to Kimberly Bares, chief executive of the Magnificent Mile Association, a trade group representing Michigan Avenue businesses.

In Millennium Park, at the huge shiny sculpture known as the Bean, crowds jostled for a spot to take a picture with the skyline of Chicago reflected above.

Janet Agunloye, 31, a social worker who lives in the city, was there with a visiting cousin. Her usual downtown spots -- restaurants, rooftop bars overlooking the river -- have been full again lately, she said, after a pandemic lull when she could always get a table. ''Everything is crazy here again,'' Ms. Agunloye said.

Graham Thompson, a native Chicagoan and the owner of Optimo, a store that sells high-end hats manufactured on the South Side, is straddling both sides of a bifurcated downtown.

From his gleaming store in the Monadnock Building in the Loop, he has seen foot traffic in the area climb steadily, but not to prepandemic levels. He is optimistic that in the long run, downtown's purpose is shifting away from a focus on corporate life and more toward the arts, culture and music. He described the downtown as ''depressing'' during the pandemic. But ''the city is so resilient,'' he said. ''Chicago's feeling better.''

By Campbell Robertson

For years, downtown Lexington was an afterthought to everything around it -- two universities, a ring of homey residential neighborhoods and, in the rolling bluegrass hills surrounding the city, world-class horse farms. Basketball fans would go into town for University of Kentucky home games, and horse owners would gather at the few nice restaurants when the big horse sales in the area were underway. But otherwise, downtown was a stodgy precinct of banks, law offices and not much else.

That changed in the 2010s. Years of effort by civic boosters dovetailed with a nationwide rediscovery of urban living, and suddenly downtown Lexington was blooming. New bars, restaurants and coffeehouses proliferated; old bank buildings were repurposed into boutique hotels; old distilleries started making bourbon again; and developers put up glassy high-rises. There were plans for a $300 million renovation of the city's convention center and basketball arena.

''It just seemed like, starting from 2010, every year was getting better,'' said Debbie Long, the owner of Dudley's on Short, a restaurant that has been a downtown mainstay for 41 years, where regulars would linger over filet mignon as the city first slept, and then boomed. ''The Marriott was getting ready to open in March,'' Ms. Long said of the months just before the pandemic took hold. ''The Breeders' Cup was coming in 2021. We were scheduled to host some regional games for the N.C.A.A. tournament.''

About a week after the Marriott opened, though, the city shut down.

Lexington is more recession-proof than some other cities, because its largest employers are universities and hospitals. But still, the city was brought to an abrupt halt. Restaurants and bars were among the hardest hit businesses, and the hits came in waves.

''Either we weren't making enough money, or there was high demand and we couldn't find staff,'' said Dan Wu, who opened the first of what would be four Atomic Ramen locations in 2017. By the summer of 2021, they had all closed.

The big real estate developers in town had a different problem. When the pandemic hit, they had already spent millions on their projects, so they pushed ahead, if nervously. Some opened during the height of the pandemic.

''They just took the attitude of, 'You know, this can't last forever, or at least we hope it can't,''' said Harold Tate, a former leader of the city's development authority, who is now working as a project manager.

Is Lexington back to where it left off? Not completely. According to a report by the Downtown Lexington Partnership, a variety of measures of the local economy -- including convention attendance figures -- were considerably higher in 2021 than they were in 2020 but still not quite at prepandemic levels.

You'd be hard-pressed to know that, though, if you went downtown on a Friday night -- even one in mid-August, before the students were back in town or the horse sales were going. The streets were noisy and full, the parking valets were busy at the steakhouses, concertgoers spilled out onto the sidewalks and D.J.s played to rooftop dance parties. The next morning, the downtown farmers' market was packed, and around the corner, people stood in a half-hour-long line to buy tickets for a flight of coffee tastings at the annual Cold Brew Festival.

The pandemic ''was such a drastic hit,'' said Nate Polly, who has been roasting coffee downtown for a decade. But now, he said, ''from a perspective of seeing people out doing things, it's better than 2019.''

By Mike Baker

In the heart of Seattle's retail core, a multimillion-dollar renovation has given the Pacific Place Mall an expansive atrium entranceway, with natural wood and natural light that beckon to a valuable clientele: the thousands of people who, in ordinary times, would be working at Amazon's nearby headquarters.

But these days, the city's tech industry remains largely in work-from-home mode, and the stores in Pacific Place -- which completed its renovation in 2020 -- are mostly vacant. A few shoppers ride the escalators through an eerie emptiness. Much of the sunlight harnessed by the architects now falls on painted plywood walls.

''Welcome to the great indoors,'' says one of the walls, apparently oblivious to all that has transpired.

Retail destinations meant to draw shoppers into major cities spent much of the pandemic struggling to survive. Now they are trying to discern whether the stark changes in downtown life are permanent, or whether the allure of downtowns will keep the retail sector on a methodical path back toward the vibrancy of their heyday.

Perhaps nowhere is that uncertainty more acute than in Amazon's hometown, where the company and the city's brick-and-mortar retailers have had a complicated relationship, often competing but also at times complementing one another.

At Pacific Place, many of the national retailers who were once anchor tenants have not returned. The mall's managers have instead offered pop-up retail space for local businesses to showcase their wares and test the viability of taking a more permanent space.

On the second floor, Laurie Kearney has set up her shop, Ghost Gallery, featuring local art, wine and décor -- many of the items with ghost themes -- in a mall that is trying to avoid being a ghost town. The items she sells are things you can't find on Amazon. So, too, are the experiences: In the back, where before the pandemic shoppers would try on clothing from Francesca's, visitors can now get a tarot card reading.

Ms. Kearney's shop used to be in the nearby Capitol Hill neighborhood, but she seized on the opportunity to relocate into Pacific Place during the pandemic. Since then, she said, her foot traffic and business have steadily increased.

''A lot of my customers are tech folks,'' she said. ''They come in and want to buy art and support small businesses.''

There are other signs of hope for downtown: Demand for hotel rooms in Seattle is nearing prepandemic levels, and so are visitors, according to the Downtown Seattle Association, and more people live downtown now than in 2019. Cruise ships arriving over the summer brought tourists flooding into the waterfront, which is undergoing a sweeping renewal to better connect visitors to the Pike Place Market to the north and the city's sports stadiums to the south.

Still, office workers are only commuting to downtown at about 40 percent of their prepandemic numbers, and many businesses and visitors express concern about safety and homelessness.

The city is experimenting with a program to subsidize small retailers who move into vacant stores downtown. One business owner in the program is Sierra Jones, who opened a shop called Inside in April. The store, a few blocks from Pacific Place, features local art, products and events.

Ms. Jones views her shop as part of an effort to rebuild what was lost in a downtown that gave her many fond memories.

''To me, personally, I believe Seattle can be what it used to be,'' she said, ''thriving with businesses, thriving with commerce, thriving with community events.''

By Jack Healy

Before Covid, residents and business owners had big dreams for Old Town Peoria, an overlooked little downtown in the Phoenix suburbs. In place of empty lots and shuttered buildings, they envisioned new apartments, shops and restaurants. Maybe a climbing wall or concert space. New money, energy and life.

They are still waiting.

On a 106-degree summer afternoon, Jorge Berber sat outside his family's barbershop, marveling at how the undertow of the pandemic had never relented. The shop's haircut numbers were still down 40 percent. The auto parts store next door was empty now. When, Mr. Berber wondered, would Arizona's galloping growth finally trickle into the quiet downtown that anchors Peoria, a city of 190,000 people?

''All these promises, and nothing ever happens,'' Mr. Berber said. ''There are a lot of businesses that didn't survive.''

Business owners say that plans to redevelop downtown seemed to wither during the pandemic, amid turmoil between the city and a developer. As the city sprang back from pandemic shutdowns, the business owners watched spring-training tourists flock to the baseball complex and 100-table restaurants on the north side of Peoria, and lamented that their city seemed to be growing everywhere but downtown.

Peoria appeals to young families and first-time home buyers who find themselves priced out of Phoenix or Scottsdale. They settle in old bungalows, stucco ranches and new apartment complexes. There's plenty to do, from hiking to jet-skiing and pontoon-boating on the Lake Pleasant reservoir.

There just isn't as much to do downtown. Restaurants there hung on with takeout menus and outdoor seating. Driftwood Coffee, a locally owned cafe that opened in 2018, survived in part by capitalizing on its to-go window. A distillery shifted focus to become an event and wedding space. But a locksmith and laundromat are no more.

Business owners say that Peoria's residents are hungry for an excuse to return downtown. People pack the pocket parks and fill the streets whenever the city holds an art walk or a Second Saturdays party. Unlike so many Arizona commercial strips that are built around parking lots and five-lane streets, Peoria's downtown is made for strolling, with parks and houses within walking distance.

One business that opened downtown during the pandemic is 808 Social, a Hawaiian-themed coffee shop that has found an improbable niche selling macadamia-nut iced coffees and Spam musubi in the middle of the Sonoran desert. ''I never came around this area,'' Sarah Ihori, a barista, said of downtown. ''It's changed a lot.''

But day to day, it is still too empty, said Lance Linderman, an owner of Driftwood Coffee.

''It hasn't really come back,'' Mr. Linderman said. ''Most people never come through here. Or know about it.''

By Rick Rojas

In the cafes and little shops that ring the courthouse in Mountain View, Ark., residents have found it increasingly common to run into new neighbors ''from off.'' In the local parlance of the place, ''from off'' is a label for people who come from off the mountain -- who, whether by luck or divine strategy, were raised somewhere else but wound up in a small town reachable by the country highways that wind and weave through the Ozarks.

''We asked God to lead us to the land where we were supposed to be, and ended up in Mountain View,'' said Roni Willson, who set off from Nebraska with her husband roughly a year ago to build a new life -- ''destination unknown,'' as she put it.

In recent years, a couple from the Mississippi Delta has reinvigorated the formerly shuttered Inn at Mountain View, just off the town square. A couple from San Antonio opened the town's only doughnut shop. The president of the local Folklore Society hails from Baton Rouge, La.

Downtown Mountain View, population roughly 2,800, could be defined by the blocks around the old Stone County courthouse, where the streets are dotted with a cafe serving country staples and a newer spot offering Mexican food; shops selling wooden furniture, and parks where musicians gather for impromptu jam sessions. (There are no bars, though; Stone County, like nearly half the counties in Arkansas, is dry.)

The community is not without its struggles: The economy of the area relies on tourism, and was battered by the pandemic. Festivals that were major draws, like Bean Fest and Folk Fest, went mostly dormant.

But things have been springing back. On a late August weekend, hundreds of motorcycles rumbled into town for a rally. The dance hall just off the square was filling up again on weekends, with crowds inching up to about half as large as they were before the pandemic.

There are also people in Mountain View like Erwin York, who is anything but ''from off.'' Mr. York, 97, lives on the land where he was born. He knows in his bones the magnetism of the place. Though he lived in California for 38 years, ''I always said when I retired, I'd come home,'' he said -- and he did, some 40 years ago.

Mountain View is not for everyone. Slowing down to the town's pace can be a tough adjustment. ''We've got friends who are all, 'There's no Chick-fil-A!''' said Kevin Goggans. He and his wife, Cheri, bought and now run the Inn at Mountain View, a bed-and-breakfast where musicians will play casually in the parlor after a show at Club Possum, and then return for homemade waffles and syrup in the morning.

''I feel like we've kept our charm,'' one of the musicians, Pam Setser, a singer and songwriter who grew up locally, said of Mountain View after breakfast. ''They've been trying to do more things to make it a little more charming.''

Elsewhere, she knew, the arrival of outsiders might be met with resistance and concern. But it seemed to her, she said, that many of the people ''from off'' whom she encountered were drawn by the soul of Mountain View and were intent on protecting it.

''They have a love and desire to be part of Mountain View,'' Ms. Setser said.

Even so, some recent transplants from Texas pointed out one alteration that they would not mind: They'd love a margarita with their Mexican food.

By Jack Healy

Salt Lake City's downtown roared back from the depths of the pandemic. As newcomers flooded into Utah over the past two years -- enticed by a hot economy, a lower cost of living and the outdoors -- new residential towers, food halls and whiskey bars have sprouted against the backdrop of the Wasatch mountains. The city's downtown population is expected to double in the next two years.

But it comes at a cost: Rocsheda Wilson said the downtown resurgence was pushing out ***working-class*** people like her.

For 30 years, Salt Lake City was her affordable hometown. She lost her customer-service job after getting Covid-19, then lost her apartment. She said she and four of her children had to career from couches to motels to transitional housing.

Apartments in her old neighborhood that once rented for $850 had been renamed, remodeled and re-rented for $1,700. She now lives in a subsidized apartment in a suburb 45 minutes' drive south of the city.

''It was either take this and deal with the grind, or be out on the street,'' she said one afternoon, as she and her son Antwan, 13, walked toward the bus stop on their commute home.

Housing costs have spiraled in Mountain West downtowns during the pandemic, spurred by remote work and worsening housing shortages. Housing costs have soared in cities like Denver and Boise, Idaho, as well as in ritzy mountain towns like Park City, Utah. In Salt Lake City, the price of a typical home rose to more than $600,000 last month, from $425,000 at the outset of the pandemic in March 2020.

Salt Lake City has struggled to provide enough housing for the working poor and people who are chronically homeless. Downtown business owners complained to the police over the summer about security, human waste and drug activity stemming from growing numbers of homeless people who do not have adequate access to help.

Salt Lake City is spending roughly $26 million on affordable housing projects, such as building new housing and retrofitting existing motels into apartments, and also hopes to build an $8 million tiny-home community, Mayor Erin Mendenhall said. Advocates say the projects are welcome, but much more is needed.

And the city keeps growing. While only about 60 percent of downtown office workers have come back, tourism and nightlife have surged past prepandemic levels. A dozen downtown restaurants closed while pandemic restrictions were in force, but since then, 19 have opened. In a state where as recently as 2017, strict alcohol laws required that drinks be mixed out of sight of restaurant patrons, tipplers can now order a Utah Old Fashioned at a clubby new restaurant, Franklin Avenue, or have craft beer and tacos in the industrial Granary District.

Matt Crandall, a downtown restaurateur, said the traffic at his restaurants was running as much as 20 percent above prepandemic levels. ''People are dying to get out,'' he said. ''The city is getting bigger. It's amazing -- on every street corner there are condo buildings going up.''

On the eastern edge of downtown, a seven-story apartment building was rising beside Ms. Wilson and her son as they headed home. It promised to have a rooftop swimming pool and a club room. As they looked around, Ms. Wilson's son set down the heavy bag of pantry items that they were lugging to their new apartment far from downtown.

''Everything is completely changing,'' she said.

By Mike Baker

Ken Fish, a four-decade resident of Nampa, Idaho, had not spent much time downtown in recent years. But early last month he was enticed to take his 1956 Chevy Bel Air to a downtown street festival, and when he did, he and his wife could not help but notice an unexpected vibrancy around them.

Teenagers were lining up to test their skills at ax-throwing. Toddlers were sitting down to get their faces painted. Along a sidewalk that the city had recently widened, diners filled tables at a row of restaurants. Inside a pet supply shop with a ''Grand Opening'' banner, dogs and humans scoped out chew toys.

''Us coming down here, we are getting to see things we probably wouldn't have even paid attention to,'' said Mr. Fish, 76, nodding to a packed restaurant across the street.

A canvas hanging in the office of Mayor Debbie Kling depicts Nampa's downtown more than half a century ago, its streets lined with bustling shops. But over the years, shoppers were lured away -- first to a mall on the edge of town, then to a bigger mall in Boise, then online to Amazon. Many of Nampa's downtown stores shut down, leaving the empty shells of turn-of-the-century brick buildings.

Before the pandemic, Nampa officials had begun a series of projects meant to recapture downtown's former vibrancy, including opening a new library. Those investments continued during the pandemic, including expanding sidewalks to support outdoor dining, which eliminated some parking spaces but helped restaurants to thrive. And the city has been hosting monthly block parties that take over downtown streets.

Those efforts are starting to pay off, drawing more businesses, consumers and investment at a time when the broader Treasure Valley region is experiencing breakneck population growth.

Lena Disney, a co-owner of the Milking Barn, a home décor retailer that began with a shop outside of town, moved into space in downtown Nampa earlier this year.

''I think people love the idea of downtown,'' Ms. Disney, 53, said, recalling the days when she used to bring her children downtown to events and activities.

Customers in the store on a clear September day were looking at charcuterie boards, farm-themed décor and locally made candles. Some remarked on the appeal of a downtown shop selling items that celebrate the community and Idaho.

Looking to build on their momentum, city leaders hope to push the redevelopment of more empty buildings. And the city has a new project in the works that would be taller than anything else in town: a six-story apartment building, designed for people eager to fully embrace Nampa's new downtown.

By Emily Cochrane

Proximity used to be everything in Washington, D.C.: proximity to the seat of the federal government, to influential staff members and lobbyists, to power. That was, until the pandemic hit.

The streets that intersect in the nation's political epicenter are lined largely with government buildings and lobbyists' offices, and with the restaurants and bars that serve them. Though pandemic restrictions have ended and workers have trickled back, the area remains subdued. The food trucks that used to line Farragut Square are gone.

Gerren Price, the chief executive of the DowntownDC Business Improvement District, said the city ''is underperforming when it comes to the return to office.''

''It's clear the future of downtown will need to be more mixed-use, and somewhat less office-dependent,'' he said.

A survey of 100 commercial buildings in downtown Washington conducted by Kastle Systems found they were just over 41 percent occupied, on average, over a four-week period ending in early October.

Residential neighborhoods just outside downtown are flourishing. New apartments are going up along the waterfront, and the Union Market, with its small restaurant stands and shops, is bustling. But rents have climbed in those areas, contributing to the city's housing affordability crisis.

In August, a homeless encampment in McPherson Square had more than two dozen tents scattered around the park within sight of the White House and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

When the pandemic hit downtown Washington, ''it became a ghost town, except for people who live on the streets,'' said Christy Respress, executive director of Pathways to Housing DC, which helps people experiencing homelessness in Washington. The push to isolate as a way to stem the spread of the coronavirus, she said, meant that more people chose to pitch tents in federal and local parks, rather than stay in shelters.

A block away in Franklin Park, Bill Bortz, 78, a retired tax counselor at the Treasury Department, walked with his pug Sadie, carrying an array of croissants and pastries he had picked up at two of the remaining downtown bakeries. Mr. Bortz said there had long been a division between the transient political scene and the residents whose families had lived in the city for generations.

''Washington doesn't have a single character -- it's a more complex, nuanced place than that,'' he said.

During the height of the pandemic, the city's many museums were closed, and tours of the Capitol were suspended. The number of visitors to the city dropped to 13 million in 2020, from more than 24 million, a record, in 2019.

Tourism rebounded in 2021, with an estimated 19 million visitors to the city, and tourists can once again be found scootering across the National mall or traipsing through the Capitol behind red-jacketed tour guides.

Sitting on a newly installed swinging picnic bench in Franklin Park, Adam Toeg, from London, sipped an iced coffee and chatted with his tour group, made up of students from Europe and Australia.

Mr. Toeg, 23, talked about how impressed the group was with the grand architecture of the monuments and federal buildings. ''They put a lot into it to make it like the showpiece of the United States,'' he said.

By Edgar Sandoval

On a balmy September weeknight, Aaron Jennings Puckett, a rapper better known to fans as Lil Aaron, took the stage at Antone's Nightclub, a music joint in the heart of downtown Austin, Texas, and egged the audience on: ''I've got one more song for y'all,'' he yelled into a microphone. ''I want to see y'all go ballistic.''

Lil Aaron waved his long green locks as the thundering sounds of drums and guitars electrified the room. The crowd of mostly young people followed his every command.

The energy at Antone's on this night illustrated why the city's downtown continues to rebound from the depths of the pandemic.

Even after years of relentless change and progress, local people insist that the capital of Texas remains true to its mantra -- ''Keep Austin Weird'' -- and its claim to be the ''live music capital of the world,'' largely because iconic music venues like Stubb's, Mohawk and Cheer Up Charlie's refuse to cede their place in a booming downtown.

''People keep coming because they don't want to see these places go away,'' said Mallory Bellinger, a manager at Antone's, an establishment whose blues roots date back to the mid-1970s. ''We are doing really well. We are open every single night.''

The numbers behind Austin's growth, which began to pick up pace in 2015, and was only fleetingly halted by the pandemic, tell a story of a city in the middle of a modern gold rush, even as it struggles with rising homelessness. Construction sites and cranes now seem to be permanent features of downtown Austin, whose ever-expanding skyline is starting to rival those of other big American cities.

Once known as a quiet center of Texas state government, downtown Austin has been transformed by waves of investment from many sources, but especially technology industries, with ambitious expansions by Apple, Samsung and Tesla.

''Austin is having its day now,'' said Jenell Moffett, an associate vice-president at the Downtown Alliance, a nonprofit group that advocates for the vitality of downtown. ''I don't think that Austin slowed down the same way other cities slowed down.''

Though the pandemic's effects are still being felt -- not every shuttered business has reopened, and concerts and other shows have yet to return to their prepandemic numbers -- getting back to normal economically seems to be within reach, officials and residents said.

But downtown has become less affordable. In 2017, residential rents hovered around $2.70 a square foot; now they are closer to $3.40, according to data collected by the Downtown Alliance.

Michael Davis, 32, is one of many people who commutes to work downtown, traveling for a half-hour each way from his home in South Austin to the Red River Cultural District, a hub for music, art and other entertainment. ''For me, living downtown is not worth it,'' Mr. Davis said. ''South Austin is just so peaceful and quiet.''

Others, like Dillon Minacci, 31, say living downtown is worth the price tag. Mr. Minacci, who moved to Austin from Philadelphia during the height of the pandemic in October 2020, said he tried a suburban neighborhood at first, but then moved downtown earlier this year in search of big-city energy.

''I'm a city kid,'' he said. ''I'm used to being able to walk anywhere.''

Rising housing costs have contributed to a surge in homelessness, with encampments appearing under roaring highway overpasses and close to state legislative buildings. Austin, which has a reputation as a liberal oasis in a conservative state, began trying to clear the encampments last year after voters approved a ban on public camping, but the city has not been able to solve its homelessness problem altogether.

Ms. Bellinger, the Antone's manager, said she would like to see the city make an extra effort to help its homeless people get on their feet, for their benefit as well as the city's.

''I do think there is a general feeling of people wanting to take care of one another here,'' she said. ''We all want a beautiful downtown.''Robert Gebeloff contributed reporting.Photo editing by Heather Casey. Digital design and development by Sarah Almukhtar. Story editing by Meghan Louttit and Peter Applebome. Top photos by Jamie Kelter Davis, Ruth Fremson, Julia Gillard, Terra Fondriest and Cheney Orr. Additional reporting by Rob Gebeloff.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/10/26/us/us-cities-downtown-chicago-seattle.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/10/26/us/us-cities-downtown-chicago-seattle.html)

**Load-Date:** October 30, 2022

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[***Contrasting Plans, Contrasting Styles; New York Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63WT-DMC1-DXY4-X15G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1449 words

**Byline:** James Barron

**Highlight:** Eric Adams and Curtis Sliwa spar in the first mayoral debate.

**Body**

Eric Adams and Curtis Sliwa spar in the first mayoral debate.

It’s Thursday. We’ll touch on highlights of the first debate between the two candidates for mayor, and we’ll look at an artist who does Japanese-style ink washes to raise money for jazz musicians.

The first debate between the two candidates for mayor was an hour of contrasts — contrasts on policies like vaccine mandates for municipal workers, safety and policing, and the crisis on Rikers Island.

It was also [*an hour of contrasts in style*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/debate-adams-sliwa-mayor-nyc.html). Eric Adams, the Democratic nominee, tried to remain cool and calm as Curtis Sliwa, his Republican opponent, launched repeated attacks, often talking past his allotted time. Sliwa — a local celebrity for decades who founded the Guardian Angels crime-fighting group — accused Adams of spending too much time with “elites,” losing touch with ***working-class*** New Yorkers and following the lead of Mayor Bill de Blasio.

Adams, a former police captain who is considered the front-runner in the race, called Sliwa’s debate tactics “buffoonery.” Noting that Sliwa had repeatedly interrupted him, he implored the moderators at WNBC-TV, “Can he please adhere to the rules?”

Neither candidate explicitly mentioned Day 1 of his administration, a reference that often comes up in political debates. But they had different ideas about how to spend Day 2. Adams said he would head to Florida to appeal to businesses with the message “you will be bored in Florida — you will never be bored in New York.” Sliwa said he would move into the warden’s residence on [*Rikers Island*](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/organization/rikers-island-prison-complex) and provide additional correction officers for the city jail complex there, which has descended into chaos.

Adams repeated his support for [*de Blasio’s plan to close the jails on Rikers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/nyregion/rikers-island-de-blasio-congress.html) and replace them with smaller units in the boroughs. Sliwa flatly opposed shutting down Rikers. He also said he would hire 2,000 more officers and send emotionally disturbed inmates to state facilities.

Adams found moments to go on the offensive, criticizing Sliwa for admitting that he had made up crimes to get attention for his Guardian Angels patrol group. Sliwa said he had apologized. “I made mistakes,” he said. “I was immature at the age of 25 and did things I should not have done. I know my opponent, Eric Adams, similarly has done things that he’s apologized for.”

Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, said he supported the [*vaccine mandate for city workers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/nyc-vaccine-mandate.html) that de Blasio had announced hours earlier. But he said he would have “handled it differently” and conferred with union leaders. He called them “credible messengers” who could help convince wavering members that vaccines were safe.

Adams also said he wanted a vaccine mandate for students in the public schools, a departure from the policy set by the de Blasio administration. But Adams said he was “open to a remote option” for families who wanted children to learn at home — something de Blasio ruled out for the current academic year, although it was offered last year.

Sliwa opposed the mandate for city workers and any similar requirement for students.

As for policing, Adams called for “a new ecosystem” for public safety. “Bad guys are watching us squabble with each other,” he said. “That’s not going to happen, and we’re not going to see disorder in my city.”

At the end of a sunny day in the low 70s and a partly cloudy evening in the 60s, there’s a chance of showers late at night.

In effect until Nov. 1 (All Saints Day).

A vaccine mandate for city workers

New York City will require the entire municipal work force — more than 300,000 people — to be [*vaccinated against the coronavirus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/nyc-vaccine-mandate.html) by the end of the month.

Mayor Bill de Blasio’s directive removes an option for unvaccinated city employees to take regular coronavirus tests. Workers who remain unvaccinated after Oct. 29 will be placed on unpaid leave.

The new requirement, the most aggressive move yet to boost vaccination rates in the city, comes with an incentive: Workers who get their first doses of a vaccine at city-run sites by the Oct. 29 deadline will see an extra $500 in their paychecks.

Municipal labor unions were divided over the new mandate, with the union representing rank-and-file police officers pledging to fight it. But Gregory Floyd, president of a Teamsters local that represents more than 18,000 municipal workers, had a different reaction.

“I understand why he’s doing it,” he said of de Blasio. “I can’t say it’s wrong, because we have a pandemic.”

The latest New York news

* Former President Donald J. Trump’s family business, which is already under indictment in Manhattan, is [*facing a criminal investigation by another prosecutor’s office.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/trump-westchester-golf-club-investigation.html)

1. Trump was deposed as part of [*a lawsuit accusing his security guards of roughing up protesters in 2015.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/19/nyregion/trump-protest-lawsuit-testimony.html)

* A subway rider repeatedly asked two officers to wear masks. [*He was eventually pushed out of the station.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/nypd-unmasked-covid.html)

1. The New York City Board of Health [*declared racism a public health crisis.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/19/nyregion/nyc-racism-healthcare-system.html)

Painting to the music

Jim Watt will start with No. 670.

Watt, an architect and painter from Asbury Park, N.J., is slightly more than two-thirds of the way through [*a multimedia project in which he does ink-wash images while jazz musicians play.*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzV236zFt7g) Each wash is projected on a screen as his brush moves across the parchment during performances like one scheduled for tonight at [*Jim Kempner Fine Art*](https://www.jimkempnerfineart.com/) at 501 West 23rd Street. Watt plans to paint 1,000 washes in all. The gallery will sell them, with a goal of raising $100,000. The money will go to jazz musicians who have been struggling for lack of gigs during the pandemic.

“I was hearing so many stories about financial hardships,” said Watt, who with the trumpeter Antoine Drye had started an outdoor jazz series in Asbury Park in May 2020. And Watt, who had done watercolors to brighten the cheerless days of the pandemic, turned to monochromatic Japanese brush painting that uses black sumi ink.

Playing off his name, Watt decided to do the thousand ink-washes and call the project [*1000W*](https://www.jimwatt.org/1000w). He called the photographer [*Danny Clinch*](https://www.dannyclinch.com/), who brought a film crew to Watt’s studio. Drye brought in musicians, and they had the beginnings of a film.

“I was improvising to what they were playing, and they were improvising to what I was painting,” said Watt, who has already arranged through a nonprofit to distribute money to nine musicians. As pandemic restrictions were relaxed, they began booking appearances. “Every time a new musician would come in, I’d say, ‘Just think of this as if I’m in the band,” he said, “only I’m playing an instrument that makes a visual thing happen.”

What we’re reading

* Meet the new owners of a one-of-a-kind Wu Tang Clan album. [*They put it away for safekeeping after paying $4 million.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/arts/music/wu-tang-clan-once-upon-a-time-in-shaolin.html)

1. Curbed reported on members of the Ramapough Lenape Nation, based in the Ramapo Mountains in New York and New Jersey, and [*their fight to protect a sacred site.*](https://www.curbed.com/2021/10/split-rock-ramapough-lenape-development.html)
2. There’s a new bronze statue in front of the Charging Bull in the Financial District, and it’s [*accompanied by 10,000 bananas, Artnet reports.*](https://news.artnet.com/art-world/harambe-sculpture-wall-street-bull-2022689)

Shirts on hangers

Dear Diary:

For years, Mr. Kim and I have been racing to beat the clock: I try to get home from work before his dry-cleaning shop closes, and he tries to keep his delivery man around to help me bring my clothes home.

Sometimes we win, sometimes we lose, and sometimes we just wait until Saturday.

Recently, I called him from the subway to say that I would be making a pickup. We had a few confused exchanges, I entered a tunnel, we were disconnected and the race to beat the clock began.

I missed the delivery man, but Mr. Kim and I were happy to see each other. We chatted while he twist-tied four bundles of shirts. Seeing that I was already carrying two bags, he came out front to his sewing machine in a panic and started to dig through a heap of pants and jackets.

From the middle of the pile, like a sorcerer, he pulled out two matching, navy-blue cuffs that had been cut off the pants legs they once belonged to.

He looped them into a figure eight, and then hung two bundles from each loop, 25 shirts on hangers that he then draped over my shoulder, front and back.

It was the easiest giant load of laundry, dirty or clean, that I have ever hauled happily down Broadway and the long hill to Riverside Drive.

— Paul Klenk

Illustrated by Agnes Lee. [*Send submissions here*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/how-to-submit-to-metropolitan-diary.html) and [*read more Metropolitan Diary here*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/metropolitan-diary).

Glad we could get together here. See you tomorrow. — J.B.

P.S. Here’s today’s [*Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini) and [*Spelling Bee*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee). [*You can find all our puzzles here*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords).

Melissa Guerrero, Meghan Louttit, Rick Martinez and Olivia Parker contributed to New York Today. You can reach the team at [*nytoday@nytimes.com*](mailto:nytoday@nytimes.com).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Pool photo by Craig Ruttle FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 21, 2021

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[***I’m a Trauma Surgeon in Israel. In My Hospital, We Are in This Together.; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62PH-W9J1-JBG3-60FJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 18, 2021 Tuesday 00:06 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1076 words

**Byline:** Adam Lee Goldstein

**Highlight:** To me, this hospital — with its diverse staff and free medical care — represents everything that is beautiful and possible in this place.

**Body**

HOLON, Israel — Late in the evening on Tuesday, I was working in my office in Wolfson Medical Center, the hospital where I am the director of trauma surgery. The sun had set and suddenly the sirens started blaring from every corner of Tel Aviv, warning of rockets headed our way.

Our hospital is on the southern edge of the city, in a ***working-class*** neighborhood filled with Jews and Arabs, recent immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa and the countries of the former Soviet Union. From the hospital’s intercom came a calm, programmed voice: “Red alert,” it said. “Please move away from the windows and into a protected area as soon as possible.”

I ran down the internal stairway to the emergency room and waited. Moments later I heard booms — some sounded distant, others sounded like they were right over our heads, a result of Israel’s Iron Dome antimissile system exploding rockets in the sky.

After a while, things were quiet again. I walked outside to the entrance where the ambulances are. Medics — most of them volunteers, some as young as 15 — were running to their ambulances and speeding off; they wore bulletproof vests and helmets. One told me that a bus in a nearby neighborhood had been hit. There were casualties. The hospital staff knew that we had only minutes to prepare for the influx.

Doctors, nurses, radiologist technicians, transport techs, the blood bank and social workers were called to the emergency room. The operating rooms were notified. Within an hour, more than 40 patients had arrived. Four were in critical condition; three needed emergency surgery. For the next few hours, the entire hospital worked to evaluate and treat the wounded. People cleaned wounds, set fractures, did whatever was necessary.

At 3 a.m., I left the operating room and went back to the emergency room. Everything had returned more or less to normal. As the sun rose, our trauma team rounded on our patients. I was called urgently back to the operating room because one patient was still bleeding. Once I finished treating her, I was ready to sleep on the couch in my office for a few hours. Maybe I would even shave. (A colleague in the gynecology department had found me a razor.) But first it was time for a debriefing: The whole staff gathered to discuss what we would do differently, and how to improve our performance the next time there was a mass casualty incident.

As I looked around at my colleagues, I couldn’t help but notice the diversity of our team. From the trauma center to the inpatient ward to the operating rooms, this was a team of Arabs, Jews, Muslims, Christians and Druze (and I’m sure a few others).

In parallel with the rising conflict with Gaza last week, tension rose between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel. There have been violent riots, with Jewish extremists pulling Arabs from their cars and Arabs doing the same to their Jewish neighbors. Businesses and homes have been destroyed. The police have used more violence to control the violence.

We have been treating the people injured in those clashes, too. The groups fighting each other on the streets were suddenly confined together inside the walls of our emergency room. As they arrived, one would wear the religious Jewish undergarment, the next would be an Arab. One of our Arab nurses would thoroughly treat a Jewish wounded woman; a Jewish intern examined a young Arab man who had been injured by a rubber bullet to the chest. An Arab specialist checked the wounds of a Jewish man who had been beaten, and the Jewish cleaning lady helped an Arab man put on his hospital gown. A Jewish nurse cleaned the blood off the forehead of an Arab boy.

To help with the influx of patients one of our Arab residents had driven to the hospital from Lod, a city that has seen some of the worst communal violence in recent days with buildings burned, windows smashed and hundreds of people injured. That resident had risked his own life — he could have been attacked by extremists as he drove through the streets — to help treat whatever patient was put in front of him. The next day in Lod, his wife’s car was set on fire.

Wolfson Medical Center is not the biggest hospital in Israel. It lacks funds, and its exterior probably has not been painted for 40 years. But to me it represents everything that is beautiful and possible with this place. Before, during and after this current disaster we are the hospital for one of the most diverse, elderly and neglected populations in Israel. We train residents from all over the world (especially Africa and Latin America), and Palestinian residents from the West Bank and Gaza. The concepts of free, accessible medicine — socialized medicine — and of serving a needy community with the highest standard of care are as essential to this place as its concrete walls.

In two and a half days last week, we received more than 100 people wounded from missiles, falling shrapnel or the violence on the streets. I have no idea what this week will bring; whatever it is, I cannot be proud enough of the team here, which is constantly ready to come into work at any hour, willing to sacrifice themselves to help, to do whatever is needed.

In the coming days, years and decades, I hope that what is happening now under the roof of this hospital — the selflessness, the lack of ego, the teamwork and diversity and mutual respect — can be a model for this entire country, for our entire region. If neighbors and communities can’t work together, can’t get along in the way that I see every night in our hospital, I worry that we are guaranteeing that the suffering across this country will only get worse. If we do come together, as we do inside our walls, it will be a beautiful thing.

In the early hours of Thursday morning, I asked one of our best nurses, a Druze man from a village in the Golan Heights, for a cigarette. I allow myself one a year and this felt like the right moment. He rolled it for me and we stepped outside into the parking lot, together, to enjoy a moment of quiet. And peace.

Adam Lee Goldstein is the director of trauma surgery at Wolfson Medical Center in Holon, Israel.

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY AVSHALOM SASSONI/MAARIV, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** May 20, 2021

**End of Document**



[***‘Doubling Down on New York’: A Manhattan Neighborhood Bounces Back***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64DH-G7D1-JBG3-62PD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 29, 2021 Wednesday 13:03 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1741 words

**Byline:** Mihir Zaveri

**Highlight:** The Omicron variant is keeping Manhattan’s offices empty. But an influx of residents and a housing boom in neighborhoods like Chelsea hint at a better future.

**Body**

The Omicron variant is keeping Manhattan’s offices empty. But an influx of residents and a housing boom in neighborhoods like Chelsea hint at a better future.

Not long after graduating from the University of Florida this spring, Emily Locke decided to move to the Chelsea neighborhood in Manhattan.

Ms. Locke, 22, grew up near West Palm Beach, but had long been attracted to the invigorating, unpredictable energy she felt during childhood visits to New York. Chelsea offered the perfect blend of shops and access to multiple subway lines.

She knew of the pandemic’s devastating toll in New York and how so many people [*had fled the city*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/05/15/upshot/who-left-new-york-coronavirus.html). Still, this summer she jumped at the chance to rent a studio apartment. Fully vaccinated, she has gone to Broadway shows and restaurants close to home, and even has a favorite neighborhood juice shop.

As the pandemic gave rise to scenes of death and desperation across New York, few places emptied out more than the blocks in and around Chelsea, the upscale neighborhood known for trendy restaurants, art galleries and an elevated urban park, the High Line. The outflow of residents from Manhattan fueled headlines about New York’s demise and the [*decline of urban America*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/upshot/covid-cities-predictions-wrong.html).

But even as the Omicron variant has once again plunged the city and Chelsea into uncertainty, this year has also fostered a more hopeful narrative: the filling out of once-emptied neighborhoods. Chelsea has been among the leading areas in New York in luring returning and new residents, new findings show, stoking a [*boom in the housing market*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/12/magazine/real-estate-pandemic.html) and projecting a far more optimistic future than the one conjured by last year’s gloomiest predictions. Asking rents have skyrocketed and surpassed prepandemic levels.

“Covid is terrible, and what it’s doing to the city is horrible,” said Ms. Locke, who works at a marketing firm in Manhattan. “But you can’t let it completely stop you from living your life.”

Chelsea has been hit particularly hard in the recent surge. There were 2,600 new cases per 100,000 residents, on average, in the Chelsea area in the past week, [*according to the latest city data*](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data.page#transmission), the highest of any neighborhood in the city.

Ms. Locke, who tested positive this month and has since recovered, said she understood the toll the Omicron variant was taking on the city, but that she was not scared, noting that vaccines seemed to be preventing the worst outcomes for many people.

“It has to end at some point,” she said.

Chelsea is one of several Manhattan neighborhoods, including Murray Hill, the East Village, the Upper East Side and Greenwich Village, where a rapid exodus driven by the pandemic appears to have largely stopped, and is even slowly reversing in some cases. In one ZIP code in Chelsea, for example, data from the United States Postal Service shows more people moving in than out during several months of this year.

The population is still far from fully recovered and [*remote work is enabling*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/29/nyregion/remote-work-coronavirus-pandemic.html) many employees to live far from their Manhattan offices. The Omicron variant is feeding [*a resurgent wave of infections and anxiety*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/22/nyregion/omicron-nyc-spread.html), raising questions about how much longer office workers and tourists will stay away from New York and hobble its recovery.

And for many ***working-class*** parts of the city, the picture is more dire: unemployment remains high, thousands struggle to pay rent, and the expiration of New York’s moratorium on evictions looms just weeks away.

But the resurgence in Chelsea reflects how many of the city’s wealthier neighborhoods, which hollowed out as the pandemic began last year, are now slowly rebounding and showing the potential for a vibrant future anchored in what has long made New York attractive and resilient: an abundance of culture, entertainment and social attractions.

“People want to be at the center of the action,” said Kathryn Wylde, the president of the Partnership for New York City, an influential business organization. “Work is one piece of that, but there’s much more. They want to be where the ball drops on New Year’s Eve. They want to be where the art shows open, where fashion is defined, where there are limitless cultural opportunities.”

The pandemic prompted many to abandon cities across the country for suburbs or rural areas. But the outflow appears to be slowing in many urban centers, as more people have gotten vaccinated and schools and businesses have reopened.

And the population shifts have been the most striking in the nation’s largest city, which was among the first and hardest-hit places in the early days of the pandemic.

A recent [*analysis of United States Postal Service data by the New York City Comptroller*](https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/the-pandemics-impact-on-nyc-migration-patterns/) found that the number of residents leaving the city in 2020 was triple that in 2019. The outflow has also underscored the city’s inequality: residents in the wealthiest neighborhoods, many who have white-collar jobs that made remote work easier or had resources to move, were much more likely to have left than other residents, the report found.

This year, a swath of western Manhattan, including Chelsea and Midtown, which saw among the greatest losses in 2020, also saw among the greatest net gain of people who said they planned to stay permanently, the report found.

The Postal Service data, which tracks address changes reported by residents, is incomplete — for example, it does not account for international migration nor does it capture young adults making a first move after college who may not fill out change of address forms.

A separate analysis by the Partnership for New York City, examining just one ZIP code in Chelsea, and looking at both permanent and temporary moves, showed a net loss in 2020 of more than 2,700 residents, amounting to about 12 percent of the estimated population of the entire ZIP code — among the highest proportions of people leaving any ZIP code in the city.

The data reflects a brighter picture this year: The net loss through November was about 100. And between April and November, there was even a net gain of 29. That is a notable reversal compared with the corresponding period in 2019, when the ZIP code showed a net loss of more than 530.

“I feel like Chelsea is reviving from the pandemic,” said Michael J. Franco, a real estate agent with the brokerage Compass who works in the neighborhood.

Mr. Franco said apartment sales have started picking up. In one building in the heart of Chelsea, 15 apartments have sold in 2021, compared with three in 2020, he said.

Rents have been soaring. According to StreetEasy, the median asking rent in November in Chelsea was $4,801, up more than 45 percent over the prior year, and higher than a $4,462 peak in June 2019.

The rising housing prices are driven, in part, by many people who postponed moving and saved up money during the pandemic, brokers and analysts said. Other property owners had taken units off the market because they knew they might not get a good price. Low mortgage rates are encouraging more buying.

“When you have a massive surge in sales activity, part of that is pent-up demand, part of that is extreme confidence about the future, and part of it is normalizing,” said Jonathan Miller of Miller Samuel, an appraisal company. “The city has been playing catch-up from the lack of activity.”

Still, Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody’s Analytics, said New York faced immense challenges.

While the return of some residents may buoy particular neighborhoods, he said that overall, the New York City metropolitan area, including Newark and Jersey City, N.J., is still losing population, just at a slower rate.

“I don’t think anyone is arguing that New York won’t come back,” Mr. Zandi said, adding that the questions will be “how quickly, and will it ever get back what it lost during the pandemic.”

Chelsea is drawing both newcomers and residents who left and have come back.

As the pandemic worsened in April 2020, Emily Bracken, 45, moved from her apartment in Harlem to her sister’s home in Westchester County. Ms. Bracken enjoyed reconnecting with family. But after a few months, she began missing the small things about life in New York, like interactions at the bodega or overhearing strangers’ conversations.

Ms. Bracken had always wanted to buy a place in the city and found a one-bedroom in Chelsea, which she was attracted to because of how easy it was to get to Brooklyn or Greenwich Village, NoMad and other neighborhoods she liked. She declined to give the exact price, but said the apartment fell within her price range of $500,000 to $1 million. The deal closed in September and she moved in around Thanksgiving.

“I liked the idea of doubling down on New York,” she said.

Yousif Alrasheed, 25, a graduate student at Pace University who is studying remotely, moved in May to a one-bedroom apartment in Chelsea from Boston, where he was living near family. Mr. Alrasheed grew up in Kuwait, and had visited New York City many times in the past. He never considered living anywhere else.

“Coming to the city was amazing compared to Boston,” he said. “It was so lively here.”

Mr. Alrasheed said he loves Chelsea’s central location and the concentration of nearby bars and restaurants. Among the biggest draws of the apartment, which costs about $3,600 a month: a washer and dryer and a walk-in closet. And he has recently noticed more and more people in the neighborhood.

“Especially when the fall started and summer ended, everyone just came back here,” he said.

Justin Silver, who had lived in Chelsea for 25 years, moved last winter to Los Angeles, where he was able to stay with friends for free. Mr. Silver, who performs stand-up comedy, enjoyed the weather and the ease of social distancing.

As vaccines became increasingly available, however, Mr. Silver, 45, moved back to his rent-regulated unit in the neighborhood — an affordable place to stay in a pricey Manhattan neighborhood.

“The ease of just being on this island, it just makes it so much easier to get around,” he said.

Nate Schweber contributed reporting.

Nate Schweber contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Chelsea Market in Manhattan last week. The Chelsea neighborhood has seen an influx of New Yorkers who left during the pandemic, including Emily Bracken, 45, below left, who recently bought a one-bedroom apartment in Chelsea, as well as newcomers like Emily Locke, 22, right, a University of Florida graduate.; The High Line in Chelsea. Covid has not deterred new residents like Ms. Locke. “It has to end at some point,” she said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARAH BLESENER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 30, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Which Is The Radical Party Now?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61T5-HKR1-DXY4-X1NW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 19, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 23

**Length:** 908 words

**Byline:** By Paul Krugman

**Body**

Evidence has a well-known liberal bias.

Most Americans, myself included, will be deeply relieved when Joe Biden is finally sworn in as president. But almost everyone has a sense of foreboding, not just because of the specific threat of right-wing terrorism, but also because Biden will take office in a political environment polluted by lies.

Most important, of course, is the Big Lie: the claim, based on nothing whatsoever, that the election was stolen. Has there been anything in U.S. history like the demand from leading Republicans that Biden pursue ''unity'' when they won't even say publicly that he won fairly? And polls showing that a large majority of rank-and-file Republicans believe that there was major election fraud are deeply scary.

But not far behind in importance is what I think of as the Slightly Smaller Lie -- the almost universal insistence on the right that the mildly center-left leaders of the incoming administration and Congress are, or at least are controlled by, radical socialists. This allegation was almost the entire substance of Republican campaigning during the Georgia Senate runoffs.

One response to this bizarre claim -- and it's not a bad response -- would be a Bidenesque ''C'mon, man. Get real!'' But I'd like to do a somewhat deeper dive by focusing on one particular issue: Biden's call, as part of his economic recovery plan, for an increase in the minimum wage to $15 an hour.

Republicans raising objections to Biden's plan have singled out the minimum wage hike as a prime reason for their opposition, although we all know that they would have found some excuse for objecting no matter what he proposed. What's striking about this fight -- let's not dignify it by calling it a debate, as if both sides were making real arguments -- is that it shows us who the real radicals are.

For what counts as a radical economic proposal? One possible answer would be a proposal that flies in the face of public opinion.

By that criterion, however, Republican politicians are definitely the radicals here. Raising the minimum wage is immensely popular; it's supported by around 70 percent of voters, including a substantial majority of self-identified Republicans. Or if you don't believe polls, look at what happened in Florida back in November: even as Trump carried the state, a referendum on raising the minimum wage to $15 won in a landslide.

So the G.O.P. is very much out of step with the public on this issue -- it's espousing what is almost a fringe position. Oh, and it's a position that is completely at odds with the claim by many Republicans that they're the true party of the ***working class***.

What if we define radicalism not by opposition to public opinion but by a refusal to accept the conclusions of mainstream economics? Here, too, Democrats are the moderates and Republicans the radicals.

It's true that once upon a time there was a near-consensus among economists that minimum wages substantially reduced employment. But that was long ago. These days only a minority of economists think raising the minimum to $15 would have large employment costs, and a strong plurality believe that a significant rise -- although maybe not all the way to $15 -- would be a good idea.

Why did economists change their minds? No, the profession wasn't infiltrated by antifa; it was moved by evidence, specifically the results of ''natural experiments'' that take place when an individual state raises its minimum wage while neighboring states don't. The lesson from this evidence is that unless minimum wages are raised to levels higher than anything currently being proposed, hiking the minimum won't have major negative effects on employment -- but it will have significant benefits in terms of higher earnings and a reduction in poverty.

But evidence has a well-known liberal bias. Did I mention that on Friday, just days before their eviction, Trump officials released a report claiming that the 2017 tax cut paid for itself?

Voodoo economics may be the most thoroughly debunked doctrine in the history of economic thought, refuted by decades of experience -- and voters consistently say that corporations and the wealthy pay too little, not too much, in taxes. Yet tax cuts for the already privileged are central to the Republican agenda, even under a supposedly populist president.

On economic policy, then, Democrats -- even though they have moved somewhat to the left in recent years -- are moderates by any standard, while Republicans are wild-eyed radicals. So why does the G.O.P. think that it can get away with claiming the opposite?

Part of the answer is the power of the right-wing disinformation machine, which relentlessly portrays anyone left of center as the second coming of Pol Pot. Another part of the answer is that Republicans clearly hope that voters will judge some Democrats by the color of their skin, not the content of their policy proposals.

In any case, let's be clear: There is indeed a radical party in America, one that, aside from hating democracy, has crazy ideas about how the world works and is at odds with the views of most voters. And it's not the Democrats.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/18/opinion/minimum-wage-us.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/18/opinion/minimum-wage-us.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The group Fight for $15 has been a leading member of the movement to raise the minimum wage. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alex Wong/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2021

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[***Biden's Message for the Labor Movement***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6249-XKD1-DXY4-X0N8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 3, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 18

**Length:** 1077 words

**Byline:** By Jamelle Bouie

**Body**

The unionization struggle at a year-old warehouse in Alabama will help shape the future of work.

For a few minutes on Sunday night, President Biden sounded a little like a union leader. ''Unions put power in the hands of workers,'' he said in a video statement of support for the union drive at an Amazon fulfillment center in Bessemer, Ala. ''They level the playing field. They give you a stronger voice for your health, your safety, higher wages, protections from racial discrimination and sexual harassment. Unions lift up workers, both union and nonunion, but especially Black and Brown workers.''

Biden also spoke directly to employers who might try to subvert or sabotage an organizing drive. ''There should be no intimidation, no coercion, no threats, no anti-union propaganda. No supervisor should confront employees about their union preferences. Every worker should have a free and fair choice to join a union. The law guarantees that choice. And it's your right, not that of an employer, it's your right.''

Biden is not the first president to speak in support of unions, but he may be the first to speak so publicly -- and so directly -- in their favor (certainly since Harry Truman). The words themselves are ordinary, but the context, an American president speaking in support of the most high profile organizing drive in the country, makes them extraordinary. And that, in turn, raises expectations for what Biden can and should accomplish as president on behalf of the labor movement.

Typically, Democratic presidents aren't so specific in their support for organized labor. Barack Obama, for example, stuck to platitudes at his 2015 White House summit on ''worker voice.'' ''Labor unions were often the driving force for progress,'' he said, ''The middle class itself was built on a union label. And that middle class that was built was the engine of our prosperity.''

Before Obama, Jennifer Klein, a professor of history at Yale, wrote by email, ''Presidents Carter and Bill Clinton basically didn't even believe there should be unions. They saw them as relics of a decidedly different era of American capitalism. Unions didn't really function in a modern economy. Free trade, 'knowledge', and new technologies would eliminate that old politics of class conflict and the need for much of the New Deal apparatus.''

Even Franklin Roosevelt was, as the historian William E. Leuchtenburg wrote in 1963, ''somewhat perturbed at being cast in the role of midwife of industrial unionism.'' When pressured by events to take a side in the ''Little Steel'' strike of May 1937 -- in which steel workers under the C.I.O. and the Steel Workers Organizing Committee clashed with a group of independent steel producers, their strikebreakers and law enforcement -- Roosevelt blanched. ''The majority of people are saying just one thing,'' the president said. ''A plague on both your houses.''

Compare this to Biden, who stepped in during an organizing drive and ongoing union election to support workers, rebuke hostile employers and remind the country that the federal government has an obligation to allow or even encourage union organizing. Relative to the rhetoric of most of his predecessors, Biden's brief address stands as one of the most pro-union statements ever issued from the White House.

What is also striking is how the president's statement reflects the changing nature of the labor movement. Biden says explicitly that unions help protect workers from sexual harassment and racial bias, and he ties the fight for union representation to the nation's ''reckoning on race'' and the ''deep disparities that still exist in our country.''

It is worth saying that the majority of workers at the Amazon facility in Bessemer are Black, and a large proportion of them are women. Across the country, Black and Hispanic workers, especially women, are at the forefront of struggles for higher wages and greater dignity. Unions are diverse, and unionized workers are no longer just the hard hats and stevedores of the industrial age.

''That is the old imagining of the union base,'' said Kirsten Swinth, a professor of history at Fordham University. ''But that's not the reality of the American labor movement today. When Biden speaks out the way he does, he is speaking to the ***working class*** that has come into being since the 1970s.''

Presidential rhetoric is not all powerful, but it does matter. Biden's statement will almost certainly reverberate through future organizing campaigns, to be used against hostile employers. It also plants a flag for the Democratic Party, not just in favor of unions generally but worker power specifically. And to that end, it raises the urgency for pro-union executive action and pro-worker legislation.

On his own, Biden can raise the minimum wage for federal contract employees to $15 per hour, require contracts to go exclusively to employers who remain neutral in union elections and temporarily bar contracts for employers who illegally oppose union organizing. He can also, pending Senate confirmation, fill vacancies on the five-member National Labor Relations Board, which sets rules for collective bargaining, conducts and certifies union elections, and adjudicates labor disputes. A Democratic majority on the board -- achieved by filling both an existing vacancy and a scheduled one in August -- would allow Biden to reverse anti-union rulings from the Trump era and begin to make the government less hostile to labor rights.

The surest way to bring about major change, however, is through legislation. Last year, the House of Representatives passed the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, which would grant workers new collective bargaining rights as well as penalize employers that retaliate against workers who organize.

The obstacle here isn't Biden, however, it is the Senate and its supermajority requirement for legislation. And with that in mind, perhaps the best thing Biden's rhetoric can do beyond the specific situation in Alabama is put a little more pressure on Democrats to bring majority rule to the chamber and let Congress finally govern on behalf of the country and its workers.

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**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Outside Amazon facilities in Alabama, union organizers have been presenting the benefits of unionizing. President Biden seems to agree. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAY REEVES/ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOB MILLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 3, 2021

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[***Israel’s Real Existential Threat; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62P9-7TW1-JBG3-63MM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 17, 2021 Monday 07:48 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1171 words

**Byline:** Yossi Klein Halevi

**Highlight:** More than the missiles, I worry about the terror we have internalized. How will we overcome the hatred and fear?

**Body**

JERUSALEM —  Israelis are adept at the pretense of normalcy. We move with seeming ease between daily life and life-threatening crisis. Our home front has endured assaults from Saddam Hussein’s Scud missiles, Hezbollah’s Katyushas and precision missiles, Hamas’s homemade rockets and the more lethal Iranian models [*currently falling*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/world/middleeast/gaza-rockets-hamas-israel.html) on our neighborhoods, along with suicide bombing and car ramming and stabbing sprees.

The Israeli ethos of coping is summed up in an ironic but heartfelt phrase, Lo na’im, lo norah, “not so pleasant but not so terrible.” Even when it is terrible, as it is now, with half the country forced into air raid shelters and “safe rooms,” we know there is a morning after.

But now it is the morning after that I worry about most. Even as the missiles fall, Arab citizens and Jewish citizens are violently attacking one another. More than the missiles, I worry about the terror we have internalized. How will we overcome the hatred and fear?

The [*epicenter of the unrest is Lod*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/world/middleeast/gaza-rockets-hamas-israel.html), a mixed Arab-Jewish ***working-class*** town minutes from Ben Gurion Airport. Young Arab men firebombed Jewish homes and burned five synagogues, chanting slogans calling for Israel’s destruction; Jewish extremists counterattacked. The violence quickly spread, even to Haifa, our showcase of coexistence. Arab mobs and Jewish mobs roamed the streets, beating and lynching, destroying “Jewish” shops and “Arab” shops, destroying a fragile but enduring equilibrium.

Ironically, the worst interethnic violence since the 1948 War follows the most promising year in the fraught history of the Arab-Jewish relationship. The coronavirus pandemic, Israel’s first lethal crisis that wasn’t about its conflict with the Arab world, brought Arab citizens closer than ever to the mainstream. The Israeli health system is one of the most integrated areas in our society: According to government estimates about 17 percent of doctors and 24 percent of nurses are Arab. The Israeli news media’s coverage of coronavirus focused on doctors in hijabs and coexistence in the respirator wards. One story that became iconic told of an Arab nurse who [*recited deathbed prayers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/world/middleeast/gaza-rockets-hamas-israel.html) with an ultra-Orthodox Jew.

Meanwhile, Israel was in political lockdown. After four inconclusive elections in two years, Jewish Israel was stalemated. Until this year, it was a given that Arab parties don’t participate in helping to form governing coalitions. Arab politicians didn’t want to risk supporting a government at war with Gaza or Lebanon; Jewish politicians didn’t want to legitimize Arab politicians who sometimes supported terror attacks against Jews.

Arab voters, though, were demanding that their representatives become players, even if that meant downplaying a Palestinian nationalist agenda in favor of pressing local issues like rising violent crime in Arab towns. The deadlock provided an opening.

Then came the fighting in Gaza and in Israel’s streets, and the historic partnership unraveled.

Israel’s ability to fashion a common civic identity for Arabs and Jews is confounded by the security situation. Jews wonder how they can trust a minority that is culturally and emotionally aligned with their enemies, and whose politicians reject the country’s identity as a Jewish state. For Arabs, a history of government land confiscation and budgetary discrimination, as well as the seemingly endless occupation of the Palestinians, have left deep wounds and distrust. The message Arabs take from the country’s Jewish identity and symbols is that they don’t quite belong.

That message was reinforced in 2018 with [*the Nation-State Law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/world/middleeast/gaza-rockets-hamas-israel.html), passed by the right over the objections of the center and the left, which defines Israel as a Jewish state but ignores its democratic identity. Right-wing defenders of the law insist that affirming Israel as a democracy was unnecessary, since the Knesset had already passed laws ensuring equal rights for all. Yet those laws refer to individual rights, while the Nation-State Law defines the country’s identity.

The framers of Israel’s Declaration of Independence defined Israel as both Jewish and democratic: the homeland of all Jews, whether or not they were Israeli citizens; the state of all its citizens, whether or not they were Jews. An Israel that would no longer regard itself as a continuity of the Jewish story and protector of the world’s vulnerable Jews would lose its soul; an Israel that would no longer aspire to fulfill democratic values would lose its mind.

Balancing those two increasingly contentious but foundational elements of our national identity defines my Israeli commitment. There are voices on the left and the right who call for abolishing either Israel’s Jewish identity or its democratic identity. I stand with the large, if embattled, camp of political centrists that insists on holding both. We know that Israel’s long-term viability depends on managing the tensions inherent in our identity and reality.

For Israelis to form a shared civic identity, Jews need to fulfill Israel’s founding promise to grant full equality to all citizens and reassure Arabs that “Israeli” is not a synonym for “Jew.” Arabs need to come to terms with the fact that Israel will not abandon its Jewish identity and commitments.

In my building in Jerusalem’s French Hill neighborhood, nearly half the families are Arab Israeli. They are lawyers, doctors, civil servants, who bought apartments here because they want their share of the Israeli dream. The violence that erupted in the poor mixed neighborhoods would be unthinkable in middle-class French Hill. When Arabs and Jews meet in the parking lot, we sigh and reassure each other that things will get better because they always do and we have no choice.

Most Israelis — Arabs and Jews — are practiced in the habit of decency. But we are also practiced in self-justification. We know the routines of neighborliness, but rarely consider the other’s reality. We avoid the hard questions that threaten our certainties, our insistence on the absolute justice of our side. What is it like to be a Palestinian citizen of a Jewish state that occupies your family? What is it like to be a Jew who has finally come home, only to live under constant siege?

The current violence wasn’t triggered by any one event but, in part, by our inability to ask those questions. Perhaps we can begin building a better Israel from that place of shared brokenness.

Yossi Klein Halevi is a senior fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. He is author, most recently, of “Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor.”

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/world/middleeast/gaza-rockets-hamas-israel.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/world/middleeast/gaza-rockets-hamas-israel.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/world/middleeast/gaza-rockets-hamas-israel.html).

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PHOTO: An Israeli firefighter extinguishes a fire caused by rockets launched from the Gaza Strip on Sunday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jack Guez/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 17, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Remembering a 100-Year-Old Battle for Coal Miners' Rights***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63J6-9D11-DXY4-X3HW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 6, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 9

**Length:** 1285 words

**Byline:** By Campbell Robertson

**Body**

BLAIR, W.Va. -- On the shoulder of a lonely stretch of highway miles into the hills, a sign stands in the weeds. ''Battle of Blair Mt.,'' it says, informing the tumbledown cinder block building across the road that here, 100 years ago, was the largest armed labor uprising in U.S. history.

In late August 1921, thousands of rifle-bearing coal miners marched to this thickly wooded ridge in southern West Virginia, a campaign that was ignited by the daylight assassinations of union sympathizers but had been building for years in the oppressive despair of the coal fields. The miners' army was met at Blair Mountain by thousands of men who volunteered to fight with the Logan County sheriff, who was in the pay of the coal companies. Over 12 miles and five days, the sheriff's men fought the miners, strafing the hillsides with machine-gun fire and dropping homemade bombs from planes. There were at least 16 confirmed deaths in the battle, though no one knows exactly how many were killed before the US Army marched in to put a stop to the fighting.

The roadside marker and the spent shell casings found in the hillsides are the only reminders at Blair Mountain that this took place.

The country has begun wrestling in recent years with its buried trauma, memorializing vile and suppressed histories like the Tulsa Race Massacre. The Battle of Blair Mountain, the culmination of a series of violent conflicts known as the Mine Wars, would also seem to be a candidate for such exhumation.

The army of miners that came to Blair Mountain was made up of Black and white people, new immigrants and people with deep roots in Appalachia. They did perilous work under conditions close to indentured servitude: They were kept in line by armed guards and paid only in company scrip, with their pay docked for the costs of housing, medical care and the tools they used in the mines. These conditions eventually erupted in the largest insurrection since the Civil War.

But while there are commemorations this weekend in West Virginia, including talks, rallies and re-enactments, a century of silence enforced by power and fear has left the battle nearly forgotten elsewhere.

''It is one of the most amazing confrontations between workers and bosses ever in this country and no one knows about it,'' said Cecil Roberts, the president of the United Mine Workers of America and a great-nephew of Bill Blizzard, who led the miners' army in 1921. ''It seems to be almost impossible unless there's a concerted effort for people not to know about it.''

The Mine Wars era was bloody, with at least 100 deaths in shootouts and violent crackdowns. For most of the 20th century, silence about it served mutual interests. The participants kept quiet out of self-protection and solidarity. Mr. Blizzard was charged with treason and murder, though he was acquitted, and some of the most prominent labor leaders faced permanent ostracism. Frank Keeney, who roused thousands to fight as head of the U.M.W.A. local, spent the latter part of his life as a parking lot attendant.

Mr. Keeney's great-grandson, Charles B. Keeney, a history professor at Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College, had trouble getting his own family to talk about the uprising. Instead, he learned about it from stray remarks at family cookouts and from older strangers, who told him star-struck tales after approaching him when they learned of his family connection.

But it was primarily the coal industry and its supporters in state government, Mr. Keeney and other historians said, w tried to smother any public discussion of the history. State officials demanded that any mention of Blair Mountain be stripped from federal oral histories. A 1931 state law regulated the ''study of social problems'' and for decades, the Mine Wars were left entirely out of school history textbooks. Today, the battlefield is owned in large part by coal operators, who until recently planned to strip mine Blair Mountain itself.

This was narrowly averted in 2018 after Mr. Keeney and a group called Friends of Blair Mountain succeeded in a nine-year campaign, resisted at virtually every turn, to have the site placed on the National Register of Historic Places. But even that does not prevent logging or natural gas exploration, he said.

''In an ideal world, it should be a state park,'' said Mr. Keeney. Instead, he climbs through metal gates blocking the roads into the mountain to see what industrial activities may be going on outside of public view.

In recent decades, the Mine Wars have steadily drawn more attention, with a critically acclaimed movie; serious history books; an exhibit in the state museum; and explicit allusions to it during the 2018 state teachers' strike.

Earlier this year, a great-grandson of one of the coal company detectives even showed up in the little town of Matewan, once a citadel of union resistance, and began offering tours.

''There are two sides to every story,'' said James Baldwin, who sits on a bench in front of the Mexican restaurant, waiting to tell tourists of the ''brave'' detectives who were killed in a shootout after they evicted the families of striking miners from company-owned houses.

The history is being talked about more, but still only in ''bits and pieces,'' said Stan Bumgardner, the editor of Goldenseal, the state history magazine. ''It's missing in the public sphere.'' The events of the Mine Wars are noted far less vigorously than those of the tourist-pleasing Hatfield-McCoy feud, broadcast on signs all over southern West Virginia.

The chief mission of remembering Mine Wars history on the ground has remained with Mr. Keeney and his small cadre of activists, residents and retired union miners. In 2015, they opened the West Virginia Mine Wars Museum, privately funded and located in a union-owned building in Matewan. They have also organized the main events for the centennial of the Battle of Blair Mountain, including a re-enactment of the march this weekend. None of these are state-sponsored, although to the surprise of the organizers, the West Virginia governor, Jim Justice, a billionaire owner of coal companies, issued a proclamation in recent days in which he recognized the ''significance'' of the battle as a ''fight for fair treatment of working peoples.''

Mr. Keeney said powerful interests were not the only opposition to his cause. Past re-enactments of the march have been met with hostility and even assault by people along the route, many of them coal families, who were angered by the involvement of environmentalists.

Mr. Roberts, who has spent much of this summer rallying hundreds of union coal miners on strike in Alabama, sees this as a natural consequence of hard times. Decades of automation and changes in the energy market have dried up the coal jobs in West Virginia, and years of anti-union campaigns have frayed old loyalties. People desperate for work tend to view any critic of the coal industry, including those championing oppressed miners of 100 years ago, as a threat to their livelihoods.

Mr. Roberts cited a quote from Jay Gould, the Gilded Age railroad baron: ''I can hire one half of the ***working class*** to kill the other half.''

Not long ago, a local historian found a document in the attic of the Logan County courthouse, listing hundreds of miners who were charged for taking part in the Battle of Blair Mountain. It may be the only list of its kind, said Mr. Keeney, who plans to dig into it after the centennial has passed. And it may offer surprises for people throughout the coal fields and scattered around the country who had never learned that their great-grandfathers had gone to war in West Virginia a hundred years ago.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/05/us/coal-miners-blair-mountain.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/05/us/coal-miners-blair-mountain.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Marchers in West Virginia last week retraced a 45-mile path to Blair Mountain that unionized coal miners walked in August 1921. The labor battle is being commemorated after a century of silence.

Charles B. Keeney, left, a history professor, is descended from a labor leader who organized the uprising. James Baldwin, right, a great-grandson of a coal company detective, now leads tours about the battle.

A roadside marker in Logan County, W.Va., is one of the few reminders of the Battle of Blair Mountain. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKE BELLEME FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***California Resumes a Virus Fight That It Thought It Had Won***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:635B-2GD1-JBG3-62W7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 17, 2021 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1403 words

**Byline:** By Matt Craig, Mitch Smith and Shawn Hubler

**Body**

A new indoor mask requirement in Los Angeles County comes as new virus cases have nearly tripled statewide. Immunization rates, however, should keep any spike below past peaks.

LOS ANGELES -- Last month, flanked by the ''Transformers'' robot hero Optimus Prime and a bevy of Minions from the ''Despicable Me'' movie franchise, Gov. Gavin Newsom triumphantly stood before the Universal Studios Hollywood globe, lifting more than a year's worth of pandemic health restrictions and announcing California's ''grand reopening.''

''We are here today, June 15, to turn the page,'' the governor said, his clean-shaven face mask-free in the Los Angeles sunshine.

On Saturday at midnight, Los Angeles County health authorities will turn back that page.

Just four weeks into California's push for a return to normalcy, health officials in the state's most populous county announced that face masks would again be required indoors starting this weekend, the first major county in America to restore indoor masking requirements regardless of vaccination status.

Driven by the rise of the ultra-contagious Delta variant and pockets of low vaccination, the announcement, which affects more than 10 million Californians, led a wave of heightened health warnings in a state of 40 million people. It also reflected concern nationally that vaccine defiance, disinformation and the variant have been responsible for significant increases in coronavirus cases in Arkansas, Louisiana and elsewhere.

''This is becoming a pandemic of the unvaccinated,'' Dr. Rochelle P. Walensky, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said.

Los Angeles County's new rules came Thursday as the University of California's 10-campus system announced that most faculty, staff and students will be barred from its campuses this fall if they show up without vaccinations. Health authorities in Sacramento, Fresno and Yolo Counties also recommended, but did not yet require, that residents return to indoor masking, a move that was followed on Friday by Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Sonoma Counties in the Bay Area.

The new local and institutional health rules also sowed confusion.

The C.D.C. as well as the state's Department of Public Health have said fully vaccinated people do not need to wear masks indoors in most situations. However, Los Angeles has been among the more cautious jurisdictions throughout its response to the pandemic, and California's guidance gives counties the option to impose tighter restrictions locally.

Officials in Los Angeles stressed that they were acting out of an abundance of caution, in an effort to pre-empt the sort of case numbers that have rapidly increased in other parts of the country. Every state has reported an increase in the number of new virus cases in recent days.

California's figures have nearly tripled over the past month, largely because of San Bernardino and Los Angeles, but the current rate of 3,000 new cases a day is a blip compared to the winter peak, when there were more than 44,000. California is doing slightly better than the national per capita average and far better than in hot spots around the country. In parts of Missouri, hospitals have been stretched thin by an influx of coronavirus patients.

Scientists say the some 160 million people across the country who are fully vaccinated are largely protected from the virus, including the Delta variant. But particularly in places like the South, where vaccination rates are among the lowest in the country, the risk of a fresh spike is serious, said Dr. Peter Hotez, a vaccine expert at Baylor College of Medicine.

''If you have been lucky enough to escape infection previously and you're not vaccinated, your luck is about to run out,'' Dr. Hotez said.

President Biden expressed his frustration on Friday with social media's role in spreading disinformation about the coronavirus vaccine.

''They're killing people,'' Mr. Biden said about social media platforms like Facebook. ''Look, the only pandemic we have is among the unvaccinated, and that -- and they're killing people.''

On Friday, the C.D.C. director noted that local authorities could adapt masking guidance to reflect the trajectory of the virus in their communities.

''If you have areas of low vaccination and high case rates, then I would say local policymakers might consider whether masking at that point would be something that would be helpful for their community,'' said Dr. Walensky, warning that the number of new virus cases is likely to increase in the coming weeks, particularly in areas with low vaccine coverage.

Hours later, 10 Kansas City-area hospitals and health officials issued a joint advisory for indoor and crowded outdoor settings, recommending masks.

Fifty-one percent of Californians are fully vaccinated, well below the levels in some Northeastern states but above the national rate. Vaccines are free and available to anyone 12 or older. In Los Angeles County, where public health officials had already been recommending masks indoors, new cases have spiked more than 200 percent in the past two weeks, to more than 1,000 per day.

Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, the nation's top infectious-disease expert, has described the Delta variant as ''the greatest threat in the U.S. to our attempt to eliminate Covid-19.'' More than 63,000 Californians have died of the coronavirus. Fewer than 40 deaths statewide are being announced on most recent days, down from more than 500 a day during much of January.

At the University of California, President Michael V. Drake said in a letter to chancellors that the current research, both from medical studies and the university's own infectious-disease experts, clearly pointed to the need for a vaccine mandate for anyone who was going to be on campus.

''Vaccination is by far the most effective way to prevent severe disease and death after exposure to the virus and to reduce spread of the disease to those who are not able, or not yet eligible, to receive the vaccine,'' Dr. Drake, who is also a physician, wrote.

The vaccine requirement will apply to students and employees alike, as well as participants in athletic and study-abroad programs, he said, and will be enforced even if the vaccines remain under emergency use authorization.

Students without approved vaccine exemptions will be barred from campus housing, events, facilities and classrooms, the policy noted. While there would be ''limited exceptions, accommodations and deferrals,'' not all classes will be offered remotely.

Hundreds of colleges and universities, including Stanford, the Claremont Colleges and the University of Southern California, have required vaccines for the fall, according to The Chronicle of Higher Education. But the University of California mandate is the most sweeping so far by a public university.

In liberal Los Angeles, the return of indoor masking did not require a hard sell. The sidewalks of the Los Feliz neighborhood northwest of downtown were filled on Friday with mask-wearing Angelenos working behind counters, sitting around outdoor breakfast tables and standing in morning coffee lines.

Those without masks over their noses and mouths tended to have masks around their necks or dangling from their wrists. Some said they were surprised that Los Angeles County had not re-mandated face coverings sooner.

''What's the virus going to do?'' joked Marc Rosales, 26, a cashier at a Hillhurst Avenue pet store. ''Wait until Saturday?''

''I'm pretty sure people in the city will respond positively about it,'' agreed Simone Bonelli, 39, the part-owner of a Brazilian restaurant. He said some of his kitchen staff were annoyed at returning to masks, but a few are unvaccinated. ''My main hope,'' he said, ''is that it's not going to hurt the inside business, obviously.''

Californians statewide may be less compliant should mandates be restored more broadly, a worry increasingly addressed in recent days by Mr. Newsom, who is facing a recall election in less than two months.

''I cannot impress upon you more the power of getting vaccinated,'' the governor told an audience this week in the ***working-class*** Los Angeles-area community of Bell Gardens. ''If we want to extinguish this pandemic, this disease, we've got to get vaccinated. Period. Full stop.''

Emily Anthes contributed reporting.Emily Anthes contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/16/us/california-los-angeles-mask-mandate.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/16/us/california-los-angeles-mask-mandate.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The Los Feliz neighborhood of Los Angeles. With Covid cases spiking, the county reimposed an indoor face-mask requirement. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNA SCHOENEFELD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A11)

**Load-Date:** July 17, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Biden Is Saying Things Amazon Doesn’t Want to Hear***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6244-8SS1-JBG3-62XS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 2, 2021 Tuesday 07:45 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1104 words

**Byline:** Jamelle Bouie

**Highlight:** The unionization struggle at a year-old warehouse in Alabama will help shape the future of work.

**Body**

The unionization struggle at a year-old warehouse in Alabama will help shape the future of work.

For a few minutes on Sunday night, President [*Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/business/economy/joe-biden-unions.html) sounded a little like a [*union*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/business/economy/joe-biden-unions.html) leader. “Unions put power in the hands of workers,” he said in [*a video statement of support*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/business/economy/joe-biden-unions.html) for the union drive at an Amazon fulfillment center in Bessemer, Ala. “They level the playing field. They give you a stronger voice for your health, your safety, higher wages, protections from racial discrimination and sexual harassment. Unions lift up workers, both union and nonunion, but especially Black and Brown workers.”

Biden also spoke directly to employers who might try to subvert or sabotage an organizing drive. “There should be no intimidation, no coercion, no threats, no anti-union propaganda. No supervisor should confront employees about their union preferences. Every worker should have a free and fair choice to join a union. The law guarantees that choice. And it’s your right, not that of an employer, it’s your right.”

Biden is not the first president to speak in support of unions, but he may be the first to speak so publicly — and so directly — in their favor (certainly since [*Harry Truman*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/business/economy/joe-biden-unions.html)). The words themselves are ordinary, but the context, an American president speaking in support of the most high profile organizing drive in the country, makes them extraordinary. And that, in turn, raises expectations for what Biden can and should accomplish as president on behalf of the labor movement.

Typically, Democratic presidents aren’t so specific in their support for organized labor. Barack Obama, for example, stuck to platitudes at [*his 2015 White House summit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/business/economy/joe-biden-unions.html) on “worker voice.” “Labor unions were often the driving force for progress,” he said, “The middle class itself was built on a union label. And that middle class that was built was the engine of our prosperity.”

Before Obama, Jennifer Klein, a professor of history at Yale, wrote by email, “Presidents Carter and Bill Clinton basically didn’t even believe there should be unions. They saw them as relics of a decidedly different era of American capitalism. Unions didn’t really function in a modern economy. Free trade, ‘knowledge’, and new technologies would eliminate that old politics of class conflict and the need for much of the New Deal apparatus.”

Even Franklin Roosevelt was, as the historian William E. Leuchtenburg wrote in 1963, “somewhat perturbed at being cast in the role of midwife of industrial unionism.” When pressured by events to take a side in the “Little Steel” strike of May 1937 — in which steel workers under the C.I.O. and the Steel Workers Organizing Committee clashed with a group of independent steel producers, their strikebreakers and law enforcement — Roosevelt blanched. “The majority of people are saying just one thing,” the president said. “A plague on both your houses.”

Compare this to Biden, who stepped in during an organizing drive and ongoing union election to support workers, rebuke hostile employers and remind the country that the federal government has an obligation to allow or even encourage union organizing. Relative to the rhetoric of most of his predecessors, Biden’s brief address stands as one of the most pro-union statements ever issued from the White House.

What is also striking is how the president’s statement reflects the changing nature of the labor movement. Biden says explicitly that unions help protect workers from sexual harassment and racial bias, and he ties the fight for union representation to the nation’s “reckoning on race” and the “deep disparities that still exist in our country.”

It is worth saying that the majority of workers at the Amazon facility in Bessemer are Black, and a large proportion of them are women. Across the country, Black and Hispanic workers, especially women, are at the forefront of struggles for higher wages and greater dignity. Unions are diverse, and unionized workers are no longer just the hard hats and stevedores of the industrial age.

“That is the old imagining of the union base,” said Kirsten Swinth, a professor of history at Fordham University. “But that’s not the reality of the American labor movement today. When Biden speaks out the way he does, he is speaking to the ***working class*** that has come into being since the 1970s.”

Presidential rhetoric is not all powerful, but it does matter. Biden’s statement will almost certainly reverberate through future organizing campaigns, to be used against hostile employers. It also plants a flag for the Democratic Party, not just in favor of unions generally but worker power specifically. And to that end, it raises the urgency for pro-union executive action and pro-worker legislation.

[*On his own*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/business/economy/joe-biden-unions.html), Biden can raise the minimum wage for federal contract employees to [*$15 per hour*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/business/economy/joe-biden-unions.html), require contracts to go exclusively to employers who remain neutral in union elections and temporarily bar contracts for employers who illegally oppose union organizing. He can also, pending Senate confirmation, fill vacancies on the five-member National Labor Relations Board, which sets rules for collective bargaining, conducts and certifies union elections, and adjudicates labor disputes. A Democratic majority on the board — achieved by filling both an existing vacancy and a scheduled one in August — would allow Biden to reverse anti-union rulings from the Trump era and begin to make the government less hostile to labor rights.

The surest way to bring about major change, however, is through legislation. Last year, the House of Representatives [*passed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/business/economy/joe-biden-unions.html) the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, which would grant workers new collective bargaining rights as well as penalize employers that retaliate against workers who organize.

The obstacle here isn’t Biden, however, it is the Senate and its supermajority requirement for legislation. And with that in mind, perhaps the best thing Biden’s rhetoric can do beyond the specific situation in Alabama is put a little more pressure on Democrats to bring majority rule to the chamber and let Congress finally govern on behalf of the country and its workers.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/business/economy/joe-biden-unions.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/business/economy/joe-biden-unions.html). And here&#39;s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/business/economy/joe-biden-unions.html).

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PHOTOS: Outside Amazon facilities in Alabama, union organizers have been presenting the benefits of unionizing. President Biden seems to agree. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAY REEVES/ASSOCIATED PRESS; BOB MILLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 25, 2021

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[***A Century Ago, Miners Fought in a Bloody Uprising. Few Know About It Today.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63J6-9HF1-DXY4-X45S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 6, 2021 Monday 10:22 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1369 words

**Byline:** Campbell Robertson

**Highlight:** At the Battle of Blair Mountain, thousands of miners clashed with sheriff’s deputies in the largest insurrection since the Civil War.

**Body**

BLAIR, W.Va. — On the shoulder of a lonely stretch of highway miles into the hills, a sign stands in the weeds. “Battle of Blair Mt.,” it says, informing the tumbledown cinder block building across the road that here, 100 years ago, was the largest armed labor uprising in U.S. history.

In late August 1921, thousands of rifle-bearing coal miners marched to this thickly wooded ridge in southern West Virginia, a campaign that was ignited by the [*daylight assassinations of union sympathizers*](https://www.wvpublic.org/radio/2018-08-01/sid-hatfield-and-ed-chambers-shot-in-welch-august-1-1921) but had been building for years in the oppressive despair of the coal fields. The miners’ army was met at Blair Mountain by thousands of men who volunteered to fight with the Logan County sheriff, who was in the pay of the coal companies. Over 12 miles and five days, the sheriff’s men fought the miners, strafing the hillsides with machine-gun fire and dropping homemade bombs from planes. There were at least 16 confirmed deaths in the battle, though no one knows exactly how many were killed before the US Army marched in to put a stop to the fighting.

The roadside marker and the spent shell casings found in the hillsides are the only reminders at Blair Mountain that this took place.

The country has begun wrestling in recent years with its buried trauma, memorializing [*vile*](https://museumandmemorial.eji.org/) and [*suppressed histories*](https://www.tulsa2021.org/) like the Tulsa Race Massacre. The Battle of Blair Mountain, the culmination of a series of violent conflicts known as the Mine Wars, would also seem to be a candidate for such exhumation.

The army of miners that came to Blair Mountain was made up of Black and white people, new immigrants and people with deep roots in Appalachia. They did perilous work under conditions close to indentured servitude: They were kept in line by armed guards and paid only in company scrip, with their pay docked for the costs of housing, medical care and the tools they used in the mines. These conditions eventually erupted in the largest insurrection since the Civil War.

But while there are commemorations this weekend in West Virginia, including talks, rallies and re-enactments, a century of silence enforced by power and fear has left the battle nearly forgotten elsewhere.

“It is one of the most amazing confrontations between workers and bosses ever in this country and no one knows about it,” said Cecil Roberts, the president of the United Mine Workers of America and a great-nephew of Bill Blizzard, who led the miners’ army in 1921. “It seems to be almost impossible unless there’s a concerted effort for people not to know about it.”

The Mine Wars era was bloody, with at least 100 deaths in shootouts and violent crackdowns. For most of the 20th century, silence about it served mutual interests. The participants kept quiet out of self-protection and solidarity. Mr. Blizzard was charged with treason and murder, though he was acquitted, and some of the most prominent labor leaders faced permanent ostracism. Frank Keeney, who roused thousands to fight as head of the U.M.W.A. local, spent the latter part of his life as a parking lot attendant.

Mr. Keeney’s great-grandson, Charles B. Keeney, a history professor at Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College, had trouble getting his own family to talk about the uprising. Instead, he learned about it from stray remarks at family cookouts and from older strangers, who told him star-struck tales after approaching him when they learned of his family connection.

But it was primarily the coal industry and its supporters in state government, Mr. Keeney and other historians said, who tried to smother any public discussion of the history. State officials demanded that any mention of Blair Mountain be stripped from federal oral histories. A 1931 state law regulated the “study of social problems” and for decades, the Mine Wars were [*left entirely out of school history textbooks*](https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1115&amp;context=studentpub_uht). Today, the battlefield is owned in large part by coal operators, who until recently planned to strip mine Blair Mountain itself.

This was narrowly averted in 2018 after Mr. Keeney and a group called Friends of Blair Mountain succeeded [*in a nine-year campaign*](https://wvupressonline.com/node/850), resisted at virtually every turn, to have the site placed on the National Register of Historic Places. But even that does not prevent logging or natural gas exploration, he said.

“In an ideal world, it should be a state park,” said Mr. Keeney. Instead, he climbs through metal gates blocking the roads into the mountain to see what industrial activities may be going on outside of public view.

In recent decades, the Mine Wars have steadily drawn more attention, with a [*critically acclaimed movie*](https://slate.com/culture/2019/10/matewan-criterion-john-sayles-interview.html); serious [*history books*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/30/books/james-greens-the-devil-is-here-in-these-hills.html); an exhibit in the state museum; and [*explicit allusions to it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/02/us/west-virginia-teacher-strike.html)during the 2018 state teachers’ strike.

Earlier this year, a great-grandson of one of the coal company detectives even showed up in the little town of Matewan, once a citadel of union resistance, and began offering tours.

“There are two sides to every story,” said James Baldwin, who sits on a bench in front of the Mexican restaurant, waiting to tell tourists of the “brave” detectives who were killed in a shootout after they evicted the families of striking miners from company-owned houses.

The history is being talked about more, but still only in “bits and pieces,” said Stan Bumgardner, the editor of Goldenseal, the state history magazine. “It’s missing in the public sphere.” The events of the Mine Wars are noted far less vigorously than those of the [*tourist-pleasing Hatfield-McCoy feud*](https://visitwv.com/hatfield-and-mccoy-feud-in-west-virginia/), broadcast on signs all over southern West Virginia.

The chief mission of remembering Mine Wars history on the ground has remained with Mr. Keeney and his small cadre of activists, residents and retired union miners. In 2015, they opened the West Virginia Mine Wars Museum, privately funded and located in a union-owned building in Matewan. They have also organized the main events for the centennial of the Battle of Blair Mountain, including a re-enactment of the march this weekend. None of these are state-sponsored, although to the surprise of the organizers, the West Virginia governor, Jim Justice, a billionaire owner of coal companies, issued a proclamation in recent days in which he recognized the “significance” of the battle as a “fight for fair treatment of working peoples.”

Mr. Keeney said powerful interests were not the only opposition to his cause. Past re-enactments of the march have been met with [*hostility and even assault*](https://www.loc.gov/resource/afc1999008.afc1999008_crf_mhc09915/) by people along the route, many of them coal families, who were angered by the involvement of environmentalists.

Mr. Roberts, who has spent much of this summer [*rallying hundreds of union coal miners*](https://www.tuscaloosanews.com/story/news/2021/08/04/united-mine-workers-rally-support-coal-mine-strike-brookwood/5480898001/) on strike in Alabama, sees this as a natural consequence of hard times. Decades of automation and changes in the energy market have dried up the coal jobs in West Virginia, and years of anti-union campaigns have frayed old loyalties. People desperate for work tend to view any critic of the coal industry, including those championing oppressed miners of 100 years ago, as a threat to their livelihoods.

Mr. Roberts cited a quote from Jay Gould, the Gilded Age railroad baron: “I can hire one half of the ***working class*** to kill the other half.”

Not long ago, a local historian found a document in the attic of the Logan County courthouse, listing hundreds of miners who were charged for taking part in the Battle of Blair Mountain. It may be the only list of its kind, said Mr. Keeney, who plans to dig into it after the centennial has passed. And it may offer surprises for people throughout the coal fields and scattered around the country who had never learned that their great-grandfathers had gone to war in West Virginia a hundred years ago.

PHOTOS: Marchers in West Virginia last week retraced a 45-mile path to Blair Mountain that unionized coal miners walked in August 1921. The labor battle is being commemorated after a century of silence.; Charles B. Keeney, left, a history professor, is descended from a labor leader who organized the uprising. James Baldwin, right, a great-grandson of a coal company detective, now leads tours about the battle.; A roadside marker in Logan County, W.Va., is one of the few reminders of the Battle of Blair Mountain. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKE BELLEME FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 6, 2021

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[***Who’s Radical Now? The Case of Minimum Wages***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61T3-W3W1-JBG3-60N3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 926 words

**Byline:** Paul Krugman

**Highlight:** Evidence has a well-known liberal bias.

**Body**

Evidence has a well-known liberal bias.

Most Americans, myself included, will be deeply relieved when Joe Biden is finally sworn in as president. But almost everyone has a sense of foreboding, not just because of the specific threat of right-wing terrorism, but also because Biden will take office in a political environment polluted by lies.

Most important, of course, is the Big Lie: the claim, based on nothing whatsoever, that the election was stolen. Has there been anything in U.S. history like the demand from leading Republicans that Biden pursue “unity” when they won’t even say publicly that he won fairly? And polls showing that a large majority of rank-and-file Republicans [*believe*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/15/new-poll-trump-gop-approval-authoritarian/) that there was major election fraud are deeply scary.

But not far behind in importance is what I think of as the Slightly Smaller Lie — the almost universal insistence on the right that the mildly center-left leaders of the incoming administration and Congress are, or at least are controlled by, radical socialists. This allegation was almost the [*entire substance*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/15/new-poll-trump-gop-approval-authoritarian/) of Republican campaigning during the Georgia Senate runoffs.

One response to this bizarre claim — and it’s not a bad response — would be a Bidenesque “C’mon, man. Get real!” But I’d like to do a somewhat deeper dive by focusing on one particular issue: Biden’s call, as part of his economic recovery plan, for an increase in the minimum wage to $15 an hour.

Republicans raising objections to Biden’s plan have [*singled out*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/15/new-poll-trump-gop-approval-authoritarian/) the minimum wage hike as a prime reason for their opposition, although we all know that they would have found some excuse for objecting no matter what he proposed. What’s striking about this fight — let’s not dignify it by calling it a debate, as if both sides were making real arguments — is that it shows us who the real radicals are.

For what counts as a radical economic proposal? One possible answer would be a proposal that flies in the face of public opinion.

By that criterion, however, Republican politicians are definitely the radicals here. Raising the minimum wage is immensely popular; it’s supported by around [*70 percent*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/15/new-poll-trump-gop-approval-authoritarian/) of voters, including a substantial majority of self-identified Republicans. Or if you don’t believe polls, look at what happened in Florida back in November: even as Trump carried the state, a referendum on raising the minimum wage to $15 won in a landslide.

So the G.O.P. is very much out of step with the public on this issue — it’s espousing what is almost a fringe position. Oh, and it’s a position that is completely at odds with the claim by many Republicans that they’re the true party of the [***working class***](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/15/new-poll-trump-gop-approval-authoritarian/).

What if we define radicalism not by opposition to public opinion but by a refusal to accept the conclusions of mainstream economics? Here, too, Democrats are the moderates and Republicans the radicals.

It’s true that once upon a time there was a near-consensus among economists that minimum wages substantially reduced employment. But that was [*long ago*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/15/new-poll-trump-gop-approval-authoritarian/). These days only a [*minority*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/15/new-poll-trump-gop-approval-authoritarian/) of economists think raising the minimum to $15 would have large employment costs, and a [*strong plurality*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/15/new-poll-trump-gop-approval-authoritarian/) believe that a significant rise — although maybe not all the way to $15 — would be a good idea.

Why did economists change their minds? No, the profession wasn’t infiltrated by antifa; it was moved by evidence, specifically the results of “natural experiments” that take place when an individual state raises its minimum wage while neighboring states don’t. The lesson from this [*evidence*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/15/new-poll-trump-gop-approval-authoritarian/) is that unless minimum wages are raised to levels higher than anything currently being proposed, hiking the minimum won’t have major negative effects on employment — but it will have significant benefits in terms of higher earnings and a reduction in poverty.

But evidence has a well-known liberal bias. Did I mention that on Friday, just days before their eviction, Trump officials released a [*report*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/15/new-poll-trump-gop-approval-authoritarian/) claiming that the 2017 tax cut paid for itself?

Voodoo economics may be the most thoroughly debunked doctrine in the history of economic thought, refuted by decades of experience — and voters [*consistently say*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/15/new-poll-trump-gop-approval-authoritarian/) that corporations and the wealthy pay too little, not too much, in taxes. Yet tax cuts for the already privileged are central to the Republican agenda, even under a supposedly populist president.

On economic policy, then, Democrats — even though they have moved somewhat to the left in recent years — are moderates by any standard, while Republicans are wild-eyed radicals. So why does the G.O.P. think that it can get away with claiming the opposite?

Part of the answer is the power of the right-wing disinformation machine, which relentlessly portrays anyone left of center as the second coming of Pol Pot. Another part of the answer is that Republicans clearly hope that voters will judge some Democrats by the color of their skin, not the content of their policy proposals.

In any case, let’s be clear: There is indeed a radical party in America, one that, aside from hating democracy, has crazy ideas about how the world works and is at odds with the views of most voters. And it’s not the Democrats.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/15/new-poll-trump-gop-approval-authoritarian/) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/15/new-poll-trump-gop-approval-authoritarian/). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/15/new-poll-trump-gop-approval-authoritarian/).

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PHOTO: The group Fight for $15 has been a leading member of the movement to raise the minimum wage.  (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alex Wong/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 21, 2021

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[***No Surrender on the Garden***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:623P-X5R1-DXY4-X0VG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 28, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 8

**Length:** 1030 words

**Byline:** By Margaret Renkl

**Body**

Letting nature take its course is getting harder to do.

NASHVILLE -- I recently started my garden in the middle of an ice storm. Sleet and snow poured down while I trudged out to the toolshed to fetch the seeds I'd saved from last year's pollinator patch. Still, it was time.

Light is brightening the sky earlier every morning, and lingering longer every afternoon, and the songbirds are already pairing off. The winter flock of neighborhood bluebirds has dispersed, leaving just one male and one female at the mealworm feeder each morning. All around the yard the downy woodpeckers and the Carolina wrens and the tufted titmice are traveling from branch to branch, two by two. They are just getting to know each other, I think. It's a little too early yet for actual nest-building.

It's also too early to plant seeds in the garden, but I don't sow these seeds in the actual soil. I start them in trays and store our trays in the refrigerator. For the next eight weeks, the seeds will lie dormant in an artificial winter.

This isn't always a necessary step. In the bright days of April, just as the ruby-throated hummingbirds are arriving here from their wintering grounds, I'll plant the cosmos and marigold and zinnia seeds straight into the flower beds. They will grow with hardly any effort on my part, almost regardless of the weather. A marigold seed will set down roots in turned soil even if all you do is spit on it.

But some seeds need to endure a certain amount of cold before they can germinate, and our winters are getting warmer, random ice storms notwithstanding. I let my flowers go to seed to feed the birds, which are half the reason I planted this pollinator garden in the first place. But I always collect a few seeds from each variety to store in our toolshed. In late February, I bring the cold-dependent ones indoors to enjoy the steady coolness of our refrigerator, just to be safe.

The Deep South, where I grew up, has never had particularly cold winters, but the Upper South is different. Here, our growing seasons are tuned to both the heat of Southern summers and the cold of Midwestern winters.

During my first January in Nashville, more than 30 years ago, I woke up in the middle of the night to brightness and thought it was morning. When I looked out the window, the trees were sweatered in white, sending a pale light into the room. I thought I'd moved to the most magical place in the world. Magnolias, just like at home in Alabama, and snow too!

Back then we could count on several snows every winter. What we get now is less predictable and often the worst of both worlds: unseasonable mild spells that trick the songbirds into pairing off too soon, that trick the sap into rising in the trees and the woody shrubs and the perennial flowers, but also brutal cold spells that can wipe out many of my plantings -- and many songbirds, too -- in one 9-degree night.

In most matters of coexistence with the natural world, letting nature take its course is the right thing to do. If I see a rat snake climbing the cherry laurel, I'm obliged to let the snake go on its way, knowing it will eat the baby redbirds hidden in a nest deep in the greenery. If a red wasp is eating the Gulf fritillary caterpillars on the passionflower vines that I planted just for them, there is nothing to be done about it. Nature's wisdom is still wise, even if it's painful to watch.

It's another matter altogether when a natural system encounters an unnatural hitch. I've installed snake baffles below all my nest boxes because a birdhouse doesn't have the camouflage of a nest hole in a dead tree. I owe it to the birds I've invited into my yard to protect them from the predators I know are here.

But the difference between what is part of a natural system and what is a human-introduced disruption is becoming less and less clear.

I put up these nest boxes in the first place because developers keep cutting down trees to make room for bigger houses, and every year there are fewer nesting places for the wild creatures that were here first. I planted this pollinator garden because the weedy flowers that once grew in the unkempt yards and rough margins between the houses of this formerly ***working-class*** neighborhood no longer have any place in the manicured yards of what my neighborhood has become.

Improving the survival odds of wildflower seeds by letting them winter in my refrigerator, unnatural as that may seem, is my way of responding personally to an unstable climate. It comforts me to know that I'll be able to replenish the milkweed stands I've planted for the monarch butterflies, even if the recent storms have decimated my flower beds.

Nature did not design milkweed to be planted by human hands. Once the seedpods burst open, the seeds enter the world on their own tiny parachutes to be wafted away on the wind. In commercial packages, milkweed seeds come denuded of their flight gear, but the seeds I save from my own flowers still have the gossamer filaments nature gave them, and they escape into my kitchen on the slightest breath.

I grieve what is happening to the natural world, and I understand perfectly well that my own efforts to help are far from enough. But when I watch a bluebird introducing his mate to the nest box I've installed for them, it's impossible to give up. When the tiny hummingbirds make it back from far across the Gulf of Mexico, it's impossible to give up.

And a seedling muscling through the soil, carrying its old, sleeping self into the light, never fails to give me hope. It never, never, never, never fails.

Margaret Renkl is a contributing opinion writer who covers flora, fauna, politics and culture in the American South. She is the author of the books ''Late Migrations: A Natural History of Love and Loss'' and the forthcoming ''Graceland, at Last: And Other Essays From The New York Times.''

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tess Smith-Roberts FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 28, 2021

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[***Thanks for This, No Thanks to That***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:644V-66C1-DXY4-X3RS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 23, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 19; THE CONVERSATION

**Length:** 1591 words

**Byline:** By Gail Collins and Bret Stephens

**Body**

Gail Collins: Happy Thanksgiving week, Bret. Anything you're thankful for in particular -- besides your lovely family of course.

Bret Stephens: The E.M.T.s, cardiac surgeons and nurses who saved my mother's life earlier this year will be the first people we'll toast this Thursday, Gail.

Gail: To the lifesavers!

Bret: And I think we'll also raise a glass to our regular readers, who seem drawn to a style of conversation that isn't about compulsive loathing, bottomless contempt, frenzied recrimination, petty score-keeping, histrionic eye-rolling, suppurating disdain and Tucker Carlson-style smirking just because we sometimes have different political views.

How about you?

Gail: Well, gee, not gonna argue against toasting the readers. In a time when trashing folks on the web is so in, they're so ... out in a very, very fine way.

Bret: Our readers: Gluttons for emollient.

Gail: If I get to add one, I'd add teachers, especially the early childhood education community. They not only do essential work, they do it for very little applause -- or money.

Bret: Absolutely. But maybe I'm detecting a subtle hint that you really want to switch the subject to the House of Representatives passing the Build Back Bigger bill?

Gail: Bret, I am now giving thanks that you remember at least part of the name of the Build Back Better bill. Which I will always think of as Not the Infrastructure Bill Even Though It Sounds Like It.

Anyhow, we are talking about the social-safety-net-stop-climate-change bill. Known to many conservatives as That Two Trillion Dollar Thing.

Bret: I gather you're delighted with it.

Gail: I'm happy. Never bought into the idea that President Biden was elected just to not be Donald Trump. He promised during his campaign to expand government help for nonwealthy families, battle the cost of prescription drugs, increase the scope of Medicare and achieve universal prekindergarten for 3- and 4-year-olds.

Got elected, now it's happening. Good news.

Bret: Sorry to be the perpetual Grinch, Gail, but I'll bet you my considerable store of Zabar's leftovers that it isn't happening. Certainly not in anything like the size of the House bill and very possibly not at all. And I have two numbers to support my argument: 60 and 32. The first is Joe Manchin's approval rating in West Virginia. The second is Joe Biden's approval rating in West Virginia. If Manchin votes for the bill, about which he's already expressed big doubts, it's going to mean the likely end of his political career when he's up for re-election in 2024.

Gail: This gives me another chance to point out that West Virginia gets around twice as much in federal aid as its residents pay in federal taxes.

Gee, do you think Manchin's magical ability to hang onto that seat is connected to the federal largess he brings home?

Bret: The other pair of numbers I'm looking at is minus 12.1 and minus 11.6 percentage points. The first is the spread between Biden's approval and disapproval ratings, the second is Kamala Harris's. Why do you think it makes sense for the administration to double down on its policies instead of a nice Clintonian U-turn?

Gail: The negativity is mainly all about Biden's inability to get things done. Which won't look better if he fails to get this bill passed.

Bret: Despite what you said earlier, I don't think Biden was elected to be a transformative president the way Reagan or Obama were, both of whom had clear electoral mandates to change America. He was elected to be a steadying presence. Biden's failed totally so far, partly for reasons that were not under his control, like the persistence of the pandemic, and partly for reasons that were, like the bungled exit from Afghanistan.

Either way, he is misreading his mandate, and the new legislation won't help. It's deeply unwise to try to change the entire shape of government based on a tiebreaking vote in the Senate. It's even more unwise to do so when prices for groceries and gas seem to be rising by the minute.

Biden is overseeing a combustible mixture of sweeping progressive social change and ***working-class*** economic distress -- a formula that gave us Trump in 2016 and may give us Trump again in 2024. And all this is on top of the already hyperpolarized culture we have in this country.

Gail: Well, let's move onto something even more depressing. I sorta hate to bring this up on a holiday week, Bret. But I have to ask you about the Rittenhouse verdict. Your thoughts?

Bret: David French had a lovely line on the case in a recent essay in The Atlantic: ''The law allows even a foolish man to defend himself, even if his own foolishness put him in harm's way.'' Obviously Kyle Rittenhouse should not have been out that night, much less waltzing around with a rifle. But it also seems clear from the trial that much of what the world thought it knew about him -- that he was some kind of out-of-town white supremacist who had crossed state lines with a gun and was looking for trouble -- was false.

What's your view?

Gail: I can understand the way it went, given the absolute mess that Wisconsin's gun laws seem to be. But I wish I believed it would be a call to state legislatures -- and Congress -- to fix the system so that toting guns around in public is flat-out illegal. For anybody.

Bret: Something like 43 states allow people to carry around guns in most places. And depending on how it goes with a case being decided this term by the Supreme Court, that number may soon be 50. Personally, I'd argue that if you're too young to buy a beer you're surely too young to parade around with a gun, unless you're in the military or the National Guard.

Gail: The two things that totally depress me are realizing that our politicians aren't going to stop fawning over the gun-rights lobby and knowing that Rittenhouse is going to become even more of a right-wing hero who'll probably be given a medal at the next Republican convention.

Bret: He's no hero. But I also think this case is a good reminder of why America needs responsible and effective policing, particularly during violent urban protests or riots: When law enforcement fails to protect lives and property, vigilantes spring up.

Gail: Back for a minute to the House vote on Biden's noninfrastructure bill: I presume that you listened to every word of Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy's more than eight-hour speech against it, right? What were your takeaways?

Bret: Yeah, sure, right after I performed a root canal on myself while watching ''Ishtar'' dubbed in Finnish.

OK, I didn't actually see the speech, but I did read The Times's priceless account of it. My favorite detail: ''Representative Madison Cawthorn, a hard-line Republican from North Carolina, sat behind him, stuffing his lip with chewing tobacco and spitting in a cup. Mr. McCarthy, for his part, sustained himself with peppermint candies, unwrapped one by one by aides.''

Gail: Do you think that was in their original job descriptions?

Bret: How much do you look forward to having him as speaker, Gail?

Gail: Aaauuughh. I'm not the most pessimistic Democrat when it comes to future expectations, but I have to admit the chances of the party hanging onto the House and Senate are not ... super.

My greatest source of optimism is what seems like a flood of terrible Republican candidates, many of them already endorsed by Trump despite minor defects like allegations of spousal assault.

I know you have some extremely responsible, forward-looking Republican contenders you can point to, but it seems like there are only about six of them. Do you disagree?

Bret: Unfortunately, you're pretty much right. John Stuart Mill once described the Tories of his day as ''the stupider party,'' and the er in ''stupider'' seems to describe today's G.O.P. pretty nicely. It isn't out of the question that Republicans could trip themselves up on the way to a congressional majority because all of the most Trumpy candidates win the primaries and then lose in the general election.

On the other hand, Republicans will benefit mightily from the latest round of gerrymanders. Also, Glenn Youngkin in Virginia showed how a Republican candidate can distance himself just enough from Trump to win back more moderate voters, while not so much as to alienate the Trump die-hards. Which is another way of saying that I think you'll be dealing with Speaker McCarthy and Leader McConnell in the next Congress.

Gail: And both of them are the opposite of bipartisan, unless there's a chunk of money for road building back home up for grabs.

OK, gonna block all this out until after the holidays.

Bret: So, remind me again, what else will you be giving thanks for this Thanksgiving?

Gail: Don't know if I ever told you, but we have a tradition of having a group of old friends over every year for the holiday dinner. This is something we started in college -- one of this year's guests, who is 32, was born into it. So it's partly an annual reunion and a chance to be grateful for longtime pals.

As well, of course, for the relative newcomers. So when it comes to thanks, I'll be including another year of conversing with you, Bret. And looking forward to carrying on into 2022 and beyond.

Bret: As am I. And here's to you.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/22/opinion/thanksgiving-biden-rittenhouse.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/22/opinion/thanksgiving-biden-rittenhouse.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY OLIVIER DOULIERY/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

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[***Steps Forward For Tango Fans***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63W0-1441-DXY4-X541-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section AR; Column 0; Arts and Leisure Desk; Pg. 11

**Length:** 1527 words

**Byline:** By Marina Harss

**Body**

The pandemic was disastrous for tango. But milongas are thriving around the city now, capped by the return of Queer Tango Weekend.

The concept of social distancing simply does not exist in tango. This dance born in the ***working-class*** neighborhoods of Buenos Aires and Montevideo is about intimacy, touch and the closeness of the abrazo, or embrace. There is no distance between bodies; partners lean into each other, faces and chests touching, an arm wrapped around the other's back, communicating through fingertips and subtle shifts in weight.

This closeness -- and the melancholy lilt of the music -- is the draw. For many, tango dancing creates an instant connection between two people, no matter how fleeting.

''When I went to my first tango evening, I noticed that while people were dancing, they looked happy and alive -- the only sad one there was me,'' Hector Rubinstein, an Argentine-born cardiologist in his 80s, said recently at La Nacional, one of New York's oldest, most atmospheric tango spots. La Nacional reopened in July, 16 months after start of the pandemic, one of the first harbingers of tango's return to the city.

The biggest test so far of that return comes next week, when the New York Queer Tango Weekend resumes after a yearlong hiatus, Oct. 21-24. The festival, now in its sixth edition, has been scaled back, with none of the usual master classes led by international guests flying in from Argentina or Europe. Still, it will be a four-night-long traveling tango party that includes a drag milonga, a masked ball, and a milonga with live orchestra. (In tango parlance, ''milonga'' means two things: a fast and accented style of dance, and a place where people gather to dance.)

The organizers, longtime teachers and professional tangueros Walter Perez and Leonardo Sardella, said they hesitated before deciding to go ahead with the festival this year. But encouraged by the low number and mildness of breakthrough cases at milongas in the city, they decided to go ahead.

''The general direction in New York is to continue doing things, while taking precautions,'' Perez said in a Zoom interview. ''Before the vaccine, we waited, but how long are we going to wait to go back on the dance floor?''

It took the vaccines to get there. What dance could be less suited to the time of Covid, a virus carried in particles floating through the air, easily transmitted from person to person? The milonga, tango's natural habitat, is usually an enclosed space full of moving bodies, in which partners switch multiple times over the course of long evenings, sharing a tight embrace with each new matchup.

Several people I interviewed, including the organizer of the Thursday night milonga at La Nacional, fell ill in the early days of Covid.

With its large community of Argentines, New York is a tango hub. Before the pandemic it was possible to choose between several milongas each night, just as it is in Buenos Aires. Professionals and enthusiasts commuted freely between the two cities.

That all stopped in March 2020. And the pandemic was equally disastrous for tango instructors and academies, all of which closed their doors. (A few like Triángulo and Strictly Tango NYC have since reopened; some, in search of cheaper rents, have relocated outside of New York.)

The luckier teachers, those who had residency papers, received unemployment benefits. But others, like Sergio Segura, who has an O-1 visa (for extraordinary ability) and has taught tango in New York since 2007, found themselves faced with the bleak prospect of months, maybe years without income.

Segura lost his apartment and, for a while, was forced to sleep on a student's couch. With help from his pupils, he found a new place and began offering private lessons, first outdoors and later indoors, wearing a face shield and mask, changing his shirt before interacting with each new pupil. Just recently he has begun teaching group classes again.

''During the pandemic, we did the best we could,'' Segura said. Some people held private dance parties for their friends, creating tango ''bubbles'' with people they trusted. More intrepid (or perhaps foolhardy) tangoers traveled to New Jersey, where a few milongas were still operating, testing the limits of state regulations about indoor gatherings.

In the last few months, thanks to vaccines and relaxed regulations around indoor gatherings in New York, the tango scene in the city has finally started to recover. A smattering of milongas opened in June and July, all requiring proof of vaccination. More reopened in September. There are now six or seven per week.

''We were waiting to see how the vaccines did with Delta,'' said Gayle Madeira, an organizer of Ensueño, a Monday-night milonga that takes place in a party space behind a Ukrainian restaurant in the East Village. (Because there are no windows, the organizers have set up two industrial air purifiers.)

In July, after Emily Cheeger, a filmmaker and avid tango dancer, had a breakthrough case, she created an anonymous reporting tool accessible via a link on newyorktango.com, the city's most widely used tango calendar. Everyone who had attended the milonga with her got tested; one person came back positive. (Both have recovered.)

Madeira, who maintains the calendar on newyorktango.com and is in constant contact with other tango organizers in the city, said she knew of only a few breakthrough infections at milongas, none of which led to serious illness or to infection clusters.

''Tango should be a case study for the effectiveness of vaccines,'' said Juan Pablo Vicente, who runs the milonga La Nacional, in a phone interview.

The low infection rate is all the more impressive considering that masks are few and far between at these events. On the evenings I visited Ensueño and La Nacional, there were maybe three or four people wearing them.

''We debated a lot, and in the end, the majority decided we should not require masks,'' said Artem Maloratsky, known as El Ruso and one of three organizers of Ensueño. ''People have been really missing the emotional connection, and seeing people in masks feels very limiting. But if I dance with someone who is wearing a mask, I put one on, too, out of respect.''

The risk calculation is personal. Some people wear masks only when dancing with strangers. Others never wear them. ''I wish more people wore them,'' Lexa Roseán, a leader of the Queer Tango movement in New York and a regular at Ensueño, told me. Nevertheless, she is back on the dance floor. Roseán always wears a mask and dances only with masked partners.

For the more cautious, there are a few outdoor milongas, the best known being Central Park Tango, run by Rick Castro, a fixture of the park for the last 25 years. After being denied a permit last year, the weekly gathering returned in June, on Saturday afternoons in the small circle around the Shakespeare Statue. The last gathering of the year was in late September, but Castro is opening a second, Tango Interlude, near Wollman Rink.

Another outdoor milonga, at Pier 45 on the Hudson, started up way back in April of 2020. That one requires neither masks nor proof of vaccination. ''People do what they feel comfortable doing,'' the organizer, Nadia Nastaskin, said.

On a recent Saturday, 20 or so couples moved with rapt concentration in a counterclockwise motion around the Shakespeare statue in the park, lost in the pleasure of each other's company, as classic tangos from the '40s and '50s wafted from a sound system. People of all ages danced together under the cathedral-like canopy of trees. Tango is a rare activity in which people of different generations mix freely, and older partners are often prized for their experience and skill.

Dancers who showed proof of vaccination or a positive antibody test from the last three months were given a red wristband and allowed to interact without masks. Non-vaccinated or partially vaccinated participants wore a yellow wristband, and had to be masked. On the day I went, everyone I saw was wearing a red wristband.

One of the dancers that day was Suki Schorer, a former New York City Ballet dancer and longtime teacher at the School of American Ballet, who moved with delicacy and precision in her silver high-heeled tango shoes. ''I haven't gone to one of the indoor milongas yet, she said after dancing a tanda, or set of three dances. ''But I love to dance. I love the connection, and I love that I get to hug somebody.''

Nearby, Paulina Marinkovic, a 34-year-old Chilean climate change consultant, danced in a tight embrace and no mask, her eyes closed. ''I feel totally safe here,'' she said. ''Tango has been such a comfort to me. I don't think about anything but the music. It's almost like a drugged state.''

That seems to be the general feeling among tango lovers. Attendance at the milongas has been high. People are hungry to dance together again, particularly after the loneliness and anxiety of the last year-and-a-half.

''Tango is a natural anti-depressant,'' Roseán said, her voice becoming shaky with emotion. ''We were in a dark place, and tango was the one thing that would have helped.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/15/arts/dance/new-york-tango.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/15/arts/dance/new-york-tango.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top left, Don Lee and partner in Central Park. Top right, Hannah Yi at La Nacional, one of New York's most atmospheric tango spots. Center, Carlos and Maureen Urrego at La Nacional. Center right, Melanie Follert and Robert O'Gureck in Central Park. Above, Katya Shubova and Mahsa Tousi at La Nacional. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEENAH MOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 17, 2021

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[***Coronavirus Briefing: What Happened Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62NB-1MF1-DXY4-X012-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 12, 2021 Wednesday 17:43 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1222 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Wolfe

**Highlight:** Not all unvaccinated Americans are hesitant.

**Body**

Not all unvaccinated Americans are hesitant.

This is the Coronavirus Briefing, an informed guide to the pandemic. [*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

* The W.H.O. [*warned*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) that a variant in India could be highly contagious.

1. A C.D.C. advisory panel [*recommended*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) Pfizer’s vaccine be made available to 12- to 15-year-olds.
2. The leaders of Emergent, whose factory spoiled vaccine doses, [*will testify*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) before a U.S. House panel next week.
3. Get the [*latest updates here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing), as well as [*maps*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) and a [*vaccine tracker*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

A closer look at unvaccinated Americans

The recent drop in vaccinations in the U.S. has been attributed to “vaccine hesitancy” — a mishmash of misinformation and mistrust. But there’s another group of unvaccinated Americans who are amenable to getting a dose but haven’t yet, and their reasons are complex.

They number around 30 million, according to census estimates. They’re not opposed to the vaccine, or even skeptical. In interviews, [*their stated reasons for not getting vaccines are disparate*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) — not wanting to miss work because of side effects, barriers to access and social isolation.

Acy Grayson III, who runs a home improvement outift in the suburbs of Cleveland, told The Times that he found it hard to commit to a time and place because of his job.

“I know you’re trying to find out the reason people aren’t doing it,” Mr. Grayson said. “I’m going to tell you. People are trying to take care of their household. You don’t have much time in the day.”

For the most part, these folks are among America’s ***working class*** and are busy balancing jobs and family obligations that make it difficult for them to find time to travel to get a dose, let alone two. About half live in households with incomes of less than $50,000 a year, according to an analysis of the census data by Justin Feldman, a social epidemiologist at Harvard.

Eighty-one percent do not have a college degree. Some have health issues or disabilities or face language barriers that can make getting inoculated against Covid seem daunting. Many live in counties that rank high in a C.D.C. index of social vulnerability — high poverty rates, crowded housing and poor transportation access.

Vaccine historians say there is no playbook for inoculating so many adults with a day job. And as public health departments close down mass vaccination clinics because of low turnout, they are seeking new ways to reach people, including pop-up clinics in grocery store parking lots or at churches.

Reaching these populations is critical for everyone. If the country doesn’t reach high levels of vaccination, experts say, the virus is likely to continue circulating in pockets, causing unnecessary hospitalizations and deaths. A recent data analysis conducted by Lauren Ancel Meyers at the University of Texas at Austin suggests that vaccinating more residents early on in Austin’s hardest-hit Covid areas would have prevented hospitalizations and deaths across the whole city.

“Putting more resources into protecting high-risk populations can be life saving and beneficial to us all,” Meyers said.

China faces questions over vaccine

China expected its Sinopharm vaccine to be the linchpin of its vaccine diplomacy program. The vaccine is easy to transport, making it a logical option across China and the developing world. In a bid to win good will, China donated 13.3 million Sinopharm doses to other countries.

But instead of praise, the company, which has made two varieties of coronavirus vaccine, is facing mounting questions about the inoculations. First, there was the lack of transparency with Sinopharm’s [*late-stage trial data*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing). Now, Seychelles, the world’s most vaccinated nation, has had a surge in cases and had to reimpose a lockdown, [*despite much of its population being inoculated with Sinopharm*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

Among those in Seychelles who have received two doses, 57 percent were given Sinopharm, while 43 percent were given AstraZeneca. Among new cases, 37 percent are people who are fully vaccinated, according to the health ministry, although it did not say how many had the Sinopharm shot.

Dr. Kim Mulholland, a pediatrician at the Murdoch Children’s Research Institute in Melbourne, Australia, said the initial reports from Seychelles correlated to a 50 percent efficacy rate for the vaccine, instead of the 78.1 percent rate that the company had touted. By contrast, a study has shown that the Pfizer vaccine used in Israel — the country with the second-highest vaccination coverage — is 94 percent effective.

The news is a huge setback not just for Seychelles, but also the 56 other countries counting on the Sinopharm shot. It may also deepen the vaccine access gap between rich and poor nations. If developing nations choose the Chinese vaccines, they could end up lagging behind countries that select more effective doses, which could allow the pandemic to continue in countries that have the fewest resources to fight it.

Vaccine rollout

* Many parents in the U.S. [*are hesitant about giving their children the Covid shot*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing), even if they’re not anti-vaccine.

1. Ontario [*will no longer administer*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) AstraZeneca’s vaccine to new patients because of the risk of rare blood clots, CBC reports.
2. Cuba [*deployed*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) unproven homegrown vaccines, hoping to slow an exploding virus outbreak.
3. Some states have already started [*vaccinating 12- to 15- year-olds*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) against Covid, Kaiser Health News reports.

[*See how the vaccine rollout is going in your county and state*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

What else we’re following

* To prevent the next pandemic, experts [*presenting to the W.H.O.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) recommended swift mask mandates, travel restrictions, an international treaty and the creation of new bureaucracies.

1. Scientists told a House panel that coronavirus variants [*will pose a continuing threat to the U.S.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing), with the potential to spread quickly and blunt the effectiveness of vaccines.

* Goa, a popular vacation destination in India, is facing a [*devastating surge of infections*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

1. South Carolina’s governor [*lifted the mask mandate*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) for children in schools.
2. More than 99 percent of patients hospitalized with Covid at the Cleveland Clinic between Jan. 1 and April 13 [*were not fully vaccinated*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing), Axios reports.
3. Here’s a look at how 723 epidemiologists in the U.S. [*are negotiating the current climate*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing), as vaccination rates rise but Covid is still a threat.
4. In Nepal, oxygen cylinders from Mount Everest [*could soon be used by Covid patients*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

What you’re doing

I really wish there was a way to send a reply to some of the amazing people who have written into the newsletter. I am often moved to tears or just want to say: “Good for you!” Recently there was an entry about someone going to visit their dad after so long but thought he had gone too far downhill during the isolation and he would no longer remember them. “Go!” I want say. “You may be the very thing that brings him back around.” I am a single gay man turning 70 next week and have spent the last 16 months alone, broken and scared. The folks writing in have me feeling less alone, give me hope, and I thank you.

— Brian J. Moriarity, Chicago

Let us know how you’re dealing with the pandemic. [*Send us a response here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing), and we may feature it in an upcoming newsletter.

Correction: Yesterday’s newsletter misspelled the name of the ride-sharing company Lyft.

[*Sign up here to get the briefing by email*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

Email your thoughts to [*briefing@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 12, 2021

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[***What We Give Thanks for and What We Say No Thanks To; The Conversation***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:644M-JF31-JBG3-636D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 22, 2021 Monday 23:42 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1584 words

**Byline:** Gail Collins and Bret Stephens

**Highlight:** The Biden bill, the Rittenhouse verdict and the fate of the Democratic majority.

**Body**

Gail Collins: Happy Thanksgiving week, Bret. Anything you’re thankful for in particular — besides your lovely family of course.

Bret Stephens: The E.M.T.s, cardiac surgeons and nurses who saved my mother’s life earlier this year will be the first people we’ll toast this Thursday, Gail.

Gail: To the lifesavers!

Bret: And I think we’ll also raise a glass to our regular readers, who seem drawn to a style of conversation that isn’t about compulsive loathing, bottomless contempt, frenzied recrimination, petty score-keeping, histrionic eye-rolling, suppurating disdain and Tucker Carlson-style smirking just because we sometimes have different political views.

How about you?

Gail: Well, gee, not gonna argue against toasting the readers. In a time when trashing folks on the web is so in, they’re so … out in a very, very fine way.

Bret: Our readers: Gluttons for emollient.

Gail: If I get to add one, I’d add teachers, especially the early childhood education community. They not only do essential work, they do it for very little applause — or money.

Bret: Absolutely. But maybe I’m detecting a subtle hint that you really want to switch the subject to the House of Representatives passing the Build Back Bigger bill?

Gail: Bret, I am now giving thanks that you remember at least part of the name of the Build Back Better bill. Which I will always think of as Not the Infrastructure Bill Even Though It Sounds Like It.

Anyhow, we are talking about the social-safety-net-stop-climate-change bill. Known to many conservatives as That Two Trillion Dollar Thing.

Bret: I gather you’re delighted with it.

Gail: I’m happy. Never bought into the idea that President Biden was elected just to not be Donald Trump. He promised during his campaign to expand government help for nonwealthy families, battle the cost of prescription drugs, increase the scope of Medicare and achieve universal prekindergarten for 3- and 4-year-olds.

Got elected, now it’s happening. Good news.

Bret: Sorry to be the perpetual Grinch, Gail, but I’ll bet you my considerable store of Zabar’s leftovers that it isn’t happening. Certainly not in anything like the size of the House bill and very possibly not at all. And I have two numbers to support my argument: [*60 and 32*](https://wvmetronews.com/2021/11/15/wv-voters-slam-biden-approve-of-justice-manchin-in-latest-mbe-research-poll/). The first is Joe Manchin’s approval rating in West Virginia. The second is Joe Biden’s approval rating in West Virginia. If Manchin votes for the bill, about which he’s already expressed big doubts, it’s going to mean the likely end of his political career when he’s up for re-election in 2024.

Gail: This gives me another chance to point out that West Virginia gets around twice as much in federal aid as its residents pay in federal taxes.

Gee, do you think Manchin’s magical ability to hang onto that seat is connected to the federal largess he brings home?

Bret: The other pair of numbers I’m looking at is [*minus 12.1*](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/other/president-biden-job-approval-7320.html) and [*minus 11.6*](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/other/kamala_harris_favorableunfavorable-6690.html) percentage points. The first is the spread between Biden’s approval and disapproval ratings, the second is Kamala Harris’s. Why do you think it makes sense for the administration to double down on its policies instead of a nice Clintonian U-turn?

Gail: The negativity is mainly all about Biden’s inability to get things done. Which won’t look better if he fails to get this bill passed.

Bret: Despite what you said earlier, I don’t think Biden was elected to be a transformative president the way Reagan or Obama were, both of whom had clear electoral mandates to change America. He was elected to be a steadying presence. Biden’s failed totally so far, partly for reasons that were not under his control, like the persistence of the pandemic, and partly for reasons that were, like the bungled exit from Afghanistan.

Either way, he is misreading his mandate, and the new legislation won’t help. It’s deeply unwise to try to change the entire shape of government based on a tiebreaking vote in the Senate. It’s even more unwise to do so when prices for groceries and gas seem to be rising by the minute.

Biden is overseeing a combustible mixture of sweeping progressive social change and ***working-class*** economic distress — a formula that gave us Trump in 2016 and may give us Trump again in 2024. And all this is on top of the already hyperpolarized culture we have in this country.

Gail: Well, let’s move onto something even more depressing. I sorta hate to bring this up on a holiday week, Bret. But I have to ask you about the Rittenhouse verdict. Your thoughts?

Bret: David French had a lovely line on the case in a [*recent essay in The Atlantic*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/11/kyle-rittenhouse-right-self-defense-role-model/620715/): “The law allows even a foolish man to defend himself, even if his own foolishness put him in harm’s way.” Obviously Kyle Rittenhouse should not have been out that night, much less waltzing around with a rifle. But it also seems clear from the trial that much of what the world thought it knew about him — that he was some kind of out-of-town white supremacist who had crossed state lines with a gun and was looking for trouble — was false.

What’s your view?

Gail: I can understand the way it went, given the absolute mess that Wisconsin’s gun laws seem to be. But I wish I believed it would be a call to state legislatures — and Congress — to fix the system so that toting guns around in public is flat-out illegal. For anybody.

Bret: Something like 43 states allow people to carry around guns in most places. And depending on how it goes with [*a case being decided this term by the Supreme Court*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/us/politics/supreme-court-guns-second-amendment.html), that number may soon be 50. Personally, I’d argue that if you’re too young to buy a beer you’re surely too young to parade around with a gun, unless you’re in the military or the National Guard.

Gail: The two things that totally depress me are realizing that our politicians aren’t going to stop fawning over the gun-rights lobby and knowing that Rittenhouse is going to become even more of a right-wing hero who’ll probably be given a medal at the next Republican convention.

Bret: He’s no hero. But I also think this case is a good reminder of why America needs responsible and effective policing, particularly during violent urban protests or riots: When law enforcement fails to protect lives and property, vigilantes spring up.

Gail: Back for a minute to the House vote on Biden’s noninfrastructure bill: I presume that you listened to every word of Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy’s more than eight-hour speech against it, right? What were your takeaways?

Bret: Yeah, sure, right after I performed a root canal on myself while watching “Ishtar” dubbed in Finnish.

OK, I didn’t actually see the speech, but I did read The Times’s [*priceless account*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/19/us/politics/kevin-mccarthy-speech.html) of it. My favorite detail: “Representative Madison Cawthorn, a hard-line Republican from North Carolina, sat behind him, stuffing his lip with chewing tobacco and spitting in a cup. Mr. McCarthy, for his part, sustained himself with peppermint candies, unwrapped one by one by aides.”

Gail: Do you think that was in their original job descriptions?

Bret: How much do you look forward to having him as speaker, Gail?

Gail: Aaauuughh. I’m not the most pessimistic Democrat when it comes to future expectations, but I have to admit the chances of the party hanging onto the House and Senate are not … super.

My greatest source of optimism is what seems like a flood of terrible Republican candidates, many of them already endorsed by Trump despite minor defects like allegations of spousal assault.

I know you have some extremely responsible, forward-looking Republican contenders you can point to, but it seems like there are only about six of them. Do you disagree?

Bret: Unfortunately, you’re pretty much right. John Stuart Mill once described the Tories of his day as “the stupider party,” and the er in “stupider” seems to describe today’s G.O.P. pretty nicely. It isn’t out of the question that Republicans could trip themselves up on the way to a congressional majority because all of the most Trumpy candidates win the primaries and then lose in the general election.

On the other hand, Republicans will benefit mightily from the latest round of gerrymanders. Also, Glenn Youngkin in Virginia showed how a Republican candidate can distance himself just enough from Trump to win back more moderate voters, while not so much as to alienate the Trump die-hards. Which is another way of saying that I think you’ll be dealing with Speaker McCarthy and Leader McConnell in the next Congress.

Gail: And both of them are the opposite of bipartisan, unless there’s a chunk of money for road building back home up for grabs.

OK, gonna block all this out until after the holidays.

Bret: So, remind me again, what else will you be giving thanks for this Thanksgiving?

Gail: Don’t know if I ever told you, but we have a tradition of having a group of old friends over every year for the holiday dinner. This is something we started in college — one of this year’s guests, who is 32, was born into it. So it’s partly an annual reunion and a chance to be grateful for longtime pals.

As well, of course, for the relative newcomers. So when it comes to thanks, I’ll be including another year of conversing with you, Bret. And looking forward to carrying on into 2022 and beyond.

Bret: As am I. And here’s to you.

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**Load-Date:** November 23, 2021

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[***I Will Not Rest Until This Garden Grows***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:623D-R931-DXY4-X0BP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 26, 2021 Friday 10:36 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1033 words

**Byline:** Margaret Renkl

**Highlight:** Letting nature take its course is getting harder to do.

**Body**

Letting nature take its course is getting harder to do.

NASHVILLE — I recently started my garden in the middle of an ice storm. Sleet and snow poured down while I trudged out to the toolshed to fetch the seeds I’d saved from last year’s pollinator patch. Still, it was time.

Light is brightening the sky earlier every morning, and lingering longer every afternoon, and the songbirds are already pairing off. The [*winter flock of neighborhood bluebirds*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/08/opinion/2021-happiness-bluebirds.html?searchResultPosition=3) has dispersed, leaving just one male and one female at the mealworm feeder each morning. All around the yard the downy woodpeckers and the Carolina wrens and the tufted titmice are traveling from branch to branch, two by two. They are just getting to know each other, I think. It’s a little too early yet for actual nest-building.

It’s also too early to plant seeds in the garden, but I don’t sow these seeds in the actual soil. I start them in trays and store our trays in the refrigerator. For the next eight weeks, the seeds will lie dormant in an artificial winter.

This isn’t always a necessary step. In the bright days of April, just as the ruby-throated hummingbirds are arriving here from their wintering grounds, I’ll plant the cosmos and marigold and zinnia seeds straight into the flower beds. They will grow with hardly any effort on my part, almost regardless of the weather. A marigold seed will set down roots in turned soil even if all you do is spit on it.

But some seeds need to endure a certain amount of cold before they can germinate, and our winters are getting warmer, random ice storms notwithstanding. I let my flowers go to seed to feed the birds, which are half the reason I planted this pollinator garden in the first place. But I always collect a few seeds from each variety to store in our toolshed. In late February, I bring the cold-dependent ones indoors to enjoy the steady coolness of our refrigerator, just to be safe.

The Deep South, where I grew up, has never had particularly cold winters, but the Upper South is different. Here, our growing seasons are tuned to both the heat of Southern summers and the cold of Midwestern winters.

During my first January in Nashville, more than 30 years ago, I woke up in the middle of the night to brightness and thought it was morning. When I looked out the window, the trees were sweatered in white, sending a pale light into the room. I thought I’d moved to the most magical place in the world. Magnolias, just like at home in Alabama, and snow too!

Back then we could count on several snows every winter. What we get now is less predictable and often the worst of both worlds: unseasonable mild spells that trick the songbirds into pairing off too soon, that trick the sap into rising in the trees and the woody shrubs and the perennial flowers, but also brutal cold spells that can wipe out many of my plantings — and many songbirds, too — in one 9-degree night.

In most matters of coexistence with the natural world, letting nature take its course is the right thing to do. If I see a rat snake climbing the cherry laurel, I’m obliged to let the snake go on its way, knowing it will eat the baby redbirds hidden in a nest deep in the greenery. If a red wasp is eating the Gulf fritillary caterpillars on the passionflower vines that I planted just for them, there is nothing to be done about it. Nature’s wisdom is still wise, even if it’s painful to watch.

It’s another matter altogether when a natural system encounters an unnatural hitch. I’ve installed snake baffles below all my nest boxes because a birdhouse doesn’t have the camouflage of a nest hole in a dead tree. I owe it to the birds I’ve invited into my yard to protect them from the predators I know are here.

But the difference between what is part of a natural system and what is a human-introduced disruption is becoming less and less clear.

I put up these nest boxes in the first place because [*developers keep cutting down trees to make room for bigger houses*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/08/opinion/2021-happiness-bluebirds.html?searchResultPosition=3), and every year there are fewer nesting places for the wild creatures that were here first. I planted this pollinator garden because the weedy flowers that once grew in the unkempt yards and rough margins between the houses of this formerly ***working-class*** neighborhood no longer have any place in the manicured yards of what my neighborhood has become.

Improving the survival odds of wildflower seeds by letting them winter in my refrigerator, unnatural as that may seem, is my way of responding personally to an unstable climate. It comforts me to know that I’ll be able to replenish [*the milkweed stands I’ve planted for the monarch butterflies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/08/opinion/2021-happiness-bluebirds.html?searchResultPosition=3), even if the recent storms have decimated my flower beds.

Nature did not design milkweed to be planted by human hands. Once the seedpods burst open, the seeds enter the world on their own tiny parachutes to be wafted away on the wind. In commercial packages, milkweed seeds come denuded of their flight gear, but the seeds I save from my own flowers still have the gossamer filaments nature gave them, and they escape into my kitchen on the slightest breath.

I grieve what is happening to the natural world, and I understand perfectly well that my own efforts to help are far from enough. But when I watch a bluebird introducing his mate to the nest box I’ve installed for them, it’s impossible to give up. When the tiny hummingbirds make it back from far across the Gulf of Mexico, it’s impossible to give up.

And a seedling muscling through the soil, carrying its old, sleeping self into the light, never fails to give me hope. It never, never, never, never fails.

Margaret Renkl is a contributing opinion writer who covers flora, fauna, politics and culture in the American South. She is the author of the books “[*Late Migrations: A Natural History of Love and Loss*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/08/opinion/2021-happiness-bluebirds.html?searchResultPosition=3)” and the forthcoming “[*Graceland, at Last: And Other Essays From The New York Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/08/opinion/2021-happiness-bluebirds.html?searchResultPosition=3).”

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/08/opinion/2021-happiness-bluebirds.html?searchResultPosition=3) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/08/opinion/2021-happiness-bluebirds.html?searchResultPosition=3). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/08/opinion/2021-happiness-bluebirds.html?searchResultPosition=3).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tess Smith-Roberts FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 27, 2021

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[***Omicron Sowing Doubt And Fear About Economy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64CF-9931-JBG3-625B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 24, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1903 words

**Byline:** By Jeanna Smialek

**Body**

The Fed's preferred inflation gauge climbed at the fastest pace in nearly four decades, as Omicron clouded the outlook for 2022.

As the year draws to a close, inflation remains stubbornly high and the Omicron variant of the coronavirus poses looming uncertainty about what might come next, keeping the pressure on the Federal Reserve and President Biden to do more to tame rising prices.

The Personal Consumption Expenditures price index, which the Fed officially targets when it aims for 2 percent annual inflation on average over time, climbed 5.7 percent in November from a year earlier -- the fastest pace since 1982 -- the Commerce Department said on Thursday.

It was yet another sign that high prices, which many economists once hoped would fade quickly, are instead persisting, burdening consumers and worrying government officials.

The data came as a rising number of Omicron infections makes the inflation and economic outlook hazier. On one hand, the virus could slow the growth of the economy and of prices if it prompts furloughs at a time when the government is no longer stepping in to fill the void, costing households and hurting demand. On the other hand, surging global caseloads could push prices up as they close factories and keep cars, furniture, toys and other goods in short supply.

Even before the new variant surfaced, consumer spending failed to eke out a gain last month after adjusting for inflation, the Thursday data showed. Economists said the lack of growth might simply reflect that people shopped for the holidays earlier this year to guard against shortages -- spending surged in October. But the blip underscores how challenging it is to understand incoming data about consumption, growth and prices in a pandemic-stricken economy.

The picture will become all the more complicated heading into 2022, with many government relief programs either expired or about to be. Theaters, restaurants and live shows are already closing their doors to contain the spread, leaving workers temporarily out of jobs and consumers without services to spend their money on.

''I do think that demand is going to be affected by this,'' said Aneta Markowska, the chief financial economist at Jefferies. ''Every time a Broadway show closes, a restaurant closes, that's a furlough.''

The virus is making the trajectory for economic growth less certain. Most forecasters expect the economy to expand rapidly next year but at a slower place than in 2021: Fed officials last week projected that the economy would grow by 4 percent in 2022, roughly double what is considered typical but less than 5.5 percent this year. If the virus proves crushing, though, growth could weaken sharply early in the year.

Which force is more powerful when it comes to prices -- the hit to demand caused by Omicron-tied closures and layoffs, or the continued pressure on supply chains as consumers keep buying easy chairs and yoga pants and as factories shutter -- will matter hugely.

Earlier this year, big price increases were largely reserved to goods that were in short supply as demand surged and as overtaxed shipping lines struggled to keep up. Officials expected that situation to sort itself out as the economy reopened and returned to normal.

But more recently, price pressures have spread into categories like rent, suggesting that uncomfortably quick overall increases might last longer. Supply chains have gotten worse instead of better over the course of 2021, and it has become clear that the road to normalcy will be longer and more winding than forecasters had counted on.

The Biden administration is trying pull what levers it can, including increasing the supply of oil and gasoline and trying to keep ports open longer in an effort to clear backlogs. But much of the job of controlling inflation falls to the central bank, which is in charge of fostering full employment and stable prices. Fed officials will have to sort through conflicting evidence to decide whether the economy needs to be cooled down -- and, if so, by how much.

''We ended the year still on a high note -- but it was a booming economy with heat,'' said Diane Swonk, the chief economist at the accounting and advisory firm Grant Thornton. ''We also have this inflation.''

Fed officials and most economists think price gains will slow from their current rapid pace next year. But nobody is certain how quickly and how completely that will happen, or what effect Omicron will have.

Thursday's report provided further evidence of the pop in prices that a related measure -- the Consumer Price Index -- had shown two weeks earlier.

A closely watched measure of so-called core inflation, which strips out food and fuel because of their volatility, also came in high in Thursday's report, rising 4.7 percent in November.

Andrew Hunter, a senior U.S. economist at Capital Economics, said that November could be the peak for the main Personal Consumption Expenditures index, because gas prices have caused a big part of the recent run-up and they have moderated in December. But the core gauge is likely to continue rising for a few months before beginning to slow.

''We need to be humble here,'' Mr. Hunter said, noting that probably ''one or two times last year, we thought we were at peak.''

Fed officials expect inflation to ease to 2.6 percent by the end of next year, their most recent economic forecasts showed. While that would mark an improvement, it would remain substantially above their 2 percent goal.

Given that backdrop, central bankers are beginning to react more decisively.

Fed policymakers announced this month that they are speeding up their plans to withdraw support from the economy, and they set themselves up to potentially raise interest rates several times next year. That would make buying a car or expanding a business more expensive, making it more attractive to save and less attractive to spend, cooling off the economy and, over time, weighing on inflation.

''We understand that high inflation imposes significant hardship, especially on those least able to meet the higher costs of essentials like food, housing and transportation,'' Jerome H. Powell, the Fed chair, said last week. ''We are committed to our price stability goal.''

But higher interest rates could also slow the jobs recovery as they weaken growth, denting hiring.

The labor market has been strong in recent months -- open positions far outnumber available workers, and wages are rising, albeit not quickly enough to keep up with price increases in many cases. Inflation has been the worry weighing more heavily on consumers' minds. Several measures of consumer confidence tanked in 2021 as shoppers factored in higher prices. (One, the Conference Board's indicator, showed some improvement this week as inflation fears faded slightly.)

Whether the 2021 price burst teaches households to expect higher inflation going forward is critically important. From the Fed's perspective, there is a risk that climbing inflation expectations could touch off an upward spiral in wages and prices, as people seek bigger raises to cover their climbing costs.

For the Biden administration, inflation worries threaten to unsettle voters, who are unhappy about paying more to get by.

''It's a devastating thing for people who are ***working class*** and middle class,'' Mr. Biden said at the White House on Tuesday, adding: ''It really hurts.''

And every high inflation data point provides fresh ammunition for Republicans, who have blamed the administration's March 2021 pandemic relief and stimulus package for helping to fuel price increases by giving households money to spend. Inflation fears have already helped to derail a big chunk of Mr. Biden's economic agenda, with Senator Joe Manchin III, Democrat of West Virginia, saying on Sunday that he could not support the president's signature $2.2 trillion social safety net, climate and tax proposal.

Part of this year's inflation surge ties back to demand.

American households amassed roughly $2.5 trillion in savings as lockdowns kept them at home and out of stores -- and thanks to government stimulus checks, more generous tax credits and expanded unemployment benefits under the Trump and Biden administrations -- helping to fuel the robust spending.

But one of those government programs, the expanded Child Tax Credit, is set to expire, and other key income supplements have already run out. That will leave at least some people and families more vulnerable next year. And while many economists believe rising wages and existing savings will continue to fuel spending, that could be complicated if many people lose jobs as a result of Omicron.

At the same time, a big chunk of the 2021 inflation emanated from supply chain problems.

In 2020, consumers began ordering couches, video game consoles and cars as the pandemic changed their lifestyles and caused them to spend less on restaurant meals and travel. The shift toward goods and away from services overloaded factories, container ships and ports.

The goods craze has lasted, and the global supply chain has been struggling to catch up all year. Prices have risen as the flow of imported parts and products has failed to keep up with demand. A dearth of computer chips meant that fewer new cars could be produced, for instance, pushing up prices.

There are a few hopeful signs that some of the backlogs may soon improve. Shipping container costs have eased slightly from peak levels, and some automakers have worked to secure semiconductor supplies. Ms. Markowska of Jefferies pointed out that the typical drop-off in consumer demand following the holidays may give beleaguered factories time to catch up.

But risks loom. Intel's chief executive recently warned that chip shortages could last into 2023. The new variant could shut down factories in Asia -- some important manufacturing hubs in China are already cutting activity -- or further gum up domestic ports, perpetuating the problems.

''We are probably past peak supply chain chaos, but we haven't returned to supply chain normalcy,'' said Ian Shepherdson, the chief economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics.

If Omicron forces many people to revert to staying at home, consumers could keep spending on goods, extending pressure on the supply chain. Businesses are also building up vehicle fleets and ordering new equipment, keeping factories chugging: New durable good orders remained strong in November, according to government data published on Thursday.

In the job market, Omicron could prevent workers who are afraid of becoming infected, or of infecting vulnerable friends and family, from applying to open positions. That could force employers to raise wages, and they might then increase prices to cover their labor costs.

The upshot? Inflation will probably fade next year, and may have already peaked according to some measures. But it is hard to guess whether and when it will return to levels that allow consumers and policymakers to breathe easier -- and Omicron is making the trajectory for the 2022 economy less clear.

''There are a lot of things happening at once that could make this complicated to understand,'' Ms. Swonk at Grant Thornton said, noting that she will be watching incoming data on jobless claims in January for an early hint at how the new variant is affecting employment. ''We just don't know yet. That's the hardest part.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/23/business/economy/inflation-pce-index-fed.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/23/business/economy/inflation-pce-index-fed.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Consumer confidence is falling as shoppers face higher prices. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PHILIP CHEUNG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1)

Shoppers in Queens this week. Fed officials and most economists think price gains will slow eventually, but no one is certain how 2022 will unfold. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JUTHARAT PINYODOONYACHET FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A10)

**Load-Date:** December 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***In a Firm Voice, Queen Opens U.K. Parliament***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62N2-M2S1-JBG3-62BC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1135 words

**Byline:** Mark Landler

**Highlight:** The government plans laid out in the Queen’s Speech suggest that Prime Minister Boris Johnson intends to make full use of favorable political conditions.

**Body**

The government plans laid out in the Queen’s Speech suggest that Prime Minister Boris Johnson intends to make full use of favorable political conditions.

LONDON — [*Prime Minister Boris Johnson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/26/world/europe/cummings-johnson-covid.html) hoped to use the opening of Britain’s Parliament on Tuesday to galvanize his government’s agenda after a striking series of victories in regional elections in England last week. But the spotlight shone brightest on [*Queen Elizabeth II*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/06/03/world/queen-elizabeth-jubilee), who appeared in public for the first time since burying her husband, Prince Philip, to handle the age-old pageantry.

Squired by her eldest son and heir, Prince Charles, the queen presided over a ceremony she had attended for decades with [*Philip*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/09/obituaries/prince-philip-dead.html). Now a widow, and three weeks after turning 95, her voice was firm and steady as she read the Queen’s Speech, in which Mr. Johnson’s government laid out an ambitious agenda to “level up” the economically depressed north of England with the more prosperous south.

It was the queen’s 67th opening of Parliament, a reassuring sign of continuity for Britain’s constitutional monarchy after a[*turbulent period for the royal family*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/world/europe/harry-and-meghan-james-corden.html). For Mr. Johnson, it was a chance to bring normalcy back to politics, after the turmoil of Brexit and a pandemic that paralyzed the country, leaving more than [*127,000 people dead*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/world/europe/united-kingdom-coronavirus-cases.html).

Mr. Johnson signaled that he intended to keep playing a dominant role in the political arena, proposing to scrap a law that restricts his ability to call general elections. With the government reaping credit for Britain’s swift rollout of vaccines and the prospect of a post-lockdown economic boom, Mr. Johnson might decide to call an election a year early, in 2023, to take better advantage of the good news.

The government also proposed that voters be required to show photo identification at polling places in general elections, which it defended as a means to prevent fraud. But opposition parties criticized the move as unnecessary, and said it could suppress turnout, particularly among ethnic minorities — an argument often made about voter ID laws that have been passed by several American states.

“Voter I.D. is a disgraceful piece of chicanery,” said Baroness Rosalind Scott, a member of the House of Lords and a former president of the Liberal Democrats. “Voter fraud is very rare here, so it’s a solution in search of a problem.”

It was one of a handful of right-leaning measures — including [*a crime bill that would allow police to sharply restrict demonstrations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/03/world/europe/london-protests-policing-bill.html) and legislation to protect speech on university campuses — that served as a reminder that, for all its Social Democratic-style spending, Mr. Johnson’s party is still conservative.

The policing legislation has ignited angry “Kill the Bill” protests in London and other cities, where demonstrators view it as a way to crack down on legitimate gatherings. In Bristol, protesters lobbed rocks and fireworks at the police, which some warned would backfire by stoking public support for the measures.

“Johnson’s going for what’s long been the sweet spot in British politics,” said Timothy Bale, a professor of politics at Queen Mary University in London. “Just to the left of center on economics and public provision; quite a long way to the right on pretty much everything else, especially if it has to do with law and order, immigration and now anything that smacks of political correctness gone mad.”

Much of the speech, however, was on more familiar, conciliatory ground. The government promised to “deliver a national recovery from the pandemic that makes the United Kingdom stronger, healthier and more prosperous than before.”

Reading a text prepared by Downing Street, the queen spoke fluently of Mr. Johnson’s plans to roll out “[*5G mobile coverage and gigabit capable broadband*](https://www.express.co.uk/news/royal/1434548/queen-news-queens-speech-state-opening-gigabit)” throughout the country. The government will plow money into the National Health Service, a popular measure after it withstood a year of unrelenting pressure from the pandemic and overhaul planning regulations to encourage more construction of single-family houses.

The speech did not directly address perhaps the thorniest challenge facing Mr. Johnson: pressure for a second independence referendum in [*Scotland*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/08/world/europe/brexit-scotland-independence.html), where pro-independence parties expanded their majority in the regional Parliament in last week’s election.

The government said only that it would “promote the strength and integrity of the union” — a pledge that is likely to involve pouring more public money into Scotland and putting off the Scottish National Party’s demands to allow a vote.

“The question is, is Boris Johnson right to think that delaying it might help him?” said Jonathan Powell, who served as chief of staff to Prime Minister Tony Blair. “This will be the dominating issue of British politics for the next four or five years.”

With strict social distancing rules in place, the ceremony was scaled back and stripped down. The queen was driven from Buckingham Palace in a Range Rover rather than a gilded carriage. She shunned the 18-foot velvet cape and imperial crown that she once wore at state openings in favor of a more sensible lilac coat and hat.

The recent death of Philip also lent the proceedings a wistful atmosphere, even though he had turned over the duties of escorting the queen to Charles a few years ago, after his retirement. Charles and his wife, the Duchess of Cornwall, watched from the sidelines as Elizabeth sat on a carved wooden throne.

Though missing hundreds of jockeying lawmakers and V.I.P. guests, the ceremony still had its share of otherworldly pomp. The crown, which normally resides in the Tower of London, was paraded through the echoing hallways of the Palace of Westminster on a red velvet pillow rather than on the queen’s head.

Lawmakers were summoned from the House of Commons by the Lady Usher of the Black Rod, who first had the door slammed in her face as a sign of its members’ independence. Mr. Johnson and the leader of the opposition, Keir Starmer, said nothing to each other as they walked, single file and masked, to the House of Lords.

Last week’s elections [*left the Labour Party in disarray*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/10/world/europe/uk-labour-starmer-election.html), as Mr. Johnson’s Conservative Party made further inroads into Labour’s stronghold in ***working-class*** districts in the Midlands and the north of England.

Mr. Starmer tried to regain his footing in the debate that followed the ceremony, excoriating the government for not introducing legislation to bolster Britain’s care for older people and those with disabilities. Mr. Johnson, he said, had promised to do so 657 days ago.

“Failure to act after a pandemic is nothing short of an insult to a whole nation,” Mr. Starmer declared.

PHOTOS: Queen Elizabeth II, above, was escorted to Parliament on Tuesday by her eldest son and heir, Prince Charles. Prime Minister Boris Johnson, center left, leaving after the Queen’s Speech. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS JACKSON; STEFAN ROUSSEAU)

**Load-Date:** June 3, 2022

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[***Dancing Cheek to Cheek Again: New York’s Tango Scene Rebounds***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63VJ-B211-JBG3-626T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 15, 2021 Friday 08:38 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; dance

**Length:** 1572 words

**Byline:** Marina Harss

**Highlight:** The pandemic was disastrous for tango. But milongas are thriving around the city now, capped by the return of Queer Tango Weekend.

**Body**

The pandemic was disastrous for tango. But milongas are thriving around the city now, capped by the return of Queer Tango Weekend.

The concept of social distancing simply does not exist in tango. This dance born in the ***working-class*** neighborhoods of Buenos Aires and Montevideo is about intimacy, touch and the closeness of the abrazo, or embrace. There is no distance between bodies; partners lean into each other, faces and chests touching, an arm wrapped around the other’s back, communicating through fingertips and subtle shifts in weight.

This closeness — and the melancholy lilt of the music — is the draw. For many, tango dancing creates an instant connection between two people, no matter how fleeting.

“When I went to my first tango evening, I noticed that while people were dancing, they looked happy and alive — the only sad one there was me,” Hector Rubinstein, an Argentine-born cardiologist in his 80s, said recently at [*La Nacional*](https://www.tangolanacional.com/), one of New York’s oldest, most atmospheric tango spots. La Nacional reopened in July, 16 months after start of the pandemic, one of the first harbingers of tango’s return to the city.

The biggest test so far of that return comes next week, when the [*New York Queer Tango Weekend*](https://www.facebook.com/nyqueertango/) resumes after a yearlong hiatus, Oct. 21-24. The festival, now in its sixth edition, has been scaled back, with none of the usual master classes led by international guests flying in from Argentina or Europe. Still, it will be a four-night-long traveling tango party that includes a drag milonga, a masked ball, and a milonga with live orchestra. (In tango parlance, “milonga” means two things: a fast and accented style of dance, and a place where people gather to dance.)

The organizers, longtime teachers and professional tangueros Walter Perez and Leonardo Sardella, said they hesitated before deciding to go ahead with the festival this year. But encouraged by the low number and mildness of breakthrough cases at milongas in the city, they decided to go ahead.

“The general direction in New York is to continue doing things, while taking precautions,” Perez said in a Zoom interview. “Before the vaccine, we waited, but how long are we going to wait to go back on the dance floor?”

It took the vaccines to get there. What dance could be less suited to the time of Covid, a virus carried in particles floating through the air, easily transmitted from person to person? The milonga, tango’s natural habitat, is usually an enclosed space full of moving bodies, in which partners switch multiple times over the course of long evenings, sharing a tight embrace with each new matchup.

Several people I interviewed, including the organizer of the Thursday night milonga at La Nacional, fell ill in the early days of Covid.

With its large community of Argentines, New York is a tango hub. Before the pandemic it was possible to choose between several milongas each night, just as it is in Buenos Aires. Professionals and enthusiasts commuted freely between the two cities.

That all stopped in March 2020. And the pandemic was equally disastrous for tango instructors and academies, all of which closed their doors. (A few like [*Triángulo*](https://www.tangonyc.com/) and [*Strictly Tango NYC*](http://learnargentinetango.com/) have since reopened; some, in search of cheaper rents, have relocated outside of New York.)

The luckier teachers, those who had residency papers, received unemployment benefits. But others, like Sergio Segura, who has an O-1 visa (for extraordinary ability) and has taught tango in New York since 2007, found themselves faced with the bleak prospect of months, maybe years without income.

Segura lost his apartment and, for a while, was forced to sleep on a student’s couch. With help from his pupils, he found a new place and began offering private lessons, first outdoors and later indoors, wearing a face shield and mask, changing his shirt before interacting with each new pupil. Just recently he has begun teaching group classes again.

“During the pandemic, we did the best we could,” Segura said. Some people held private dance parties for their friends, creating tango “bubbles” with people they trusted. More intrepid (or perhaps foolhardy) tangoers traveled to New Jersey, where a few milongas were still operating, testing the limits of state regulations about indoor gatherings.

In the last few months, thanks to vaccines and relaxed regulations around indoor gatherings in New York, the tango scene in the city has finally started to recover. A smattering of milongas opened in June and July, all requiring proof of vaccination. More reopened in September. There are now six or seven per week.

“We were waiting to see how the vaccines did with Delta,” said Gayle Madeira, an organizer of [*Ensueño*](http://www.ensuenotango.com/Home.html), a Monday-night milonga that takes place in a party space behind a Ukrainian restaurant in the East Village. (Because there are no windows, the organizers have set up two industrial air purifiers.)

In July, after Emily Cheeger, a filmmaker and avid tango dancer, had a breakthrough case, she created an anonymous reporting tool accessible via a link on [*newyorktango.com*](https://newyorktango.com/), the city’s most widely used tango calendar. Everyone who had attended the milonga with her got tested; one person came back positive. (Both have recovered.)

Madeira, who maintains the calendar on newyorktango.com and is in constant contact with other tango organizers in the city, said she knew of only a few breakthrough infections at milongas, none of which led to serious illness or to infection clusters.

“Tango should be a case study for the effectiveness of vaccines,” said Juan Pablo Vicente, who runs the milonga La Nacional, in a phone interview.

The low infection rate is all the more impressive considering that masks are few and far between at these events. On the evenings I visited Ensueño and La Nacional, there were maybe three or four people wearing them.

“We debated a lot, and in the end, the majority decided we should not require masks,” said Artem Maloratsky, known as El Ruso and one of three organizers of Ensueño. “People have been really missing the emotional connection, and seeing people in masks feels very limiting. But if I dance with someone who is wearing a mask, I put one on, too, out of respect.”

The risk calculation is personal. Some people wear masks only when dancing with strangers. Others never wear them. “I wish more people wore them,” Lexa Roseán, a leader of the Queer Tango movement in New York and a regular at Ensueño, told me. Nevertheless, she is back on the dance floor. Roseán always wears a mask and dances only with masked partners.

For the more cautious, there are a few outdoor milongas, the best known being [*Central Park Tango*](https://www.facebook.com/groups/centralparktango/), run by Rick Castro, a fixture of the park for the last 25 years. After being denied a permit last year, the weekly gathering returned in June, on Saturday afternoons in the small circle around the Shakespeare Statue. The last gathering of the year was in late September, but Castro is opening a second, Tango Interlude, near [*Wollman Rink*](https://www.wollmanskatingrink.com/).

Another outdoor milonga, at Pier 45 on the Hudson, started up way back in April of 2020. That one requires neither masks nor proof of vaccination. “People do what they feel comfortable doing,” the organizer, Nadia Nastaskin, said.

On a recent Saturday, 20 or so couples moved with rapt concentration in a counterclockwise motion around the Shakespeare statue in the park, lost in the pleasure of each other’s company, as classic tangos from the ’40s and ’50s wafted from a sound system. People of all ages danced together under the cathedral-like canopy of trees. Tango is a rare activity in which people of different generations mix freely, and older partners are often prized for their experience and skill.

Dancers who showed proof of vaccination or a positive antibody test from the last three months were given a red wristband and allowed to interact without masks. Non-vaccinated or partially vaccinated participants wore a yellow wristband, and had to be masked. On the day I went, everyone I saw was wearing a red wristband.

One of the dancers that day was Suki Schorer, a former New York City Ballet dancer and longtime teacher at the School of American Ballet, who moved with delicacy and precision in her silver high-heeled tango shoes. “I haven’t gone to one of the indoor milongas yet, she said after dancing a tanda, or set of three dances. “But I love to dance. I love the connection, and I love that I get to hug somebody.”

Nearby, Paulina Marinkovic, a 34-year-old Chilean climate change consultant, danced in a tight embrace and no mask, her eyes closed. “I feel totally safe here,” she said. “Tango has been such a comfort to me. I don’t think about anything but the music. It’s almost like a drugged state.”

That seems to be the general feeling among tango lovers. Attendance at the milongas has been high. People are hungry to dance together again, particularly after the loneliness and anxiety of the last year-and-a-half.

“Tango is a natural anti-depressant,” Roseán said, her voice becoming shaky with emotion. “We were in a dark place, and tango was the one thing that would have helped.”

PHOTOS: Top left, Don Lee and partner in Central Park. Top right, Hannah Yi at La Nacional, one of New York’s most atmospheric tango spots. Center, Carlos and Maureen Urrego at La Nacional. Center right, Melanie Follert and Robert O’Gureck in Central Park. Above, Katya Shubova and Mahsa Tousi at La Nacional. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEENAH MOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 21, 2021

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[***Queer Exile: Three Novels About Émigrés, Lovers and Family; The Shortlist***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61C7-4S01-DXY4-X2F0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 24, 2020 Tuesday 09:36 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 903 words

**Byline:** Rayyan Al-Shawaf

**Highlight:** “The Thirty Names of Night,” “You Exist Too Much” and “A Country for Dying” feature characters who leave home and long for new identities.

**Body**

THE THIRTY NAMES OF NIGHT

By Zeyn Joukhadar

291 pp. Atria. $27.

“As long as my body was not for myself, I stopped allowing myself the luxury of wanting,” reveals the anguished narrator of Joukhadar’s “The Thirty Names of Night.”

The 28-year-old inhabitant of that body was born a woman but feels otherwise, and eventually adopts the male name Nadir (Arabic for “rare”). Nadir, who lives in Brooklyn, is falling in love with a man while trying to solve the absorbing mystery of a long-vanished Syrian immigrant painter named Laila Z, whose diary reveals an intimate connection to Nadir’s still-living maternal grandmother. “Her disappearance coincided with the city’s destruction of Little Syria,” he observes, referring to the 1946 razing of much of [*Lower Manhattan’s Washington Street*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/25/nyregion/25quarter.html), historically a Syrian-American hub, to make way for the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel.

In another narrative thread, one that at times proves distracting, Nadir is haunted by the possibility that the fire that claimed his mother’s life a few years earlier was arson. To avert the demolition of a Syrian cultural heritage building in Manhattan, she had campaigned to turn it into an Islamic community center, drawing death threats.

The author, a Syrian-American who previously published under a different name and has since transitioned to male, embellishes his novel with tinges of magic realism and beautifully rendered descriptions of birds flitting in and out of characters’ lives. Despite a languid pace and a transparent substitution of story lines for plot, “The Thirty Names of Night” stands out for its lyrical quality, its filmic peek into the early-20th-century Syro-Lebanese communities of Manhattan and Dearborn, Mich., and a contemporary protagonist whose self-abnegation stems from an unrelenting sense of bodily imprisonment.

YOU EXIST TOO MUCH

By Zaina Arafat

261 pp. Catapult. $26.

“When I saw a cute girl, the feeling in my stomach, the wave that seemed to take shape there, excited and inspired me,” recounts the young Palestinian-American woman who narrates Arafat’s debut novel, “You Exist Too Much.” “But mostly,” she adds, “the feeling terrified me.”

Arafat begins her book in promising fashion, with an unnamed 20-something bisexual protagonist finally revealing to her mother, Laila, who is visiting her in New York from Washington, D.C., that her housemate is her girlfriend. But the author then mires the ensuing drama in a prosaic and thoroughly middle-class tale of maternal imperiousness and filial resentment.

The novel derives its memorable title from Laila’s admonition that the narrator efface her idiosyncrasies, the better to morph into a version of her mother. What may surprise readers with preconceived notions of Arab women is that Laila cares little for cultivating demureness. As a socialite with class biases, she wants her daughter to land the right kind of boyfriend. The moderately engaging conceit here is that the narrator’s complex regarding her demanding and irascible mother causes her to sabotage romantic relationships with men and women alike.

And in an intriguing but underexploited aspect of the story, her ethnicity is viewed by many as something between a security risk and a demographic challenge. Arafat’s protagonist experiences firsthand Israel’s occupation of the West Bank when she visits Nablus and other Palestinian cities; back in the United States, she encounters numerous Americans “who lump all Arabs and Muslims into one large, threatening category.”

A COUNTRY FOR DYING

By Abdellah Taïa

Translated by Emma Ramadan

136 pp. Seven Stories. Paper, $16.95.

Taïa’s novels often feature a semi-autobiographical gay protagonist negotiating a sex life in a ***working-class*** Moroccan milieu. The novella-length “A Country for Dying” is quite different; out of a polyphonic onslaught, Taïa fashions a globe-trotting yet tenuous story.

The author, who grew up in Morocco and lives in France, excels when contrasting the dreams of two of his three main characters, all of whom are North African prostitutes, with the grimness of demimonde Paris. (Taïa writes in French; “A Country for Dying” was translated into appropriately gritty English by Ramadan.) Zahira, one of the protagonists, repeatedly witnesses her male Arab clients being “used by this city that mistreats them with no remorse, and by their white French bosses who exploit them under the table without a hint of guilt.” The other Parisian prostitute, Aziz, insists that he wants to “become the girl I had always been, long before I came into the world,” yet finds himself wrestling with the finality of gender reassignment surgery.

Taïa’s third main character is Zineb, Zahira’s paternal aunt, who strayed from her village in French-ruled Morocco as a teenager and was raped by a French police chief. Thus “dishonored,” she embarked on a life of prostitution. Zineb’s tale is set in 1950s French Indochina, where she tells a client about her fateful past as well as her piteous fantasy of becoming a film star in India. It jars with the stories of Zahira and Aziz, owing to its brevity and altogether different time and place. Nevertheless, Taïa adroitly conveys the sobering message that, whether in the mid-20th century or in the early 21st, sexual stigma is often irremovable, and can even foreclose the possibility of a return home.

Rayyan Al-Shawaf is a writer and book critic in Malta. His debut novel is “When All Else Fails.”

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** November 24, 2020

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[***Racism and the Hollowing Out of America***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:622V-N6N1-JBG3-602B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 24, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 5

**Length:** 1051 words

**Byline:** By Jennifer Szalai

**Body**

Hinton Rowan Helper was an unreserved bigot from North Carolina who wrote hateful, racist tracts during Reconstruction. He was also, in the years leading up to the Civil War, a determined abolitionist.

His 1857 book, ''The Impending Crisis of the South,'' argued that chattel slavery had deformed the Southern economy and impoverished the region. Members of the plantation class refused to invest in education, in enterprise, in the community at large, because they didn't have to. Helper's concern wasn't the enslaved Black people brutalized by what he called the ''lords of the lash''; he was worried about the white laborers in the South, relegated by the slave economy and its ruling oligarchs to a ''cesspool of ignorance and degradation.''

Helper and his argument come up early on in Heather McGhee's illuminating and hopeful new book, ''The Sum of Us'' -- though McGhee, a descendant of enslaved people, is very much concerned with the situation of Black Americans, making clear that the primary victims of racism are the people of color who are subjected to it. But ''The Sum of Us'' is predicated on the idea that little will change until white people realize what racism has cost them too.

The material legacy of slavery can be felt to this day, McGhee says, in depressed wages and scarce access to health care in the former Confederacy. But it's a blight that's no longer relegated to the region. ''To a large degree,'' she writes, ''the story of the hollowing out of the American ***working class*** is a story of the Southern economy, with its deep legacy of exploitative labor and divide-and-conquer tactics, going national.''

As the pandemic has laid bare, the United States is a rich country that also happens to be one of the stingiest when it comes to the welfare of its own people. McGhee, who spent years working on economic policy for Demos, a liberal think tank, says it was the election of Donald Trump in 2016 by a majority of white voters that made her realize how most white voters weren't ''operating in their own rational economic self-interest.'' Despite Trump's populist noises, she writes, his agenda ''promised to wreak economic, social and environmental havoc on them along with everyone else.''

At several points in McGhee's book, I was reminded of the old saw about ''cutting off one's nose to spite one's face,'' though she prefers a less gruesome metaphor -- the drained swimming pool. Grand public pools were sumptuous emblems of common leisure in the early decades of the 20th century, steadfastly supported by white Americans until they were told to integrate them. McGhee visited the site of one such pool in Montgomery, Ala., drained and cemented over since 1959 so that nobody, white or Black, could ever enjoy it again.

It's a self-defeating form of exclusion, a determination not to share resources even if the ultimate result is that everyone suffers. McGhee writes about health care, voting rights and the environment; she persuasively argues that white Americans have been steeped in the notion of ''zero sum'' -- that any gains by another group must come at white people's expense. She talks to scholars who have found that white respondents believed that anti-white bias was more prevalent than anti-Black bias, even though by any factual measure this isn't true. This cramped mentality is another legacy of slavery, McGhee says, which really was zero sum -- extractive and exploitative, like the settler colonialism that enabled it. She writes that zero-sum thinking ''has always optimally benefited only the few while limiting the potential of the rest of us, and therefore the whole.''

Recent books like Jonathan Metzl's ''Dying of Whiteness'' have explained how racial animus ends up harming those who cling to a chimera of privilege. While reading McGhee I was also reminded of Thomas Frank's argument in ''What's the Matter With Kansas?'' (2004), about how the Republican Party had figured out a way to push through an unpopular economic agenda by stowing it inside a Trojan horse of social conservatism and cultural grievance.

But there are major differences between their books. Frank derides the idea that racism has anything to do with what he's writing about. Not to mention that McGhee isn't a stinging polemicist; she cajoles instead of ridicules. She appeals to concrete self-interest in order to show how our fortunes are tied up with the fortunes of others. ''We suffer because our society was raised deficient in social solidarity,'' she writes, explaining that this idea is ''true to my optimistic nature.'' She is compassionate but also cleareyed, refusing to downplay the horrors of racism, even if her own book suggests that the white readers she's trying to reach can be easily triggered into seeking the safe space of white identity politics. Color blindness, she says, is just another form of denial.

One of the phenomena that emerges from McGhee's account is that the zero-sum mentality tends to get questioned only in times of actual scarcity -- when people are so desperate that they realize how much they need one another. She gives the example of the Fight for $15 movement: Already earning poverty-level wages, fast-food workers began to ask what they had to lose by organizing.

Against ''zero-sum'' she proposes ''win-win'' -- without fully addressing how the ideal of win-win has been deployed for cynical ends. McGhee discusses how the subprime mortgage crisis was fueled by racism, but it was also inflated by promises of a constantly expanding housing market and rising prices. Once the credit dried up, win-win reverted to zero-sum, with the drowned (underwater homeowners) losing out to the saved (well-connected bankers).

''We live under the same sky,'' McGhee writes. There is a striking clarity to this book; there is also a depth of kindness in it that all but the most churlish readers will find moving. She explains in exacting detail how racism causes white people to suffer. Still, I couldn't help thinking back to the abolitionist Helper, who knew full well how slavery caused white people to suffer, but remained an unrepentant racist to the end.Follow Jennifer Szalai on Twitter: @jenszalai.The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper TogetherBy Heather McGhee396 pages. One World. $28.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/23/books/review-sum-of-us-heather-mcghee.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/23/books/review-sum-of-us-heather-mcghee.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREAS BURGESS)

**Load-Date:** February 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***As Cases Surge in New York, Adams Cancels His Inauguration Gala***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64C1-BJ21-JBG3-637N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 22, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1720 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Body**

Mayor Bill de Blasio and his successor, Eric Adams, are weighing difficult decisions as the city faces another troubling wave of coronavirus cases.

It was billed as an inauguration ritual steeped in symbolism: Eric Adams, the second Black man to be elected mayor of New York, would be sworn in at Kings Theater, a lavishly restored cultural icon in Brooklyn, whose residents, he said, chose ''one of their own'' to lead the city's recovery.

But the event will now serve as a less welcome symbol, reflecting the rising concerns about the rampant spread of the Omicron variant.

Mr. Adams, who takes office on Jan. 1, canceled the ceremony on Tuesday, one of several developments that underscored how the latest wave of coronavirus cases has thrown New York City's recovery into doubt and shifted priorities as the year ends.

The number of reported cases in the city has surged in recent days to more than 15,000 on Monday, the highest level since at least January and about four times the number of cases recorded just one week earlier.

Covid-19 hospitalizations in the city have been rising over the past month but are still at less than half the level of last winter's peak, reaching about 270 new admissions a day on Monday, according to New York State figures.

Northwell Health officials say that their 53 urgent care facilities in the New York City area are seeing unprecedented volume. About 4,000 to 5,000 patients are coming into those facilities daily, up from 2,000 normally, and most are seeking testing, said John D'Angelo, Northwell Health's chief of integrated operations. Positivity rates of those tests have gone from 7 percent a week ago to 14 percent now.

''I would expect that if that is going to translate to a steeper trajectory on the inpatient side, we should be seeing that in the next week or so,'' Mr. D'Angelo said. ''So we'll see.''

The Omicron variant made up 37 percent of cases in New York State over the last two weeks, according to state data, and 92 percent of new cases in a larger area that includes New York and New Jersey, according to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate released Monday. Now Mayor Bill de Blasio and his successor, Mr. Adams, face painful decisions about how to handle the next stage of the pandemic.

Will schools fully reopen in January? Will a New Year's Eve party in Times Square be canceled? How can the city avoid another broad shutdown or a shortage of hospital beds?

Already, Broadway shows have canceled performances, a handful of schools and some classrooms have closed, sporting events have been postponed and holiday travel plans have been abandoned. Some elected officials are calling for setting up a mass testing site at Javits Center in Manhattan, which served as a temporary hospital during the height of the pandemic.

Mr. de Blasio, who is considering a run for governor next year, reiterated on Tuesday that he did not want to shut down the city. He said he would make a decision about the New Year's Eve celebration soon and noted that it would take place outdoors and vaccination would be required for attendees.

''We need to all work together now to get through these weeks to come out the other side and continue our recovery, but no shutdowns, because that would devastate the lives of so many New Yorkers,'' Mr. de Blasio said.

With hourslong lines now common outside testing sites, Mr. de Blasio said city officials were working to expand testing to 112 locations and were expected to get help from the Biden administration. The city has been testing more people than ever before, reaching nearly 130,000 P.C.R. tests one day last week.

In a sign of how severely the local testing infrastructure is being strained, the privately owned CityMD chain of urgent-care clinics said in a message posted on its website late Tuesday that it was temporarily closing 19 of its 150 locations in New York and New Jersey starting Wednesday ''to preserve our ability to staff our sites.''

Thirteen of the affected clinics are in New York City, three are in New Jersey, two are on Long Island and one is in Westchester County.

''It is our hope that closing sites now will best allow us to avoid future closures as this surge continues,'' the company said in its message.Press representatives for CityMD did not immediately respond to requests for additional information, including how long the closings might last.

The mayor also announced on Tuesday a new $100 incentive for New Yorkers who receive a booster shot -- an urgent effort to blunt the worst impact of the surge in cases.

Mr. de Blasio said he was prepared to ''spend whatever it takes'' to make boosters a priority. More than 82 percent of adults in New York City are fully vaccinated, but only about a quarter of adult New Yorkers have received a booster shot, city officials said.

At a separate news conference, Mr. Adams, the mayor-elect, said that it was best to postpone his inauguration because he did not want to put people in a dangerous environment indoors. He had chosen the location in Flatbush, a ***working-class*** neighborhood in Brooklyn, as a tribute to his roots as the son of a house cleaner.

''I don't need an inauguration -- all I need is a mattress and a floor to execute being the mayor of the City of New York,'' said Mr. Adams, who famously slept in his office during the height of the pandemic as Brooklyn borough president. It was not clear whether he would be sworn in at a private event.

Mr. de Blasio and Mr. Adams are both Democrats and political allies, and Mr. Adams has said he agrees with Mr. de Blasio's approach to the pandemic, including setting vaccine mandates for city workers and indoor dining. The current and future mayors appeared at a news conference together on Sunday to show a united front.

Mr. Adams has made a flurry of appointments in recent days, but he has not said whom he would name as health commissioner -- a key role in leading the city's pandemic strategy.

Mr. Adams is planning to keep Dr. Dave Chokshi, whom Mr. de Blasio named to the post in August 2020, as health commissioner for several months to keep continuity in the city's Covid response, according to someone who is familiar with the mayor-elect's plans.

Dr. Ashwin Vasan, the president of Fountain House, a mental health and public health charity, will take over as health commissioner in the spring, Politico reported late Tuesday.

Mr. Adams was elected in November when cases were much lower in the city. Even when he won the Democratic primary over the summer, the conversation around the pandemic centered on the city's ability to recover from it.

But the Omicron-fueled surge will confront Mr. Adams with an immediate and vexing challenge when he takes office.

One major question he will face is how to handle the reopening of schools in January. Teachers and school staff are required to be vaccinated, and Mr. de Blasio has said he is considering requiring a booster shot as well. But Mr. de Blasio has been adamant that he does not want to set a vaccine mandate for students, as Los Angeles has, because it could prompt some parents to keep their children at home.

Brad Lander, who will take office as city comptroller on Jan. 1, has urged Mr. Adams and Mr. de Blasio to create a plan for all students and staff -- which would mean close to a million students, 75,000 teachers and thousands of other staff members -- to be tested during the weekend before school resumes.

Mr. Lander, Mr. Adams and Jumaane Williams, the city's public advocate who recently tested positive for the virus, issued a joint statement on Tuesday announcing that they were postponing the inauguration ceremony and urging New Yorkers to get boosted.

''We encourage all New Yorkers to get vaccinated, get boosted and get tested,'' the statement said. ''That is our pathway out of this pandemic, and we will come out of it together.''

(Representative Nicole Malliotakis, a Republican who represents Staten Island and part of Brooklyn, disclosed on Tuesday that she has also tested positive; she said she had been vaccinated and was experiencing mild symptoms.)

With many New Yorkers' holiday plans at risk and with cases surging, the time it takes to get test results has also increased at some locations. Letitia James, the New York state attorney general, issued a warning letter to LabQ Diagnostics, a Brooklyn-based laboratory with dozens of mobile locations across New York City, about falsely advertising that results are available within 48 hours.

A new vaccine mandate for all private employers in New York City takes effect on Dec. 27. But some businesses have already closed because of outbreaks or asked employees to work remotely. Citigroup gave its New York and New Jersey staff the option to work remotely, and CNN closed its U.S. offices to all employees who are able to work remotely.

On Broadway, a half-dozen or so shows were suspended because of virus concerns; on Monday, the rock musical ''Jagged Little Pill'' became the first major show to permanently close, in part, because of the resurgent pandemic.

Andrew Rigie, the executive director of the New York City Hospitality Alliance, said that the spike in cases was another ''gut punch'' for restaurants and bars. He said that his organization had heard from dozens that had closed for a few days or were considering it.

''It's a struggle -- these restaurants have been devastated over the past almost two years,'' he said. ''They were hoping for a busy holiday season to pay off debt and move forward.''

Restaurants and bars in New York City employed nearly 325,000 people before April 2020, which then plummeted to fewer than 90,000, according to data from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. The industry now employs about 225,000 people.

Kathryn Wylde, head of the Partnership for New York City, a business group, said that most big companies had canceled in-person events for the rest of the year and postponed mandatory return-to-office policies. She said she was increasingly hearing April as a probable date for asking workers to return to offices.

''As this lingers,'' she said, ''it makes a return to what was prepandemic normal even more difficult.''

Reporting was contributed by Jeffery C. Mays, Sharon Otterman, Ed Shanahan, Eliza Shapiro and Karen Zraick.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/21/nyregion/covid-omicron-nyc.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/21/nyregion/covid-omicron-nyc.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Eric Adams, the mayor-elect of New York, postponed the indoor celebration, saying he did not want to put anyone at risk. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 22, 2021

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[***President and Incumbent Senator Are on Defense in Iowa***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6060-3C01-JBG3-610T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 21, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1630 words

**Byline:** By Trip Gabriel

**Body**

Iowa seemed out of reach for Democrats not too long ago. Now, the presidential race appears to be tightening, and Senator Ernst, a Republican, is facing a strong challenge from a political newcomer.

Iowa was not on anyone's bingo card of 2020 battlegrounds.

Donald J. Trump carried the state by nine percentage points in 2016, and a year ago prominent Democrats in the state passed up the chance to challenge Senator Joni Ernst, a popular Republican seeking re-election.

But with the political ground shifting precariously under Mr. Trump amid multiple crises, Iowa is unexpectedly in play in the presidential and Senate races this year, moving Republicans to high alert. Democrats, who a few years ago were shrouded in despair that their party might never again appeal to white ***working-class*** voters, are energized.

A poll published by The Des Moines Register and Mediacom on Monday showed Mr. Trump with only a one-point lead in the state over former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. The poll revealed a deep erosion of support for the president among white women without college degrees, voters who were key to his 2016 coalition across a swath of Midwestern swing states.

The same survey showed that Ms. Ernst, a rising star in her party in her first term, was narrowly trailing her little-known Democratic challenger.

Theresa Greenfield, the Democratic Senate nominee who emerged from a primary on June 2, is running primarily on a biography with parallels to the one Ms. Ernst used to introduce herself to Iowans six years ago: Both grew up on farms, and both have made promises to show Washington their scrappy values of hard work and self-reliance.

But Ms. Greenfield is turning Ms. Ernst's celebrated anti-establishment catchphrase against her rival.

''Senator Ernst told Iowans in 2014 she was going to be independent and different and she was going to 'make 'em squeal,''' Ms. Greenfield said in an interview, echoing a television ad six years ago in which Ms. Ernst said she would take a knife to federal spending the way she castrated hogs on the farm. ''The bottom line is nobody's squealing except Iowans.''

Ms. Ernst declined an interview request. But her advisers noted that Ms. Greenfield, a businesswoman and political newcomer, was riding the crest of more than $7 million in positive TV ads by liberal outside groups.

''This is Greenfield's high-water mark,'' said David Kochel, a senior adviser to the Ernst campaign. He promised that the Democrat would soon face a barrage of negativity. ''Forty percent of Iowans don't have an opinion of Theresa Greenfield,'' he said. ''We're here to help.''

In the Des Moines Register poll, Mr. Trump led Mr. Biden 44 percent to 43 percent among likely voters, the latest in a wave of national and state polls showing the president's prospects for re-election at their most precarious all year.

Although the road to the White House in November will not hinge on Iowa, with its meager six electoral votes, the tightness of the race in the state is an ominous sign for Mr. Trump in other Midwestern battlegrounds like Ohio and Wisconsin, which also have large electorates of older and rural voters, and white voters without college degrees.

Amid a pandemic that the president seeks to minimize, and widespread anti-police protests after the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Mr. Trump's approval has slipped five points in Iowa since March, to 45 percent. Only 37 percent approve of the way he has handled the protests. The president retains strong support from evangelical voters and white men. But white ***working-class*** women preferred Mr. Biden over Mr. Trump in the Register poll, 53 percent to 35 percent.

The 18-point gap strikingly reversed the president's advantage from 2016, when he carried white women without college diplomas by two points in Iowa. He won the state after it twice voted for President Barack Obama.

''Right now I'd like to kick them all out,'' said Mary Figenshaw, a political independent in Jefferson, Iowa. A retired bank teller, she is ''not crazy about'' a second term for Ms. Ernst, she said. ''I don't think she's done a lot. She's standing by Mitch McConnell in all the photos. I just don't think any of our congressmen are doing what they should be doing for the common people.''

Rob Sand, Iowa's state auditor and one of its top elected Democrats, said that Iowans swung to Mr. Trump because he promised to stand up for people who felt marginalized in the economy and ignored by political elites. But the twin crises of the coronavirus and racial injustice have exposed the president as incapable of empathy or leadership, Mr. Sand said, adding, ''He can't handle a crisis.''

Recognizing the threat in Iowa, the president's re-election campaign spent more than $400,000 on TV ads in the state in May and June, according to Advertising Analytics, a tracking firm.

Democrats' top presidential super PAC, Priorities USA, rated Iowa this month as leaning toward Mr. Trump and outside the top-six battleground states: Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Arizona, North Carolina and Florida. But that might change. ''While Iowa isn't currently in our spending plans, it's a state we're keeping an eye on,'' said Josh Schwerin, a senior strategist for the group. ''The fact that it's in play shows that Biden is on offense and will have multiple paths to 270,'' he added, referring to the electoral votes needed for victory.

It's a different story in the Senate race. Democratic outside groups have booked $24.1 million to support Ms. Greenfield with TV ads through Election Day, and Republican groups are close behind with $22.6 million on behalf of Ms. Ernst.

Democrats hoping to control the Senate need to net four seats in November (or three if they win the White House since the vice president has a tiebreaking vote). Their top targets are Republican incumbents in Colorado, Arizona and Maine. Close behind are the incumbents in North Carolina and, increasingly, Iowa.

The Senate Majority PAC, the top outside Democratic group in Senate races, has lined up $13 million for TV ads in Iowa after Labor Day. It matches $12.5 million reserved by the leading Republican outside group, the Senate Leadership Fund.

''The idea that Iowa's in play really shouldn't surprise people,'' said J.B. Poersch, president of the Senate Majority PAC, which is aligned with Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the Democratic leader. ''It came to the table this way, since the intensity of the caucuses.''

The Iowa caucuses in February may have been a fiasco when it came to counting votes, as well as an embarrassment for Mr. Biden, who finished fourth. But a year of intense organizing by presidential hopefuls in the state brought a bounty of new Democratic voters. Democrats now outnumber registered Republicans in the state by 9,000, a reversal from the 2018 midterm elections when Republicans had a 23,000-voter advantage.

Ms. Greenfield, who until recently was president of a commercial real estate company, led Ms. Ernst by three points in the Register poll, 46 percent to 43 percent. It is the first time Ms. Ernst, a former state senator and National Guard commander in Iraq, has trailed in a general election survey by the pollster J. Ann Selzer, the most respected in Iowa, since 2014. (Ms. Greenfield's lead, however, was within the poll's margin of sampling error.)

Paralleling the gender gap in the presidential race, Ms. Greenfield held a 20-point lead among women. Just as Ms. Ernst, 49, told of her thrifty farm upbringing when she first ran, Ms. Greenfield, 56, describes how her parents, who ran a crop-dusting business and raised hogs just across the Minnesota border, were driven out of farming in the 1980s farm crisis.

''They never farmed again and us five kids left the rural area,'' she said.

Ms. Greenfield's first husband, a union electrician, died in a workplace accident; as a candidate she praises the Social Security survivors' benefits that sustained her, a narrative with obvious appeal in Iowa's blue-collar communities along the Mississippi River, the swingiest part of the state.

''It was Social Security, it was union benefits that kept me from going into poverty and gave me the opportunity to pay the rent and put milk in the fridge and go back to school and start rebuilding a path to providing for my family,'' Ms. Greenfield said.

At the same time, she accused Ms. Ernst of implying she would cut Social Security ''behind closed doors'' -- an attack that seemed to twist a comment of Ms. Ernst's last year.

As promised, the Ernst campaign has gone on the attack since Ms. Greenfield emerged from her four-way primary. ''Liberal outside groups spent $10 million to prop up Chuck Schumer's candidate, Theresa Greenfield, in the primary,'' said Brendan Conley, a spokesman for Ms. Ernst. ''But now Iowans are learning about Greenfield's record as a failed real estate executive, like kicking out small businesses to make way for a multinational corporation.''

The reference is to a strip-mall redevelopment that Ms. Greenfield oversaw in 2015. Small retailers were displaced. Ms. Greenfield said the merchants had reached the end of their leases, and today a new shopping center on the site is home to other retailers. The ''multinational corporation'' was an Aldi grocery store that never moved in. ''Senator Ernst, she's desperate,'' Ms. Greenfield said.

Despite being a political novice, Ms. Greenfield has absorbed message discipline. She skirted attacking Mr. Trump in the interview. Asked if her race would be swept up in a broad referendum on the president, she replied: ''Gosh, I have no idea. I'll let Iowans decide what they think about President Trump. I'm running against Senator Ernst and that's what I stay focused on.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/20/us/politics/iowa-polls-trump-biden-ernst-greenfield.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/20/us/politics/iowa-polls-trump-biden-ernst-greenfield.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Theresa Greenfield, a political newcomer and the Democratic Senate nominee in Iowa, has taken a slight lead by using her farm upbringing to connect with voters. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CAROLINE BREHMAN/CQ ROLL CALL, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

Senator Joni Ernst, a rising star in the Republican Party, is running for a second term in Iowa at a moment when twin crises are putting pressure on incumbents. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AL DRAGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES): Outside a rally for President Trump in Des Moines in January. Mr. Trump is facing a threat in Iowa. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HILARY SWIFT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 21, 2020

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[***‘The Sum of Us’ Tallies the Cost of Racism for Everyone***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:622P-DDY1-JBG3-64DC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 23, 2021 Tuesday 00:49 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 1047 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Szalai

**Highlight:** Heather McGhee’s compassionate but cleareyed book argues that divide-and-conquer tactics have left all Americans worse off.

**Body**

Hinton Rowan Helper was an unreserved bigot from North Carolina who wrote hateful, racist tracts during Reconstruction. He was also, in the years leading up to the Civil War, a determined abolitionist.

His 1857 book, “The Impending Crisis of the South,” argued that chattel slavery had deformed the Southern economy and impoverished the region. Members of the plantation class refused to invest in education, in enterprise, in the community at large, because they didn’t have to. Helper’s concern wasn’t the enslaved Black people brutalized by what he called the “lords of the lash”; he was worried about the white laborers in the South, relegated by the slave economy and its ruling oligarchs to a “cesspool of ignorance and degradation.”

Helper and his argument come up early on in Heather McGhee’s illuminating and hopeful new book, “The Sum of Us” — though McGhee, a descendant of enslaved people, is very much concerned with the situation of Black Americans, making clear that the primary victims of racism are the people of color who are subjected to it. But “The Sum of Us” is predicated on the idea that little will change until white people realize what racism has cost them too.

The material legacy of slavery can be felt to this day, McGhee says, in depressed wages and scarce access to health care in the former Confederacy. But it’s a blight that’s no longer relegated to the region. “To a large degree,” she writes, “the story of the hollowing out of the American ***working class*** is a story of the Southern economy, with its deep legacy of exploitative labor and divide-and-conquer tactics, going national.”

As the pandemic has laid bare, the United States is a rich country that also happens to be one of the stingiest when it comes to the welfare of its own people. McGhee, who spent years working on economic policy for Demos, a liberal think tank, says it was the election of Donald Trump in 2016 by a majority of white voters that made her realize how most white voters weren’t “operating in their own rational economic self-interest.” Despite Trump’s populist noises, she writes, his agenda “promised to wreak economic, social and environmental havoc on them along with everyone else.”

At several points in McGhee’s book, I was reminded of the old saw about “cutting off one’s nose to spite one’s face,” though she prefers a less gruesome metaphor — the drained swimming pool. Grand public pools were sumptuous emblems of common leisure in the early decades of the 20th century, steadfastly supported by white Americans until they were told to integrate them. McGhee visited the site of one such pool in Montgomery, Ala., drained and cemented over since 1959 so that nobody, white or Black, could ever enjoy it again.

It’s a self-defeating form of exclusion, a determination not to share resources even if the ultimate result is that everyone suffers. McGhee writes about health care, voting rights and the environment; she persuasively argues that white Americans have been steeped in the notion of “zero sum” — that any gains by another group must come at white people’s expense. She talks to scholars who have found that white respondents believed that anti-white bias was more prevalent than anti-Black bias, even though by any factual measure this isn’t true. This cramped mentality is another legacy of slavery, McGhee says, which really was zero sum — extractive and exploitative, like the settler colonialism that enabled it. She writes that zero-sum thinking “has always optimally benefited only the few while limiting the potential of the rest of us, and therefore the whole.”

Recent books like Jonathan Metzl’s “Dying of Whiteness” have explained how racial animus ends up harming those who cling to a chimera of privilege. While reading McGhee I was also reminded of Thomas Frank’s argument in [*“What’s the Matter With Kansas?”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2004/06/13/books/heartland-security.html) (2004), about how the Republican Party had figured out a way to push through an unpopular economic agenda by stowing it inside a Trojan horse of social conservatism and cultural grievance.

But there are major differences between their books. Frank derides the idea that racism has anything to do with what he’s writing about. Not to mention that McGhee isn’t a stinging polemicist; she cajoles instead of ridicules. She appeals to concrete self-interest in order to show how our fortunes are tied up with the fortunes of others. “We suffer because our society was raised deficient in social solidarity,” she writes, explaining that this idea is “true to my optimistic nature.” She is compassionate but also cleareyed, refusing to downplay the horrors of racism, even if her own book suggests that the white readers she’s trying to reach can be easily triggered into seeking the safe space of white identity politics. Color blindness, she says, is just another form of denial.

One of the phenomena that emerges from McGhee’s account is that the zero-sum mentality tends to get questioned only in times of actual scarcity — when people are so desperate that they realize how much they need one another. She gives the example of the Fight for $15 movement: Already earning poverty-level wages, fast-food workers began to ask what they had to lose by organizing.

Against “zero-sum” she proposes “win-win” — without fully addressing how the ideal of win-win has been deployed for cynical ends. McGhee discusses how the subprime mortgage crisis was fueled by racism, but it was also inflated by promises of a constantly expanding housing market and rising prices. Once the credit dried up, win-win reverted to zero-sum, with the drowned (underwater homeowners) losing out to the saved (well-connected bankers).

“We live under the same sky,” McGhee writes. There is a striking clarity to this book; there is also a depth of kindness in it that all but the most churlish readers will find moving. She explains in exacting detail how racism causes white people to suffer. Still, I couldn’t help thinking back to the abolitionist Helper, who knew full well how slavery caused white people to suffer, but remained an unrepentant racist to the end.

Follow Jennifer Szalai on Twitter: @jenszalai. The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together By Heather McGhee 396 pages. One World. $28.

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREAS BURGESS)

**Load-Date:** February 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Adams Cancels Inauguration Gala in Latest Sign of Omicron Surge***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64BW-WM31-DXY4-X24J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 21, 2021 Tuesday 12:45 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1731 words

**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Highlight:** Mayor Bill de Blasio and his successor, Eric Adams, are weighing difficult decisions as the city faces another troubling wave of coronavirus cases.

**Body**

Mayor Bill de Blasio and his successor, Eric Adams, are weighing difficult decisions as the city faces another troubling wave of coronavirus cases.

It was billed as an inauguration ritual steeped in symbolism: Eric Adams, the second Black man to be elected mayor of New York, would be sworn in at Kings Theater, a lavishly restored cultural icon in Brooklyn, whose residents, he said, chose “one of their own” to lead the city’s recovery.

But the event will now serve as a less welcome symbol, reflecting the rising concerns about the rampant spread of the Omicron variant.

Mr. Adams, who takes office on Jan. 1, canceled the ceremony on Tuesday, one of several developments that underscored how the latest wave of coronavirus cases has thrown New York City’s recovery into doubt and shifted priorities as the year ends.

The [*number of reported cases in the city*](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/positive-tests-over-time-region-and-county) has surged in recent days to more than 15,000 on Monday, the highest level since at least January and about four times the number of cases recorded just one week earlier.

Covid-19 hospitalizations in the city have been rising over the past month but are still at less than half the level of last winter’s peak, reaching about 270 new admissions a day on Monday, according to New York State figures.

Northwell Health officials say that their 53 urgent care facilities in the New York City area are seeing unprecedented volume. About 4,000 to 5,000 patients are coming into those facilities daily, up from 2,000 normally, and most are seeking testing, said John D’Angelo, Northwell Health’s chief of integrated operations. Positivity rates of those tests have gone from 7 percent a week ago to 14 percent now.

“I would expect that if that is going to translate to a steeper trajectory on the inpatient side, we should be seeing that in the next week or so,” Mr. D’Angelo said. “So we’ll see.”

The Omicron variant made up 37 percent of cases in New York State over the last two weeks, according to state data, and 92 percent of new cases in a larger area that includes New York and New Jersey, according to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate released Monday. Now Mayor Bill de Blasio and his successor, Mr. Adams, face painful decisions about how to handle the next stage of the pandemic.

Will schools fully reopen in January? Will a New Year’s Eve party in Times Square be canceled? How can the city avoid another broad shutdown or a shortage of hospital beds?

Already, Broadway shows have canceled performances, a handful of schools and some classrooms have closed, sporting events have been postponed and holiday travel plans have been abandoned. Some elected officials are calling for setting up a mass testing site at Javits Center in Manhattan, which served as a [*temporary hospital during the height of the pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/21/nyregion/coronavirus-hospital-usta-queens.html).

Mr. de Blasio, who is considering a run for governor next year, reiterated on Tuesday that he did not want to shut down the city. He said he would make a decision about the New Year’s Eve celebration soon and noted that it would take place outdoors and vaccination would be required for attendees.

“We need to all work together now to get through these weeks to come out the other side and continue our recovery, but no shutdowns, because that would devastate the lives of so many New Yorkers,” Mr. de Blasio said.

With hourslong lines now common outside testing sites, Mr. de Blasio said city officials were working to expand testing to 112 locations and were expected to get help from the Biden administration. The city has been testing more people than ever before, reaching nearly 130,000 P.C.R. tests one day last week.

In a sign of how severely the local testing infrastructure is being strained, the privately owned CityMD chain of urgent-care clinics said in [*a message posted on its website late Tuesday*](https://www.citymd.com/citymd-temporary-closures) that it was temporarily closing 19 of its 150 locations in New York and New Jersey starting Wednesday “to preserve our ability to staff our sites.”

Thirteen of the affected clinics are in New York City, three are in New Jersey, two are on Long Island and one is in Westchester County.

“It is our hope that closing sites now will best allow us to avoid future closures as this surge continues,” the company said in its message. Press representatives for CityMD did not immediately respond to requests for additional information, including how long the closings might last.

The mayor also announced on Tuesday a new $100 incentive for New Yorkers who receive a booster shot — an urgent effort to blunt the worst impact of the surge in cases.

Mr. de Blasio said he was prepared to “spend whatever it takes” to make boosters a priority. More than [*82 percent of adults in New York City are fully vaccinated*](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data-vaccines.page), but only about a quarter of adult New Yorkers have received a booster shot, city officials said.

At a separate news conference, Mr. Adams, the mayor-elect, said that it was best to postpone his inauguration because he did not want to put people in a dangerous environment indoors. He had chosen the location in Flatbush, a ***working-class*** neighborhood in Brooklyn, as a tribute to his roots as the son of a house cleaner.

“I don’t need an inauguration — all I need is a mattress and a floor to execute being the mayor of the City of New York,” said Mr. Adams, who famously slept in his office during the height of the pandemic as Brooklyn borough president. It was not clear whether he would be sworn in at a private event.

Mr. de Blasio and Mr. Adams are both Democrats and political allies, and Mr. Adams has said he agrees with Mr. de Blasio’s approach to the pandemic, including setting vaccine mandates for city workers and indoor dining. The current and future mayors appeared at a news conference together on Sunday to show a united front.

Mr. Adams has made a flurry of appointments in recent days, but he has not said whom he would name as health commissioner — a key role in leading the city’s pandemic strategy.

Mr. Adams is planning to keep Dr. Dave Chokshi, whom Mr. de Blasio named to the post in August 2020, as health commissioner for several months to keep continuity in the city’s Covid response, according to someone who is familiar with the mayor-elect’s plans.

Dr. Ashwin Vasan, the president of [*Fountain House*](https://www.fountainhouse.org/), a mental health and public health charity, will take over as health commissioner in the spring, Politico [*reported*](https://twitter.com/aeis17/status/1473457825439535108?s=20) late Tuesday.

Mr. Adams was elected in November when cases were much lower in the city. Even when he won the Democratic primary over the summer, the conversation around the pandemic centered on the city’s ability to recover from it.

But the Omicron-fueled surge will confront Mr. Adams with an immediate and vexing challenge when he takes office.

One major question he will face is how to handle the reopening of schools in January. Teachers and school staff are required to be vaccinated, and Mr. de Blasio has said he is considering requiring a booster shot as well. But Mr. de Blasio has been adamant that he does not want to set a vaccine mandate for students, as Los Angeles has, because it could prompt some parents to keep their children at home.

Brad Lander, who will take office as city comptroller on Jan. 1, has urged Mr. Adams and Mr. de Blasio to create a plan for all students and staff — which would mean close to a million students, 75,000 teachers and thousands of other staff members — to be tested during the weekend before school resumes.

Mr. Lander, Mr. Adams and Jumaane Williams, the city’s public advocate who recently tested positive for the virus, issued a joint statement on Tuesday announcing that they were postponing the inauguration ceremony and urging New Yorkers to get boosted.

“We encourage all New Yorkers to get vaccinated, get boosted and get tested,” the statement said. “That is our pathway out of this pandemic, and we will come out of it together.”

(Representative Nicole Malliotakis, a Republican who represents Staten Island and part of Brooklyn, disclosed on Tuesday that she has also tested positive; she said she had been vaccinated and was experiencing mild symptoms.)

With many New Yorkers’ holiday plans at risk and with cases surging, the time it takes to get test results has also increased at some locations. Letitia James, the New York state attorney general, issued a warning letter to LabQ Diagnostics, a Brooklyn-based laboratory with [*dozens of mobile locations*](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDAsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMTEyMjEuNTA2Mjg5NzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL2FnLm55Lmdvdi9zaXRlcy9kZWZhdWx0L2ZpbGVzL2xldHRlcl90b19sYWJfcV8xMi0yMC0yMS5wZGYifQ.4-EAv0h9osFS1D8sykhpvNgWQX-pOKuxq3ewkEV7dJI/s/564705009/br/123463922559-l) across New York City, about falsely advertising that results are available within 48 hours.

A new vaccine mandate for all private employers in New York City takes effect on Dec. 27. But some businesses have already closed because of outbreaks or asked employees to work remotely. Citigroup gave its New York and New Jersey staff the option to work remotely, and CNN closed its U.S. offices to all employees who are able to work remotely.

On Broadway, a half-dozen or so shows were suspended because of virus concerns; on Monday, the rock musical [*“Jagged Little Pill”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/20/theater/jagged-little-pill-shutdown-omicron.html) became the first major show to permanently close, in part, because of the resurgent pandemic.

Andrew Rigie, the executive director of the New York City Hospitality Alliance, said that the spike in cases was another “gut punch” for restaurants and bars. He said that his organization had heard from dozens that had closed for a few days or were considering it.

“It’s a struggle — these restaurants have been devastated over the past almost two years,” he said. “They were hoping for a busy holiday season to pay off debt and move forward.”

Restaurants and bars in New York City employed nearly 325,000 people before April 2020, which then plummeted to fewer than 90,000, according to [*data*](https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/SMU36935617072200001SA) from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. The industry now employs about 225,000 people.

Kathryn Wylde, head of the Partnership for New York City, a business group, said that most big companies had canceled in-person events for the rest of the year and postponed mandatory return-to-office policies. She said she was increasingly hearing April as a probable date for asking workers to return to offices.

“As this lingers,” she said, “it makes a return to what was prepandemic normal even more difficult.”

Reporting was contributed by Jeffery C. Mays, Sharon Otterman, Ed Shanahan, Eliza Shapiro and Karen Zraick.

PHOTO: Eric Adams, the mayor-elect of New York, postponed the indoor celebration, saying he did not want to put anyone at risk. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 22, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Collins in Peril As Maine Loses Political Center***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:614M-5BG1-JBG3-604K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 24, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

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**Byline:** By Jonathan Martin

**Body**

Democrats are angry with her. Republicans see her as disloyal to the president. Her old-fashioned politics? ''I don't know if people respond as well to that anymore,'' said her G.O.P. predecessor in the Senate.

BANGOR, Maine -- Senator Susan Collins of Maine seemed to have a challenge on her hands.

A Republican running for re-election in a difficult year for her party, Ms. Collins was opposed by a well-funded Democrat with a political base in vote-rich Southern Maine who was hoping to capitalize on the unpopularity of the Republican in the White House. But in that 2008 race, even as the G.O.P. presidential nominee lost Maine by 17 percentage points, Ms. Collins won re-election by over 20 points, carrying every county in the state.

That was then.

Twelve years after what Ms. Collins thought was the most difficult re-election of her career, she is facing eerily similar circumstances -- but this time she's in the fight of her political life. And it is what has changed since 2008 in Maine, the Republican Party and politics broadly that could end her career.

The four-term senator has alienated Democrats here and beyond by voting to confirm Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh. She has become a national punchline among liberals for what they see as her toothless tut-tutting of President Trump, whom she is invariably ''concerned'' about. And she's been out-raised $63 million to $25 million by her Democratic opponent, Sara Gideon, the speaker of the State House.

Ms. Collins's biggest problem this year, however, may not be Ms. Gideon or the out-of-state donors eager to send her a message, but rather the shifting ground under her feet.

She is confronting a state, sharply cleaved by region and class, that would have been politically unrecognizable to her predecessors; an increasingly alien party overtaken by a president who demands unflinching loyalty; and, perhaps most daunting of all, a polarized political culture that elevates tribalism and national issues over the bipartisanship and pork-barreling that she has always pursued.

''I don't know if people respond as well to that anymore,'' conceded former Senator William S. Cohen of Maine, a moderate Republican whom Ms. Collins succeeded in the Senate after working for him as a young staff member. ''Therein lies the challenge of being somebody in the middle.''

Ms. Collins is the only Republican senator on the ballot this year who has not endorsed Mr. Trump.

In an interview on her campaign bus, she acknowledged momentarily considering running this year as an independent -- ''it crossed my mind,'' she said -- but was quick to note that she couldn't easily abandon ''the New England brand of Republicanism.''

It's a dying breed. Ms. Collins is the only remaining Republican member of Congress from New England.

Equally endangered, though, are any senators who can win re-election when their party's nominee is soundly defeated in the state. Mr. Trump is expected to be competitive only in Maine's Second Congressional District, which he won in 2016, and even there polls suggest that Joseph R. Biden Jr., the Democratic nominee, has an edge.

In 1984, when Ronald Reagan won a 49-state landslide, Democrats still netted two Senate seats. And even as recently as 2008, Republicans like Ms. Collins were winning re-election in blue states while Democratic senators were cruising in red ones like South Dakota and West Virginia.

By 2016, though, the results of every Senate race mirrored the state's preference in the presidential race.

Now Ms. Collins is no more likely to outrun Mr. Trump by 20 points, as she did John McCain in 2008, than Maine is to embrace crab over lobster as its crustacean of choice.

Her argument, though, is that there are exceptions to this era of polarization, and that well-known lawmakers in lightly populated states can overcome the partisan tide. Senators Jon Tester of Montana and Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, for example, both won as Democrats in Republican-leaning states just two years ago.

''There's a lot of parallels,'' Ms. Collins said. ''I still believe that most voters want problems solved and that they're put off by this us-against-them tribalism.''

Listening to Ms. Collins kick off her statewide bus tour in Bangor was like stepping into a political time machine.

She drew applause after trumpeting her record as the most bipartisan senator, noted that she had never missed a floor vote and bragged about the federal dollars she had delivered for new breakwaters in small communities.

Then she delivered the finale: ''With your help, when I'm re-elected, a year later I become the chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee,'' she announced.

The pitch resonated with some supporters, but even they were self-aware about the dated nature of Ms. Collins's appeal.

''I guess I'm a dinosaur in that I appreciate her centrist views and also I appreciate that she's been doing this a long time and has ranking positions on a lot of important committees,'' said Janna Jensen of nearby Brewer. ''I don't know how many people value that.''

A New York Times-Siena College survey last month pointed to the limitations of localism -- and that was before the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg elevated the Supreme Court and issues like abortion rights.

Fifty percent of Mainers said national issues, like which party controls the Senate, were most important to their Senate vote, while 41 percent said local matters, such as who can do more for Maine, were paramount.

A Rhode Island native, as Ms. Collins delights in noting, Ms. Gideon has made health care the centerpiece of her campaign, even more than Ms. Collins's vote on Justice Kavanaugh.During her time in the Legislature, the Democrat pushed to expand Medicaid in the state, clashing with former Gov. Paul LePage, a Republican, on the issue.As much as any individual policy issue, though, Ms. Gideon's core message is that a vote for Ms. Collins is a vote to keep Republicans in control of the Senate.

''As long as Susan Collins is elected again to the United States Senate, Mitch McConnell will again likely be the Senate majority leader,'' Ms. Gideon told attendees at a supper near Lewiston last month.

She repeated a version of that line in a brief interview afterward, and grew slightly defensive when that was pointed out.

''I don't walk around talking about Mitch McConnell all the time,'' she said, before retreating to a talking point about what Mainers focus on ''when they sit down at their kitchen table.''

Yet Ms. Gideon was more candid at the end of the conversation, when asked if she was happy with the Senate contest's becoming nationalized.

''We are where we are in this country,'' she said.

And Ms. Collins is where she is, in the dwindling middle between a party that loves Mr. Trump and one that loathes him.

The most frequently heard criticism of her is that she has changed, and has betrayed her moderate roots. Ms. Gideon has encouraged this sentiment and, when asked what she had in mind, cited Ms. Collins's support for the 2017 Republican tax cuts.

Yet Ms. Collins also supported George W. Bush's similarly high-end tax cuts, just as she backed his nominees to the Supreme Court.

What Maine voters often mean when they say Ms. Collins has changed, though, is that the Republican Party has changed -- and by that they mean Mr. Trump.

''The party has moved right,'' said Carl Bucciantini, a retired teacher who came to hear Ms. Gideon. ''It was conservative under Reagan, conservative under the Bushes and now it's just crazy.''

Ms. Collins continues to dodge the question of how she'll vote for president, but she said last month that she would probably avoid Mr. Trump if he campaigned in Maine.

In the same interview, conducted before the death of Justice Ginsburg, Ms. Collins said she would oppose filling a Supreme Court vacancy in October. Since the senator reaffirmed that view after Justice Ginsburg's death, Mr. Trump has repeatedly criticized Ms. Collins.

''I think that Susan Collins is going to be hurt very badly -- her people aren't going to take this,'' the president predicted in September, before heckling her on Twitter last week for opposing the hasty court nomination.

Pressed as to why she never fully broke with Mr. Trump the same way that her heroine, former Maine Senator Margaret Chase Smith, had confronted Joseph McCarthy, Ms. Collins recalled that she had helped torpedo the effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act and parted ways with the president on issues like his attempt to use military money for a border wall.

''I have had so many Margaret Chase Smith moments,'' she said.

The more persuasive answer, though, came from a supporter at the bus tour introduction who loathes Mr. Trump but said Ms. Collins was caught in a political vise.

''She can't,'' said the supporter, Kathy Anderson, when asked why Ms. Collins wouldn't condemn Mr. Trump. ''Look at the demographics here.''

Maine has always been split between its more affluent coastline and its blue-collar interior. But the political and social gap has widened even further in recent years.

''A lot of the people down here are more connected to Napa Valley than they are Penobscot Valley,'' said John Baldacci, a former Democratic governor of the state, who grew up in Bangor and now works in Portland.

The influx of transplants along the Maine coast and the migration of ***working-class*** whites into the Republican Party under Mr. Trump and Mr. LePage, who called himself ''Trump before Trump,'' have upended the state's politics.

Perhaps most significant, and for Ms. Collins most threatening, Mr. LePage's consecutive plurality victories prompted Maine to enact ranked-choice voting. In this system, voters rank their preference on the ballot so that those who receive few first-place votes are eliminated and the eventual winner garners a majority.

This means that the votes of those supporting a liberal independent candidate, Lisa Savage, can ultimately go to Ms. Gideon if Ms. Savage's backers list Ms. Gideon as their second choice.

It's a significant shift in a state with a long tradition of independence.

Maine has elected two unaffiliated governors in the last half-century and in 1992 handed Ross Perot more than 30 percent of the vote, his best showing of any state. Now, though, it has the same red-and-blue divide as the rest of the country -- and the old outlines of its political map have been redrawn.

Republicans used to run up some of their best margins in wealthy enclaves along the Atlantic, while Democrats consistently fared best in immigrant-heavy and union-organized mill towns further inland.

Maps from the last two major elections, the 2016 presidential contest and the 2018 governor's race, reveal a near-unbroken stretch of Democratic blue up the Atlantic Coast from Kittery to Bar Harbor.

There are effectively two states -- one ***working class*** and more pro-Trump, and the other more upscale and deeply contemptuous of the president -- that Ms. Collins must bridge.

They can be seen in the Trump lawn signs sprouting up across inland Maine and the ubiquity of Biden signs nearly anywhere saltwater is in the air.

Back on Ms. Collins's bus, she concluded an interview by recalling that in 2008 she ''only lost eight communities in the entire state.''

But once she stepped into the office of an oil heating company to address employees, she returned to the present.

''The country is so polarized and Maine is, too, unfortunately,'' Ms. Collins said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/us/politics/susan-collins-maine-senate.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/us/politics/susan-collins-maine-senate.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Senator Susan Collins of Maine is in a tough fight for re-election as some voters say that she and the Republican Party have changed.

Ms. Collins is confronting a new electoral map and trying to bridge gaps between a pro-Trump inland and blue coastal areas. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELIZABETH FRANTZ/REUTERS) (A19)

**Load-Date:** October 24, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Shakespeare, Solo Shows And Other Smart Stuff***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:633M-4D81-JBG3-63K4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 9, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 7

**Length:** 1272 words

**Byline:** By Elisabeth Vincentelli

**Body**

An adaptation of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's ''Notes on Grief,'' Russell Brand's take on Shakespeare and a two-day event anchored by a Milo Rau film are among the highlights.

Productions from the multidisciplinary Manchester International Festival often end up traveling around the world, making pit stops at well-heeled performing arts centers. This year, we don't have to wait, as the festival is making some of its offerings available online -- an approach we hope will become commonplace among international gatherings.

Of particular interest to theater audiences is ''Notes on Grief,'' Rae McKen's adaptation of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's essay-turned-book about her father's sudden death. The show is bound to be compared to the Joan Didion memoir-turned-play ''The Year of Magical Thinking.''

One day in June 2020, Adichie learned that her father -- with whom she had chatted just a day earlier -- died. ''My brother Chuks called to tell me, and I came undone,'' she wrote in an essay that The New Yorker published in September. McKen's show stars Uche Abuah, Michelle Asante and Itoya Osagiede. Audience members lucky enough to be in Manchester can see it in real life through July 17, and the rest of us can watch from home from July 15-18. mif.co.uk.

'Our Little Lives: Shakespeare and Me'

Those who associate Russell Brand only with his excesses and shock tactics may be surprised by his quieter mien these days -- he's become the kind of guy who occasionally finds life lessons in sonnets. He is now reprising a one-man show he conceived with the director Ian Rickson and developed in 2018, in which he uses Shakespeare's writings to illuminate his own story. Brand promises an appearance by his dog, Bear (perhaps timed to his exit, so he can be pursued by Bear). Through July 14; live-now.com

'A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder'

CollaborAzian is streaming an abridged version of this Tony Award-winning musical from 2013 with an all-Asian American cast and production team. Karl Josef Co takes on Monty Navarro, who sets out to kill multiple members of the D'Ysquith family, all of them to be portrayed -- often in lightning-fast succession -- by Thom Sesma. It should be interesting to see how the director Alan Muraoka and his actors handle the show's high-farcical style online. Look also for a special appearance by Lea Salonga. July 15-22; collaborazian.com

'I Hate It Here'

Last year, Studio Theater presented the Chicago playwright Ike Holter's anthology of vignettes as an audio drama; now the Goodman Theater is producing it as a fully staged livestream, directed by Lili-Anne Brown. The stories cover various aspects of life during the peak of the pandemic year, touching on Covid-19, racism and activism, and possibly even hope. July 15-18; goodmantheatre.org

The New Solidarity: Art, Organizing and Radical Politics

Presented by various institutions and organizations across the country, including the Foundry Theater in New York, this two-day event is anchored by a streaming presentation of the Milo Rau film ''The New Gospel.'' Rau, an audacious Swiss director whose production company ''for theater, film and social sculpture'' is called the International Institute of Political Murder, set the Passion of Christ in the context of 21st-century conflicts about migration; the Jesus character is played by the activist and writer Yvan Sagnet, who was born in Cameroon and then later moved to Italy to study. Rau will also participate in a couple of panels: ''How are artists seizing power today?'' and ''How are artists and organizers building solidarity between art and movements?'' (Sagnet will participate in the latter one as well). July 9-10; howlround.com

'Lines in the Dust'

Nikkole Salter emerged in 2005 with the play ''In the Continuum,'' which she and Danai Gurira wrote and starred in. Since then, Salter continues to make theater that inspires and engages, stirs and advocates. The New Normal Rep company is reviving her 2014 play ''Lines in the Dust,'' in which a ***working-class*** New Jersey mother alters her residency paperwork so her daughter can attend a good school. July 8-Aug. 8; [*https://www.newnormalrep.org/next-up*](https://www.newnormalrep.org/next-up)

'Silent'

The respected Dublin company Fishamble celebrates the 10th anniversary of one of its biggest hits, ''Silent,'' from the writer-performer Pat Kinevane, with a virtual American mini-tour of a filmed version: It's presented first by Odyssey Theater Ensemble in Los Angeles (July 9-11) then by Solas Nua in Washington (July 11-18). Kinevane portrays a mentally ill homeless man who emulates the silent movie star Rudolph Valentino. Praising ''Silent'' in The New York Times, Ben Brantley wrote that ''there is breath and blood to spare in this carefully wrought production.'' fishamble.com

Discover Imitating the Dog

The explosion of streaming theater last year allowed us to discover many artists doing stellar work in their corners of the world. One such outfit is Britain's Imitating the Dog, whose shows make inventive use of multimedia techniques and translate remarkably well online. Luckily the company remains proactive in making its catalog available. Check out, for example, ''Dr Blood's Old Travelling Show,'' from October 2020, or the collection of shorts ''Street,'' which smartly spruces up the aesthetics of documentary theater. [*http://www.imitatingthedog.co.uk/at-home*](http://www.imitatingthedog.co.uk/at-home)/

2021 Short New Play Festival: Restoration

Red Bull Theater, in New York, has made a name with such zippy revivals as ''The Government Inspector,'' which gave Michael Urie a golden opportunity to display his comic timing, but the company is not stuck in the past. For this year's edition of its festival dedicated to short new plays, Red Bull commissioned a work from JoseÌ Rivera (''Cloud Tectonics'' and the Academy Award-nominated screenplay for ''The Motorcycle Diaries'') and selected six entries from hundreds of open submissions. The winning playwrights are Constance Congdon, Rosslyn Cornejo, George LaVigne, David Lefkowitz, Abigail C. Onwunali and Charlotte Rahn-Lee, and their pieces should be in good hands with the directors Margot Bordelon and Timothy Douglas. July 12-16; redbulltheater.com

'Possible'

The Welsh writer and performer ShÃ´n Dale-Jones's new solo show has been compared to Bo Burnham's Netflix special ''Inside'': both are autobiographical works that explore lockdown life while occasionally reaching further back in time. Dale-Jones refers to digital interactions he's had in the past year, including WhatsApp group chats and Zoom calls, and includes tough discussions about his mother's mental well-being. After a livestreamed run, the National Theater Wales production is available on-demand. Through July 13; nationaltheatrewales.org

East to Edinburgh Goes Virtual

Every year, 59E59 Theaters in New York presents a showcase of productions headed to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. While the United States have made great steps toward a return to a theatrical normal (whatever that might be), the new edition of East to Edinburgh is still virtual, with nine shows you can watch from home. Among the titles that caught my eye is Priyanka Shetty's docu-theater solo ''#Charlottesville,'' about the events that roiled the Virginia city in August 2017. Borrowing from Anna Deavere Smith, Shetty built her text from interviews. Other intriguing entries in the showcase include ''Testament,'' in which Tristan Bernays (''Frankenstein'') imagines what would happen if four biblical characters lived now; and Somebody Jones's ''Black Women Dating White Men,'' whose title is an apt description of the show. July 15-July 25; 59e59.org

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/theater/new-streaming.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/theater/new-streaming.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, ''Silent,'' from the writer-performer Pat Kinevane and the theater company Fishamble. Near right, the actor Russell Brand, with the director Ian Rickson. Their show is ''Our Little Lives: Shakespeare and Me.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY STE MURRAY

TRISTRAM KENTON)

**Load-Date:** July 9, 2021

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[***The Booker Prize Goes to 'Shuggie Bain'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61BC-8CK1-DXY4-X1XX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 20, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 13

**Length:** 876 words

**Byline:** By Alexandra Alter

**Body**

The autobiographical novel, about the lonely gay son of an alcoholic mother in 1980s Scotland, was one of four debut books in this year's shortlist.

[The Best Books of 2020: View our full list.]

When Douglas Stuart began writing a fictional account of his childhood, growing up in Glasgow with an alcoholic mother, he wasn't sure it would ever be published.

''I wouldn't allow myself to believe I was writing a book, because it was too intimidating,'' he said during an interview last month.

Early responses from editors were equally discouraging: More than 30 publishers rejected the book. He finally sold it to Grove Atlantic, and the novel, ''Shuggie Bain,'' drew rapturous reviews.

Now, his debut has won the Booker Prize, one of the most prestigious literary awards in the world, cementing Stuart's reputation as a blazing new literary talent.

The award, which was announced on Thursday, will likely draw a large new audience to the novel, which came out earlier this year.

In a video news conference, Margaret Busby, this year's chair of judges, said the vote was unanimous and quick, and she noted that she believed the book is destined to become a classic.

''It's challenging, it's intimate, it's gripping, it's daring,'' she said of the novel. ''To some extent, I think anybody who reads it will never feel the same.''

For Stuart, working on ''Shuggie Bain'' gave him a way to process the trauma of his childhood and to pay tribute to his mother, who died when he was 16.

''Shuggie Bain'' unfolds in 1980s Glasgow and centers on a boy nicknamed Shuggie, who is struggling with being gay and his mother's addiction. Shuggie is precocious and sensitive, making him a target for school bullies. He devotes himself to caring for his mother Agnes, sometimes skipping school to make sure she doesn't harm herself and checking on her when she passes out drunk.

The novel, which has drawn comparisons to D.H. Lawrence, James Joyce and Frank McCourt, has been a favorite contender for this year's top literary prizes. In addition to being a Booker finalist, Stuart was also a finalist for the Kirkus Prize and the National Book Award for fiction, which on Wednesday went to Charles Yu for ''Interior Chinatown.''

Stuart, 44, who has dual British and American citizenship, lives in the East Village with his husband, Michael Cary, a curator at Gagosian who specializes in Picasso. Stuart came to writing somewhat late in life, and worked in the fashion industry for nearly 20 years, as a designer for Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren, Banana Republic and Jack Spade. He started writing ''Shuggie Bain'' more than a decade ago, when he was working 12-hour days as a senior director of design at Banana Republic.

Stuart was one of four debut novelists on this year's shortlist. The others were Brandon Taylor for ''Real Life,'' which follows a Black gay graduate student navigating white campus culture; Diane Cook for her dystopian novel ''The New Wilderness,'' about a mother and daughter who left a polluted city for the last swath of wilderness; and Avni Doshi for ''Burnt Sugar,'' about an artist in Pune, India, whose mother abandoned her to join an ashram.

The two established authors on the shortlist were Maaza Mengiste, for her novel ''The Shadow King,'' set during Italy's invasion of Ethiopia in the 1930s, and Tsitsi Dangarembga for ''This Mournable Body,'' which centers on a middle-aged woman struggling with life in Harare.

Last year, the Booker judges made the surprising decision to flout their own rules and award the prize jointly to Margaret Atwood, for ''The Testaments,'' a sequel to her 1985 dystopian classic, ''The Handmaid's Tale,'' and Bernardine Evaristo, for her novel ''Girl, Woman, Other.'' She became the first Black woman to win the Booker Prize.

This year, the judges were able to come to a unanimous consensus. They included the thriller writer Lee Child, the poet Lemn Sissay, the classicist and translator Emily Wilson, and the British author and critic Sameer Rahim.

This year's ceremony included a star-studded lineup of guest speakers. Former President Barack Obama -- whose memoir came out this week, prompting the Booker to reschedule its ceremony -- spoke about some of his favorite Booker-winning novels, and the solace he takes in reading fiction. The Duchess of Cornwall described how people can forge a sense of connection by reading during the pandemic. Previous winners, including Kazuo Ishiguro, Atwood and Evaristo, also spoke.

During a news conference, Booker representatives said ''Shuggie Bain'' had prevailed because of the strength of the narrative and the prose.

''It appears to be a very classical novel on a first reading,'' said Gaby Wood, the literary director of the Booker Prize Foundation. ''But actually when you reread it, you find it's quite daring.''

In an acceptance speech, Stuart thanked his mother, noting that she ''is on every page of this book.'' He was honored to be only the second Scottish author to win the Booker in some 50 years, he said. ''That means a lot for regional voices, for ***working-class*** voices.''

Follow New York Times Books on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, sign up for our newsletter or our literary calendar. And listen to us on the Book Review podcast.

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Douglas Stuart once worked in fashion. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIEL DORSA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 21, 2020

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[***Substantial Turnout Powered Democrats' Gains in Georgia***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61PT-V8K1-DXY4-X3GB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 8, 2021 Friday

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 11

**Length:** 969 words

**Byline:** By Nate Cohn and Charlie Smart

**Body**

Far more people of both parties voted than usual in a runoff, but the Democratic turnout was stronger, largely because of Black voters.

Two months ago, Republicans in Georgia won more votes for Senate than the Democratic candidates, even as Joe Biden defeated President Trump at the top of the ticket. On Tuesday for the runoff races, the Georgia electorate was very different; so was the outcome.

Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock prevailed in Georgia with the help of superior Democratic turnout, especially among Black Georgians, which allowed them to overcome their disadvantage with voters who might have been decisive in Mr. Biden's victory but voted Republican down-ballot.

An authoritative analysis of the results won't be possible until the state releases detailed data on exactly who voted and who stayed home. But the data available so far shows that Democrats benefited from a more favorable electorate, as a greater proportion of Democrats and especially Black voters returned to the polls than Republicans and white voters without college degrees. (The accompanying map shows how the margins shifted for Mr. Ossoff in his race against David Perdue; the map for Mr. Warnock vs. Kelly Loeffler, not shown, is essentially the same.)

Over all, turnout reached a remarkable 92 percent of 2020 general election levels in precincts carried by Mr. Biden in November, compared with 88 percent of general election levels in the precincts carried by Mr. Trump. These tallies include Upshot estimates of the remaining uncounted vote by precinct, and it suggests that nearly all of the Democratic gains since the November election can be attributed to the relatively stronger Democratic turnout.

A majority of Georgia's Democratic voters are Black -- they are roughly 30 percent of the overall electorate -- and it was these voters who drove the stronger Democratic turnout. Over all, turnout reached 93 percent of 2020 levels in precincts where Black voters represented at least 80 percent of the electorate. In comparison, turnout fell to 87 percent of general election levels in white ***working-class*** precincts.

In any election, it can be hard to decide whether to frame the result as a strong turnout from one side as opposed to a weak one from the other. In this election, it is easier to argue that the Black and Democratic turnout was strong rather than to say that the Republican turnout was weak. Republican turnout was extremely strong for a runoff election; had analysts been told of G.O.P. turnout in advance, most would have assumed the Republicans were on track to win.

The relatively strong Democratic turnout produced such a marked shift in part because the November election featured relatively weak Black turnout. In November, the Black share of the Georgia electorate appeared to fall to its lowest level since 2006; Black turnout, although it increased, did so to a lesser degree than non-Black turnout. In part for this reason, Democrats had legitimate cause to hope they could enjoy a more favorable electorate in the runoff than in the general, even though they have tended to fare worse in Georgia runoffs over the last two decades.

It will be some time before the Black share of the runoff electorate can be nailed down with precision, but the results by precinct and early voting data suggest it may rise two points higher than in the general election, to a level not seen in the state since Barack Obama's re-election bid in 2012.

As a result, Democratic gains were concentrated in the relatively Black and Democratic areas where superior Democratic turnout overwhelmed Republican support.

Democrats made their largest gains in the predominantly Black counties of the so-called Black Belt -- a region named for its fertile soil but now associated with the voters whose ancestors were enslaved to till it -- as well as the growing majority-Black suburbs south of Atlanta. It was the culmination of a voter drive led in part by Stacey Abrams, who narrowly lost the governor's race in 2018.

Democrats also made gains in the state's small number of majority-Hispanic areas. Turnout fell to a far greater extent in these precincts than they did elsewhere in the state. The Democratic gains in these precincts might have been because the Black share of the electorate increased in relatively diverse but predominantly Hispanic precincts, or because the Latino voters who stayed home were relatively likely to back Republicans in November.

At the same time, the relatively limited Democratic gains in Republican areas suggest that there was virtually no shift in voter preference since the November election, despite hundreds of millions of dollars in television advertisements.

Democrats had cause for hope they might change some minds. Mr. Biden had run ahead of the Democratic Senate candidates in November, and they sought to lure some of these voters to their side -- especially after the president's effort to foment doubts about the outcome of the November election. Instead, Republican candidates fared even better in affluent precincts -- those with a median income over $80,000 per year -- than they did in the general election, and in the precincts where Republican candidates ran farthest ahead of Mr. Trump in November.

It is hard to tell whether any Republican gains in these precincts can be explained by underlying shifts in turnout or an intentional shift to ensure divided government. If there is any silver lining for Republicans in the election, it is the possibility that these voters -- who are decisive in many competitive congressional districts even if not always in statewide elections -- may be inclined to serve as a check against the Democrats in the midterms, as has often been the case in recent political history.

For now, it won't be much consolation.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/07/upshot/warnock-ossoff-georgia-victories.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/07/upshot/warnock-ossoff-georgia-victories.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Douglas Stuart Wins Booker Prize for ‘Shuggie Bain’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61B6-XTF1-JBG3-62YG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 19, 2020 Thursday 13:53 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 878 words

**Byline:** Alexandra Alter

**Highlight:** The autobiographical novel, about the lonely gay son of an alcoholic mother in 1980s Scotland, was one of four debut books in this year’s shortlist.

**Body**

The autobiographical novel, about the lonely gay son of an alcoholic mother in 1980s Scotland, was one of four debut books in this year’s shortlist.

[The [*Best Books of 2020*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html): View our full list.]

When Douglas Stuart began writing a fictional account of his childhood, growing up in Glasgow with an alcoholic mother, he wasn’t sure it would ever be published.

“I wouldn’t allow myself to believe I was writing a book, because it was too intimidating,” he said [*during an interview last month*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html).

Early responses from editors were equally discouraging: More than 30 publishers rejected the book. He finally sold it to Grove Atlantic, and the novel, “[*Shuggie Bain*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html),” drew rapturous reviews.

Now, his debut has won the Booker Prize, one of the most prestigious literary awards in the world, cementing Stuart’s reputation as a blazing new literary talent.

The award, which was announced on Thursday, will likely draw a large new audience to the novel, which came out earlier this year.

In a video news conference, Margaret Busby, this year’s chair of judges, said the vote was unanimous and quick, and she noted that she believed the book is destined to become a classic.

“It’s challenging, it’s intimate, it’s gripping, it’s daring,” she said of the novel. “To some extent, I think anybody who reads it will never feel the same.”

For Stuart, working on “Shuggie Bain” gave him a way to process the trauma of his childhood and to pay tribute to his mother, who died when he was 16.

“Shuggie Bain” unfolds in 1980s Glasgow and centers on a boy nicknamed Shuggie, who is struggling with being gay and his mother’s addiction. Shuggie is precocious and sensitive, making him a target for school bullies. He devotes himself to caring for his mother Agnes, sometimes skipping school to make sure she doesn’t harm herself and checking on her when she passes out drunk.

The novel, which has drawn comparisons to D.H. Lawrence, James Joyce and Frank McCourt, has been a favorite contender for this year’s top literary prizes. In addition to being a Booker finalist, Stuart was also a finalist for the [*Kirkus Prize*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html) and the [*National Book Award for fiction*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html), which on Wednesday went to [*Charles Yu*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html) for “[*Interior Chinatown*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html).”

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Stuart was one of four debut novelists on this year’s shortlist. The others were [*Brandon Taylor*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html) for “[*Real Life*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html),” which follows a Black gay graduate student navigating white campus culture; Diane Cook for her dystopian novel “[*The New Wilderness*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html),” about a mother and daughter who left a polluted city for the last swath of wilderness; and Avni Doshi for “[*Burnt Sugar*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html),” about an artist in Pune, India, whose mother abandoned her to join an ashram.

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This year, [*the judges*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html) were able to come to a unanimous consensus. They included the thriller writer Lee Child, the poet Lemn Sissay, the[*classicist and translator*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html) Emily Wilson, and the British author and critic Sameer Rahim.

This year’s ceremony included a star-studded lineup of guest speakers. Former President Barack Obama — whose [*memoir came out*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html) this week, prompting the Booker to [*reschedule its ceremony*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html) — spoke about some of his favorite Booker-winning novels, and the solace he takes in reading fiction. The Duchess of Cornwall described how people can forge a sense of connection by reading during the pandemic. Previous winners, including [*Kazuo Ishiguro*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html), Atwood and Evaristo, also spoke.

During a news conference, Booker representatives said “Shuggie Bain” had prevailed because of the strength of the narrative and the prose.

“It appears to be a very classical novel on a first reading,” said Gaby Wood, the literary director of the Booker Prize Foundation. “But actually when you reread it, you find it’s quite daring.”

In an acceptance speech, Stuart thanked his mother, noting that she “is on every page of this book.” He was honored to be only the second Scottish author to win the Booker in some 50 years, he said. “That means a lot for regional voices, for ***working-class*** voices.”

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PHOTO: Douglas Stuart once worked in fashion. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIEL DORSA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 20, 2020

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[***Why Warnock and Ossoff Won in Georgia***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61PK-W561-DXY4-X17H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 7, 2021 Thursday 13:07 EST

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 970 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn and Charlie Smart

**Highlight:** Far more people of both parties voted than usual in a runoff, but the Democratic turnout was stronger, largely because of Black voters.

**Body**

Far more people of both parties voted than usual in a runoff, but the Democratic turnout was stronger, largely because of Black voters.

Two months ago, Republicans in Georgia won more votes for Senate than the Democratic candidates, even as Joe Biden defeated President Trump at the top of the ticket. On Tuesday for the runoff races, the Georgia electorate was very different; so was the outcome.

Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock prevailed in Georgia with the help of superior Democratic turnout, especially among Black Georgians, which allowed them to overcome their disadvantage with voters who might have been decisive in Mr. Biden’s victory but voted Republican down-ballot.

An authoritative analysis of the results won’t be possible until the state releases detailed data on exactly who voted and who stayed home. But the data available so far shows that Democrats benefited from a more favorable electorate, as a greater proportion of Democrats and especially Black voters returned to the polls than Republicans and white voters without college degrees. (The accompanying map shows how the margins shifted for Mr. Ossoff in his race against David Perdue; the map for Mr. Warnock vs. Kelly Loeffler, not shown, is essentially the same.)

Over all, turnout reached a remarkable 92 percent of 2020 general election levels in precincts carried by Mr. Biden in November, compared with 88 percent of general election levels in the precincts carried by Mr. Trump. These tallies include Upshot estimates of the remaining uncounted vote by precinct, and it suggests that nearly all of the Democratic gains since the November election can be attributed to the relatively stronger Democratic turnout.

A majority of Georgia’s Democratic voters are Black — they are roughly 30 percent of the overall electorate — and it was these voters who drove the stronger Democratic turnout. Over all, turnout reached 93 percent of 2020 levels in precincts where Black voters represented at least 80 percent of the electorate. In comparison, turnout fell to 87 percent of general election levels in white ***working-class*** precincts.

In any election, it can be hard to decide whether to frame the result as a strong turnout from one side as opposed to a weak one from the other. In this election, it is easier to argue that the Black and Democratic turnout was strong rather than to say that the Republican turnout was weak. Republican turnout was extremely strong for a runoff election; had analysts been told of G.O.P. turnout in advance, most would have assumed the Republicans were on track to win.

The relatively strong Democratic turnout produced such a marked shift in part because the November election featured relatively weak Black turnout. In November, the Black share of the Georgia electorate appeared [*to fall to its lowest level*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/17/upshot/georgia-precinct-shift-suburbs.html) since 2006; Black turnout, although it increased, did so to a lesser degree than non-Black turnout. In part for this reason, Democrats had legitimate cause to hope they could enjoy a more favorable electorate in the runoff than in the general, even though they have tended to fare worse in Georgia runoffs over the last two decades.

It will be some time before the Black share of the runoff electorate can be nailed down with precision, but the results by precinct and early voting data suggest it may rise two points higher than in the general election, to a level not seen in the state since Barack Obama’s re-election bid in 2012.

As a result, Democratic gains were concentrated in the relatively Black and Democratic areas where superior Democratic turnout overwhelmed Republican support.

Democrats made their largest gains in the predominantly Black counties of the so-called Black Belt — a region named for its fertile soil but now associated with the voters whose ancestors were enslaved to till it — as well as the growing majority-Black suburbs south of Atlanta. It was the culmination of a voter drive led in part by Stacey Abrams, who narrowly lost the governor’s race in 2018.

Democrats also made gains in the state’s small number of majority-Hispanic areas. Turnout fell to a far greater extent in these precincts than they did elsewhere in the state. The Democratic gains in these precincts might have been because the Black share of the electorate increased in relatively diverse but predominantly Hispanic precincts, or because the Latino voters who stayed home were relatively likely to back Republicans in November.

At the same time, the relatively limited Democratic gains in Republican areas suggest that there was virtually no shift in voter preference since the November election, despite hundreds of millions of dollars in television advertisements.

Democrats had cause for hope they might change some minds. Mr. Biden had run ahead of the Democratic Senate candidates in November, and they sought to lure some of these voters to their side — especially after the president’s effort to foment doubts about the outcome of the November election. Instead, Republican candidates fared even better in affluent precincts — those with a median income over $80,000 per year — than they did in the general election, and in the precincts where Republican candidates ran farthest ahead of Mr. Trump in November.

It is hard to tell whether any Republican gains in these precincts can be explained by underlying shifts in turnout or an intentional shift to ensure divided government. If there is any silver lining for Republicans in the election, it is the possibility that these voters — who are decisive in many competitive congressional districts even if not always in statewide elections — may be inclined to serve as a check against the Democrats in the midterms, as has often been the case in recent political history.

For now, it won’t be much consolation.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 8, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Surviving in a New World, via a New Medium***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60X1-2TJ1-DXY4-X09C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 23, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 3; CRITIC'S PICK

**Length:** 855 words

**Byline:** By Jesse Green

**Body**

Stephen Karam's celebrated play about economic distress looks very different in 2020 than it did in 2015 -- and streaming is only part of the change.

A couple of weeks ago, when The New York Times asked people what changes they sought in a post-pandemic theater, the pithiest answer came from the playwright Raquel Almazan. ''I hope I never have to see a couch onstage again,'' she wrote.

I get her point. The couch she meant is not just something to sit on; it symbolizes the kind of play that turns its back, often literally, on the world beyond the suburban picture window. Usually conventional in form and domestic in content, such plays have traditionally represented the problems of white people in a white bubble, as if Pottery Barn had become a genre.

''The Humans,'' by Stephen Karam, might at first glance seem to belong to that genre. It does concern a white family -- the Blakes -- in a domestic setting as they celebrate Thanksgiving. The parents, Erik and Deirdre, have come to New York City from Scranton, Pa., to visit their daughter, Brigid, a would-be composer who is just moving into a basement apartment with her boyfriend, Richard, a graduate student. (They have a couch, but it's decrepit.) Also sharing the holiday meal are Brigid's sister, Aimee, a lawyer; and Momo, Erik's mother, lost in a fog of dementia.

Produced in New York by the Roundabout Theater Company in 2015, ''The Humans'' was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize, and the Broadway transfer in 2016 won the Tony Award for best play. I saw it several times back then, each time finding it more gripping and terrifying. Scraping the skin off an apparently upbeat family, it revealed the many struggles, economic and otherwise, that were turning the inner lives of the Blakes into nightmares.

But 2015 and 2016 feel like a century ago. Would ''The Humans'' remain vital in a world facing bigger monsters than the ones Erik sees in his sleep and Momo sees even waking?

The Olney Theater Center's blistering virtual production, directed by Aaron Posner and streaming through Oct. 4, suggests that it does. The story that once seemed to turn on a specific economic phenomenon -- the downward mobility of the ***working class*** -- proves rich enough to encompass the even bigger disasters now besetting us.

Erik, Deirdre, Aimee and Brigid all face job insecurity. Illness intersects with those problems to create a kind of economic gridlock: Momo's dementia requires constant care, but who can pay for it? And the idea of a vigorous allegiance among people of different backgrounds keeps backfiring. Erik cannot disguise his resentment of Richard, who comes from money and whose last name, Saad, suggests Arab descent.

Karam's masterly structuring of the story, in one 100-minute act punctuated by frightening sounds from the compactor room and sources unknown, means that you never feel the thumb of the polemicist on the scales. His interest, as the title suggests, is in how we struggle to remain human even within inhuman constraints. Surely that theme does not change much, even as our world does.

The means of production have changed, though. After the pandemic forced the cancellation of the live version Olney had planned for its suburban Washington stage -- the nearly finished two-level set by Paige Hathaway was thrown in a dumpster -- the company used Paycheck Protection Program funds to extend rehearsals and reimagine ''The Humans'' for a virtual world.

That reimagining is mostly successful. Hathaway's set model became the video backdrop against which the actors, filmed in six different locations, could be digitally assembled. (This neatly solves the problem of the play's spatial requirements; we know when characters are upstairs or down, or off in the kitchen, by where their faces appear.) The sense of isolation is of course enhanced -- but so is the cacophony of the overlapping dialogue when everyone is talking straight out at the camera: all needy, none fully heard.

What may be lost in Posner's otherwise acute and balanced production is the shell of family cohesion that, live, encloses the chaos until it can't. Without actual togetherness on a stage, the Olney cast, led by Mitchell HeÌbert as Erik and Sherri L. Edelen as Deirdre, can sometimes fall into the trap of acting for one, and thus too emphatically. But each has soul-scraping moments as well, as when Aimee (Kimberly Gilbert) makes a phone call to an ex: The digital exchange seems completely natural in a digital medium. And when Momo (Catie Flye) delivers her bizarre bulletins from inner space, you wonder for a moment if the feed has been hacked.

The play makes you feel as if you, too, have been hacked. Parts are hilarious; parts unbearable -- just like the humans it dignifies despite their failures and misdeeds.

So as we do the necessary job of rethinking the canon to include great plays that have too long been denied entry, let's also leave room for those that prosecute the faults of society through their prickly insight into families. Not all couches are comfortable.

The HumansAvailable for streaming at olneytheatre.org through Oct. 4.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/22/theater/the-humans-review-olney.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/22/theater/the-humans-review-olney.html)

**Load-Date:** September 23, 2020

**End of Document**



[***How the Pandemic Worsened the Housing Crisis in the Bronx***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:643J-C7M1-DXY4-X02H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 17, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1655 words

**Byline:** By Mihir Zaveri, Matthew Haag and Sofia Cerda Campero

**Body**

Livia Fernandez used to commute every day from her one-bedroom apartment in the Bronx to an Ecuadorean restaurant in Queens, where she worked as a cook and earned $700 a week. But when the pandemic hit New York City last year, the restaurant shut down, and she lost her job.

Ms. Fernandez got Covid-19 in March 2020, and ever since she has felt weak and unable to work. Her two young daughters were also infected. For 20 months, Ms. Fernandez has not paid her $1,400 rent -- she owes more than $28,000.

Her landlord has yet to demand payment, instead hoping that Ms. Fernandez would qualify for a state pandemic relief program. But with the rent relief program now nearly out of money, Ms. Fernandez knows her housing situation is precarious.

''Where will I go with two daughters?'' Ms. Fernandez said. ''I can't live in the streets. ''

The pandemic has left millions of people across the country jobless and on the brink of losing their homes. But few places better illustrate the escalating housing crisis than the Bronx, where ***working-class*** residents have long struggled to afford the city's rising cost of living. Before the pandemic, more than one-third of households in the Bronx spent at least half their income on rent.

More than 26,000 renters in the borough have been sued by their landlord since the pandemic began, the highest concentration of eviction cases in New York State and more than in many large American cities, including Philadelphia, St. Louis and Cincinnati, according to the Eviction Lab at Princeton University. A state moratorium on evictions -- one of the strongest in the nation -- has helped keep the number of cases from being even higher; they are far below prepandemic levels.

While many lawsuits do not lead to actual evictions, the mere filing of a case can land a renter on a so-called tenant blacklist, making it much more difficult to find and qualify for another apartment.

Still, many residents, like Ms. Fernandez, remain out of work and unable to pay rent. The 12.4 percent unemployment rate in the Bronx in September was almost triple the national figure.

More than $248 million in pandemic rent relief has been distributed in the borough, according to the most recent data, more than in the entire states of Indiana, Arizona and Connecticut combined. The state has been so overwhelmed with requests for aid that it has stopped accepting most new applications and says that more than 70,000 pending applications could be left in limbo without more federal funds.

Interviews with landlords and tenants paint a grim portrait of a borough in distress, where the housing crisis is straining economic recovery.

Some of those who did not receive or qualify for rent relief because they did not submit an application or did not meet the criteria may face eviction once the moratorium expires in January. Others will struggle for years to climb out of debt. Without rental income, property owners could let buildings slip into disrepair.

''I'm very concerned about the long-term impact of such a momentous event,'' said Matthew Murphy, the executive director of the New York University Furman Center.

An out-of-work cook worries for her daughters

Ever since she moved to New York from Guayaquil, Ecuador, three years ago, Ms. Fernandez has worked as a cook.

Since she lost her job, she has struggled to find work. She got Covid-19 again this March and has been unable to stand for long periods of time. ''I can't find a full-time job because I feel physically weak,'' she said.

She cannot afford food and sometimes gets help from a nearby church pantry. She is especially concerned for her daughters, Clara and Marta.

''I can go hungry,'' she said, ''but they can't. I do nails, clean apartments, anything.''

She applied for the rent relief program when the landlord of her Mott Haven building pushed her. But she said she had not received any notice that her application was being considered.

''I break down and start crying,'' she said. ''But then I control myself because who will take care of my daughters if I'm not around?''

Her landlord, Inocencio González, could not be reached for comment.

Without a job, Ms. Fernandez is anxious about the future.

''Thank God my landlord hasn't been pushing or bothering with the rent money, but months keep passing and my pressure has gone up a lot,'' she said.

A social worker owes more than $40,000 in back rent

Mercedes Escoto, 63, has not paid rent on her two-bedroom apartment in the Highbridge neighborhood since April 2020. As of October, the sum of her unpaid bills, according to a letter she got from her landlord, was more than $43,000. In May, the landlord filed court papers seeking her eviction.

But like many renters facing eviction during the pandemic, her troubles had begun long before.

Five years ago, her landlord abruptly raised the monthly rent from around $1,400 to $2,000, she said. The rent would have claimed almost half her income -- Ms. Escoto earns around $59,000 a year as a social worker and also takes care of her mother, who lives with her.

''I told them from the get go, I could not pay all of that,'' she said.

Unable to afford the increase, she fell behind on rent. She borrowed money from a city emergency assistance program and took roughly $11,000 out of her retirement account for back rent -- money she is still paying back.

The pandemic worsened Ms. Escoto's financial woes. Her mother got Covid-19 in March 2020 and needs a walker, oxygen and pain pills. Ms. Escoto had to take weeks off from work without pay. She struggled with anxiety and depression.

''I used to cry every day,'' she said. ''It was too much for me.''

She also said she has had a leaky bathroom ceiling and nonfunctional oven, emblematic of issues that are particularly prevalent in rent-stabilized buildings like hers. Unlike the city's other four boroughs, the Bronx has many more rent-stabilized units than unregulated apartments.

She said that even if she could afford to pay back the rent, she is reluctant to do so until the repairs are made, especially as the moratorium on evictions has kept her case from moving forward. Ms. Escoto has also applied for rent relief from the state.

The landlord, a limited liability company associated with Isaac Kassirer, who has received national attention for pushing to gentrify affordable housing, filed papers last year seeking to deregulate the building so it can charge higher rents.

In an emailed statement, Todd Rothenberg, a lawyer representing the landlord, said Ms. Escoto ''has not paid a single penny in 21 months'' while the landlord ''has to pay me, his property taxes, his mortgage, the heating, the hot water etc., without any income whatsoever by Ms. Escoto.''

He noted that the landlord had agreed to charge Ms. Escoto a lower rent -- around $1,500 -- in October 2020. It was not clear why she was still receiving bills reflecting a higher amount.

We're not bloodsuckers, a real estate executive says

Of all the eviction cases filed in the Bronx since March 2020, about 70 of them were submitted by OneSource Property Management, a real estate company that owns and manages 25 apartment buildings in the borough.

In the months after the pandemic arrived in New York, rent collections dropped by 40 percent across the company's properties, said Valentina Gojcaj, an executive at OneSource.

In August 2020, Ms. Gojcaj said the company decided to move forward in filing the eviction cases, believing that they would enable her tenants to qualify for some kind of financial assistance. Instead, the cases were put on hold by the moratorium, and rent continued to go unpaid.

With the drop in rental revenue, the company started to dip into its savings reserved for large capital expenditures like new boilers, Ms. Gojcaj said. It has been made worse, she added, with the rising cost of operating the company's buildings, notably a $160,000 increase from last year in expected heating costs.

By June 2021, the arrears had climbed to nearly $800,000, she said, and she sought help through the state's pandemic rental aid program.

It was a nightmare. Each of the 70 applications had to be submitted individually, making it virtually impossible for her to follow their statuses. Tenants also had to submit information for each case. Only 20 renters responded, she said.

While she did receive emergency assistance through the state's program for those 20 renters, she said she is still out hundreds of thousands of dollars.

''We're being told that we are such bad people, that we are bloodsuckers,'' Ms. Gojcaj said. ''We are doing the best that you can just like everyone else, trying to make things work and being beat up on unfairly.''

A cleaner and cab driver struggle to catch up

Diana Mendez, a cleaner, and her husband, a taxi driver, pay $1,800 for a two-bedroom apartment on the Grand Concourse in the Bronx, where they live with their five children. But after the pandemic hit, Ms. Mendez said she saw almost 90 percent of her work disappear, and her husband lost customers too.

For months, they were able to scrounge the money for rent. But then in October of last year, they started to fall behind. By May, they owed some $10,700, and their landlord had filed a lawsuit seeking their eviction.

''This has really affected us and our community, we're poor people and are the ones that have been the most affected by this,'' Ms. Mendez said.

Through a city aid program, which provided the couple with $1,700 every month, they were able to slowly pay the money back, Ms. Mendez said. She said they were able to find some more work, but still not enough to stabilize their finances.

''If it wasn't for public assistance, we wouldn't have been able to pay rent and would have gotten evicted,'' Ms. Mendez said.

But the aid is ending this month, she said. And she remains unsure how the couple will continue to afford their apartment.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/16/nyregion/bronx-evictions-housing-coronavirus-pandemic.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/16/nyregion/bronx-evictions-housing-coronavirus-pandemic.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSE A. ALVARADO JR. FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 17, 2021

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[***10 Years After Arab Spring, Tunisians Confront Failed Promises***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63TN-45K1-JBG3-606Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1558 words

**Byline:** By Vivian Yee

**Body**

Tunisia, birthplace of the pro-democracy uprisings that swept the Arab world, now looks to many like a final confirmation of failed promise.

TUNIS, Tunisia -- For roughly three months after Tunisians toppled their dictator in January 2011 in an eruption of protest that electrified the Arab world, Ali Bousselmi felt nothing but ''pure happiness.''

The decade that followed, during which Tunisians adopted a new Constitution, gained freedom of speech and voted in free and fair elections, brought Mr. Bousselmi its own rewards. He co-founded a gay rights group -- an impossibility before 2011, when the gay scene was forced to hide deep underground.

But as the revolution's high hopes curdled into political chaos and economic failure, Mr. Bousselmi, like many Tunisians, said he began to wonder whether his country would be better off with a single ruler, one powerful enough to just get things done.

''I ask myself, what have we done with democracy?'' said Mr. Bousselmi, 32, the executive director of Mawjoudin, meaning ''We Exist'' in Arabic. ''We have corrupt members of Parliament, and if you go into the street, you can see that people can't even afford a sandwich. And then suddenly, there was a magic wand saying things were going to change.''

That wand was held by Kais Saied, Tunisia's democratically elected president, who, on July 25, froze Parliament and fired the prime minister, vowing to attack corruption and return power to the people. It was a power grab that an overwhelming majority of Tunisians greeted with joy and relief.

July 25 has made it harder than ever to tell a hopeful story about the Arab Spring.

Held up by Western supporters and Arab sympathizers alike as proof that democracy could bloom in the Middle East, Tunisia now looks to many like a final confirmation of the uprisings' failed promise. The birthplace of the Arab revolts, it is now ruled by one-man decree.

Elsewhere, wars that followed the uprisings have devastated Syria, Libya and Yemen. Autocrats smothered protest in the Gulf. Egyptians elected a president before embracing a military dictatorship.

Still, the revolutions proved that power, traditionally wielded from the top down, could also be driven by a fired-up street.

It was a lesson the Tunisians, who recently flooded the streets again to demonstrate against Parliament and for Mr. Saied, have reaffirmed. This time, however, the people lashed out at democracy, not at an autocrat.

''The Arab Spring will continue,'' predicted Tarek Megerisi, a North Africa specialist at the European Council on Foreign Relations. ''No matter how much you try to repress it or how much the environment around it changes, desperate people will still try to secure their rights.''

Mr. Saied's popularity stems from the same grievances that propelled Tunisians, Bahrainis, Egyptians, Yemenis, Syrians and Libyans to protest a decade ago -- corruption, unemployment, repression and an inability to make ends meet. Ten years on, Tunisians felt themselves backsliding on virtually everything except freedom of expression.

''We got nothing out of the revolution,'' said Houyem Boukchina, 48, a resident of Jabal Ahmar, a ***working-class*** neighborhood in the capital, Tunis. ''We still don't know what the plan is, but we live on the basis of hope,'' she said of Mr. Saied.

But popular backlashes can still threaten autocracy.

Mindful of their people's simmering grievances, Arab rulers have doubled down on repression instead of addressing the issues, their ruthlessness only inviting more upheaval in the future, analysts warned.

In Mr. Saied's case, his gambit depends on economic progress. Tunisia faces a looming fiscal crisis, with billions in debt coming due this fall. If the government fires public workers and cuts wages and subsidies, if prices and employment do not improve, public sentiment is likely to U-turn.

An economic collapse would pose problems not only for Mr. Saied, but also for Europe, whose shores draw desperate Tunisian migrants in boats by the thousands each year.

Yet Mr. Saied's office has not made any contact with the International Monetary Fund officials who are waiting to negotiate a bailout, according to a senior Western diplomat. Nor has he taken any measures other than requesting chicken sellers and iron merchants to lower prices, telling them it was their national duty.

''People don't necessarily support Saied, they just hated what Saied broke,'' Mr. Megerisi said. ''That's going to be gone pretty quickly when they find he's not delivering for them, either.''

For Western governments, which initially backed the uprisings then returned in the name of stability to partnering with the autocrats who survived them, Tunisia may serve as a reminder of what motivated Arab protesters a decade ago -- and what could bring them into the streets again.

While many demonstrators demanded democracy, others chanted for more tangible outcomes: an end to corruption, lower food prices, jobs.

From outside, it was easy to cheer the hundreds of thousands of protesters who surged into Cairo's Tahrir Square, easy to forget the tens of millions of Egyptians who stayed home.

''The people pushing for Parliament, democracy, freedoms, we weren't the biggest part of the revolution,'' said Yassine Ayari, an independent Tunisian lawmaker recently imprisoned after he denounced Mr. Saied's power grab. ''Maybe a lot of Tunisians didn't want the revolution. Maybe people just want beer and security. That's a hard question, a question I don't want to ask myself,'' he added.

''But I don't blame the people. We had a chance to show them how democracy could change their lives, and we failed.''

The revolution equipped Tunisians with some tools to solve problems, but not the solutions they had expected, Mr. Ayari said. With more needs than governing experience, he said, they had little patience for the time-consuming mess of democracy.

A Constitution, the ballot box and a Parliament did not automatically give rise to opportunity or accountability, a state of affairs that Westerners may find all too familiar. Parliament descended into name-calling and fistfights. Political parties formed and re-formed without offering better ideas. Corruption spread.

''I don't think that a Western-style liberal democracy can or should be something that can just be parachuted in,'' said Elisabeth Kendall, an Oxford University scholar of Arabic and Islamic studies. ''You can't just read 'Liberal Democracy 101,' absorb it, write a constitution and hope that everything works out. Elections are just the start.''

Arab intellectuals often point out that it took decades for France to transition to democracy after its revolution. Parts of Eastern Europe and Africa saw similar ups and downs in leaving dictatorships behind.

Opinion polls show that emphatic majorities across the Arab world still support democracy. But nearly half of respondents say their own countries are not ready for it. Tunisians, in particular, have grown to associate it with economic deterioration and dysfunction.

Their experience may have left Tunisians still believing in democracy in the abstract, but wanting for now what one Tunisian constitutional law professor, Adnan Limam, approvingly called a ''short-term dictatorship.''

Still, Ms. Kendall cautioned that it is too soon to declare the revolutions dead.

In Tunisia, rejection of the system that evolved over the last decade does not necessarily imply embrace of one-man rule. As Mr. Saied has arrested more opponents and taken more control, last month suspending much of the Constitution and seizing sole authority to make laws, more Tunisians -- especially secular, affluent ones -- have grown uneasy.

''Someone had to do something, but now it's getting off-track,'' said Azza Bel Jaafar, 67, a pharmacist in the upscale Tunis suburb of La Marsa. She said she had initially supported Mr. Saied's actions, partly out of fear of Ennahda, the Islamist party that dominates Parliament and that many Tunisians blame for the country's ills.

''I hope there'll be no more Islamism,'' she said, ''but I'm not for a dictatorship either.''

Some pro-democracy Tunisians are counting on the idea that the younger generation will not easily surrender the freedoms they have grown up with.

''We haven't invested in a democratic culture for 10 years for nothing,'' said Jahouar Ben M'barek, a former friend and colleague of Mr. Saied's who is now helping organize anti-Saied protests. ''One day, they'll see it's actually their freedom at risk, and they'll change their minds.''

Others say there is still time to save Tunisia's democracy.

Despite Mr. Saied's increasingly authoritarian actions, he has not moved systematically to crack down on opposition protests, and recently told the French president, Emmanuel Macron, that he would engage in dialogue to resolve the crisis.

''Let's see if democracy is able to correct itself by itself,'' said Youssef Cherif, a Tunis-based political analyst, ''and not by the gun.''

Mr. Bousselmi, the gay rights activist, is torn, wondering whether gay rights can progress under one-man rule.

''I don't know. Will I accept forgetting about my activism for the sake of the economy?'' Mr. Bousselmi said. ''I really want things to start changing in the country, but we'll have to pay a very heavy price.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/10/world/middleeast/tunisia-arab-spring-anniversary.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/10/world/middleeast/tunisia-arab-spring-anniversary.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A cafe in Tunis last month. A large majority of Tunisians supported a power grab by the nation's democratically elected president, who froze Parliament.

A bakery, left, and a commuter tram in downtown Tunis last month. Some Arab Spring protesters wanted lower food prices and jobs, rather than democracy.

Activists hope young people will save democracy. ''One day, they'll see it's actually their freedom at risk,'' one said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY IVOR PRICKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Biden Is Going Big, and Americans Are With Him***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6220-SXW1-DXY4-X2X9-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Timothy Egan

**Body**

The long-awaited blue wave will come from policy that takes care of people.

For years, well-credentialed thinkers have been telling us to expect a Democratic majority, built on the rise of young, minority and urban voters. Demography was destiny, and the future was blue.

Texas was the Moby Dick in this telling, the great whale that finally would be landed by the Dems some fine Election Day. And yet here we are -- more than a quarter-century and counting since a Democrat last won statewide office in Texas.

But now Democrats have a real shot at a durable majority, defying even the gerrymandering and small-state inequities built into the system. And not only because of Stacey Abrams's winning strategy in Georgia. It's no more complicated than this: The current Democratic agenda is hugely popular, crossing racial and regional lines. If you do things that help people's lives, and do them well, the public will stay with you.

Joe Biden has been president for only a month. But if his $1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan and the jobs, infrastructure and climate initiatives to follow work out as well as they are now polling, his party could govern for many years to come.

Biden is listening to whispers from the grave of Franklin Roosevelt -- laying out a society-changing plan of action at a low ebb in the nation's history. Facing the largest social and economic crisis since the Great Depression, Biden's hoping to significantly reduce child poverty, expand health care and fortify ***working-class*** families.

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One stumbling block is opening the schools, an issue Republicans see as their best chance to trip up their new Democratic leader's early momentum. Another threat comes from right-wing media's talent for making odious mountains out of Democratic molehills -- or outright making things up. Case in point: the fictional death panels that were used to erode support for Obamacare, in which government bureaucrats were rumored to choose one life or treatment over another.

But make no mistake: The public is with Biden now. The Covid-19 relief package -- with its direct payments to families and aid for businesses, the unemployed and local governments -- is backed by nearly 70 percent of Americans, according to a recent Quinnipiac poll. In a nation that can't agree on a simple set of facts, this is staggering.

Two-thirds of Americans supported raising the federal minimum wage before the pandemic, By August, that figure had risen to 72 percent. That level of support has only gone up since Covid set in, as people realize that many of their beloved essential workers have been living on poverty-level wages.

In Florida, a state run by Republicans, the $15 minimum hourly wage won more than 60 percent of the vote last November. Let Republicans in Congress continue to defend a federal wage floor of $7.25. They can't. Nor can they go after the popular central elements of the American Rescue Plan.

Biden's plan to provide tax credits in the form of payments of up to $300 per month to poor families could lift 10 million children above or closer to the poverty line. People who have long argued that the best way to help the poor is simply to give them money are going to have their moment.

Big majorities also support rejoining the Paris climate agreement, offering a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants and expanding Obamacare with a public option. One month in, Biden's presidency gets the approval of well over 50 percent of Americans, something Trump never had in the aggregate of polls in his four years.

What could doom Democrats is fellow Democrats. Seattle was a laudable pioneer in raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour. But now its City Council is never far from a bad idea. A recent proposal would make it the first city in the nation to appear to incentivize misdemeanor crime. Assaults, trespass, stalking -- all could be excused if their offense is linked to poverty or a behavioral health disorder.

And then there's the San Francisco school board, which can't find a way to put children back at their desks but plans to wipe out a third of the city's school names, including one named for Abraham Lincoln, because of character flaws of the honorees.

In the great scheme of things, these kinds of distractions are just that. They sound like parodies of liberals gone mad. But with that kind of material, Fox News and friends are expert at making people believe the lefty fringe is the main Democratic agenda.

So while Biden explicitly said he would not seek to defund the police, Republican demagogy on the issue was effective enough that the slogan was wielded against other Democrats down the ticket.

For the moment, Biden has kept his troops united and disciplined. Tepid incremental steps are out. So long as it remains carpe diem time at the White House, the president is poised to make a lasting blue mark.

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Timothy Egan (@nytegan) is a contributing opinion writer who covers the environment, the American West and politics. He is a winner of the National Book Award and the author, most recently, of ''A Pilgrimage to Eternity.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/19/opinion/biden-democratic-majority-winning.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/19/opinion/biden-democratic-majority-winning.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Caroline Brehman/CQ Roll Call FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Biden Is Going Big, and Americans Are With Him***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:621S-KS61-JBG3-60FR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 19, 2021 Friday 13:13 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1019 words

**Byline:** Timothy Egan

**Highlight:** The long-awaited blue wave will come from policy that takes care of people.

**Body**

The long-awaited blue wave will come from policy that takes care of people.

For years, well-credentialed thinkers have been [*telling us*](https://prospect.org/power/emerging-democratic-majority-finally-coming-pass/) to expect a Democratic majority, built on the rise of young, minority and urban voters. Demography was destiny, and the future was blue.

Texas was the Moby Dick in this telling, the great whale that [*finally would be landed*](https://prospect.org/power/emerging-democratic-majority-finally-coming-pass/) by the Dems some fine Election Day. And yet here we are — more than a quarter-century and counting since a Democrat last won statewide office in Texas.

But now Democrats have a real shot at a durable majority, defying even the gerrymandering and small-state inequities built into the system. And not only because of Stacey Abrams’s winning strategy in Georgia. It’s no more complicated than this: The current Democratic agenda is hugely popular, crossing racial and regional lines. If you do things that help people’s lives, and do them well, the public will stay with you.

Joe Biden has been president for only a month. But if his $1.9 trillion [*American Rescue Plan*](https://prospect.org/power/emerging-democratic-majority-finally-coming-pass/) and the jobs, infrastructure and climate initiatives to follow work out as well as they are now polling, his party could govern for many years to come.

Biden is listening to whispers from the grave of Franklin Roosevelt — laying out a society-changing plan of action at a low ebb in the nation’s history. Facing the largest social and economic crisis since the Great Depression, Biden’s hoping to significantly reduce child poverty, expand health care and fortify ***working-class*** families.

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Timothy Egan (@nytegan) is a contributing opinion writer who covers the environment, the American West and politics. He is a winner of the National Book Award and the author, most recently, of “A Pilgrimage to Eternity.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Caroline Brehman/CQ Roll Call FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 20, 2021

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[***Theater to Stream: Revivals, One-Man Shows and Docu-Theater***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6336-XBS1-JBG3-60P7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 7, 2021 Wednesday 00:40 EST

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 1300 words

**Byline:** Elisabeth Vincentelli

**Highlight:** An adaptation of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s “Notes on Grief,” Russell Brand’s take on Shakespeare and a two-day event anchored by a Milo Rau film are among the highlights.

**Body**

An adaptation of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s “Notes on Grief,” Russell Brand’s take on Shakespeare and a two-day event anchored by a Milo Rau film are among the highlights.

Productions from the multidisciplinary Manchester International Festival often end up traveling around the world, making pit stops at well-heeled performing arts centers. This year, we don’t have to wait, as the festival is making some of its offerings available online — an approach we hope will become commonplace among international gatherings.

Of particular interest to theater audiences is [*“Notes on Grief,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html) Rae McKen’s adaptation of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s essay-turned-book about her father’s sudden death. The show is bound to be compared to the Joan Didion memoir-turned-play [*“The Year of Magical Thinking.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html)

One day in June 2020, Adichie learned that her father — with whom she had chatted just a day earlier — died. “My brother Chuks called to tell me, and I came undone,” she wrote in an essay that [*The New Yorker*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html) published in September. McKen’s show stars Uche Abuah, Michelle Asante and Itoya Osagiede. Audience members lucky enough to be in Manchester can see it in real life through July 17, and the rest of us can watch from home from July 15-18. [*mif.co.uk*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html).

‘Our Little Lives: Shakespeare and Me’

Those who associate Russell Brand only with his excesses and shock tactics may be surprised by his quieter mien these days — he’s become the kind of guy who occasionally finds life lessons in sonnets. He is now reprising a one-man show he conceived with the director Ian Rickson and developed in 2018, in which he uses Shakespeare’s writings to illuminate his own story. Brand promises an appearance by his dog, Bear (perhaps timed to his exit, so he can be pursued by Bear). Through July 14; [*live-now.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html)

‘A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder’

[*CollaborAzian*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html) is streaming an abridged version of this [*Tony Award-winning musical*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html) from 2013 with an all-Asian American cast and production team. Karl Josef Co takes on Monty Navarro, who sets out to kill multiple members of the D’Ysquith family, all of them to be portrayed — often in lightning-fast succession — by Thom Sesma. It should be interesting to see how the director Alan Muraoka and his actors handle the show’s high-farcical style online. Look also for a special appearance by Lea Salonga. July 15-22; [*collaborazian.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html)

‘I Hate It Here’

Last year, Studio Theater presented the Chicago playwright Ike Holter’s anthology of vignettes as an [*audio drama*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html); now the Goodman Theater is producing it as a fully staged livestream, directed by Lili-Anne Brown. The stories cover various aspects of life during the peak of the pandemic year, touching on Covid-19, racism and activism, and possibly even hope. July 15-18; [*goodmantheatre.org*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html)

The New Solidarity: Art, Organizing and Radical Politics

Presented by various institutions and organizations across the country, including the Foundry Theater in New York, this two-day event is anchored by a streaming presentation of the Milo Rau film [*“The New Gospel.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html) Rau, an [*audacious Swiss director*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html) whose production company [*“for theater, film and social sculpture”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html) is called the International Institute of Political Murder, set the Passion of Christ in the context of 21st-century conflicts about migration; the Jesus character is played by the activist and writer Yvan Sagnet, who was born in Cameroon and then later moved to Italy to study. Rau will also participate in a couple of panels: “How are artists seizing power today?” and “How are artists and organizers building solidarity between art and movements?” (Sagnet will participate in the latter one as well). July 9-10; [*howlround.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html)

‘Lines in the Dust’

Nikkole Salter emerged in 2005 with the play [*“In the Continuum,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html) which she and Danai Gurira wrote and starred in. Since then, Salter continues to make theater that inspires and engages, stirs and advocates. The New Normal Rep company is reviving her 2014 play [*“Lines in the Dust,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html) in which a ***working-class*** New Jersey mother alters her residency paperwork so her daughter can attend a good school. July 8-Aug. 8; [*https://www.newnormalrep.org/next-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html)

‘Silent’

The respected Dublin company Fishamble celebrates the 10th anniversary of one of its biggest hits, “Silent,” from the writer-performer Pat Kinevane, with a virtual American mini-tour of a filmed version: It’s presented first by Odyssey Theater Ensemble in Los Angeles (July 9-11) then by Solas Nua in Washington (July 11-18). Kinevane portrays a mentally ill homeless man who emulates the silent movie star Rudolph Valentino. [*Praising “Silent” in The New York Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html), Ben Brantley wrote that “there is breath and blood to spare in this carefully wrought production.” [*fishamble.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html)

Discover Imitating the Dog

The explosion of streaming theater last year allowed us to discover many artists doing stellar work in their corners of the world. One such outfit is Britain’s Imitating the Dog, whose shows make inventive use of multimedia techniques and translate remarkably well online. Luckily the company remains proactive in making its catalog available. Check out, for example, “Dr Blood’s Old Travelling Show,” from October 2020, or the collection of shorts “Street,” which smartly spruces up the aesthetics of documentary theater. [*http://www.imitatingthedog.co.uk/at-home/*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html)

2021 Short New Play Festival: Restoration

Red Bull Theater, in New York, has made a name with such zippy revivals as [*“The Government Inspector,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html) which gave Michael Urie a golden opportunity to display his comic timing, but the company is not stuck in the past. For this year’s edition of its festival dedicated to short new plays, Red Bull commissioned a work from José Rivera ([*“Cloud Tectonics”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html) and the Academy Award-nominated screenplay for “The Motorcycle Diaries”) and selected six entries from hundreds of open submissions. The winning playwrights are Constance Congdon, Rosslyn Cornejo, George LaVigne, David Lefkowitz, Abigail C. Onwunali and Charlotte Rahn-Lee, and their pieces should be in good hands with the directors Margot Bordelon and Timothy Douglas. July 12-16; [*redbulltheater.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html)

‘Possible’

The Welsh writer and performer Shôn Dale-Jones’s new solo show has been compared to Bo Burnham’s Netflix special [*“Inside”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html): both are autobiographical works that explore lockdown life while occasionally reaching further back in time. Dale-Jones refers to digital interactions he’s had in the past year, including WhatsApp group chats and Zoom calls, and includes tough discussions about his mother’s mental well-being. After a livestreamed run, the National Theater Wales production is available on-demand. Through July 13; [*nationaltheatrewales.org*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html)

East to Edinburgh Goes Virtual

Every year, 59E59 Theaters in New York presents a showcase of productions headed to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. While the United States have made great steps toward a return to a theatrical normal (whatever that might be), the new edition of East to Edinburgh is still virtual, with nine shows you can watch from home. Among the titles that caught my eye is Priyanka Shetty’s docu-theater solo “#Charlottesville,” about the events that [*roiled the Virginia city*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html) in August 2017. Borrowing from Anna Deavere Smith, Shetty built her text from interviews. Other intriguing entries in the showcase include “Testament,” in which Tristan Bernays ([*“Frankenstein”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html)) imagines what would happen if four biblical characters lived now; and Somebody Jones’s “Black Women Dating White Men,” whose title is an apt description of the show. July 15-July 25; [*59e59.org*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/books/review/notes-on-grief-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html)

PHOTOS: Above, “Silent,” from the writer-performer Pat Kinevane and the theater company Fishamble. Near right, the actor Russell Brand, with the director Ian Rickson. Their show is “Our Little Lives: Shakespeare and Me.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY STE MURRAY; TRISTRAM KENTON)

**Load-Date:** July 9, 2021

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[***The One Thing We Couldn't Talk About***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63TG-6YV1-JBG3-62XH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 10, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 6; MODERN LOVE

**Length:** 1435 words

**Byline:** By Alice Hoffman

**Body**

When the bad news finally arrived, neither one of us -- dear friends for 60 years -- knew what to say.

It was late at night when the phone rang. I lived alone with my dog and didn't expect anyone to be calling. I rightly assumed that only bad news arrived at this hour. I had recently experienced a series of plagues. Flies. Rats. Bats. Divorce. And now Covid.

''It happened,'' my oldest friend said when I picked up.

We had known each other for so long we could speak in shorthand.

''Tell me,'' I said.

''I can't talk. Not this time.''

It was that terrible dark spring when we were all first in quarantine, and if she couldn't talk, then I knew what had happened. I knew, because for nearly our entire lives we had never stopped talking.

We had met when I was 5 and she was 4, so I had always been the older, but not necessarily wiser, one. In kindergarten we had gotten together on Saturdays to walk through our neighborhood, talking nonstop. Hers was a nice left-wing family who had regular dinners and whom I found to be comforting compared to my own household, where all hell frequently broke loose and there were never any rules.

She and I talked through grammar school and then high school. We talked through bad boyfriends, one of whom we shared and who was later arrested for murder. We cut school and took the subway to Murray the K's all-day concerts at the Fox Theater in Brooklyn. We wore black eyeliner, listened to the radio day and night, were secret readers, fell in love with the wrong boys, wore short skirts and plotted.

What we wanted more than anything was to have a different life than the ones we were living in Franklin Square, N.Y., where nothing happened or ever would. It was a planned community, built after World War II for returning GIs and their families. Every house was the same, and it seemed to us that every family was, too, except for ours. In the other houses, the mothers stayed home, the fathers disappeared on the Long Island Rail Road, boys played baseball, girls had to mind their manners.

Our families were different. Her mother worked and their family was involved in politics. My single mother was a social worker, a bohemian free spirit, who often left me and my brother alone when she went off to Florida with her boyfriend, assuming we would figure out how to do laundry and get dinner for ourselves -- which we did.

My friend and I felt different too. She was a talented artist and a musician who went to summer camp with brainy, arty kids from Brooklyn and the Bronx. I was drawn to heroin addicts and guys who played the guitar, and I spent as much time as I could at the library with my own addiction, reading novels.

What she and I had in common, what truly bound us together, was that we were desperate for the future. We shared a deep hatred for our ***working-class*** suburban town just over the city line from Queens, and we planned to get out as soon as we could. The future was waiting for us in London or New York City or Boston. Someday soon we would meet our destiny.

Throughout this time, she always confided in me, and I told her everything. Well, almost everything. I never mentioned that one summer while she was off at camp, her boyfriend decided that he and I were meant for each other. He was a good-looking guitar player, and I was keeping an eye on him for her. We often got together to sing her praises, and then one beautiful day he told me that the plan had changed. It was going to be him and me. When he lurched forward to kiss me, I nearly laughed out loud. I said, ''Are you crazy?''

We were alone in a field where mysterious and sometimes illegal things happened. We were stoned and young. Also, he was so handsome and sullen, just my type. But it didn't matter. I truly thought he might be crazy. What on earth had led him to believe I would ever betray my close friend? My dear friend, who was probably protesting the war at a rally near her summer camp in upstate New York.

When I told him there was no ''us'' and never would be, he was furious. As much as I tried to explain the situation, he didn't seem to grasp the concept of loyalty. He had no idea that there was such a thing as girl code. In layman's language, the code was simple and never changed: Keep your hands off my boyfriend. I didn't tell her about this encounter when she returned. I didn't want to hurt her and what was the point?

Not surprisingly, they drifted apart without any input from me. After high school, she and I went in different directions. We still talked but not as often. She moved to Massachusetts for college. I left high school early, skipped college, then went to night school before heading to graduate school in California.

In time, we both wound up in Cambridge, Mass., and even though our separate, busy lives made it impossible for us to get together and walk, we kept talking, aware that our friendship would never include our husbands; it was a circle of two, just as it always had been.

When my husband abruptly left me seven years ago for a friend of mine, she helped me through the wreckage of my marriage with nightly phone calls for a year. And even when I recovered, with the help of hypnosis, therapy and strong doses of reality, we never stopped talking.

But now, on this night in the dark spring, for the first time, she had nothing to say. Words were too painful. Her beloved husband of 27 years had been ill for several weeks with a mysterious and painful illness that had spiraled out of control. Because of Covid, she was forced to drop off her terrified, disoriented husband at the emergency room entrance, until at last she was allowed to visit.

Finally, there was a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer, horrible at the best of times, even more horrifying now. When it became clear that nothing more could be done, she took her husband home and saw him through his death, arranging every detail, from a hospital bed to a raised toilet to hospice to friends delivering food. When it finally happened, she was in the kitchen getting his painkillers -- the first time she had left his side.

Knowing how deeply he had loved her, I wondered if he had waited for a moment when he could leave her with a memory not of agony but of peace, a last gift.

Afterward, because of Covid, there was no funeral and no way to share the grief other than a few visits when friends brought groceries or casseroles. I called every night, and after a while she started talking again; she talked so much that I knew all I needed to do was listen. But it soon became clear that in this lonely time, talking wasn't enough.

That was when we began to walk, just as we had in kindergarten, only now we wore masks. We met every Saturday when the streets were deserted. It was just the two of us and my sheepdog, Shelby. During one of our walks, I finally told her what had happened that summer she was away.

''It's fine,'' she said, completely unruffled. ''I know you'd never betray me.''

On another Saturday we learned that the boyfriend we had shared had been in an accident and died, and we talked about all of the impossible, ridiculous things we had done when we were young and searching for love.

I had never found it, but she had.

Even though she was in the throes of grief, I knew how grateful she was for her long marriage, just as I knew despite the difference in our fortunes there had been another love story, one we had shared for more than 60 years. For all that time we have been walking and talking, through a failed marriage, disastrous family matters, true love and betrayals, and now heartbreak and grief.

We have never cared if there's wind or rain. We don't care if it's a burning hot August day. We're not worried about bad weather and we're certainly not worried that we'll run out of things to say. We knew each other when we were girls sitting on the front steps of our houses, desperate to find a way out. Because of that, and because we will always trust each other no matter what, we'll be meeting this Saturday.

Alice Hoffman is the author of more than 30 novels, the latest of which, ''The Book of Magic,'' will be published next week.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/style/modern-love-dear-friends-bad-news.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/style/modern-love-dear-friends-bad-news.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Brian Rea FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 10, 2021

**End of Document**



[***How the Pandemic Worsened a Housing Crisis in the Bronx***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:643B-D5Y1-DXY4-X3FK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1642 words

**Byline:** Mihir Zaveri, Matthew Haag and Sofia Cerda Campero

**Highlight:** In a New York City borough where residents have long struggled to afford their homes, thousands are now threatened with eviction as state pandemic aid dwindles.

**Body**

Livia Fernandez used to commute every day from her one-bedroom apartment in the Bronx to an Ecuadorean restaurant in Queens, where she worked as a cook and earned $700 a week. But when the pandemic hit New York City last year, the restaurant shut down, and she lost her job.

Ms. Fernandez got [*Covid-19*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/coronavirus) in March 2020, and ever since she has felt weak and unable to work. Her two young daughters were also infected. For 20 months, Ms. Fernandez has not paid her $1,400 rent — she owes more than $28,000.

Her landlord has yet to demand payment, instead hoping that Ms. Fernandez would qualify for a state pandemic relief program. But with [*the rent relief program*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/12/nyregion/new-york-pandemic-rental-aid.html) now nearly out of money, Ms. Fernandez knows her housing situation is precarious.

“Where will I go with two daughters?” Ms. Fernandez said. “I can’t live in the streets. ”

The pandemic has left millions of people across the country jobless and on the brink of losing their homes. But few places better illustrate the escalating housing crisis than the Bronx, where ***working-class*** residents have long struggled to afford the city’s rising cost of living. Before the pandemic, more than one-third of households in the Bronx spent at least half their income on rent.

More than 26,000 renters in the borough have been sued by their landlord since the pandemic began, the highest concentration of eviction cases in New York State and [*more than in many large American cities*](https://evictionlab.org/eviction-tracking/new-york-ny/), including Philadelphia, St. Louis and Cincinnati, according to the Eviction Lab at Princeton University. A state moratorium on evictions — one of the strongest in the nation — has helped keep the number of cases from being even higher; they are far below prepandemic levels.

While many lawsuits do not lead to actual evictions, the mere filing of a case can land a renter on a [*so-called tenant blacklist*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/13/realestate/how-to-escape-the-dreaded-tenant-blacklist.html), making it much more difficult to find and qualify for another apartment.

Still, many residents, like Ms. Fernandez, remain out of work and unable to pay rent. The 12.4 percent unemployment rate in the Bronx in September was almost triple the national figure.

More than $248 million in pandemic rent relief has been distributed in the borough, [*according to the most recent data*](https://otda.ny.gov/programs/emergency-rental-assistance/monthly-reports/ERAP-County-Payments-21-10-26.pdf), more than in the entire states of [*Indiana*](https://www.in.gov/ihcda/covid-19-resources/), [*Arizona*](https://des.az.gov/erap-dashboard) and [*Connecticut*](https://portal.ct.gov/DOH/DOH/Programs/UniteCT) combined. The state has been so overwhelmed with requests for aid that it has stopped accepting most new applications and says that more than 70,000 pending applications could be left in limbo without more federal funds.

Interviews with landlords and tenants paint a grim portrait of a borough in distress, where the housing crisis is straining economic recovery.

Some of those who did not receive or qualify for rent relief because they did not submit an application or did not meet the criteria may face eviction once the moratorium expires in January. Others will struggle for years to climb out of debt. Without rental income, property owners could let buildings slip into disrepair.

“I’m very concerned about the long-term impact of such a momentous event,” said Matthew Murphy, the executive director of the New York University Furman Center.

An out-of-work cook worries for her daughters

Ever since she moved to New York from Guayaquil, Ecuador, three years ago, Ms. Fernandez has worked as a cook.

Since she lost her job, she has struggled to find work. She got Covid-19 again this March and has been unable to stand for long periods of time. “I can’t find a full-time job because I feel physically weak,’’ she said.

She cannot afford food and sometimes gets help from a nearby church pantry. She is especially concerned for her daughters, Clara and Marta.

“I can go hungry,” she said, “but they can’t. I do nails, clean apartments, anything.”

She applied for the rent relief program when the landlord of her Mott Haven building pushed her. But she said she had not received any notice that her application was being considered.

“I break down and start crying,” she said. “But then I control myself because who will take care of my daughters if I’m not around?”

Her landlord, Inocencio González, could not be reached for comment.

Without a job, Ms. Fernandez is anxious about the future.

“Thank God my landlord hasn’t been pushing or bothering with the rent money, but months keep passing and my pressure has gone up a lot,” she said.

A social worker owes more than $40,000 in back rent

Mercedes Escoto, 63, has not paid rent on her two-bedroom apartment in the Highbridge neighborhood since April 2020. As of October, the sum of her unpaid bills, according to a letter she got from her landlord, was more than $43,000. In May, the landlord filed court papers seeking her eviction.

But like many renters facing eviction during the pandemic, her troubles had begun long before.

Five years ago, her landlord abruptly raised the monthly rent from around $1,400 to $2,000, she said. The rent would have claimed almost half her income — Ms. Escoto earns around $59,000 a year as a social worker and also takes care of her mother, who lives with her.

“I told them from the get go, I could not pay all of that,” she said.

Unable to afford the increase, she fell behind on rent. She borrowed money from a city emergency assistance program and took roughly $11,000 out of her retirement account for back rent — money she is still paying back.

The pandemic worsened Ms. Escoto’s financial woes. Her mother got Covid-19 in March 2020 and needs a walker, oxygen and pain pills. Ms. Escoto had to take weeks off from work without pay. She struggled with anxiety and depression.

“I used to cry every day,” she said. “It was too much for me.”

She also said she has had a leaky bathroom ceiling and nonfunctional oven, emblematic of issues that are particularly prevalent in rent-stabilized buildings like hers. Unlike the city’s other four boroughs, the Bronx has many more rent-stabilized units than unregulated apartments.

She said that even if she could afford to pay back the rent, she is reluctant to do so until the repairs are made, especially as the moratorium on evictions has kept her case from moving forward. Ms. Escoto has also applied for rent relief from the state.

The landlord, a limited liability company associated with Isaac Kassirer, who has [*received national attention*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/wall-street-funded-plan-to-gentrify-affordable-housing-crumbles-in-harlem-11603618203) for pushing to gentrify affordable housing, filed papers last year seeking to deregulate the building so it can charge higher rents.

In an emailed statement, Todd Rothenberg, a lawyer representing the landlord, said Ms. Escoto “has not paid a single penny in 21 months” while the landlord “has to pay me, his property taxes, his mortgage, the heating, the hot water etc., without any income whatsoever by Ms. Escoto.”

He noted that the landlord had agreed to charge Ms. Escoto a lower rent — around $1,500 — in October 2020. It was not clear why she was still receiving bills reflecting a higher amount.

We’re not bloodsuckers, a real estate executive says

Of all the eviction cases filed in the Bronx since March 2020, about 70 of them were submitted by OneSource Property Management, a real estate company that owns and manages 25 apartment buildings in the borough.

In the months after the pandemic arrived in New York, rent collections dropped by 40 percent across the company’s properties, said Valentina Gojcaj, an executive at OneSource.

In August 2020, Ms. Gojcaj said the company decided to move forward in filing the eviction cases, believing that they would enable her tenants to qualify for some kind of financial assistance. Instead, the cases were put on hold by the moratorium, and rent continued to go unpaid.

With the drop in rental revenue, the company started to dip into its savings reserved for large capital expenditures like new boilers, Ms. Gojcaj said. It has been made worse, she added, with the rising cost of operating the company’s buildings, notably a $160,000 increase from last year in expected heating costs.

By June 2021, the arrears had climbed to nearly $800,000, she said, and she sought help through the state’s pandemic rental aid program.

It was a nightmare. Each of the 70 applications had to be submitted individually, making it virtually impossible for her to follow their statuses. Tenants also had to submit information for each case. Only 20 renters responded, she said.

While she did receive emergency assistance through the state’s program for those 20 renters, she said she is still out hundreds of thousands of dollars.

“We’re being told that we are such bad people, that we are bloodsuckers,” Ms. Gojcaj said. “We are doing the best that you can just like everyone else, trying to make things work and being beat up on unfairly.”

A cleaner and cab driver struggle to catch up

Diana Mendez, a cleaner, and her husband, a taxi driver, pay $1,800 for a two-bedroom apartment on the Grand Concourse in the Bronx, where they live with their five children. But after the pandemic hit, Ms. Mendez said she saw almost 90 percent of her work disappear, and her husband lost customers too.

For months, they were able to scrounge the money for rent. But then in October of last year, they started to fall behind. By May, they owed some $10,700, and their landlord had filed a lawsuit seeking their eviction.

“This has really affected us and our community, we’re poor people and are the ones that have been the most affected by this,” Ms. Mendez said.

Through a city aid program, which provided the couple with $1,700 every month, they were able to slowly pay the money back, Ms. Mendez said. She said they were able to find some more work, but still not enough to stabilize their finances.

“If it wasn’t for public assistance, we wouldn’t have been able to pay rent and would have gotten evicted,” Ms. Mendez said.

But the aid is ending this month, she said. And she remains unsure how the couple will continue to afford their apartment.

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSE A. ALVARADO JR. FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Harvard's Chief Chaplain Is an Atheist***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63G3-28C1-JBG3-63HS-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Emma Goldberg

**Body**

The elevation of Greg Epstein, author of ''Good Without God,'' reflects a broader trend of young people who increasingly identify as spiritual but religiously nonaffiliated.

The Puritan colonists who settled in New England in the 1630s had a nagging concern about the churches they were building: How would they ensure that the clergymen would be literate? Their answer was Harvard University, a school that was established to educate the ministry and adopted the motto ''Truth for Christ and the Church.'' It was named after a pastor, John Harvard, and it would be more than 70 years before the school had a president who was not a clergyman.

Nearly four centuries later, Harvard's organization of chaplains has elected as its next president an atheist named Greg Epstein, who takes on the job this week.

Mr. Epstein, 44, author of the book ''Good Without God,'' is a seemingly unusual choice for the role. He will coordinate the activities of more than 40 university chaplains, who lead the Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist and other religious communities on campus. Yet many Harvard students -- some raised in families of faith, others never quite certain how to label their religious identities -- attest to the influence that Mr. Epstein has had on their spiritual lives.

''There is a rising group of people who no longer identify with any religious tradition but still experience a real need for conversation and support around what it means to be a good human and live an ethical life,'' said Mr. Epstein, who was raised in a Jewish household and has been Harvard's humanist chaplain since 2005, teaching students about the progressive movement that centers people's relationships with one another instead of with God.

To Mr. Epstein's fellow campus chaplains, at least, the notion of being led by an atheist is not as counterintuitive as it might sound; his election was unanimous.

''Maybe in a more conservative university climate there might be a question like 'What the heck are they doing at Harvard, having a humanist be the president of the chaplains?''' said Margit Hammerstrom, the Christian Science chaplain at Harvard. ''But in this environment it works. Greg is known for wanting to keep lines of communication open between different faiths.''

The dozens of students whom Mr. Epstein mentors have found a source of meaning in the school's organization of humanists, atheists and agnostics, reflecting a broader trend of young people across the United States who increasingly identify as spiritual but religiously nonaffiliated. That trend might be especially salient at Harvard; a Harvard Crimson survey of the class of 2019 found that those students were two times more likely to identify as atheist or agnostic than 18-year-olds in the general population.

''Greg's leadership isn't about theology,'' said Charlotte Nickerson, 20, an electrical engineering student. ''It's about cooperation between people of different faiths and bringing together people who wouldn't normally consider themselves religious.''

The Harvard chaplains play an outsize role on campus, touching hundreds of students' lives whether through Mass offered by the Catholic Student Center or Shabbat dinners at Harvard Hillel. Its leader reports directly to the office of the university president.

To Mr. Epstein, becoming the organization's head, especially as it gains more recognition from the university, comes as affirmation of a yearslong effort, started by his predecessor, to teach a campus with traditional religious roots about humanism.

''We don't look to a god for answers,'' Mr. Epstein said. ''We are each other's answers.''

Mr. Epstein's work includes hosting dinners for undergraduates where conversation goes deep: Does God exist? What is the meaning of life? He previously ran a congregation of Boston-area humanists and atheists who met in Harvard Square for weekly services that centered on secular sermons. In 2018 he closed that down to focus his time on building campus relationships, including at M.I.T., where he is also a chaplain. Mr. Epstein frequently meets individually with students who are struggling with issues both personal and theological, counseling them on managing anxiety about summer jobs, family feuds, the pressures of social media and the turbulence endemic to college life.

''Greg is irreverent and good at diffusing pressure,'' Ms. Nickerson said, recalling a time he joked that if her summer internship got too stressful she could always get fired -- then she would have a good story to share.

Some of the students drawn to Mr. Epstein's secular community are religious refugees, people raised in observant households who arrive at college seeking spiritual meaning in a less rigid form.

Adelle Goldenberg, 22, grew up in the Hasidic community in Brooklyn, where she recalls being told that she could not attend college. In preschool, when asked what she wanted to be when she grew up, her answer was simple: a bride. It was the only thing she could envision for a girl like herself. When she turned 19, she applied to Harvard in secret and fled the community.

Once at Harvard, she was wary of assuming any religious label, but she still yearned to find people wrestling with issues deeper than academic achievement. She started attending meetings of the humanist group and discovered in Mr. Epstein a form of mentorship that felt almost like having a secular rabbi, she said.

''When the pandemic hit I was like, 'Greg, do you have time to talk about the meaning of life,''' Ms. Goldenberg recalled. ''He showed me that it's possible to find community outside a traditional religious context, that you can have the value-add religion has provided for centuries, which is that it's there when things seem chaotic.''

Ms. Goldenberg reflected anew on how unlikely her path had been when her mother asked to see the university yearbook: ''I told her, 'I don't think you're going to like it,''' Ms. Goldenberg said. ''It says I was co-president of the Harvard Humanists, Atheists and Agnostics. And you can see my shoulders.''

Nonreligiosity is on the rise far beyond the confines of Harvard; it is the fastest growing religious preference in the country, according to the Pew Research Center. More than 20 percent of the country identifies as atheist, agnostic or nonreligious -- called the ''nones'' -- including four in 10 millennials.

The reasons that more young Americans are disaffiliating in the world's most religious developed country are varied. The Notre Dame sociologist Christian Smith attributes the trend partly to the growing alliance between the Republican Party and the Christian right, a decline of trust in institutions, growing skepticism of religion in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and a shift away from traditional family structures that centered on churchgoing.

Mr. Epstein's community has tapped into the growing desire for meaning without faith in God. ''Being able to find values and rituals but not having to believe in magic, that's a powerful thing,'' said A.J. Kumar, who served as the president of a Harvard humanist graduate student group that Mr. Epstein advised.

Other Harvard chaplains have applauded Mr. Epstein's efforts to provide a campus home for those who are religiously unattached, skeptical but still searching. Some said his selection to lead the group, following its previous Jewish leader, seemed obvious.

''Greg was the first choice of a committee that was made up of a Lutheran, a Christian Scientist, an evangelical Christian and a Bahá'í,'' said the Rev. Kathleen Reed, a Lutheran chaplain who chaired the nominating committee. ''We're presenting to the university a vision of how the world could work when diverse traditions focus on how to be good humans and neighbors.''

And for some members of Harvard's humanist and atheist community, exploring humanism has brought with it a richer understanding of faith.

Ms. Nickerson grew up in a ***working-class*** Catholic household where she struggled to connect with rituals like Mass. But during her freshman year at Harvard, she found herself capable of long, lively conversations with her devout grandmother. Ms. Nickerson realized that her involvement with Harvard humanism had given her the language to understand her grandmother's theology.

Last spring, the two were tending roses and daylilies in the family garden when they got on the topic of surrender. Ms. Nickerson's grandmother reflected on the aspects of her life that were in God's hands; Ms. Nickerson agreed that it was important to recognize all the events beyond human control, though she does not believe there is a deity involved. Ms. Nickerson then shared a Buddhist parable that she had learned from the humanist club, which her grandmother later passed on to her Bible study group.

''We understood the idea of surrender in a similar way even though one of those explanations came with God and the other didn't,'' Ms. Nickerson said. ''I find I'm more fluid in my spiritual conversations now.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/26/us/harvard-chaplain-greg-epstein.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/26/us/harvard-chaplain-greg-epstein.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Greg Epstein, the author of the book ''Good Without God,'' has been Harvard's humanist chaplain since 2005. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CODY O'LOUGHLIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 27, 2021

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[***‘What Have We Done With Democracy?’ A Decade On, Arab Spring Gains Wither***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63TH-49C1-JBG3-6033-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** WORLD; middleeast

**Length:** 1617 words

**Byline:** Vivian Yee

**Highlight:** Tunisia, birthplace of the pro-democracy uprisings that swept the Arab world, now looks to many like a final confirmation of failed promise.

**Body**

Tunisia, birthplace of the pro-democracy uprisings that swept the Arab world, now looks to many like a final confirmation of failed promise.

TUNIS, Tunisia — For roughly three months after Tunisians [*toppled their dictator*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/15/world/africa/15tunis.html) in January 2011 in an eruption of protest that [*electrified*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/15/world/africa/15region.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedCoverage&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;region=Footer) the Arab world, Ali Bousselmi felt nothing but “pure happiness.”

The decade that followed, during which Tunisians adopted a new Constitution, gained freedom of speech and voted in free and fair elections, brought Mr. Bousselmi its own rewards. He co-founded a gay rights group — an impossibility before 2011, when the gay scene was forced to hide deep underground.

But as the revolution’s [*high hopes curdled*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/world/middleeast/tunisia-protests-arab-spring-anniversary.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article) into political chaos and [*economic failure*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/05/world/africa/tunisia-democracy-president-support.html), Mr. Bousselmi, like many Tunisians, said he began to wonder whether his country would be better off with a single ruler, one powerful enough to just get things done.

“I ask myself, what have we done with democracy?” said Mr. Bousselmi, 32, the executive director of Mawjoudin, meaning “We Exist” in Arabic. “We have corrupt members of Parliament, and if you go into the street, you can see that people can’t even afford a sandwich. And then suddenly, there was a magic wand saying things were going to change.”

That wand was held by [*Kais Saied*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/26/world/middleeast/tunisia-president-kais-saied.html), Tunisia’s democratically elected president, who, on July 25, froze Parliament and fired the prime minister, vowing to attack corruption and return power to the people. It was a [*power grab*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/26/world/middleeast/tunisia-government-dismissed-protests.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article) that an overwhelming majority of Tunisians greeted with joy and relief.

July 25 has made it harder than ever to tell a hopeful story about the Arab Spring.

Held up by Western supporters and Arab sympathizers alike as proof that democracy could bloom in the Middle East, Tunisia now looks to many like a final confirmation of the uprisings’ [*failed promise*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/14/world/middleeast/arab-spring-mideast-autocrats.html). The [*birthplace*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/22/world/africa/22sidi.html) of the Arab revolts, it is now ruled by one-man decree.

Elsewhere, wars that followed the uprisings have devastated Syria, Libya and Yemen. Autocrats smothered protest in the Gulf. Egyptians elected a president before embracing a military dictatorship.

Still, the revolutions proved that power, traditionally wielded from the top down, could also be driven by a fired-up street.

It was a lesson the Tunisians, who recently flooded the streets again to demonstrate against Parliament and for Mr. Saied, have reaffirmed. This time, however, the people lashed out at democracy, not at an autocrat.

“The Arab Spring will continue,” predicted Tarek Megerisi, a North Africa specialist at the European Council on Foreign Relations. “No matter how much you try to repress it or how much the environment around it changes, desperate people will still try to secure their rights.”

Mr. Saied’s popularity stems from the same grievances that propelled Tunisians, Bahrainis, Egyptians, Yemenis, Syrians and Libyans to protest a decade ago — [*corruption, unemployment, repression and an inability to make ends meet*](https://carnegie-mec.org/2020/02/19/tunisia-s-geography-of-anger-regional-inequalities-and-rise-of-populism-pub-81086). Ten years on, Tunisians felt themselves backsliding on virtually everything except freedom of expression.

“We got nothing out of the revolution,” said Houyem Boukchina, 48, a resident of Jabal Ahmar, a ***working-class*** neighborhood in the capital, Tunis. “We still don’t know what the plan is, but we live on the basis of hope,” she said of Mr. Saied.

But popular backlashes can still threaten autocracy.

Mindful of their people’s simmering grievances, Arab rulers have doubled down on repression instead of addressing the issues, their ruthlessness only [*inviting more upheaval*](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/2020-12-08/arab-uprisings-never-ended) in the future, analysts warned.

In Mr. Saied’s case, his gambit depends on economic progress. Tunisia faces a [*looming fiscal crisis*](https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/tunisias-political-crisis-threatens-deepen-economic-troubles-2021-09-27/), with billions in debt coming due this fall. If the government fires public workers and cuts wages and subsidies, if prices and employment do not improve, public sentiment is likely to U-turn.

An economic collapse would pose problems not only for Mr. Saied, but also for Europe, whose shores draw desperate Tunisian migrants in boats [*by the thousands*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-tunisia-europe-migrants/number-of-tunisian-migrants-landing-in-italy-rose-fivefold-in-2020-idUSKBN29H202) each year.

Yet Mr. Saied’s office has not made any contact with the International Monetary Fund officials who are waiting to negotiate a bailout, according to a senior Western diplomat. Nor has he taken any measures other than requesting chicken sellers and iron merchants to lower prices, telling them it was their national duty.

“People don’t necessarily support Saied, they just hated what Saied broke,” Mr. Megerisi said. “That’s going to be gone pretty quickly when they find he’s not delivering for them, either.”

For Western governments, which initially backed the uprisings then returned in the name of stability to partnering with the autocrats who survived them, Tunisia may serve as a reminder of what motivated Arab protesters a decade ago — and what could bring them into the streets again.

While many demonstrators demanded democracy, others chanted for more tangible outcomes: an end to corruption, lower food prices, jobs.

From outside, it was easy to cheer the hundreds of thousands of protesters who surged into Cairo’s Tahrir Square, easy to forget the tens of millions of Egyptians who stayed home.

“The people pushing for Parliament, democracy, freedoms, we weren’t the biggest part of the revolution,” said Yassine Ayari, an independent Tunisian lawmaker recently imprisoned after he denounced Mr. Saied’s power grab. “Maybe a lot of Tunisians didn’t want the revolution. Maybe people just want beer and security. That’s a hard question, a question I don’t want to ask myself,” he added.

“But I don’t blame the people. We had a chance to show them how democracy could change their lives, and we failed.”

The revolution equipped Tunisians with some tools to solve problems, but not the solutions they had expected, Mr. Ayari said. With more needs than governing experience, he said, they had little patience for the time-consuming mess of democracy.

A Constitution, the ballot box and a Parliament did not automatically give rise to opportunity or accountability, a state of affairs that Westerners may find all too familiar. Parliament descended into name-calling and fistfights. Political parties formed and re-formed without offering better ideas. Corruption spread.

“I don’t think that a Western-style liberal democracy can or should be something that can just be parachuted in,” said Elisabeth Kendall, an Oxford University scholar of Arabic and Islamic studies. “You can’t just read ‘Liberal Democracy 101,’ absorb it, write a constitution and hope that everything works out. Elections are just the start.”

Arab intellectuals often point out that it took decades for France to transition to democracy after its revolution. Parts of Eastern Europe and Africa saw similar ups and downs in leaving dictatorships behind.

[*Opinion polls*](https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/do-arabs-want-democracy/) show that emphatic majorities across the Arab world still support democracy. But nearly half of respondents say their own countries are not ready for it. Tunisians, in particular, have grown to associate it with economic deterioration and dysfunction.

Their experience may have left Tunisians still believing in democracy in the abstract, but wanting for now what one Tunisian constitutional law professor, Adnan Limam, approvingly called a “short-term dictatorship.”

Still, Ms. Kendall cautioned that it is too soon to declare the revolutions dead.

In Tunisia, rejection of the system that evolved over the last decade does not necessarily imply embrace of one-man rule. As Mr. Saied has arrested more opponents and [*taken more control*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/29/world/africa/tunisia-president-prime-minister.html), last month suspending much of the Constitution and seizing sole authority to make laws, more Tunisians — especially secular, affluent ones — [*have grown uneasy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/world/middleeast/tunisia-president-dictator.html).

“Someone had to do something, but now it’s getting off-track,” said Azza Bel Jaafar, 67, a pharmacist in the upscale Tunis suburb of La Marsa. She said she had initially supported Mr. Saied’s actions, partly out of fear of Ennahda, the Islamist party that dominates Parliament and that many Tunisians blame for the country’s ills.

“I hope there’ll be no more Islamism,” she said, “but I’m not for a dictatorship either.”

Some pro-democracy Tunisians are counting on the idea that the younger generation will not easily surrender the freedoms they have grown up with.

“We haven’t invested in a democratic culture for 10 years for nothing,” said Jahouar Ben M’barek, a former friend and colleague of Mr. Saied’s who is now helping organize anti-Saied protests. “One day, they’ll see it’s actually their freedom at risk, and they’ll change their minds.”

Others say there is still time to save Tunisia’s democracy.

Despite Mr. Saied’s increasingly authoritarian actions, he has not moved systematically to crack down on opposition protests, and recently told the French president, Emmanuel Macron, that he would engage in dialogue to resolve the crisis.

“Let’s see if democracy is able to correct itself by itself,” said Youssef Cherif, a Tunis-based political analyst, “and not by the gun.”

Mr. Bousselmi, the gay rights activist, is torn, wondering whether gay rights can progress under one-man rule.

“I don’t know. Will I accept forgetting about my activism for the sake of the economy?” Mr. Bousselmi said. “I really want things to start changing in the country, but we’ll have to pay a very heavy price.”

PHOTOS: A cafe in Tunis last month. A large majority of Tunisians supported a power grab by the nation’s democratically elected president, who froze Parliament.; A bakery, left, and a commuter tram in downtown Tunis last month. Some Arab Spring protesters wanted lower food prices and jobs, rather than democracy.; Activists hope young people will save democracy. “One day, they’ll see it’s actually their freedom at risk,” one said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY IVOR PRICKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 14, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The New Chief Chaplain at Harvard? An Atheist.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63FV-YNR1-JBG3-625M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 26, 2021 Thursday 10:45 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1517 words

**Byline:** Emma Goldberg

**Highlight:** The elevation of Greg Epstein, author of “Good Without God,” reflects a broader trend of young people who increasingly identify as spiritual but religiously nonaffiliated.

**Body**

The elevation of Greg Epstein, author of “Good Without God,” reflects a broader trend of young people who increasingly identify as spiritual but religiously nonaffiliated.

The Puritan colonists who settled in New England in the 1630s had a nagging concern about the churches they were building: How would they ensure that the clergymen would be literate? Their answer was Harvard University, a school that was established to educate the ministry and adopted the motto “Truth for Christ and the Church.” It was named after a pastor, John Harvard, and it would be more than 70 years before the school had a president who was not a clergyman.

Nearly four centuries later, Harvard’s organization of chaplains has elected as its next president an atheist named Greg Epstein, who takes on the job this week.

Mr. Epstein, 44, author of the book “Good Without God,” is a seemingly unusual choice for the role. He will coordinate the activities of more than 40 university chaplains, who lead the Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist and other religious communities on campus. Yet many Harvard students — some raised in families of faith, others never quite certain how to label their religious identities — attest to the influence that Mr. Epstein has had on their spiritual lives.

“There is a rising group of people who no longer identify with any religious tradition but still experience a real need for conversation and support around what it means to be a good human and live an ethical life,” said Mr. Epstein, who was raised in a Jewish household and has been Harvard’s humanist chaplain since 2005, teaching students about the progressive movement that centers people’s relationships with one another instead of with God.

To Mr. Epstein’s fellow campus chaplains, at least, the notion of being led by an atheist is not as counterintuitive as it might sound; his election was unanimous.

“Maybe in a more conservative university climate there might be a question like ‘What the heck are they doing at Harvard, having a humanist be the president of the chaplains?’” said Margit Hammerstrom, the Christian Science chaplain at Harvard. “But in this environment it works. Greg is known for wanting to keep lines of communication open between different faiths.”

The dozens of students whom Mr. Epstein mentors have found a source of meaning in the school’s organization of humanists, atheists and agnostics, reflecting a broader trend of young people across the United States who increasingly identify as spiritual but religiously nonaffiliated. That trend might be especially salient at Harvard; a [*Harvard Crimson survey*](https://features.thecrimson.com/2015/freshman-survey/lifestyle/) of the class of 2019 found that those students were two times more likely to identify as atheist or agnostic than 18-year-olds in the general population.

“Greg’s leadership isn’t about theology,” said Charlotte Nickerson, 20, an electrical engineering student. “It’s about cooperation between people of different faiths and bringing together people who wouldn’t normally consider themselves religious.”

The Harvard chaplains play an outsize role on campus, touching hundreds of students’ lives whether through Mass offered by the Catholic Student Center or Shabbat dinners at Harvard Hillel. Its leader reports directly to the office of the university president.

To Mr. Epstein, becoming the organization’s head, especially as it gains more recognition from the university, comes as affirmation of a yearslong effort, started by his predecessor, to teach a campus with traditional religious roots about humanism.

“We don’t look to a god for answers,” Mr. Epstein said. “We are each other’s answers.”

Mr. Epstein’s work includes hosting dinners for undergraduates where conversation goes deep: Does God exist? What is the meaning of life? He previously ran a congregation of Boston-area humanists and atheists who met in Harvard Square for weekly services that centered on secular sermons. In 2018 he closed that down to focus his time on building campus relationships, including at M.I.T., where he is also a chaplain. Mr. Epstein frequently meets individually with students who are struggling with issues both personal and theological, counseling them on managing anxiety about summer jobs, family feuds, the pressures of social media and the turbulence endemic to college life.

“Greg is irreverent and good at diffusing pressure,” Ms. Nickerson said, recalling a time he joked that if her summer internship got too stressful she could always get fired — then she would have a good story to share.

Some of the students drawn to Mr. Epstein’s secular community are religious refugees, people raised in observant households who arrive at college seeking spiritual meaning in a less rigid form.

Adelle Goldenberg, 22, grew up in the Hasidic community in Brooklyn, where she recalls being told that she could not attend college. In preschool, when asked what she wanted to be when she grew up, her answer was simple: a bride. It was the only thing she could envision for a girl like herself. When she turned 19, she applied to Harvard in secret and fled the community.

Once at Harvard, she was wary of assuming any religious label, but she still yearned to find people wrestling with issues deeper than academic achievement. She started attending meetings of the humanist group and discovered in Mr. Epstein a form of mentorship that felt almost like having a secular rabbi, she said.

“When the pandemic hit I was like, ‘Greg, do you have time to talk about the meaning of life,’” Ms. Goldenberg recalled. “He showed me that it’s possible to find community outside a traditional religious context, that you can have the value-add religion has provided for centuries, which is that it’s there when things seem chaotic.”

Ms. Goldenberg reflected anew on how unlikely her path had been when her mother asked to see the university yearbook: “I told her, ‘I don’t think you’re going to like it,’” Ms. Goldenberg said. “It says I was co-president of the Harvard Humanists, Atheists and Agnostics. And you can see my shoulders.”

Nonreligiosity is on the rise far beyond the confines of Harvard; it is the fastest growing religious preference in the country, according to the Pew Research Center. [*More than 20 percent of the country*](https://www.pewforum.org/2019/10/17/in-u-s-decline-of-christianity-continues-at-rapid-pace/) identifies as atheist, agnostic or nonreligious — called the “nones” — including four in 10 millennials.

The reasons that more young Americans are disaffiliating in the world’s most religious developed country are varied. The Notre Dame sociologist Christian Smith attributes the trend partly to the growing alliance between the Republican Party and the Christian right, a decline of trust in institutions, growing skepticism of religion in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and a shift away from traditional family structures that centered on churchgoing.

Mr. Epstein’s community has tapped into the growing desire for meaning without faith in God. “Being able to find values and rituals but not having to believe in magic, that’s a powerful thing,” said A.J. Kumar, who served as the president of a Harvard humanist graduate student group that Mr. Epstein advised.

Other Harvard chaplains have applauded Mr. Epstein’s efforts to provide a campus home for those who are religiously unattached, skeptical but still searching. Some said his selection to lead the group, following its previous Jewish leader, seemed obvious.

“Greg was the first choice of a committee that was made up of a Lutheran, a Christian Scientist, an evangelical Christian and a Bahá’í,” said the Rev. Kathleen Reed, a Lutheran chaplain who chaired the nominating committee. “We’re presenting to the university a vision of how the world could work when diverse traditions focus on how to be good humans and neighbors.”

And for some members of Harvard’s humanist and atheist community, exploring humanism has brought with it a richer understanding of faith.

Ms. Nickerson grew up in a ***working-class*** Catholic household where she struggled to connect with rituals like Mass. But during her freshman year at Harvard, she found herself capable of long, lively conversations with her devout grandmother. Ms. Nickerson realized that her involvement with Harvard humanism had given her the language to understand her grandmother’s theology.

Last spring, the two were tending roses and daylilies in the family garden when they got on the topic of surrender. Ms. Nickerson’s grandmother reflected on the aspects of her life that were in God’s hands; Ms. Nickerson agreed that it was important to recognize all the events beyond human control, though she does not believe there is a deity involved. Ms. Nickerson then shared a Buddhist parable that she had learned from the humanist club, which her grandmother later passed on to her Bible study group.

“We understood the idea of surrender in a similar way even though one of those explanations came with God and the other didn’t,” Ms. Nickerson said. “I find I’m more fluid in my spiritual conversations now.”

PHOTO: Greg Epstein, the author of the book “Good Without God,” has been Harvard’s humanist chaplain since 2005. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CODY O’LOUGHLIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 2, 2021

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[***The One Thing We Couldn’t Talk About; Modern Love***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63T0-WNM1-DXY4-X04H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 8, 2021 Friday 17:30 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1430 words

**Byline:** Alice Hoffman

**Highlight:** When the bad news finally arrived, neither one of us — dear friends for 60 years — knew what to say.

**Body**

When the bad news finally arrived, neither one of us — dear friends for 60 years — knew what to say.

It was late at night when the phone rang. I lived alone with my dog and didn’t expect anyone to be calling. I rightly assumed that only bad news arrived at this hour. I had recently experienced a series of plagues. Flies. Rats. Bats. Divorce. And now Covid.

“It happened,” my oldest friend said when I picked up.

We had known each other for so long we could speak in shorthand.

“Tell me,” I said.

“I can’t talk. Not this time.”

It was that terrible dark spring when we were all first in quarantine, and if she couldn’t talk, then I knew what had happened. I knew, because for nearly our entire lives we had never stopped talking.

We had met when I was 5 and she was 4, so I had always been the older, but not necessarily wiser, one. In kindergarten we had gotten together on Saturdays to walk through our neighborhood, talking nonstop. Hers was a nice left-wing family who had regular dinners and whom I found to be comforting compared to my own household, where all hell frequently broke loose and there were never any rules.

She and I talked through grammar school and then high school. We talked through bad boyfriends, one of whom we shared and who was later arrested for murder. We cut school and took the subway to Murray the K’s all-day concerts at the Fox Theater in Brooklyn. We wore black eyeliner, listened to the radio day and night, were secret readers, fell in love with the wrong boys, wore short skirts and plotted.

What we wanted more than anything was to have a different life than the ones we were living in Franklin Square, N.Y., where nothing happened or ever would. It was a planned community, built after World War II for returning GIs and their families. Every house was the same, and it seemed to us that every family was, too, except for ours. In the other houses, the mothers stayed home, the fathers disappeared on the Long Island Rail Road, boys played baseball, girls had to mind their manners.

Our families were different. Her mother worked and their family was involved in politics. My single mother was a social worker, a bohemian free spirit, who often left me and my brother alone when she went off to Florida with her boyfriend, assuming we would figure out how to do laundry and get dinner for ourselves — which we did.

My friend and I felt different too. She was a talented artist and a musician who went to summer camp with brainy, arty kids from Brooklyn and the Bronx. I was drawn to heroin addicts and guys who played the guitar, and I spent as much time as I could at the library with my own addiction, reading novels.

What she and I had in common, what truly bound us together, was that we were desperate for the future. We shared a deep hatred for our ***working-class*** suburban town just over the city line from Queens, and we planned to get out as soon as we could. The future was waiting for us in London or New York City or Boston. Someday soon we would meet our destiny.

Throughout this time, she always confided in me, and I told her everything. Well, almost everything. I never mentioned that one summer while she was off at camp, her boyfriend decided that he and I were meant for each other. He was a good-looking guitar player, and I was keeping an eye on him for her. We often got together to sing her praises, and then one beautiful day he told me that the plan had changed. It was going to be him and me. When he lurched forward to kiss me, I nearly laughed out loud. I said, “Are you crazy?”

We were alone in a field where mysterious and sometimes illegal things happened. We were stoned and young. Also, he was so handsome and sullen, just my type. But it didn’t matter. I truly thought he might be crazy. What on earth had led him to believe I would ever betray my close friend? My dear friend, who was probably protesting the war at a rally near her summer camp in upstate New York.

When I told him there was no “us” and never would be, he was furious. As much as I tried to explain the situation, he didn’t seem to grasp the concept of loyalty. He had no idea that there was such a thing as girl code. In layman’s language, the code was simple and never changed: Keep your hands off my boyfriend. I didn’t tell her about this encounter when she returned. I didn’t want to hurt her and what was the point?

Not surprisingly, they drifted apart without any input from me. After high school, she and I went in different directions. We still talked but not as often. She moved to Massachusetts for college. I left high school early, skipped college, then went to night school before heading to graduate school in California.

In time, we both wound up in Cambridge, Mass., and even though our separate, busy lives made it impossible for us to get together and walk, we kept talking, aware that our friendship would never include our husbands; it was a circle of two, just as it always had been.

When my husband abruptly left me seven years ago for a friend of mine, she helped me through the wreckage of my marriage with nightly phone calls for a year. And even when I recovered, with the help of hypnosis, therapy and strong doses of reality, we never stopped talking.

But now, on this night in the dark spring, for the first time, she had nothing to say. Words were too painful. Her beloved husband of 27 years had been ill for several weeks with a mysterious and painful illness that had spiraled out of control. Because of Covid, she was forced to drop off her terrified, disoriented husband at the emergency room entrance, until at last she was allowed to visit.

Finally, there was a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer, horrible at the best of times, even more horrifying now. When it became clear that nothing more could be done, she took her husband home and saw him through his death, arranging every detail, from a hospital bed to a raised toilet to hospice to friends delivering food. When it finally happened, she was in the kitchen getting his painkillers — the first time she had left his side.

Knowing how deeply he had loved her, I wondered if he had waited for a moment when he could leave her with a memory not of agony but of peace, a last gift.

Afterward, because of Covid, there was no funeral and no way to share the grief other than a few visits when friends brought groceries or casseroles. I called every night, and after a while she started talking again; she talked so much that I knew all I needed to do was listen. But it soon became clear that in this lonely time, talking wasn’t enough.

That was when we began to walk, just as we had in kindergarten, only now we wore masks. We met every Saturday when the streets were deserted. It was just the two of us and my sheepdog, Shelby. During one of our walks, I finally told her what had happened that summer she was away.

“It’s fine,” she said, completely unruffled. “I know you’d never betray me.”

On another Saturday we learned that the boyfriend we had shared had been in an accident and died, and we talked about all of the impossible, ridiculous things we had done when we were young and searching for love.

I had never found it, but she had.

Even though she was in the throes of grief, I knew how grateful she was for her long marriage, just as I knew despite the difference in our fortunes there had been another love story, one we had shared for more than 60 years. For all that time we have been walking and talking, through a failed marriage, disastrous family matters, true love and betrayals, and now heartbreak and grief.

We have never cared if there’s wind or rain. We don’t care if it’s a burning hot August day. We’re not worried about bad weather and we’re certainly not worried that we’ll run out of things to say. We knew each other when we were girls sitting on the front steps of our houses, desperate to find a way out. Because of that, and because we will always trust each other no matter what, we’ll be meeting this Saturday.

[*Alice Hoffman*](https://alicehoffman.com/) is the author of more than 30 novels, the latest of which, “[*The Book of Magic*](https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/The-Book-of-Magic/Alice-Hoffman/The-Practical-Magic-Series/9781982151485),” will be published next week.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Brian Rea FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 8, 2021

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[***Abolish Debt!***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:632K-2WS1-JBG3-6069-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 4, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 5; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1445 words

**Byline:** By Astra Taylor

**Body**

Formerly enslaved people called the phase that followed the Civil War, and their emancipation, Jubilee. In doing so, they at once communicated the joy of freedom and knowingly invoked the authority of the Bible: jubilee as an Old Testament law commanding the end of slavery, redistribution of land and forgiveness of debts. The prophetic term was another name for the period more commonly known as Reconstruction.

That attempt to usher in a more substantive democracy -- racially egalitarian and responsive to its poorest citizens -- was swiftly abandoned by the federal government and violently suppressed by Southern reactionaries. Reconstruction's sabotage still reverberates: in the dysfunction of our political system, in the endurance of white supremacy, in our ever-widening inequality.

While the White House likes to trumpet good news about the economy's recovery from Covid-19, it's important to understand how unequal the recovery has been. From March 2020 to March 2021, America's billionaires increased their combined fortunes by over $1.3 trillion, according to an analysis by Americans for Tax Fairness and the Institute for Policy Studies, while millions of families, particularly in ***working-class*** communities of color, either scraped by or fell further into arrears. The nonmortgage debt load of retirees has, on average, doubled; while eviction bans kept many families off the street, they did not stop back rent from piling up. Millions more people fell into medical debt during the pandemic, which experts warn may soon lead to a spike in personal bankruptcies.

Instead of hawking a ''recovery'' that disproportionately benefits the wealthy, President Biden and his colleagues should help finish the work of Reconstruction. The time has come to revive the Jubilee -- which in the modern era would mean the erasure of debts and a democratic rebalancing of power between regular people and elites.

Since before this nation's founding, indebtedness has been useful to the powerful as both a source of profit and a tool of social control and racial domination. Thomas Jefferson's view is particularly revealing: While he fulminated against debt as an unjust encumbrance on posterity and argued for the termination of debts unpaid after ''natural limits'' (which he took to be the span of a generation), he recommended wielding debt as a tool to dispossess Indigenous people, ''because we observe that when these debts get beyond what the individuals can pay, they become willing to lop them off by a cession of lands.''

After slavery's abolition, similar tactics were deployed to squelch hopes for Jubilee. Sharecropping and tenant farming arrangements used debt to secure white landlords generations of exploitable labor, ensuring Reconstruction would remain undone.

Today, financial predators, aided by allies in Washington from both parties, target borrowers who come from marginalized backgrounds, lack intergenerational wealth and face wage discrimination on the job, ensuring lifetimes of repayment while compounding social inequities and racial disparities.

The rich, meanwhile, can use credit to their advantage: Individuals walk away from their obligations (Donald Trump, the self-professed ''king of debt,'' epitomizes this warped paradigm), and companies engage in strategic defaults.

The same ethos informed the first Covid relief package. Congress stabilized the corporate debt market and offered companies forgivable loans (they even aided payday lenders and debt collectors that were previously fined by regulators) but failed to extend equivalent generosity to regular borrowers, who instead received inadequate payment pauses and cash assistance. Even this support was a circuitous bailout for creditors, given that people spent much of what they received to pay down debts. (Debt collectors could garnish people's third stimulus checks.)

Whereas the American dream used to be owning a home with a white picket fence, now it is getting out of debt. For many, the humble aspiration of owing zero dollars seems out of reach. Over his long career, Mr. Biden has contributed to this crisis by working to strengthen the hands of creditors, including through a 2005 bankruptcy reform bill that rolled back protections for borrowers.

The time has come to make amends. If the Biden administration is serious about ''build back better,'' it needs to take bold action. This country cannot afford to allow millions of struggling households to sink when mountains of old bills and back rent suddenly come due once payment pauses and eviction moratoriums end. The government can and must find ways to make crushing debt disappear.

Student loans, medical debt, utility bills, criminal justice fines and fees, and municipal debt all need to be written down or canceled outright. I've written elsewhere about some of the various legal means by which this can be accomplished, and many other potential strategies exist.

To begin, Mr. Biden should honor his campaign promise for Congress to immediately cancel student debt for borrowers. There is no reason to hold back. Erasing every penny of federal student debt would improve nearly 45 million lives, help narrow the racial wealth gap and most likely win over a good number of Republican voters in advance of the midterms. The Debt Collective, a membership organization for debtors I helped found, has already drafted an executive order the president could sign tomorrow to do so -- no need to involve Congress or pass legislation.

Next, he should tackle medical debt. Following the lead of a proposal by Senator Bernie Sanders, Democrats could eliminate medical debt in collections, including fees incurred because of Covid. (At the very least, legislators should protect borrowers by ensuring that past-due hospital bills aren't reported on credit scores and make it harder for collectors to come after patients.)

Finally, elected officials also need to relieve renters of the enormous burden they hold by canceling accumulated rent debt, preferably in a way that doesn't simply bail out and further enrich and empower landlords. Passing the Rent and Mortgage Cancellation Act introduced by Representative Ilhan Omar of Minnesota would be a good start.

These ideas are not outside the mainstream. Over 415 organizations, including the Minority Veterans of America, the National Young Farmers Coalition and the N.A.A.C.P., have signed a letter calling on the Biden administration to use executive authority to cancel student debt. In the early days of the pandemic, the Poor People's Campaign, a racial and economic justice group, introduced the Jubilee Platform, and it recently collaborated with progressive congressional legislators on a ''Third Reconstruction Resolution,'' both of which prominently feature debt relief.

Contrary to worries that letting debtors off the hook would sink the economy, there is evidence it would actually help keep it afloat by providing a much-needed financial boost. Freeing up money now spent on debt servicing to circulate more widely would increase demand, create jobs and encourage entrepreneurialism. A Jubilee would be a boon for everyone, even those who don't need direct assistance.

But the effect would be farther-reaching than what can be measured by G.D.P. A Jubilee would help us reconstruct both our monetary economy and our moral one. A renegotiation of the social contract is long overdue.

While the affluent shirk their obligations by refusing to pay taxes and living wages and then use the wealth they've hoarded to fund politicians who protect their interests, poverty is shrouded in shame and stigma. But indebtedness is not a personal failing, and debtors are not to blame, which is why we should reject the language of ''debt forgiveness'' and instead demand debt abolition, a phrase that pays homage to the concept of abolition democracy developed by the historian and activist W.E.B. Du Bois.

''Abolition democracy'' was Du Bois's name for what Reconstruction aspired to achieve -- a process that would involve both the dismantling of racist institutions and the building of new egalitarian, cooperative political and economic relationships. We are owed nothing less.

Astra Taylor (@astradisastra) is a filmmaker, activist and writer. She is the author, most recently, of ''Remake the World: Essays, Reflections, Rebellions.''

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY O.O.P.S. FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 4, 2021

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[***Why a Rhodes Scholar’s Ambition Led Her to a Job at Starbucks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65R7-P901-DXY4-X4YY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 3020 words

**Byline:** Noam Scheiber

**Highlight:** Jaz Brisack became a barista for the same reasons that talented young people have long chosen their career paths: a mix of idealism and ambition.

**Body**

Jaz Brisack became a barista for the same reasons that talented young people have long chosen their career paths: a mix of idealism and ambition.

Most weekend mornings, Jaz Brisack gets up around 5, wills her semiconscious body into a Toyota Prius and winds her way through Buffalo, to the Starbucks on Elmwood Avenue. After a supervisor unlocks the door, she clocks in, checks herself for Covid symptoms and helps get the store ready for customers.

“I’m almost always on bar if I open,” said Ms. Brisack, who has a thrift-store aesthetic and long reddish-brown hair that she parts down the middle. “I like steaming milk, pouring lattes.”

The Starbucks door is not the only one that has been opened for her. As a University of Mississippi senior in 2018, Ms. Brisack was one of 32 Americans who won Rhodes scholarships, which fund study in Oxford, England.

Many students seek the scholarship because it can pave the way to a career in the top ranks of law, academia, government or business. They are motivated by a mix of ambition and idealism.

Ms. Brisack became a barista for similar reasons: She believed it was simply the most urgent claim on her time and her many talents.

When she joined Starbucks in late 2020, not a single one of the company’s 9,000 U.S. locations had a union. Ms. Brisack hoped to change that by helping to unionize its stores in Buffalo.

Improbably, she and her co-workers have far exceeded their goal. Since December, when her store became the only corporate-owned Starbucks in the United States with a certified union, more than 150 other stores have voted to unionize, and more than 275 have filed paperwork to hold elections. Their actions come amid an increase [*in public support*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/354455/approval-labor-unions-highest-point-1965.aspx) for unions, which last year reached its highest point since the mid-1960s, and a [*growing consensus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/business/economy/middle-class-pay.html) among [*center-left experts*](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Stansbury-Summers-Conference-Draft.pdf) that rising union membership could move millions of workers into the middle class.

Ms. Brisack’s weekend shift represents all these trends, as well as one more: a change in the views of the most privileged Americans. According to Gallup, approval of unions among college graduates grew from 55 percent in the late 1990s to 70 percent last year.

I have seen this first hand in more than seven years of reporting on unions, as a growing interest among [*white-collar workers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/21/business/architects-white-collar-union.html) has coincided with a broader enthusiasm for the labor movement.

In talking with Ms. Brisack and her fellow Rhodes scholars, it became clear that the change had even reached that rarefied group. The American Rhodes scholars I encountered from a generation earlier typically said that, while at Oxford, they had been middle-of-the-road types who believed in a modest role for government. They did not spend much time thinking about unions as students, and what they did think was likely to be skeptical.

“I was a child of the 1980s and 1990s, steeped in the centrist politics of the era,” [*wrote Jake Sullivan*](https://democracyjournal.org/arguments/the-new-old-democrats/), a 1998 Rhodes scholar who is President Biden’s national security adviser and was a top aide to Hillary Clinton.

By contrast, many of Ms. Brisack’s Rhodes classmates express reservations about the market-oriented policies of the ’80s and ’90s and strong support for unions. Several told me that they were enthusiastic about Senators Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, who made reviving the labor movement [*a priority*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/11/business/economy/democratic-candidates-labor-unions.html) of their 2020 presidential campaigns.

Even more so than other indicators, such a shift could foretell a comeback for unions, whose membership in the United States stands at its lowest percentage in roughly a century. That’s because the kinds of people who win prestigious scholarships are the kinds who later hold positions of power — who make decisions about whether to fight unions or negotiate with them, about whether the law should make it easier or harder for workers to organize.

As the recent union campaigns at companies like Starbucks, Amazon and Apple show, the terms of the fight are still largely set by corporate leaders. If these people are increasingly sympathetic to labor, then some of the key obstacles to unions may be dissolving.

Then again, Jaz Brisack isn’t waiting to find out.

The fight in Buffalo

Ms. Brisack moved to Buffalo after Oxford for another job, as an organizer with the union Workers United, where a mentor she had met in college also worked. Once there, she decided to take a second gig at Starbucks.

“Her philosophy was get on the job and organize. She wanted to learn the industry,” said Gary Bonadonna Jr., the top Workers United official in upstate New York. “I said, ‘OK.’”

In its pushback against the campaign, Starbucks has often blamed “outside union forces” intent on harming the company, as its chief executive, Howard Schultz, [*suggested*](https://stories.starbucks.com/stories/2022/starbucks-ceo-restoring-the-trust-and-belief-of-our-partners/) [*in April*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/us-policy/2022/04/30/white-house-starbucks-amazon/). The company has identified Ms. Brisack as one of these interlopers, noting that she draws a salary from Workers United. (Mr. Bonadonna said she was the only Starbucks employee on the union’s payroll.)

But the impression that Ms. Brisack and her fellow employee-organizers give off is one of fondness for the company. Even as they [*point out flaws*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/30/business/starbucks-coffee-buffalo-union.html) — understaffing, insufficient training, low seniority pay, all of which they want to improve — they embrace Starbucks and its distinctive culture.

They talk up their sense of camaraderie and community — many count regular customers among their friends — and delight in their coffee expertise. On mornings when Ms. Brisack’s store isn’t busy, employees often hold tastings.

A Starbucks spokesman said that Mr. Schultz believes employees don’t need a union if they have faith in him and his motives, and the company has [*said*](https://stories.starbucks.com/press/2022/starbucks-commits-one-billion-in-fy2022-investments-to-uplift-partners-employees-and-the-store-experience/) that seniority-based pay increases will take effect this summer.

One Friday in late February, Ms. Brisack and another barista, Casey Moore, met at the two-bedroom rental that Ms. Brisack shares with three cats, to talk union strategy over breakfast. Naturally, the conversation turned to coffee.

“Jaz has a very barista drink,” Ms. Moore said.

Ms. Brisack elaborated: “It’s four blonde ristretto shots — that’s a lighter roast of espresso — with oat milk. It’s basically an iced latte with oat milk. If we had sugar-cookie syrup, I would get that. Now that that’s no more, it’s usually plain.”

That afternoon, Ms. Brisack held a Zoom call from her living room with a group of Starbucks employees who were interested in unionizing. It is an exercise that she and other organizers in Buffalo have repeated hundreds of times since last fall, as workers around the country sought to follow their lead. But in almost every case, the Starbucks workers outside Buffalo have reached out to the organizers, rather than vice versa.

This particular group of workers, in Ms. Brisack’s college town of Oxford, Miss., seemed to require even less of a hard sell than most. When Ms. Brisack said she, too, had attended the University of Mississippi, one of the workers waved her off, as if her celebrity preceded her. “Oh, yeah, we know Jaz,” the worker gushed.

A few hours later, Ms. Brisack, Ms. Moore and Michelle Eisen, a longtime Starbucks employee also involved in the organizing, gathered with two union lawyers at the union office in a [*onetime auto plant*](https://trimaincenter.com/history/). The National Labor Relations Board was counting ballots for an election at a Starbucks in Mesa, Ariz. — the first real test of whether the campaign was taking root nationally, and not just in a union stronghold like New York. The room was tense as the first results trickled in.

“Can you feel my heart beating?” Ms. Moore asked her colleagues.

Within a few minutes, however, it became clear that the union would [*win in a rout*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/business/economy/starbucks-union-vote-mesa-arizona.html) — the final count was 25 to 3. Everyone turned slightly punchy, as if they had all suddenly entered a dream world where unions were far more popular than they had ever imagined. One of the lawyers let out an expletive before musing, “Whoever organized down there …”

Ms. Brisack seemed to capture the mood when she read a text from a co-worker to the group: “I’m so happy I’m crying and eating a week-old ice cream cake.”

A black antifa T-shirt at the formal

Ms. Brisack once appeared to be on a different path. As a child, she idolized Lyndon Johnson and imagined running for office. At the University of Mississippi, she was elected president of the college Democrats.

She had developed an interest in labor history as a teenager, when money was sometimes tight, but it was largely an academic interest. “She had read Eugene Debs,” said Tim Dolan, the university’s national scholarship adviser at the time. “It was like, ‘Oh, gosh. Wow.’”

When Richard Bensinger, a former organizing director with the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and the United Automobile Workers, came to speak on campus, she realized that union organizing was more than a historical curiosity. She talked her way into an internship on a [*union campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/02/business/economy/nissan-united-auto-workers-mississippi.html) he was involved with at a nearby Nissan plant. It did not go well. The union accused the company of running a [*racially divisive*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/02/business/economy/nissan-united-auto-workers-mississippi.html) [*campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/02/business/economy/nissan-united-auto-workers-mississippi.html), and Ms. Brisack was disillusioned by the loss.

“Nissan never paid a consequence for what it did,” she said. (In response to charges of “scare tactics,” the company [*said at the time*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/05/business/nissan-united-auto-workers-union-mississippi.html) that it had sought to provide information to workers and clear up misperceptions.)

Mr. Dolan noticed that she was becoming jaded about mainstream politics. “There were times between her sophomore and junior year when I’d steer her toward something and she’d say, ‘Oh, they’re way too conservative.’ I’d send her a New York Times article and she’d say, ‘Neoliberalism is dead.’”

In England, where she arrived during the fall of 2019 at age 22, Ms. Brisack was a regular at a “solidarity” film club that screened movies about labor struggles worldwide, and wore a sweatshirt that featured a head shot of Karl Marx. She liberally reinterpreted the term “black tie” at an annual Rhodes dinner, wearing a black dress-coat over a black antifa T-shirt.

“I went and got gowns and everything — I wanted to fit in,” said a friend and fellow Rhodes scholar, Leah Crowder. “I always loved how she never tried to fit into Oxford.”

But Ms. Brisack’s politics didn’t stand out the way her formal wear did. In talking with eight other American Rhodes scholars from her year, I got the sense that progressive politics were generally in the ether. Almost all expressed some skepticism of markets and agreed that workers should have more power. The only one who questioned aspects of collective bargaining told me that few of his classmates would have agreed, and that he might have been loudly jeered for expressing reservations.

Some in the group even said they had incorporated pro-labor views into their career aspirations.

Claire Wang has focused on helping fossil fuel workers find family-sustaining jobs as the world transitions to green energy. “Unions are a critical partner in this work,” she told me. Rayan Semery-Palumbo, who is finishing a dissertation on inequality and meritocracy while working for a [*climate technology start-up*](https://remoracarbon.com/vision/), lamented that workers had too little leverage. “Labor unions may be the most effective way of implementing change going forward for a lot of people, including myself,” he told me. “I might find myself in labor organizing work.”

This is not what talking to Rhodes scholars used to sound like. At least not in my experience.

I was a Rhodes scholar in 1998, when centrist politicians like Bill Clinton and Tony Blair were ascendant, and before “neoliberalism” became such a dirty word. Though we were dimly aware of a time, decades earlier, when radicalism and pro-labor views were more common among American elites — and when, not coincidentally, the U.S. labor movement was much more powerful — those views were far less in evidence by the time I got to Oxford.

Some of my classmates were interested in issues like race and poverty, as they reminded me in interviews for this article. A few had nuanced views of labor — they had worked a blue-collar job, or had parents who belonged to a union, or had studied their Marx. Still, most of my classmates would have regarded people who talked at length about unions and class the way they would have regarded religious fundamentalists: probably earnest but slightly preachy, and clearly stuck in the past.

Kris Abrams, one of the few U.S. Rhodes Scholars in our cohort who thought a lot about the ***working class*** and labor organizing, told me recently that she felt isolated at Oxford, at least among other Americans. “Honestly, I didn’t feel like there was much room for discussion,” Ms. Abrams said.

By contrast, it was common within our cohort to revere business and markets and globalization. As an undergraduate, my friend and Rhodes classmate Roy Bahat led a large public-service organization that periodically worked with unions. But as the “new” economy boomed in 1999, he interned at a large corporation. It dawned on him that a career in business might be more desirable — a way to make a larger impact on the world.

“There was a major shift in my own mentality,” Roy told me. “I became more open to business.” It didn’t hurt that the pay was good, too.

Roy would go on to work for McKinsey &amp; Company, the City of New York and the executive ranks of News Corp, then start a venture capital fund focused on technologies that change how business operates. More recently, in a sign of the times, his investment portfolio has included companies that make it easier for workers to organize.

On some level, Roy Bahat and Jaz Brisack are not so different: Both are chronic overachievers; both are ambitious about changing society for the better; both are sympathetic to the underdog by way of intellect and disposition. But the world was telling Roy in the late 1990s to go into business if he wanted to influence events. The world was telling Ms. Brisack in 2020 to move to Buffalo and organize workers.

Reaching Howard Schultz

The first time I met Ms. Brisack was in October, at a Starbucks near the Buffalo airport.

I was there to cover the union election. She was there, unsolicited, to brief me. “I don’t think we can lose,” she said of the vote at her store. At the time, not a single corporate-owned Starbucks in the country was unionized. The union would go on to win there by more than a two-to-one ratio.

It’s hard to overstate the challenge of unionizing a major corporation that doesn’t want to be unionized. Employers are allowed to inundate workers with anti-union messaging, whereas unions have no protected access to workers on the job. And while it is officially illegal to threaten, discipline or fire workers who seek to unionize, the consequences for doing so are [*typically minor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/business/economy/joe-biden-unions.html) and long in coming.

At Starbucks, the National Labor Relations Board [*has*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/15/business/economy/starbucks-union-nlrb-arizona.html) [*issued*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/business/economy/starbucks-union-nlrb.html) [*complaints*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/20/business/starbucks-union-buffalo.html) finding merit in such accusations. Yet the union continues to win elections — over 80 percent of the more than 175 votes in which the board has declared a winner. (Starbucks denies that it has broken the law, and a federal judge recently [*rejected*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-08/judge-dismisses-labor-board-bid-for-injunction-against-starbucks) a request to reinstate pro-union workers whom the labor board said Starbucks had forced out illegally.)

Though Ms. Brisack was one of dozens of early leaders of the union campaign, the imprint of her personality is visible. In store after store around the country, workers who support the union give no ground in meetings with company officials.

Even prospective allies are not spared. In May, after Time ran a favorable piece, Ms. Brisack’s response on [*Twitter*](https://twitter.com/jazbrisack/status/1525207430715650049) was: “We appreciate TIME magazine’s coverage of our union campaign. TIME should make sure they’re giving the same union rights and protections that we’re fighting for to the amazing journalists, photographers, and staff who make this coverage possible!”

The tweet reminded me of a story that Mr. Dolan, her scholarship adviser, had told about a reception that the University of Mississippi held in her honor in 2018. Ms. Brisack had just won a Truman scholarship, another prestigious award. She took the opportunity to urge the university’s chancellor to remove a Confederate monument from campus. The chancellor looked pained, according to several attendees.

“My boss was like, ‘Wow, you couldn’t have talked her out of doing that?’” Mr. Dolan said. “I was like, ‘That’s what made her win. If she wasn’t that person, you all wouldn’t have a Truman now.’”

(Mr. Dolan’s boss at the time did not recall this conversation, and the former chancellor did not recall any drama at the event.)

The challenge for Ms. Brisack and her colleagues is that while younger people, even younger elites, are increasingly pro-union, the shift has not yet reached many of the country’s most powerful leaders. Or, more to the point, the shift has not yet reached Mr. Schultz, the 68-year-old now in his third tour as Starbucks’s chief executive.

Mr. Schultz has [*long opposed unions at Starbucks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/16/business/starbucks-kevin-johnson-howard-schultz.html), but Ms. Brisack, for one, believes that even business executives are persuadable.

She recently spoke at an Aspen Institute panel on workers’ rights. She has even mused about using her Rhodes connections to make a personal appeal to Mr. Schultz, something that Mr. Bensinger has pooh-poohed but that other organizers believe she just may pull off.

“Richard has been making fun of me for thinking of asking one of the Rhodes people to broker a meeting with Howard Schultz,” Ms. Brisack said in February.

“I’m sure if you met Howard Schultz, he’d be like, ‘She’s so nice,’” responded Ms. Moore, her co-worker. “He’d be like, ‘I get it. I would want to be in a union with you, too.’”

Audio produced by Tally Abecassis.

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PHOTOS: Clockwise from top: Jaz Brisack on her way to work in February at a Starbucks in Buffalo where she helped unionize co-workers; Casey Moore and Will Westlake watching the December vote count that gave union supporters a victory at the Starbucks where Ms. Brisack works; placards at a Denver rally in support of a union push at Starbucks stores; Richard Bensinger, left, who was advising unionization efforts at Starbucks, in Buffalo last fall with Ms. Brisack and two other baristas, Ms. Moore, right, and Brian Murray. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRENDAN BANNON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; JOSHUA BESSEX/ASSOCIATED PRESS; DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/ASSOCIATED PRESS; CAROLYN THOMPSON/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (BU6)

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[***Over the Edge: The Fall of Kidd Creole***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65R6-W371-DXY4-X4BK-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

The video is grainy, the sound raw, but it's hard to look away. A small, nervous man is describing the previous night's commute to a police detective. In his telling, he has exited Grand Central Terminal onto East 43rd Street, heading to a midnight shift at a copy shop.

''I cross the street on Lexington Avenue -- I notice him standing on the side right there,'' he says.

The detective interrupts. ''When you say him, who are you referring to?''

''The guy that I stabbed,'' the man says.

The interview continues, and the nervous man explains why he stopped to talk to the man he stabbed: He did not want to alienate a potential fan. ''I have a social status,'' he says. ''I'm part of this rap group called Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five.''

The fatal encounter came on the first day of August 2017. The following day, Nathaniel Glover, better known as Kidd Creole, who helped create the blueprint for rap music, was under arrest for the murder of John Jolly, 55. He spent the next four and a half years in jail awaiting trial, was convicted of manslaughter in April and, last month, at the age of 62, was sentenced to 16 years in prison.

''I didn't mean to kill him,'' he told the detective the night after the stabbing. ''I wish that I would just have stayed home. I didn't even want to hurt him. He just made me so afraid, that's all. And I just didn't want him to hurt me.''

South Bronx Rising

The saga of Kidd Creole, from the pinnacle of hip-hop stardom to a Bronx rooming house and a series of menial temp jobs, is a parable of rap's first generation. It is a story of extravagant creativity, an industry that took advantage of its very young creators and a man who never stopped dreaming of a way back into stardom.

''This entire music genre was founded by us,'' said Grandmaster Caz, a contemporary of Kidd Creole. ''And how much is it worth? How much do we own?''

The answer, for most of the genre's pioneers, is not much.

Nathaniel Glover Jr. was born Feb. 19, 1960, the third of five children in a ***working-class*** Bronx family. His father, Nathaniel Sr., was a handyman who would repair floors; his mother, Sarah, took care of the home.

''We basically were sheltered,'' said his sister, Glander, one year older. ''We weren't allowed to hang out late at night, be outside, be late.''

Nathaniel was a shy, undersized adolescent who favored soft rock and Motown. He and his younger brother Melvin would sneak away with their sister's poetry notebooks, enchanted by the rhymes. In the Bronx, at that time, it was a useful interest to cultivate.

By the mid-1970s, neighborhood D.J.s started holding parties in parks and community centers. In July 1977 -- the month of a blackout that left New York City dark -- the brothers met a D.J. named Joseph Saddler, who called himself Grandmaster Flash.

Flash worked with a bowlegged teenager named Keef Cowboy, who energized the crowds with simple rhymes and exhortations. When a friend enlisted in the military, Cowboy teased him on the microphone: ''Hip, hop, hip, hop!''

The new culture would soon have a name.

Nathaniel and Melvin were the next to join. Nathaniel became Kidd Creole, from the Elvis Presley movie ''King Creole''; Melvin became Melle Mel.

They were the Three M.C.s -- later the Furious Four, and finally, Five -- giving shape to what hip-hop would become. Their parties were epic, and they were stars -- untrained, disrespected by mainstream artists and creating the music that would define much of Black culture for the next 50 years.

''We didn't have any idea that it would be an original form of American music,'' Mr. Glover said last month, speaking from the floating jail barge where he spent years waiting for his trial. ''We was just trying to have fun, make a couple of dollars, meet some women. It wasn't that we had in our head, 'Oh, this is going to be the start of something big.'''

Creole was not as lyrically deft as the other group members, but he had a way of connecting with audiences, said MC Sha-Rock, a member of the Funky Four Plus 1, the Furious Five's chief rivals in the early days. ''Every rhyme, every word made you feel like he was talking to you,'' she said. ''It was strange: being a teenager, how did you just know that this is what you had to do to engage a crowd?''

From another D.J.'s party, Creole picked up a phrase and made it a hip-hop fundamental: ''Yes, yes, y'all.''

Major record companies saw the music as a fad, leaving it to independents: Enjoy, Sugar Hill, Tommy Boy, Tuff City. When Sugar Hill offered the group a contract in 1980, the rappers signed the papers on the trunk of a Lincoln Town Car at the Englewood, N.J., home of the label's owners, Sylvia and Joe Robinson, according to Guy Todd Williams, better known as Rahiem, another member of the Furious Five. He was under 18, the others just over. Like the other performers on the label, they knew nothing about the music business.

The gloss of the studio and the authority of the engineers made Mr. Glover feel like he was a member of the Motown groups he looked up to, one of the Temptations, maybe.

''We kind of felt like we were walking in their footsteps,'' he said.

What followed was music history and decades of litigation.

Sugar Hill became the group's managers, publishers, producers and recording company. Tension grew when the record label selected Melle Mel as a de facto frontman, alienating the others. Mel was the only member who participated in the Furious Five's highest charting hit, ''The Message'' -- it is his voice reciting the song's familiar refrain: ''Don't push me 'cause I'm close to the edge / I'm trying not to lose my head.''

The invention, the crowds, the concerts, made the six members of the group into celebrities. But it wouldn't last. Even as the group recorded songs that defined the new genre, they never received any royalty payments, Rahiem said. (Flash, Melle Mel and Scorpio all declined to be interviewed for this article; Cowboy died in 1989.) Eventually, Grandmaster Flash had to sue just for the right to use his own stage name.

It was a familiar story, said Rocky Bucano, executive director of the Universal Hip Hop Museum, which is scheduled to open in the Bronx in 2024.

''This goes not just for the guys in hip-hop, but the guys in R&B, soul and every other music genre,'' Mr. Bucano said. ''The early guys who started as teenagers got taken advantage of and ended up with the short end of the stick.''

The band ultimately made some money when the label paid the performers to settle two lawsuits in 2002 and 2007; another is still ongoing.

Leland Robinson, son of the label founders, said that Sugar Hill paid the performers all royalties due them, and that any lingering litigation would soon be resolved. ''We are one,'' he said, claiming close relationships with Scorpio and Melle Mel. ''I'm just tired of bad press.''

Styles Change

Onstage, the group was dynamic and seamless. They toured the world. But offstage there were problems: egos, drugs, friction over loyalty to the Robinsons, which helped seed a rift between the Glover brothers that persists to this day.

Styles were also changing. In 1983, the group Run-DMC. from Queens, came out with a stripped-down sound and look that made the Furious Five, with their flashy hair and designer leathers, seem dated. They still performed, but the hits stopped coming and the audiences were smaller. Mr. Glover was just 23, and his star turn was ending. The first generation of hip-hop pioneers -- the oldest of the old school -- were disappearing from view.

''There was never a Plan B for them,'' said Sha-Rock. As her career waned, she went on to become a corrections officer in Texas. (She couldn't do it in New York, she said, ''because I would know all the people coming through.'')

Mr. Glover spoke candidly about the pain of losing his star status. ''It was disappointing to stand on the sideline and watch people achieve,'' he said.

After a last brief turn in New York's spotlight in 1994, hosting a call-in radio show on Hot 97 that was canceled the next year, Mr. Glover began to take on temporary jobs -- security guard, maintenance, office work -- which gave him flexibility for occasional gigs or short tours. In 1997, he moved into a modest rooming house in the West Bronx, still believing the group had the talent to get back on top.

He bought himself a beat-making machine and an eight-track recorder so he could produce his own songs, but he could never get anyone to take much of an interest. In 2012, he posted a series of videos of himself rapping, hoping to drum up a following on YouTube. Five years earlier, the group had been inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, but now his videos rarely got more than a few hundred views.

''You went from having everything to having almost nothing,'' his sister said. ''That's a deep dive.''

And in the rooming house, he was essentially anonymous.

''Hardly anybody knew I was part of the recording industry,'' he said. ''I kept that to myself.''

It was a life he never quite got used to.

''Ain't like nobody was walking up to him, 'Ain't you so-and-so from Grandmaster Flash?''' said Van Silk, a promoter who worked with the group. ''Because the time has passed.''

A Fatal Confrontation

In the summer of 2017, Mr. Glover thought he had finally caught a break. Capitalizing on growing nostalgia for old school hip-hop, the surviving Furious Five MCs were booked to perform at the 6,000-seat Dell Music Center in Philadelphia, on a bill with other veteran hip-hop acts. It would be Mr. Glover's first time in front of an audience in more than five years, and he hoped it might lead to a full tour.

''I always enjoyed being out on the road performing,'' he said in a call from jail. ''It's in my blood. I can't get away from it.''

On Aug. 1, three weeks before the Philadelphia gig, Mr. Glover rode the subway to Grand Central Terminal for his midnight shift in Manhattan. Since being robbed after a trip to the store for milk and beer a dozen years prior, he had begun carrying a steak knife attached to his forearm with a rubber band.

''I went across Lexington Avenue, that's when I noticed the guy,'' he would tell Mark Dahl, a prosecutor from the Manhattan district attorney's office, the next night. He said that seeing a man standing alone was ''a red flag for me.''

But Cheryl Horry, John Jolly's cousin, doubted there was anything unusual going on: ''Most likely my cousin was standing there drinking a beer,'' she said. ''When he's drinking his beer, he'll lean against the wall, and he'll speak to everybody.''

According to Ms. Horry, Mr. Jolly was born in Charleston, S.C., but moved to New York with an uncle after his parents died. As an adolescent, he left school for a series of jobs, Ms. Horry said, including a stint at White Castle. He had a habit of distancing himself from his family, and this became more pronounced as an adult, particularly after he'd been drinking heavily. Ms. Horry and others lost touch with Mr. Jolly, seeing him only occasionally, often during the holidays.

''We never knew why,'' she said. ''When he'd come around, we always used to tell him: 'We're family. Even if you don't want to be around family, call us, let us know you're all right.'''

According to Mr. Glover and surveillance video of the confrontation, Mr. Jolly said something to Mr. Glover as he passed by that August night. But Mr. Glover had earbuds in, listening to a song by the Eagles. Take it easy, take it easy / Don't let the sound of your own wheels drive you crazy.

Mr. Glover said that he took out his earbuds, not wanting to be rude, in case the man was a fan -- in which case, he would have apologized for initially ignoring Mr. Jolly and thanked him for the recognition. But when he realized that Mr. Jolly had only said, 'What's up?' he responded in kind. ''Nothing, bruh, nothing,'' he said and put the buds back in.

Surveillance video from a neighboring office building shows Mr. Glover then strolling out of the frame. After several seconds, Mr. Jolly is seen gesticulating in the direction that Mr. Glover has gone. He then walks purposefully toward him, still gesturing, until he is right in the face of Mr. Glover, who has walked back into the frame. Mr. Glover makes to leave, and Mr. Jolly follows him. Both men drift out of sight. What happened next was not caught on camera.

Throughout his four and a half years in jail, Mr. Glover has never denied that he stabbed Mr. Jolly, even pantomiming for the prosecutor during the interview the following night the motion he used, two sharp jabs to Mr. Jolly's chest. On the phone recently from the Vernon C. Bain jail barge, he was just as blunt.

''I'm backing up, and he's moving toward me,'' he said. ''He was sweating and his eyes was bulging.'' Mr. Glover backed off, he said, and Mr. Jolly moved forward. ''And then that's when I stabbed him.''

Rahiem, who stayed in touch with Mr. Glover as he awaited trial, said that the rapper never appeared broken. ''He seemed determined, resilient, innocent, but disappointed in the way the justice system was working against him,'' Rahiem said.

But while he expressed deep remorse in his initial interviews with law enforcement, Mr. Glover became increasingly fixated on the surveillance video during his years in jail, telling family members, friends and reporters that it had been manipulated to make Mr. Jolly seem less aggressive. (The New York Times asked a video expert, Catalin Grigoras, the director of the National Center for Media Forensics at the University of Colorado, Denver, to analyze the video in question, and he said it bore no signs of manipulation.)

Finally, this March, a trial commenced. Mr. Glover's trademark long hair was shorn, his face creased by time. He looked small and uncomfortable in an oversize suit, and he did not testify, leaving it to Scottie Celestin, the fifth in a string of lawyers representing him over the years, to argue that Mr. Jolly died from mismanaged care at the hospital, not from his two stab wounds.

Mr. Glover's supporters were irate when the judge, Michele S. Rodney, told the jurors not to consider whether Mr. Glover acted in self-defense. New York law says that deadly physical force is permissible only in response to an aggressor who is also using deadly physical force; Mr. Jolly was unarmed.

On April 6, the jury returned a verdict acquitting Mr. Glover of murder -- which requires intent -- but convicting him of manslaughter. On May 4, Mr. Glover was sentenced to 16 years. If he serves the full term, he will be 73 when he leaves prison. Asked to speak before the sentencing, he made no apology to anybody, as Cheryl Horry noted bitterly afterward.

Mr. Glover said to the judge, ''I'm very disappointed in the way that the whole situation has played out,'' adding that he had been portrayed as a person with no remorse or humanity. ''I also feel that at a certain point the truth of all this will be revealed and I will be exonerated,'' he said. Mr. Celestin said he planned to appeal.

The day of the sentencing, Sylvia Robinson, who had been the chief executive of Sugar Hill Records, was posthumously inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. The music that she, Mr. Glover and a small handful of others brought into the world is now almost 50 years old, and it is the dominant form of popular music today. Hip-hop's legacy includes revolutions in fashion and language, lasting fame and enormous fortunes -- but it left Mr. Glover working a midnight shift over a photocopier.

The tragedy of Kidd Creole, the rapper, is that the culture he helped create had so little need for him. The tragedy of Nathaniel Glover and John Jolly was a random encounter of no more than seven minutes. Mr. Glover believed to the end that he was one break away from relaunching his music career.

Sha-Rock, now 60, sees in Mr. Glover's fall a legacy of neglect: first by the city, and then by the industry.

''Sugar Hill Records created the space for people to hear us outside of New York City,'' she said. ''But we were supposed to be protected as young teenagers. He shouldn't have had to be working at a copy shop, I shouldn't have to be working as a corrections officer. We were supposed to have been protected. We gave you everything that was dear to our heart and dear to the culture of hip-hop. That's real.

''We gave you our blood, sweat and tears, and transformed rap records,'' she continued. ''You were supposed to protect us.''

Mr. Glover agrees. ''If I was doing anything that had any relation to the industry, I wouldn't have been there,'' he said. ''I would have been home.''

He protests the case against him, talking to anyone who will listen about his issues with the surveillance video. Though he has never stopped admitting to the stabbing, the contrition he displayed on the night after the killing has disappeared. ''My conscience is clear,'' he said.

''He initiated this whole thing,'' he said of Mr. Jolly. ''I didn't want anything to do with him.'' He mentioned the show scheduled for later in the month. ''The group was ready to get back together,'' he said. ''I was getting ready to go back to my life the way it was.''

The concert in Philadelphia went on without him.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/16/nyregion/kidd-creole-nathaniel-glover.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/16/nyregion/kidd-creole-nathaniel-glover.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Nathaniel Glover, known as Kidd Creole, during his trial this year in Manhattan. He was convicted of manslaughter. (POOL PHOTO BY STEVEN HIRSCH) (MB1)

Top, Kidd Creole, right, with other members of Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five in 1984. Above from left, Scorpio (Eddie Morris), Melle Mel (Melvin Glover), Kidd Creole (Nathaniel Glover) and Raheim (Guy Todd Williams) in 2007 at the group's Rock & Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTHONY BARBOZA/GETTY IMAGES

PETER KRAMER/GETTY IMAGES) (MB5)

**Load-Date:** June 19, 2022

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[***Why a Rhodes Scholar Took a Job at Starbucks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65R6-W371-DXY4-X4GS-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Noam Scheiber

**Body**

Jaz Brisack became a barista for the same reasons that talented young people have long chosen their career paths: a mix of idealism and ambition.

Most weekend mornings, Jaz Brisack gets up around 5, wills her semiconscious body into a Toyota Prius and winds her way through Buffalo, to the Starbucks on Elmwood Avenue. After a supervisor unlocks the door, she clocks in, checks herself for Covid symptoms and helps get the store ready for customers.

''I'm almost always on bar if I open,'' said Ms. Brisack, who has a thrift-store aesthetic and long reddish-brown hair that she parts down the middle. ''I like steaming milk, pouring lattes.''

The Starbucks door is not the only one that has been opened for her. As a University of Mississippi senior in 2018, Ms. Brisack was one of 32 Americans who won Rhodes scholarships, which fund study in Oxford, England.

Many students seek the scholarship because it can pave the way to a career in the top ranks of law, academia, government or business. They are motivated by a mix of ambition and idealism.

Ms. Brisack became a barista for similar reasons: She believed it was simply the most urgent claim on her time and her many talents.

When she joined Starbucks in late 2020, not a single one of the company's 9,000 U.S. locations had a union. Ms. Brisack hoped to change that by helping to unionize its stores in Buffalo.

Improbably, she and her co-workers have far exceeded their goal. Since December, when her store became the only corporate-owned Starbucks in the United States with a certified union, more than 150 other stores have voted to unionize, and more than 275 have filed paperwork to hold elections. Their actions come amid an increase in public support for unions, which last year reached its highest point since the mid-1960s, and a growing consensus among center-left experts that rising union membership could move millions of workers into the middle class.

Ms. Brisack's weekend shift represents all these trends, as well as one more: a change in the views of the most privileged Americans. According to Gallup, approval of unions among college graduates grew from 55 percent in the late 1990s to 70 percent last year.

I have seen this first hand in more than seven years of reporting on unions, as a growing interest among white-collar workers has coincided with a broader enthusiasm for the labor movement.

In talking with Ms. Brisack and her fellow Rhodes scholars, it became clear that the change had even reached that rarefied group. The American Rhodes scholars I encountered from a generation earlier typically said that, while at Oxford, they had been middle-of-the-road types who believed in a modest role for government. They did not spend much time thinking about unions as students, and what they did think was likely to be skeptical.

''I was a child of the 1980s and 1990s, steeped in the centrist politics of the era,'' wrote Jake Sullivan, a 1998 Rhodes scholar who is President Biden's national security adviser and was a top aide to Hillary Clinton.

By contrast, many of Ms. Brisack's Rhodes classmates express reservations about the market-oriented policies of the '80s and '90s and strong support for unions. Several told me that they were enthusiastic about Senators Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, who made reviving the labor movement a priority of their 2020 presidential campaigns.

Even more so than other indicators, such a shift could foretell a comeback for unions, whose membership in the United States stands at its lowest percentage in roughly a century. That's because the kinds of people who win prestigious scholarships are the kinds who later hold positions of power -- who make decisions about whether to fight unions or negotiate with them, about whether the law should make it easier or harder for workers to organize.

As the recent union campaigns at companies like Starbucks, Amazon and Apple show, the terms of the fight are still largely set by corporate leaders. If these people are increasingly sympathetic to labor, then some of the key obstacles to unions may be dissolving.

Then again, Jaz Brisack isn't waiting to find out.

The fight in Buffalo

Ms. Brisack moved to Buffalo after Oxford for another job, as an organizer with the union Workers United, where a mentor she had met in college also worked. Once there, she decided to take a second gig at Starbucks.

''Her philosophy was get on the job and organize. She wanted to learn the industry,'' said Gary Bonadonna Jr., the top Workers United official in upstate New York. ''I said, 'OK.'''

In its pushback against the campaign, Starbucks has often blamed ''outside union forces'' intent on harming the company, as its chief executive, Howard Schultz, suggested in April. The company has identified Ms. Brisack as one of these interlopers, noting that she draws a salary from Workers United. (Mr. Bonadonna said she was the only Starbucks employee on the union's payroll.)

But the impression that Ms. Brisack and her fellow employee-organizers give off is one of fondness for the company. Even as they point out flaws -- understaffing, insufficient training, low seniority pay, all of which they want to improve -- they embrace Starbucks and its distinctive culture.

They talk up their sense of camaraderie and community -- many count regular customers among their friends -- and delight in their coffee expertise. On mornings when Ms. Brisack's store isn't busy, employees often hold tastings.

A Starbucks spokesman said that Mr. Schultz believes employees don't need a union if they have faith in him and his motives, and the company has said that seniority-based pay increases will take effect this summer.

One Friday in late February, Ms. Brisack and another barista, Casey Moore, met at the two-bedroom rental that Ms. Brisack shares with three cats, to talk union strategy over breakfast. Naturally, the conversation turned to coffee.

''Jaz has a very barista drink,'' Ms. Moore said.

Ms. Brisack elaborated: ''It's four blonde ristretto shots -- that's a lighter roast of espresso -- with oat milk. It's basically an iced latte with oat milk. If we had sugar-cookie syrup, I would get that. Now that that's no more, it's usually plain.''

That afternoon, Ms. Brisack held a Zoom call from her living room with a group of Starbucks employees who were interested in unionizing. It is an exercise that she and other organizers in Buffalo have repeated hundreds of times since last fall, as workers around the country sought to follow their lead. But in almost every case, the Starbucks workers outside Buffalo have reached out to the organizers, rather than vice versa.

This particular group of workers, in Ms. Brisack's college town of Oxford, Miss., seemed to require even less of a hard sell than most. When Ms. Brisack said she, too, had attended the University of Mississippi, one of the workers waved her off, as if her celebrity preceded her. ''Oh, yeah, we know Jaz,'' the worker gushed.

A few hours later, Ms. Brisack, Ms. Moore and Michelle Eisen, a longtime Starbucks employee also involved in the organizing, gathered with two union lawyers at the union office in a onetime auto plant. The National Labor Relations Board was counting ballots for an election at a Starbucks in Mesa, Ariz. -- the first real test of whether the campaign was taking root nationally, and not just in a union stronghold like New York. The room was tense as the first results trickled in.

''Can you feel my heart beating?'' Ms. Moore asked her colleagues.

Within a few minutes, however, it became clear that the union would win in a rout -- the final count was 25 to 3. Everyone turned slightly punchy, as if they had all suddenly entered a dream world where unions were far more popular than they had ever imagined. One of the lawyers let out an expletive before musing, ''Whoever organized down there ...''

Ms. Brisack seemed to capture the mood when she read a text from a co-worker to the group: ''I'm so happy I'm crying and eating a week-old ice cream cake.''

A black antifa T-shirt at the formal

Ms. Brisack once appeared to be on a different path. As a child, she idolized Lyndon Johnson and imagined running for office. At the University of Mississippi, she was elected president of the college Democrats.

She had developed an interest in labor history as a teenager, when money was sometimes tight, but it was largely an academic interest. ''She had read Eugene Debs,'' said Tim Dolan, the university's national scholarship adviser at the time. ''It was like, 'Oh, gosh. Wow.'''

When Richard Bensinger, a former organizing director with the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and the United Automobile Workers, came to speak on campus, she realized that union organizing was more than a historical curiosity. She talked her way into an internship on a union campaign he was involved with at a nearby Nissan plant. It did not go well. The union accused the company of running a racially divisive campaign, and Ms. Brisack was disillusioned by the loss.

''Nissan never paid a consequence for what it did,'' she said. (In response to charges of ''scare tactics,'' the company said at the time that it had sought to provide information to workers and clear up misperceptions.)

Mr. Dolan noticed that she was becoming jaded about mainstream politics. ''There were times between her sophomore and junior year when I'd steer her toward something and she'd say, 'Oh, they're way too conservative.' I'd send her a New York Times article and she'd say, 'Neoliberalism is dead.'''

In England, where she arrived during the fall of 2019 at age 22, Ms. Brisack was a regular at a ''solidarity'' film club that screened movies about labor struggles worldwide, and wore a sweatshirt that featured a head shot of Karl Marx. She liberally reinterpreted the term ''black tie'' at an annual Rhodes dinner, wearing a black dress-coat over a black antifa T-shirt.

''I went and got gowns and everything -- I wanted to fit in,'' said a friend and fellow Rhodes scholar, Leah Crowder. ''I always loved how she never tried to fit into Oxford.''

But Ms. Brisack's politics didn't stand out the way her formal wear did. In talking with eight other American Rhodes scholars from her year, I got the sense that progressive politics were generally in the ether. Almost all expressed some skepticism of markets and agreed that workers should have more power. The only one who questioned aspects of collective bargaining told me that few of his classmates would have agreed, and that he might have been loudly jeered for expressing reservations.

Some in the group even said they had incorporated pro-labor views into their career aspirations.

Claire Wang has focused on helping fossil fuel workers find family-sustaining jobs as the world transitions to green energy. ''Unions are a critical partner in this work,'' she told me. Rayan Semery-Palumbo, who is finishing a dissertation on inequality and meritocracy while working for a climate technology start-up, lamented that workers had too little leverage. ''Labor unions may be the most effective way of implementing change going forward for a lot of people, including myself,'' he told me. ''I might find myself in labor organizing work.''

This is not what talking to Rhodes scholars used to sound like. At least not in my experience.

I was a Rhodes scholar in 1998, when centrist politicians like Bill Clinton and Tony Blair were ascendant, and before ''neoliberalism'' became such a dirty word. Though we were dimly aware of a time, decades earlier, when radicalism and pro-labor views were more common among American elites -- and when, not coincidentally, the U.S. labor movement was much more powerful -- those views were far less in evidence by the time I got to Oxford.

Some of my classmates were interested in issues like race and poverty, as they reminded me in interviews for this article. A few had nuanced views of labor -- they had worked a blue-collar job, or had parents who belonged to a union, or had studied their Marx. Still, most of my classmates would have regarded people who talked at length about unions and class the way they would have regarded religious fundamentalists: probably earnest but slightly preachy, and clearly stuck in the past.

Kris Abrams, one of the few U.S. Rhodes Scholars in our cohort who thought a lot about the ***working class*** and labor organizing, told me recently that she felt isolated at Oxford, at least among other Americans. ''Honestly, I didn't feel like there was much room for discussion,'' Ms. Abrams said.

By contrast, it was common within our cohort to revere business and markets and globalization. As an undergraduate, my friend and Rhodes classmate Roy Bahat led a large public-service organization that periodically worked with unions. But as the ''new'' economy boomed in 1999, he interned at a large corporation. It dawned on him that a career in business might be more desirable -- a way to make a larger impact on the world.

''There was a major shift in my own mentality,'' Roy told me. ''I became more open to business.'' It didn't hurt that the pay was good, too.

Roy would go on to work for McKinsey & Company, the City of New York and the executive ranks of News Corp, then start a venture capital fund focused on technologies that change how business operates. More recently, in a sign of the times, his investment portfolio has included companies that make it easier for workers to organize.

On some level, Roy Bahat and Jaz Brisack are not so different: Both are chronic overachievers; both are ambitious about changing society for the better; both are sympathetic to the underdog by way of intellect and disposition. But the world was telling Roy in the late 1990s to go into business if he wanted to influence events. The world was telling Ms. Brisack in 2020 to move to Buffalo and organize workers.

Reaching Howard Schultz

The first time I met Ms. Brisack was in October, at a Starbucks near the Buffalo airport.

I was there to cover the union election. She was there, unsolicited, to brief me. ''I don't think we can lose,'' she said of the vote at her store. At the time, not a single corporate-owned Starbucks in the country was unionized. The union would go on to win there by more than a two-to-one ratio.

It's hard to overstate the challenge of unionizing a major corporation that doesn't want to be unionized. Employers are allowed to inundate workers with anti-union messaging, whereas unions have no protected access to workers on the job. And while it is officially illegal to threaten, discipline or fire workers who seek to unionize, the consequences for doing so are typically minor and long in coming.

At Starbucks, the National Labor Relations Board has issued complaints finding merit in such accusations. Yet the union continues to win elections -- over 80 percent of the more than 175 votes in which the board has declared a winner. (Starbucks denies that it has broken the law, and a federal judge recently rejected a request to reinstate pro-union workers whom the labor board said Starbucks had forced out illegally.)

Though Ms. Brisack was one of dozens of early leaders of the union campaign, the imprint of her personality is visible. In store after store around the country, workers who support the union give no ground in meetings with company officials.

Even prospective allies are not spared. In May, after Time ran a favorable piece, Ms. Brisack's response on Twitter was: ''We appreciate TIME magazine's coverage of our union campaign. TIME should make sure they're giving the same union rights and protections that we're fighting for to the amazing journalists, photographers, and staff who make this coverage possible!''

The tweet reminded me of a story that Mr. Dolan, her scholarship adviser, had told about a reception that the University of Mississippi held in her honor in 2018. Ms. Brisack had just won a Truman scholarship, another prestigious award. She took the opportunity to urge the university's chancellor to remove a Confederate monument from campus. The chancellor looked pained, according to several attendees.

''My boss was like, 'Wow, you couldn't have talked her out of doing that?''' Mr. Dolan said. ''I was like, 'That's what made her win. If she wasn't that person, you all wouldn't have a Truman now.'''

(Mr. Dolan's boss at the time did not recall this conversation, and the former chancellor did not recall any drama at the event.)

The challenge for Ms. Brisack and her colleagues is that while younger people, even younger elites, are increasingly pro-union, the shift has not yet reached many of the country's most powerful leaders. Or, more to the point, the shift has not yet reached Mr. Schultz, the 68-year-old now in his third tour as Starbucks's chief executive.

Mr. Schultz has long opposed unions at Starbucks, but Ms. Brisack, for one, believes that even business executives are persuadable.

She recently spoke at an Aspen Institute panel on workers' rights. She has even mused about using her Rhodes connections to make a personal appeal to Mr. Schultz, something that Mr. Bensinger has pooh-poohed but that other organizers believe she just may pull off.

''Richard has been making fun of me for thinking of asking one of the Rhodes people to broker a meeting with Howard Schultz,'' Ms. Brisack said in February.

''I'm sure if you met Howard Schultz, he'd be like, 'She's so nice,'' responded Ms. Moore, her co-worker. ''He'd be like, 'I get it. I would want to be in a union with you, too.'''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/18/business/starbucks-union-rhodes-scholar.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/18/business/starbucks-union-rhodes-scholar.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top: Jaz Brisack on her way to work in February at a Starbucks in Buffalo where she helped unionize co-workers

Casey Moore and Will Westlake watching the December vote count that gave union supporters a victory at the Starbucks where Ms. Brisack works

placards at a Denver rally in support of a union push at Starbucks stores

Richard Bensinger, left, who was advising unionization efforts at Starbucks, in Buffalo last fall with Ms. Brisack and two other baristas, Ms. Moore, right, and Brian Murray. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRENDAN BANNON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

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[***Make Americans’ Crushing Debt Disappear; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6324-JN11-DXY4-X4W3-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1443 words

**Byline:** Astra Taylor

**Highlight:** The American dream used to be owning a home with a white picket fence, but now it is getting out of debt.

**Body**

Formerly enslaved people called the phase that followed the Civil War, and their emancipation, Jubilee. In doing so, they at once communicated the joy of freedom and knowingly invoked the authority of the Bible: jubilee as an Old Testament law commanding the end of slavery, redistribution of land and forgiveness of [*debts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/10/business/student-loan-forgiveness-biden.html). The prophetic term was another name for the period more commonly known as Reconstruction.

That attempt to usher in a more substantive democracy — racially egalitarian and responsive to its poorest citizens — was swiftly abandoned by the federal government and violently suppressed by Southern reactionaries. Reconstruction’s sabotage still reverberates: in the dysfunction of our political system, in the endurance of white supremacy, in our ever-widening inequality.

While the White House likes to trumpet good news about the economy’s recovery from Covid-19, it’s important to understand how unequal the recovery has been. From March 2020 to March 2021, America’s billionaires increased their combined fortunes by over $1.3 trillion, according to [*an analysis*](https://americansfortaxfairness.org/issue/one-year-roundup-billionaire-wealth-growth-pandemic-top-pandemic-profiteers/) by Americans for Tax Fairness and the Institute for Policy Studies, while millions of families, particularly in ***working-class*** communities of color, either scraped by or fell further into arrears. The nonmortgage debt load of retirees has, on average, [*doubled*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/17/business/retirement/rising-debt-falling-income-how-to-dig-out.html); while eviction bans kept many families off the street, they did not stop back rent from piling up. Millions more people fell into medical debt during the pandemic, which experts warn may soon lead to a spike in personal bankruptcies.

Instead of hawking a “recovery” that disproportionately benefits the wealthy, President Biden and his colleagues should help finish the work of Reconstruction. The time has come to revive the Jubilee — which in the modern era would mean the erasure of debts and a democratic rebalancing of power between regular people and elites.

Since before this nation’s founding, indebtedness has been useful to the powerful as both a source of profit and a tool of social control and racial domination. Thomas Jefferson’s view is particularly revealing: While he fulminated against debt as an unjust encumbrance on posterity and [*argued for*](https://jeffersonpapers.princeton.edu/selected-documents/thomas-jefferson-james-madison) the termination of debts unpaid after “natural limits” (which he took to be the span of a generation), he [*recommended*](https://www.in.gov/history/for-educators/download-issues-of-the-indiana-historian/lewis-and-clark-indiana-connections/extending-americas-reach/president-jeffersons-letter-to-william-henry-harrison/) wielding debt as a tool to dispossess Indigenous people, “because we observe that when these debts get beyond what the individuals can pay, they become willing to lop them off by a cession of lands.”

After slavery’s abolition, similar tactics were deployed to squelch hopes for Jubilee. Sharecropping and tenant farming arrangements used debt to secure white landlords generations of exploitable labor, ensuring Reconstruction would remain undone.

Today, financial predators, aided by allies in Washington from both parties, target borrowers who come from marginalized backgrounds, lack intergenerational wealth and face wage discrimination on the job, ensuring lifetimes of repayment while compounding social inequities and racial disparities.

The rich, meanwhile, can use credit to their advantage: Individuals walk away from their obligations (Donald Trump, the self-professed “king of debt,” epitomizes this warped paradigm), and companies engage in strategic defaults.

The same ethos informed the first Covid relief package. Congress stabilized the corporate debt market and offered companies forgivable loans (it even aided [*payday lenders and debt collectors*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2021/01/15/debt-collectors-payday-ppp/) that were previously fined by regulators) but failed to extend equivalent generosity to regular borrowers, who instead received inadequate payment pauses and cash assistance. Even this support was a circuitous bailout for creditors, given that people [*spent*](https://www.nber.org/digest/oct20/most-stimulus-payments-were-saved-or-applied-debt) much of what they received to pay down debts. (Debt collectors could garnish people’s third stimulus checks.)

Whereas the American dream used to be owning a home with a white picket fence, now it is getting out of debt. For many, the humble aspiration of owing zero dollars seems out of reach. Over his long career, Mr. Biden has contributed to this crisis by working to strengthen the hands of creditors, including through a 2005 bankruptcy reform bill that rolled back protections for borrowers.

The time has come to make amends. If the Biden administration is serious about “build back better,” it needs to take bold action. This country cannot afford to allow millions of struggling households to sink when mountains of old bills and back rent suddenly come due once payment pauses and eviction moratoriums end. The government can and must find ways to make crushing debt disappear.

Student loans, medical debt, utility bills, criminal justice fines and fees, and municipal debt all need to be written down or canceled outright. I’ve [*written*](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/oct/04/bernie-sanders-healthcare-medical-debt) [*elsewhere*](https://www.thenation.com/article/society/biden-debt-loans-covid/) about some of the various legal means by which this can be accomplished, and many other potential strategies exist.

To begin, Mr. Biden should honor his campaign promise for Congress to immediately cancel student debt for borrowers. There is no reason to hold back. Erasing every penny of federal student debt would improve nearly 45 million lives, help narrow the racial wealth gap and [*most likely*](https://www.defendstudents.org/news/body/docket/100-Day-Docket-Policy-Poll-Memo.pdf) [*win*](https://couriernewsroom.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/12/dfp_omni_8_20_d_run_0001971.pdf) [*over*](https://twitter.com/SenWarren/status/1333093709903237125?s=20) a good number of Republican voters in advance of the midterms. The Debt Collective, a membership organization for debtors I helped found, has already [*drafted an executive order*](https://debtcollective.org/flick-of-a-pen/) the president could sign tomorrow to do so — no need to involve Congress or pass legislation.

Next, he should tackle medical debt. Following the lead of a proposal by Senator Bernie Sanders, Democrats could eliminate medical debt in collections, including fees incurred because of Covid. (At the very least, legislators should protect borrowers by ensuring that past-due hospital bills aren’t reported on credit scores and make it harder for collectors to come after patients.)

Finally, elected officials also need to relieve renters of the enormous burden they hold by canceling accumulated rent debt, preferably in a way that doesn’t simply bail out and further enrich and empower landlords. Passing the Rent and Mortgage Cancellation Act introduced by Representative Ilhan Omar of Minnesota would be a good start.

These ideas are not outside the mainstream. Over 415 organizations, including the Minority Veterans of America, the National Young Farmers Coalition and the N.A.A.C.P., have signed a [*letter*](https://ourfinancialsecurity.org/2021/04/sign-on-letter-over-410-orgs-call-on-president-biden-to-cancel-federal-student-debt-immediately-via-executive-action/) calling on the Biden administration to use executive authority to cancel student debt. In the early days of the pandemic, the Poor People’s Campaign, a racial and economic justice group, introduced the [*Jubilee Platform*](https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/about/jubilee-platform/), and it recently collaborated with progressive congressional legislators on a “[*Third Reconstruction Resolution*](https://lee.house.gov/imo/media/doc/LEE_037_xml.pdf),” both of which prominently feature debt relief.

Contrary to worries that letting debtors off the hook would sink the economy, there is evidence it would actually help keep it afloat by providing a [*much-needed*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/03/21/debt-jubilee-is-only-way-avoid-depression/) [*financial*](https://www.ineteconomics.org/perspectives/blog/its-time-for-a-debt-jubilee) [*boost*](http://www.levyinstitute.org/publications/the-macroeconomic-effects-of-student-debt-cancellation). Freeing up money now spent on debt servicing to circulate more widely would increase demand, create jobs and encourage entrepreneurialism. A Jubilee would be a boon for everyone, even those who don’t need direct assistance.

But the effect would be farther-reaching than what can be measured by G.D.P. A Jubilee would help us reconstruct both our monetary economy and our moral one. A renegotiation of the social contract is long overdue.

While the affluent shirk their obligations by refusing to pay taxes and living wages and then use the wealth they’ve hoarded to fund politicians who protect their interests, poverty is shrouded in shame and stigma. But indebtedness is not a personal failing, and debtors are not to blame, which is why we should reject the language of “debt forgiveness” and instead demand [*debt abolition*](https://www.amazon.com/Cant-Pay-Wont-Disobedience-Abolition/dp/1642592625/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&amp;keywords=can%27t+pay+wont+pay&amp;qid=1624286783&amp;s=books&amp;sr=1-1), a phrase that pays homage to the concept of abolition democracy developed by the historian and activist W.E.B. Du Bois.

“Abolition democracy” was Du Bois’s name for what Reconstruction aspired to achieve — a process that would involve both the dismantling of racist institutions and the building of new egalitarian, cooperative political and economic relationships. We are owed nothing less.

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**End of Document**



[***As Masks Begin to Come Off, A Delicate Dance Takes Form***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JP-42N1-DXY4-X3WW-00000-00&context=1519360)

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Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1143 words

**Byline:** By Matt Richtel

**Body**

After the C.D.C. issued new guidelines, people are figuring out how to proceed. Some want to keep their face coverings on: ''It saves me having to put on sunscreen.''

Mark Rasch hopped on his bike Tuesday in Bethesda, Md., pedaled off for an afternoon ride, and realized he forgot his mask. As he turned back for it, news came on the radio over his earbuds: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said masks were no longer required outdoors for fully vaccinated people unless they were in a crowd.

Mr. Rasch, a lawyer, rode on, naked from nose to chin for the first time in a year. He reached nearby Georgetown and found he was nearly alone in that almost everyone else there remained masked.

''I wondered if there was a store I could go into without wearing a mask to buy a mask?'' he said. Instead, he went home, and told his wife: ''Nothing is changing, but it's happening quickly.''

It's springtime of the pandemic. After the trauma of the last year, the quarantined are emerging into sunlight, and beginning to navigate travel, classrooms and restaurants. And they are discovering that when it comes to returning to the old ways, many feel out of sorts. Do they shake hands? Hug? With or without a mask?

It's a confusion exacerbated by changing rules, state and federal, that vary by congressional district or even neighborhood, all while the very real threat of infection remains, in some places more than others.

Many states and cities are scrambling to incorporate the agency's new counsel into their own rules. New York has ended its curfew. In California, where masks remain recommended, the authorities are looking to reconcile the clash of cues.

''We have reviewed and support the C.D.C.'s new masking recommendations and are working quickly to align California's guidance with these common sense guidelines,'' Dr. Tomás Aragón, the director of the California Department of Public Health, said in a statement.

Dr. Susan Huang, of the University of California, Irvine, Medical School, explained the conflicted psychology as a function of rapidly changing risk, and the difference in tolerance individuals have for risk. At present, she said, most places have a foundation of people vaccinated but are not near the 80 percent that marks herd immunity -- with no children inoculated.

''We're between the darkness and the light,'' Dr. Huang said. She likened the psychology around masks and other behavior to the different approaches people take to changing their wardrobes at the end of winter: People who are more risk averse continue to wear winter clothes on 50 degree days, where bigger risk takers opt for shorts.

''Eventually,'' she said, ''everyone will be wearing shorts.''

It seems that this psychology may come to define the way the pandemic ebbs, revolving less around public dictate than personal comfort after a stark trauma. For many, the jurisdictional battle is internal, with head and heart clashing over the right personal policy.

''I have hugged friends but in a very clumsy body posture,'' said Shirley Lin, who lives in Fremont, Calif., where she works on business development at a mobile game company. ''The bear hugs with the joyful scream will not be seen for a long, long time.''

Her partner lost his mother to Covid-19. She died in August in St. Petersburg, Russia, at age 68. Ms. Lin, scarred, is dubious that the risk has passed. ''I don't think we can slack off on the proper social distancing and masking,'' she said. But ''we are much more optimistic.''

Masks have also become so much more than mere barrier between germs and lungs. They can keep that too-chatty neighbor at bay or help the introvert hide in plain sight. And vanity? Goodbye to that.

''It saves me having to put on sunscreen and wear lipstick,'' said Sara J. Becker, an associate professor at the Brown University School of Public Health.

She recently had an awkward transitional moment when she, her husband and two children went to an outdoor fire pit with vaccinated neighbors.

''Someone offered me their hand, and I gave my elbow,'' Dr. Becker said. She was ''not quite ready for handshakes or hugs,'' she explained, though ''pre-Covid, I was definitely a hugger.''

So was Dr. Shervin Assari, but he's abstaining -- at least for now, particularly after the last few weeks. His mother, who lives in Tehran, was just released from the hospital there after a dangerous bout with Covid-19, and Dr. Assari feels chastened anew.

''I had an abstract idea about the risk, and now I really see the risk,'' said Dr. Assari, who lives in Lakewood, Calif. He's ''half-vaccinated,'' he said, ''and terribly scared of Covid-19.''

Dr. Assari, a public health expert, is trying to modulate his own behavior given the three different worlds he's trying to navigate: in the ***working-class*** neighborhood where he lives in South Los Angeles; his daughter's elementary school; and the historically Black medical school, Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science, where he teaches family medicine.

Each differs in culture. Most residents of his neighborhood wear masks, but also seem to him respectful of individual choice. The elementary school maintains rigid standards with daily checklists to make sure no one is sick or at risk.

And at the medical school, people religiously wear masks, even as the school roils with mistrust of the vaccination, despite the fact it trains doctors, nurses and others in the field.

''It's shocking -- it's very deep mistrust, not just moderate,'' Dr. Assari said. The skepticism of the medical establishment was centuries in the making -- like the infamous Tuskegee experiments -- and he doubts it will end soon. But the mistrust at his school is different from that of conservatives: Vaccination may be slow among both groups, but white conservatives may be quicker to rip off their masks, if they wore them at all.

''There's none of that Tucker Carlson stuff here,'' he said. Mr. Carlson, a talk-show host on Fox News, said on a recent show that having children wear a mask outside should ''be illegal'' and that ''your response should be no different than seeing someone beat a kid at Walmart'' and to call the police.

(Dr. Anthony Fauci, the president's chief medical adviser for Covid, promptly shot back on CNN: ''I think that's self-evident that that's bizarre.'')

In San Francisco, Huntley Barad, a retired entrepreneur, ventured out with his wife this week, and they took their first walk without masks in more than a year.

''We walked down the Great Highway,'' he said. ''We're ready to poke our heads out from underneath our rock, and perhaps find a restaurant with a nice outdoor table setup -- on a warmish night if possible.''

But he said that their plans for a date night weren't firm, much like the conflicting guidance and behavior of a nation itself.

''Nothing definite yet.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/health/masks-cdc-rules.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/health/masks-cdc-rules.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Robbie Bell, 75, of Miami, Fla., put her mask on after dinner out with friends last month. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT MCINTYRE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A8)

**Load-Date:** April 30, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Best (and Worst) Theater in Europe in 2021***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:649R-RD91-JBG3-60WM-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Matt Wolf, Laura Cappelle and A.J. Goldmann

**Highlight:** The Times’s three European theater critics pick their favorite productions of the year — plus a turkey apiece for the festive season.

**Body**

The Times’s three European theater critics pick their favorite productions of the year — plus a turkey apiece for the festive season.

Matt Wolf

Four favorites from The Times’s theater critic in London

“[*ANNA X*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/05/theater/ian-mckellen-hamlet.html)”

Joseph Charlton’s 80-minute two-hander was first seen in 2019 at the VAULT Festival, an annual London showcase of new work on the theatrical fringe, but it hit the big time last summer as part of the producer Sonia Friedman’s RE:EMERGE season of new writing. In Daniel Raggett’s bravura production, the mysterious con woman of the play’s title draws the ambitious techie Ariel into her duplicitous orbit. Playing a fictionalized take on [*the real fraudster Anna Sorokin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/25/nyregion/anna-delvey-sorokin-verdict.html), the [*lauded Princess Diana of*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/02/theater/golden-globes-british-theater.html)“The Crown,” Emma Corrin, proved a stage natural in this West End debut: sleek, stylish and intriguingly dangerous.

Harold Pinter Theater, London

“[*Cabaret*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/theater/cabaret-review-london-eddie-redmayne.html)”

Kit Kat Club, London

This 1966 musical is rarely absent from the London stage for long. But I’ve seldom seen it so angrily, or movingly, realized as in the production from [*the fast-rising director Rebecca Frecknall*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/05/theater/brief-encounter-summer-and-smoke.html) that opened recently at the Kit Kat Club, as the Playhouse Theater has been renamed. The West End venue has been refashioned into a Weimar-era Berlin nightclub, complete with backstage corridors full of dancers, and drinks, that audience members discover on the way to their seats. Jessie Buckley is blistering as the hapless Sally Bowles, and Eddie Redmayne is a sinister and sinuous Emcee. The two reinvent their iconic roles from scratch, and are given robust support by Liza Sadovy and Elliot Levey as the doomed couple at the musical’s bruised heart.

“[*Roman Tragedies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/theater/roman-tragedies-ivo-van-hove.html)”

International Theater Amsterdam

Amid a lean spell for Shakespeare on the London stage, a one-off livestream from Amsterdam during the coronavirus lockdown in February found something current in some time-honored texts. “Roman Tragedies” amalgamated Shakespeare’s three Roman plays — “Julius Caesar,” “Coriolanus” and “Antony and Cleopatra” — into a riveting six-hour marathon conceived well before its Belgian director, Ivo van Hove, had become [*a Broadway and West End presence*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/09/theater/ivo-van-hove-broadway.html). (The triptych was first performed in 2007.) These studies in political discord and societal discontent found multiple correspondences with the present, not least in the [*storming of the Capitol in Washington, D.C*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/us-capitol-riots-investigations)., the previous month: Democracy is fragile in Shakespeare’s plays, and it certainly felt so then.

“[*What If If Only*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/14/theater/london-mirror-light-normal-heart-what-if-only.html)”

Royal Court Theater, London

At 83, Caryl Churchill shows no sign — thank heavens — of slowing down or easing up on the adventure and surprise that characterize her work. “What If If Only,” her latest offering, ran a mere 20 minutes, but without leaving the audience feeling shortchanged. Churchill’s searching wit and intelligence were evident at every turn, as was the crystalline clarity brought to the play by her frequent director, James Macdonald, and a superb cast headed by John Heffernan and Linda Bassett, playing characters with names like Someone, Future and Present. The potentially cryptic, in their hands, made perfect sense.

And the turkey …

“Indecent Proposal”

Southwark Playhouse, London

Why must seemingly every film become a stage musical? I was beginning to feel I’d had enough after watching this misbegotten venture, which is adapted from the same novel by Jack Engelhard as the 1993 Robert Redford and Demi Moore movie. The outline remained: A couple is thrown into turmoil when the wife is offered a million dollars to sleep with a smooth-talking man of means, here played by Ako Mitchell. What was missing was any real characterization, motivation or decent music. The production resembled a cruise ship lounge act: appropriate for a show that was entirely at sea.

Laura Cappelle

Four favorites from The Times’s theater critic in Paris

“[*What Should Men Be Told?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/14/theater/behind-closed-doors-paris-theaters-carry-on.html)”

MC93; Bobigny, France

The first performances of “What Should Men Be Told?” (“Que Faut-Il Dire aux Hommes?”) took place under unusual circumstances. Last January, theaters were still closed in France under coronavirus restrictions — they didn’t reopen until May — and to keep artists onstage, some theaters held private daytime performances for industry professionals. This collaboration between the director Didier Ruiz and seven men and women of faith provided unexpected respite from the outside world. All were nonprofessional actors opening up in monologues about their relationship to spirituality, whether they had spent decades in a Dominican cell or found shamanist beliefs late in life. Even to this atheist, the result felt like a soothing meditation.

“[*7 Minutes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/30/theater/women-set-tone-paris.html)”

Comédie-Française, Paris

In Stefano Massini’s “7 Minutes,” the director Maëlle Poésy found a play that both widens the horizons of the Comédie-Française, France’s oldest and most prestigious theater company, and plays to its strengths. This contemporary blue-collar drama — a rarity in the Comédie-Française repertoire — follows 11 women who fear for their jobs after the textile factory where they work changes hands. They meet to discuss whether they should accept or reject an offer from the new management team, which initially seems too good to be true. The cast, drawn from every generation within the company’s permanent acting troupe, delivered the debate with passion, nuance and a compelling hint of ***working-class*** rebellion.

“[*Out of Sweat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/11/theater/france-black-theater-directors-le-mois-kreyole.html)”

Le Lucernaire, Paris

The premiere of “Out of Sweat” was delayed twice because of the pandemic, but it was worth the wait. The play, by Hakim Bah, won the 2019 Laurent Terzieff-Pascale de Boysson writing prize, created by the Lucernaire theater to encourage new talent and help produce their work. It deftly tells the stories of a handful of characters from an unspecified African country. One woman has already emigrated to France, while another decides to seduce a Frenchman online, abandoning her children and unfaithful husband. Yet “Out of Sweat,” co-directed by Bah and Diane Chavelet, is no gritty drama: Each scene is a self-contained work of poetry, carried by the musical lilt in Bah’s writing. A superb and versatile cast completes this showcase of Black talent.

“[*Misericordia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/22/theater/avignon-festival-fringe.html)”

Avignon Festival

The Italian director Emma Dante has become a regular visitor to the Avignon Festival, and “Misericordia,” one of two productions she presented there this year, exemplified her mastery of movement-based theater. In this spare show, three women rally around a mentally disabled young man, Arturo, whose mother has died. Dante gives the characters a larger-than-life physicality to express their frustrations, as money becomes tight and their home life fraught. The back-and-forth gestures and quips among them are meticulously timed, and as Arturo, Simone Zambelli, a trained dancer, anchors every scene, his limbs bending and darting eloquently in bittersweet solo turns.

And the turkey …

“[*Andy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/24/theater/andy-gus-van-sant-warhol-review.html)”

Teatro Nacional D. Maria II; Lisbon

Gus Van Sant certainly doesn’t lack confidence. For his first stage production, “Andy,” a musical inspired by the life of Andy Warhol, he opted not only to direct but also to write the script, design the sets and compose the music. Predictably, “Andy,” which had its premiere as part of Lisbon’s Biennial of Contemporary Arts, failed on pretty much all counts, with labored pacing, dubious songs and characters that never acquired inner lives. The inexperienced cast valiantly tried to save Van Sant from himself, but this will go down as a lesson in the perils of hiring big names who lack a basic knowledge of stagecraft.

A.J. Goldmann

Four favorites from The Times’s theater critic in Berlin

“[*Richard the Kid and King*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/29/theater/salzburg-festival-richard-the-kid-and-the-king.html)”

Salzburg Festival / Deutsches Schauspielhaus

The German actress Lina Beckmann gave the performance of the year in this epic Shakespeare mash-up that traces the development of the Bard’s most bloodthirsty monarch. Selecting carefully from the vast panorama of the eight War of the Roses plays, the director Karin Henkel keeps her staging (seen at both the Salzburg Festival in Austria and the Deutsches Schauspielhaus in Hamburg, Germany) focused and uncluttered despite the large dramatis personae. For much of the lengthy evening, the Houses of Lancaster and York are brought to life by a handful of nimble actresses playing multiple roles. But the production belongs to Beckmann, whose volcanic performance as Richard III is a master class in shape-shifting, dissembling and uncanny persuasion: in other words, in acting itself.

“[*The Threepenny Opera*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/15/arts/music/berliner-ensemble-threepenny-review.html)”

Berliner Ensemble

Robert Wilson’s legendary production of Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht’s “The Threepenny Opera,” which ran for over 300 performances at the Berliner Ensemble, was going to be a hard act to follow. If Barrie Kosky, the director of the new production at the theater, where what is Berlin’s most famous musical premiered in 1928, felt under pressure, his assured staging doesn’t show it. Kosky’s bold reimagining scrupulously avoids the Weimar clichés that have hardened around the work over the past 90 years. Working with a flawless cast from the theater’s acting ensemble, Kosky has produced something full of savage and gleeful menace — and the firecracker score has rarely sounded better.

“[*Metamorphoses (overcoming mankind)*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/theater/volksbuhne-theater-polis-reset.html)”

Volksbühne Berlin

As Germany slid back into lockdown last winter, the Volksbühne forged ahead with a series of new plays, streamed online, exploring ancient Greek drama and myth. The most arrestingly beautiful was the director Claudia Bauer’s Ovid-inspired “Metamorphoses (overcoming mankind),” a hypnotic combination of drama, dance and music whose premiere was one of the most exquisitely filmed digital productions of the pandemic. Seven actors (wearing blank masks) and three musicians imaginatively conjured the magical transformations whereby women become birds and men turn into flowers. At the same time, Bauer used the stories about the porous relationship between humans, nature and the gods to reflect on a range of timeless and contemporary issues, including gender fluidity, toxic masculinity, exploitative capitalism and climate change.

“[*The Politicians*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/28/theater/muenchner-volkstheater-uenchner-kammersipele.html)”

Münchner Kammerspiele; Munich

When I first saw Wolfram Lotz’s dramatic monologue “The Politicians” (“Die Politiker”) [*embedded in a 2019 reimagining of “King Lear,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/10/theater/volksbuehne-odyssey-dont-be-evil.html) I was startled by the verve and inventiveness of this manic, free-associative monologue. In the short time since, Lotz’s screed has taken on a surprising life of its own in several stand-alone productions throughout Germany and Austria. In Felicitas Brucker’s concise and furiously paced staging at the Münchner Kammerspiele, three performers give a dazzling rapid-fire delivery of this enigmatic and repetitive text. Clocking in at 65 minutes, “The Politicians” feels like a sustained freak-out: an exhilarating roller coaster of bravura acting and transformative stagecraft, in the service of a distinctively bold (and odd) new dramatic text.

And the turkey …

“[*The Falun Mine*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/26/theater/salzburg-festival-ruhrtriennale.html)”

Salzburg Festival

A new staging of Hugo von Hofmannsthal’s rarely performed “The Falun Mine” was intended to celebrate the Austrian writer who was one of the Salzburg Festival’s founders, and whose morality play “Jedermann” [*is the event’s perennial favorite*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/theater/jedermann-everywoman-salzburg.html). Sadly, Jossi Wieler’s production, which arrived in the midst of the festival’s centennial celebrations, was so lackluster that it felt like the opposite of a rediscovery. Indeed, the inert staging was so dreary that one could wish “The Falun Mine,” never performed during Hofmannsthal’s lifetime, had remained buried. Here’s hoping some other theater or director can successfully excavate it in the future.

PHOTO: Nabhaan Rizwan, left, and Emma Corrin in “ANNA X” at the Harold Pinter Theater. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Helen Murray FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 16, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Men Should Speak Up for Family Leave***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:642G-H9P1-DXY4-X22N-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Jessica Grose

**Body**

I've been covering work and family for more than a decade, and it seems about once a year, the fact that we have no federal system of paid parental leave is an issue that goes viral. Often the topic is in the news because of legislative tussling, as with the Build Back Better plan making its way through Congress; a provision for 12 weeks of paid family leave was removed from the bill, and as of this moment, a four-week provision is back in.

When the paid leave topic breaks through, people tweet and retweet global maps, like this one from 2011, showing what an absurd outlier the United States is. Norway and Sweden are routinely invoked as paragons of humanity. Mothers take to social media to share their postnatal struggles.

An example of this kind of consciousness-raising tale is one on Instagram by Mona Amin, a physician married to another physician, who reported that she had no paid leave after a ''traumatic birth.'' Eight days after she delivered, she said, she was in an I.C.U. while her son was in an N.I.C.U., and she and her husband had to battle with her employer and the insurance company to manage her postpartum care and ''to make sure I would still get a paycheck so we could pay off our $400,000+ hospital bill.''

Another is from the novelist Lydia Kiesling, who wrote for The Baffler about how her maternity leave benefit was originally denied and she had to untangle a ''bureaucratic snarl'' in order to receive it while still wearing what amounted to a maternity diaper. ''I am talking a lot about blood and torn vaginas and incisions here because birth is a physical trauma that affects the body in ways they don't even tell you about beforehand,'' Kiesling said. ''It's been four years since I had my second child, and my pelvic floor is still not quite right. Please Google 'rectocele,' and let your imagination run wild.''

After hearing hundreds, maybe thousands, of testimonies like this, I'm enraged that we are still having to tell these stories, still having to splay our vulnerability and torn-up bodies out to the universe to get some legislators to prioritize mothers as humans in need of the barest social supports. Four weeks?! If that even survives the ongoing Capitol Hill sausagemaking.

I had difficult pregnancies and then relatively easy births, and four weeks postpartum with my second child, I was so exhausted and out of sorts caring for a newborn and a preschooler that I bit my inner lip while eating -- so hard that I needed expensive oral surgery. I also had a prolapsed uterus (don't Google that) that ultimately resolved itself, in part because I had the opportunity to rest during my two months of paid leave. And I considered myself lucky to get that much time off in the first place. My husband had no time off at all.

Though I haven't spoken to all of them, every member of Congress surely knows, deep down, that mothers shouldn't be returning to work a mere two weeks after giving birth, which, In These Times reported in 2015, nearly an estimated quarter of employed moms do. And yet mothers such as Senator Patty Murray, Democrat of Washington, are still forced to explain to colleagues such as Joe Manchin of West Virginia how vital paid leave is. Even though -- as a father of three and grandfather of 10 -- he really should know.

That's pretty clear, because he said he's not against paid leave in theory but framed his concerns in terms of more general worries about the Build Back Better plan's overall price tag. He said he would be more likely to support paid leave if it were considered as separate legislation under regular order (not the reconciliation process being used to avoid the possibility of filibuster). And while Republicans increasingly say they support paid leave, some of their proposals for it are ungenerous, relying on funding mechanisms that involve borrowing from future Social Security benefits.

The problem, then, isn't one of awareness. It's one of political calculus. And for the moderate Senate Democrats Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona and most congressional Republicans, it doesn't seem to be adding up.

Christine Matthews, a public opinion pollster who has surveyed voters on the issue of paid family leave, said that while most Republican voters want it enacted, Republican legislators know they will not be punished for voting it down. ''It's not that Republican voters don't support it. It's that politicians know they're not voting on that particular issue,'' she said.

Neither Democrat nor Republican voters seem to list paid leave as a top legislative priority. A 2017 Pew Research poll showed that only 35 percent of Americans listed paid leave as a top priority for President Donald Trump and Congress. A 2021 Pew poll of legislative priorities didn't list paid leave, with most Americans citing the economy and Covid as their biggest concerns. And according to an October CBS News/YouGov poll, only 36 percent of Americans think the Build Back Better plan would help them and their families (with 33 percent saying it would hurt them and 31 percent saying it would have no effect at all).

The 2017 Pew poll found that paid leave provided by businesses rather than government was viewed more favorably. I worry, though, that if we leave it up to the private sector, it will never happen for the majority of parents, particularly ***working-class*** parents.

If we're going to move large numbers of American voters toward more full-throated support of government-funded paid leave, we need more fathers -- and men in general -- to be vocal about it. Abby McCloskey, who has served as policy director for Republican and independent candidates, pointed out that while she's no apologist for Trump, she thinks his public support of family leave helped senior Republicans become more ''willing and open'' to it. After all, around two million federal workers now have 12 weeks of paid family leave because of a Trump-era policy.

Matthews believes we can increase the salience of paid leave for men and for more conservative voters by elevating new narratives. Many people tune out these new-mom stories (which is why I'm so full of rage right now), but if we want to be savvy about getting support for this issue, we should start telling stories like the ones Matthews heard from rural men when she was conducting focus groups.

''They're talking about having jobs that are very inflexible, where they don't get time off to support their wife who has had a baby or a serious illness or problem,'' she said. Because they live far away from medical services or extra help, they feel the lack of paid leave particularly acutely.

This doesn't mean women should stop telling their stories. I will continue to tell mine. We should continue forever because these stories are worthy on their own terms. But as political motivation, perhaps we need a different tactic.

Would I prefer to live in a country that actually cared about women and their physical and emotional pain? I would. But if I can't have that, I want paid leave for any people who need it to care for themselves or their loved ones. And if listening to men's stories is what it takes, let's hear them.

Tell us about how you bonded with a new child or helped a parent through an illness or saved somebody's life. Drown out the Tucker Carlsons and the Joe Lonsdales who claim men taking parental leave are losers. Just do it now, while there's still time for this bill, because while four weeks is not nearly enough, four weeks is better than nothing at all.

Want more on paid leave?

Paternity leave is mentally and emotionally transformative for dads, according to Darby Saxbe and Sofia Cardenas, who research the way that bonding with children affects men's brains.

Men who take paternity leave are less likely to get divorced, and their partners are less likely to be on anti-anxiety medication, according to an article from Nathaniel Popper in 2019.

As Claire Cain Miller pointed out, ''Globally, the average paid maternity leave is 29 weeks, and the average paid paternity leave is 16 weeks.''

Tiny Victories

Parenting can be a grind. Let's celebrate the tiny victories.

During the pandemic, my 4-year-old was challenging. After many long days of trying to work and parent with no breaks, I would go to a drive-through and grab coffee and take the long way to an outdoor visit with my parents. Often my daughter would fall asleep in the car, and I would enjoy a moment -- just myself, a podcast and a coffee. Some days this was my first moment to myself since my eyes opened. I learned that sometimes the little things can rejuvenate you.

-- Diana Short, Indianapolis

If you want a chance to get your Tiny Victory published, find us on Instagram @NYTparenting and use the hashtag #tinyvictories; email us; or enter your Tiny Victory at the bottom of this page. Include your full name and location. Tiny Victories may be edited for clarity and style. Your name, location and comments may be published, but your contact information will not. By submitting to us, you agree that you have read, understand and accept the Reader Submission Terms in relation to all of the content and other information you send to us.

Jessica Grose has written about parenting for The Times since 2019. She is the author of the novels ''Soulmates'' and ''Sad Desk Salad'' and the forthcoming ''All Powerful and Totally Useless: The Creation of the Ideal American Mother.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/opinion/paid-family-leave-dads.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/opinion/paid-family-leave-dads.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Eleanor Davis FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 12, 2021

**End of Document**



[***She Mocked Men’s Bluster. Then Came the Complaints.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61MX-K501-DXY4-X4KR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 30, 2020 Wednesday 17:48 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; asia

**Length:** 920 words

**Byline:** Tiffany May

**Highlight:** A stand-up comedian in China suggested that some men had an unwarranted confidence. An attempt to censor her followed.

**Body**

A stand-up comedian in China suggested that some men had an unwarranted confidence. An attempt to censor her followed.

HONG KONG — Yang Li, a comedian, tells jokes about men and their egos.

She is hardly the first in the stand-up world to mine such a rich source of material. But Ms. Yang is a comedian in China, where homes and offices still hold fast to traditional gender roles and where [*a nascent #MeToo movement has been met with considerable political and social opposition*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/26/business/china-sexual-harassment-metoo.html).

One of her lines in particular has set off fierce online debate: “[*How can he look so average and still have so much confidence?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/26/business/china-sexual-harassment-metoo.html)” A lot of men didn’t find it funny. And that, said many of Ms. Yang’s defenders, is exactly the point.

In her routine, recorded this summer on an online comedy show, Ms. Yang compared male students with their female counterparts. While female students who get high grades often wonder why they can’t score perfectly, Ms. Yang said, some male classmates seem unfazed by their poor performance.

“You feel he owns the whole world,” she said, comparing a male student with female students who get scores of 85 percent or higher. “He can prance around the room with his exam papers held high. ‘Look at me, I got a 40. I’m a fool.’”

As videos from that show and other appearances have spread, some men have pushed back. On Sunday, a group calling itself a defender of men’s rights began an online campaign aimed at getting the attention of government censors. It offered a sample letter to send to China’s media regulator accusing Ms. Yang of “insulting all men” and “propagating hatred.” The post was later deleted amid criticism.

Screenshots of the post circulated widely, prompting debate among comedians and fans.

One of Ms. Yang’s most prominent detractors is Chu Yin, a law professor at the University of International Relations in Beijing. He first aired his complaints in September [*on Douyin, China’s version of the TikTok app*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/26/business/china-sexual-harassment-metoo.html).

“How special does a man need to be to appear confident to you?” Mr. Chu said. “Maybe these average men don’t look so good, but you’re probably the ugly one after you wash off your makeup.”

Mr. Chu also published a lengthy [*blog post*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/26/business/china-sexual-harassment-metoo.html) on Tuesday, warning that Ms. Yang’s “bourgeois” gender politics could threaten the unity of the ***working class***. “This sort of movement, based on identity politics, will almost certainly slip into the mobilization of hatred,” he wrote, namely the “hatred of straight men.”

Women in China are increasingly vocal about pressing for their rights. Just this month, hundreds of people [*gathered outside a Beijing court*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/26/business/china-sexual-harassment-metoo.html) in support of a former intern who brought a sexual harassment lawsuit against a prominent TV host, while a pop singer [*sang about real-life domestic violence cases*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/26/business/china-sexual-harassment-metoo.html) on live television. This year, students nationwide have also engaged in a grass-roots campaign to [*remove the stigma around menstruation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/26/business/china-sexual-harassment-metoo.html).

But women continue to face barriers in employment, education, health care and the justice system, which is often dismissive of people seeking help for [*domestic abuse*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/26/business/china-sexual-harassment-metoo.html).

Ms. Yang’s joke about overconfident men first gained widespread attention after her August performance on “Rock &amp; Roast,” a Tencent Video web series in which amateur comics compete for the approval of judges and audience members. Like other online video platforms in China, Tencent Video is regulated by the National Radio and Television Administration.

Ms. Yang responded to some of her male critics in a [*special routine last week*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/26/business/china-sexual-harassment-metoo.html), saying, “They think I’m the most abominable witch in the world. Everything they’ve suffered is because I said, ‘How can you look so average and be so confident?’”

Neither the National Radio and Television Administration nor Ms. Yang responded to requests for comment. It is unclear whether complaints have been officially lodged against her, and whether she would be subject to a review.

In her stand-up routines and interviews, Ms. Yang has said that she comes from a family of pig farmers in Hebei Province and studied graphic design before finding fame last year on “Rock &amp; Roast,” which draws tens of millions of viewers.

Ms. Yang [*told the Chinese news media*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/26/business/china-sexual-harassment-metoo.html) that she was initially taken aback by the backlash her joke received, which she said included violent threats. But some male Chinese entertainers have defended Ms. Yang’s right to make jokes, even if they aren’t laughing themselves.

“I personally didn’t find her routine funny. Parts of it were biased,” Su Xing, a Chinese singer, wrote on Weibo, China’s rough equivalent of Twitter. “But she should still have that space to express herself in stand-up.”

Others say the defensive tone of her detractors is revealing.

“Yang Li was wrong: Some men aren’t so confident after all,” a celebrity presenter, Xiao Xiao, quipped on Weibo on Sunday.

[*Joe Wong*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/26/business/china-sexual-harassment-metoo.html), a comedian who performed on American late-night shows before starting a television career in China, praised Ms. Yang’s punch-up jokes. “Her material is about the blind spots of men, so perhaps that’s why some do not find humor in it,” he wrote on Weibo.

In her show last week, Ms. Yang said that her supporters outnumbered her critics.

“A joke can only get laughs for one reason,” she said. “Because it resonates.”

Claire Fu contributed research in Beijing.

Claire Fu contributed research in Beijing.

PHOTO: A screenshot taken from YouTube showing Yang Li, a comedian, during an episode of “Rock &amp;amp; Roast.” Ms. Yang made a joke about overconfident men, setting off an online debate. (PHOTOGRAPH BY via YouTube FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 4, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Mask On or Off? Life Is Getting Back to Normal, and We’re Rusty.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JH-JYV1-JBG3-61NS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 29, 2021 Thursday 21:11 EST

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**Section:** HEALTH

**Length:** 1150 words

**Byline:** Matt Richtel

**Highlight:** After the C.D.C. issued new guidelines, people are figuring out how to proceed. Some want to keep their face coverings on: “It saves me having to put on sunscreen.”

**Body**

After the C.D.C. issued new guidelines, people are figuring out how to proceed. Some want to keep their face coverings on: “It saves me having to put on sunscreen.”

Mark Rasch hopped on his bike Tuesday in Bethesda, Md., pedaled off for an afternoon ride, and realized he forgot his mask. As he turned back for it, news came on the radio over his earbuds: The [*Centers for Disease Control*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/us/cdc-mask-guidelines-vaccinated.html) and Prevention said [*masks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/us/cdc-mask-guidelines-vaccinated.html) were no longer required outdoors for fully vaccinated people unless they were in a crowd.

Mr. Rasch, a lawyer, rode on, naked from nose to chin for the first time in a year. He reached nearby Georgetown and found he was nearly alone in that almost everyone else there remained masked.

“I wondered if there was a store I could go into without wearing a mask to buy a mask,” he said. Instead, he went home, and told his wife: “Nothing is changing, but it’s happening quickly.”

It’s springtime of the pandemic. After the trauma of the last year, the quarantined are emerging into sunlight, and beginning to navigate travel, classrooms and restaurants. And they are discovering that when it comes to returning to the old ways, many feel out of sorts. Do they shake hands? Hug? With or without a mask?

It’s a confusion exacerbated by changing rules, state and federal, that vary by congressional district or even neighborhood, all while the very real threat of infection remains, in some places more than others.

Many states and cities are scrambling to incorporate the agency’s new counsel into their own rules. New York has ended its curfew. In California, where masks remain recommended, the authorities are looking to reconcile the clash of cues.

“We have reviewed and support the [*C.D.C.’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/us/cdc-mask-guidelines-vaccinated.html) new masking recommendations and are working quickly to align California’s guidance with these common sense guidelines,” Dr. Tomás Aragón, the director of the California Department of Public Health, said in a statement.

Dr. Susan Huang, of the University of California, Irvine, Medical School, explained the conflicted psychology as a function of rapidly changing risk, and the difference in tolerance individuals have for risk. At present, she said, most places have a foundation of people vaccinated but are not near the 80 percent that marks herd immunity — with no children inoculated.

“We’re between the darkness and the light,” Dr. Huang said. She likened the psychology around masks and other behavior to the different approaches people take to changing their wardrobes at the end of winter: People who are more risk averse continue to wear winter clothes on 50 degree days, where bigger risk takers opt for shorts.

“Eventually,” she said, “everyone will be wearing shorts.”

It seems that this psychology may come to define the way the pandemic ebbs, revolving less around public dictate than personal comfort after a stark trauma. For many, the jurisdictional battle is internal, with head and heart clashing over the right personal policy.

“I have hugged friends but in a very clumsy body posture,” said Shirley Lin, who lives in Fremont, Calif., where she works on business development at a mobile game company. “The bear hugs with the joyful scream will not be seen for a long, long time.”

Her partner lost his mother to Covid-19. She died in August in St. Petersburg, Russia, at age 68. Ms. Lin, scarred, is dubious that the risk has passed. “I don’t think we can slack off on the proper social distancing and masking,” she said. But “we are much more optimistic.”

Masks have also become so much more than mere barrier between germs and lungs. They can keep that too-chatty neighbor at bay or help the introvert hide in plain sight. And vanity? Goodbye to that.

“It saves me having to put on sunscreen and wear lipstick,” said Sara J. Becker, an associate professor at the Brown University School of Public Health.

She recently had an awkward transitional moment when she, her husband and two children went to an outdoor fire pit with vaccinated neighbors.

“Someone offered me their hand, and I gave my elbow,” Dr. Becker said. She was “not quite ready for handshakes or hugs,” she explained, though “pre-Covid, I was definitely a hugger.”

So was Dr. Shervin Assari, but he’s abstaining — at least for now, particularly after the last few weeks. His mother, who lives in Tehran, was just released from the hospital there after a dangerous bout with Covid-19, and Dr. Assari feels chastened anew.

“I had an abstract idea about the risk, and now I really see the risk,” said Dr. Assari, who lives in Lakewood, Calif. He’s “half-vaccinated,” he said, “and terribly scared of Covid-19.”

Dr. Assari, a public health expert, is trying to modulate his own behavior given the three different worlds he’s trying to navigate: in the ***working-class*** neighborhood where he lives south of Los Angeles; his daughter’s elementary school; and the historically Black medical school, Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science, where he teaches family medicine.

Each differs in culture. Most residents of his neighborhood wear masks, but also seem to him respectful of individual choice. The elementary school maintains rigid standards with daily checklists to make sure no one is sick or at risk.

And at the medical school, people religiously wear masks, even as the school roils with mistrust of the vaccination, despite the fact it trains doctors, nurses and others in the field.

“It’s shocking — it’s very deep mistrust, not just moderate,” Dr. Assari said. The skepticism of the medical establishment was centuries in the making — like the infamous Tuskegee experiments — and he doubts it will end soon. But the mistrust at his school is different from that of conservatives: Vaccination [*may be slow*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/us/cdc-mask-guidelines-vaccinated.html) among both groups, but white conservatives may be quicker to rip off their masks, if they wore them at all.

“There’s none of that Tucker Carlson stuff here,” he said. Mr. Carlson, a talk-show host on Fox News, said on a recent show that having children wear a mask outside should “be illegal” and that “your response should be no different than seeing someone beat a kid at Walmart” and to call the police.

(Dr. Anthony Fauci, the president’s chief medical adviser for Covid, promptly shot back on CNN: “I think that’s self-evident that that’s bizarre.”)

In San Francisco, Huntley Barad, a retired entrepreneur, ventured out with his wife this week, and they took their first walk without masks in more than a year.

“We walked down the Great Highway,” he said. “We’re ready to poke our heads out from underneath our rock, and perhaps find a restaurant with a nice outdoor table setup — on a warmish night if possible.”

But he said that their plans for a date night weren’t firm, much like the conflicting guidance and behavior of a nation itself.

“Nothing definite yet.”

PHOTO: Robbie Bell, 75, of Miami, Fla., put her mask on after dinner out with friends last month. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT MCINTYRE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A8)

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Fall of Kidd Creole: Inside a Rap Pioneer’s Tragic Descent***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65PK-GNR1-DXY4-X20R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 16, 2022 Thursday 15:20 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 2924 words

**Byline:** Jonah E. Bromwich and John Leland

**Highlight:** As a member of Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, he helped invent hip-hop. He spent the rest of his life trying to recapture that glory. Then, in seven minutes on a Manhattan street, it all came to an end.

**Body**

The video is grainy, the sound raw, but it’s hard to look away. A small, nervous man is describing the previous night’s commute to a police detective. In his telling, he has exited Grand Central Terminal onto East 43rd Street, heading to a midnight shift at a copy shop.

“I cross the street on Lexington Avenue — I notice him standing on the side right there,” he says.

The detective interrupts. “When you say him, who are you referring to?”

“The guy that I stabbed,” the man says.

The interview continues, and the nervous man explains why he stopped to talk to the man he stabbed: He did not want to alienate a potential fan. “I have a social status,” he says. “I’m part of this rap group called [*Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fYy-4vT2z3g).”

The fatal encounter came on the first day of August 2017. The following day, Nathaniel Glover, better known as Kidd Creole, who helped create the blueprint for rap music, was under arrest for the murder of John Jolly, 55. He spent the next four and a half years in jail awaiting trial, was [*convicted of manslaughter in April*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/nyregion/kidd-creole-guilty-manslaughter.html)and, last month, at the age of 62, [*was sentenced to 16 years in prison.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/04/nyregion/kidd-creole-sentenced-homeless-man-stabbing.html)

“I didn’t mean to kill him,” he told the detective the night after the stabbing. “I wish that I would just have stayed home. I didn’t even want to hurt him. He just made me so afraid, that’s all. And I just didn’t want him to hurt me.”

South Bronx Rising

The saga of Kidd Creole, from the pinnacle of hip-hop stardom to a Bronx rooming house and a series of menial temp jobs, is a parable of rap’s first generation. It is a story of extravagant creativity, an industry that took advantage of its very young creators and a man who never stopped dreaming of a way back into stardom.

“This entire music genre was founded by us,” said [*Grandmaster Caz*](https://twitter.com/grandmastercaz?lang=en), a contemporary of Kidd Creole. “And how much is it worth? How much do we own?”

The answer, for most of the genre’s pioneers, is not much.

Nathaniel Glover Jr. was born Feb. 19, 1960, the third of five children in a ***working-class*** Bronx family. His father, Nathaniel Sr., was a handyman who would repair floors; his mother, Sarah, took care of the home.

“We basically were sheltered,” said his sister, Glander, one year older. “We weren’t allowed to hang out late at night, be outside, be late.”

Nathaniel was a shy, undersized adolescent who favored soft rock and Motown. He and his younger brother Melvin would sneak away with their sister’s poetry notebooks, enchanted by the rhymes. In the Bronx, at that time, it was a useful interest to cultivate.

By the mid-1970s, neighborhood D.J.s started holding parties in parks and community centers. In July 1977 — the month of a blackout that left New York City dark — the brothers met a D.J. named Joseph Saddler, who called himself Grandmaster Flash.

Flash worked with a bowlegged teenager named Keef Cowboy, who energized the crowds with simple rhymes and exhortations. When a friend enlisted in the military, Cowboy teased him on the microphone: “Hip, hop, hip, hop!”

The new culture would soon have a name.

Nathaniel and Melvin were the next to join. Nathaniel became Kidd Creole, from the Elvis Presley movie “King Creole”; Melvin became Melle Mel.

They were the Three M.C.s — later the Furious Four, and finally, Five — giving shape to what hip-hop would become. Their parties were epic, and they were stars — untrained, disrespected by mainstream artists and creating the music that would define much of Black culture for the next 50 years.

“We didn’t have any idea that it would be an original form of American music,” Mr. Glover said last month, speaking from the floating jail barge where he spent years waiting for his trial. “We was just trying to have fun, make a couple of dollars, meet some women. It wasn’t that we had in our head, ‘Oh, this is going to be the start of something big.’”

Creole was not as lyrically deft as the other group members, but he had a way of connecting with audiences, said [*MC Sha-Rock*](http://mcsharockonline.com/Biography/biography.html), a member of the [*Funky Four Plus 1*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_m2F1BppHc), the Furious Five’s chief rivals in the early days. “Every rhyme, every word made you feel like he was talking to you,” she said. “It was strange: being a teenager, how did you just know that this is what you had to do to engage a crowd?”

From another D.J.’s party, Creole picked up a phrase and made it a hip-hop fundamental: “Yes, yes, y’all.”

Major record companies saw the music as a fad, leaving it to independents: Enjoy, Sugar Hill, Tommy Boy, Tuff City. When [*Sugar Hill*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_BmDjOXsvQ) offered the group a contract in 1980, the rappers signed the papers on the trunk of a Lincoln Town Car at the Englewood, N.J., home of the label’s owners, Sylvia and Joe Robinson, according to Guy Todd Williams, better known as Rahiem, another member of the Furious Five. He was under 18, the others just over. Like the other performers on the label, they knew nothing about the music business.

The gloss of the studio and the authority of the engineers made Mr. Glover feel like he was a member of the Motown groups he looked up to, one of the Temptations, maybe.

“We kind of felt like we were walking in their footsteps,” he said.

What followed was music history and decades of [*litigation*](https://iapps.courts.state.ny.us/nyscef/DocumentList?docketId=1yxjcLY4qxx3AyRLySCmow==&amp;PageNum=1&amp;narrow=).

Sugar Hill became the group’s managers, publishers, producers and recording company. Tension grew when the record label selected Melle Mel as a de facto frontman, alienating the others. Mel was the only member who participated in the Furious Five’s highest charting hit, “[*The Message*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYMkEMCHtJ4)” — it is his voice reciting the song’s familiar refrain: “Don’t push me ’cause I’m close to the edge / I’m trying not to lose my head.”

The invention, the crowds, the concerts, made the six members of the group into celebrities. But it wouldn’t last. Even as the group recorded songs that defined the new genre, they never received any royalty payments, Rahiem said. (Flash, Melle Mel and Scorpio all declined to be interviewed for this article; Cowboy died in 1989.) Eventually, Grandmaster Flash had to sue just for the right to use his own stage name.

It was a familiar story, said Rocky Bucano, executive director of the [*Universal Hip Hop Museum*](https://uhhm.org/), which is scheduled to open in the Bronx in 2024.

“This goes not just for the guys in hip-hop, but the guys in R&amp;B, soul and every other music genre,” Mr. Bucano said. “The early guys who started as teenagers got taken advantage of and ended up with the short end of the stick.”

The band ultimately made some money when the label paid the performers to settle two lawsuits in 2002 and 2007; another is still ongoing.

Leland Robinson, son of the label founders, said that Sugar Hill paid the performers all royalties due them, and that any lingering litigation would soon be resolved. “We are one,” he said, claiming close relationships with Scorpio and Melle Mel. “I’m just tired of bad press.”

Styles Change

Onstage, the group was dynamic and seamless. They toured the world. But offstage there were problems: egos, drugs, friction over loyalty to the Robinsons, which helped seed a rift between the Glover brothers that persists to this day.

Styles were also changing. In 1983, the group [*Run-DMC.*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qOhRE4wDK6w) from Queens, came out with a stripped-down sound and look that made the Furious Five, with their flashy hair and designer leathers, seem dated. They still performed, but the hits stopped coming and the audiences were smaller. Mr. Glover was just 23, and his star turn was ending. The first generation of hip-hop pioneers — the oldest of the old school — were disappearing from view.

“There was never a Plan B for them,” said Sha-Rock. As her career waned, she went on to become a corrections officer in Texas. (She couldn’t do it in New York, she said, “because I would know all the people coming through.”)

Mr. Glover spoke candidly about the pain of losing his star status. “It was disappointing to stand on the sideline and watch people achieve,” he said.

After a last brief turn in New York’s spotlight in 1994, hosting a call-in radio show on Hot 97 that was canceled the next year, Mr. Glover began to take on temporary jobs — security guard, maintenance, office work — which gave him flexibility for occasional gigs or short tours. In 1997, he moved into a modest rooming house in the West Bronx, still believing the group had the talent to get back on top.

He bought himself a beat-making machine and an eight-track recorder so he could produce his own songs, but he could never get anyone to take much of an interest. In 2012, he posted [*a series of videos of himself rapping*](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL93D2405EA24A79BB), hoping to drum up a following on YouTube. Five years earlier,[*the group*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tuPWXPd4nI) had been [*inducted into the Rock &amp; Roll Hall of Fame*](https://www.rockhall.com/inductees/grandmaster-flash-and-furious-five), but now his videos rarely got more than a few hundred views.

“You went from having everything to having almost nothing,” his sister said. “That’s a deep dive.”

And in the rooming house, he was essentially anonymous.

“Hardly anybody knew I was part of the recording industry,” he said. “I kept that to myself.”

It was a life he never quite got used to.

“Ain’t like nobody was walking up to him, ‘Ain’t you so-and-so from Grandmaster Flash?’” said [*Van Silk*](https://www.facebook.com/Rapamaniavansilk), a promoter who worked with the group. “Because the time has passed.”

A Fatal Confrontation

In the summer of 2017, Mr. Glover thought he had finally caught a break. Capitalizing on growing nostalgia for old school hip-hop, the surviving Furious Five MCs were booked to perform at the 6,000-seat Dell Music Center in Philadelphia, on a bill with other veteran hip-hop acts. It would be Mr. Glover’s first time in front of an audience in more than five years, and he hoped it might lead to a full tour.

“I always enjoyed being out on the road performing,” he said in a call from jail. “It’s in my blood. I can’t get away from it.”

On Aug. 1, three weeks before the Philadelphia gig, Mr. Glover rode the subway to Grand Central Terminal for his midnight shift in Manhattan. Since being robbed after a trip to the store for milk and beer a dozen years prior, he had begun carrying a steak knife attached to his forearm with a rubber band.

“I went across Lexington Avenue, that’s when I noticed the guy,” he would tell Mark Dahl, a prosecutor from the Manhattan district attorney’s office, the next night. He said that seeing a man standing alone was “a red flag for me.”

But Cheryl Horry, John Jolly’s cousin, doubted there was anything unusual going on: “Most likely my cousin was standing there drinking a beer,” she said. “When he’s drinking his beer, he’ll lean against the wall, and he’ll speak to everybody.”

According to Ms. Horry, Mr. Jolly was born in Charleston, S.C., but moved to New York with an uncle after his parents died. As an adolescent, he left school for a series of jobs, Ms. Horry said, including a stint at White Castle. He had a habit of distancing himself from his family, and this became more pronounced as an adult, particularly after he’d been drinking heavily. Ms. Horry and others lost touch with Mr. Jolly, seeing him only occasionally, often during the holidays.

“We never knew why,” she said. “When he’d come around, we always used to tell him: ‘We’re family. Even if you don’t want to be around family, call us, let us know you’re all right.’”

According to Mr. Glover and surveillance video of the confrontation, Mr. Jolly said something to Mr. Glover as he passed by that August night. But Mr. Glover had earbuds in, listening to a song by the Eagles. Take it easy, take it easy / Don’t let the sound of your own wheels drive you crazy.

Mr. Glover said that he took out his earbuds, not wanting to be rude, in case the man was a fan — in which case, he would have apologized for initially ignoring Mr. Jolly and thanked him for the recognition. But when he realized that Mr. Jolly had only said, ‘What’s up?’ he responded in kind. “Nothing, bruh, nothing,” he said and put the buds back in.

Surveillance video from a neighboring office building shows Mr. Glover then strolling out of the frame. After several seconds, Mr. Jolly is seen gesticulating in the direction that Mr. Glover has gone. He then walks purposefully toward him, still gesturing, until he is right in the face of Mr. Glover, who has walked back into the frame. Mr. Glover makes to leave, and Mr. Jolly follows him. Both men drift out of sight. What happened next was not caught on camera.

Throughout his four and a half years in jail, Mr. Glover has never denied that he stabbed Mr. Jolly, even pantomiming for the prosecutor during the interview the following night the motion he used, two sharp jabs to Mr. Jolly’s chest. On the phone recently from the Vernon C. Bain jail barge, he was just as blunt.

“I’m backing up, and he’s moving toward me,” he said. “He was sweating and his eyes was bulging.” Mr. Glover backed off, he said, and Mr. Jolly moved forward. “And then that’s when I stabbed him.”

Rahiem, who stayed in touch with Mr. Glover as he awaited trial, said that the rapper never appeared broken. “He seemed determined, resilient, innocent, but disappointed in the way the justice system was working against him,” Rahiem said.

But while he expressed deep remorse in his initial interviews with law enforcement, Mr. Glover became increasingly fixated on the surveillance video during his years in jail, telling family members, friends and reporters that it had been manipulated to make Mr. Jolly seem less aggressive. (The New York Times asked a video expert, [*Catalin Grigoras*](https://artsandmedia.ucdenver.edu/areas-of-study/national-center-for-media-forensics/faculty-staff/faculty-details/Grigoras-Catalin-UCD69048), the director of the National Center for Media Forensics at the University of Colorado, Denver, to analyze the video in question, and he said it bore no signs of manipulation.)

Finally, this March, a trial commenced. Mr. Glover’s trademark long hair was shorn, his face creased by time. He looked small and uncomfortable in an oversize suit, and he did not testify, leaving it to Scottie Celestin, the fifth in a string of lawyers representing him over the years, to argue that Mr. Jolly died from mismanaged care at the hospital, not from his two stab wounds.

Mr. Glover’s supporters were irate when the judge, Michele S. Rodney, told the jurors not to consider whether Mr. Glover acted in self-defense. New York law says that deadly physical force is permissible only in response to an aggressor who is also using deadly physical force; Mr. Jolly was unarmed.

On April 6, the jury returned a verdict acquitting Mr. Glover of murder — which requires intent — but convicting him of manslaughter. On May 4, Mr. Glover was sentenced to 16 years. If he serves the full term, he will be 73 when he leaves prison. Asked to speak before the sentencing, he made no apology to anybody, as Cheryl Horry noted bitterly afterward.

Mr. Glover said to the judge, “I’m very disappointed in the way that the whole situation has played out,” adding that he had been portrayed as a person with no remorse or humanity. “I also feel that at a certain point the truth of all this will be revealed and I will be exonerated,” he said. Mr. Celestin said he planned to appeal.

The day of the sentencing, [*Sylvia Robinson*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1JWWzerVfqE), who had been the chief executive of Sugar Hill Records, was posthumously[*inducted into the Rock &amp; Roll Hall of Fame*](https://www.rockhall.com/sylvia-robinson). The music that she, Mr. Glover and a small handful of others brought into the world is now almost 50 years old, and it is the dominant form of popular music today. Hip-hop’s legacy includes revolutions in fashion and language, lasting fame and enormous fortunes — but it left Mr. Glover working a midnight shift over a photocopier.

The tragedy of Kidd Creole, the rapper, is that the culture he helped create had so little need for him. The tragedy of Nathaniel Glover and John Jolly was a random encounter of no more than seven minutes. Mr. Glover believed to the end that he was one break away from relaunching his music career.

Sha-Rock, now 60, sees in Mr. Glover’s fall a legacy of neglect: first by the city, and then by the industry.

“Sugar Hill Records created the space for people to hear us outside of New York City,” she said. “But we were supposed to be protected as young teenagers. He shouldn’t have had to be working at a copy shop, I shouldn’t have to be working as a corrections officer. We were supposed to have been protected. We gave you everything that was dear to our heart and dear to the culture of hip-hop. That’s real.

“We gave you our blood, sweat and tears, and transformed rap records,” she continued. “You were supposed to protect us.”

Mr. Glover agrees. “If I was doing anything that had any relation to the industry, I wouldn’t have been there,” he said. “I would have been home.”

He protests the case against him, talking to anyone who will listen about his issues with the surveillance video. Though he has never stopped admitting to the stabbing, the contrition he displayed on the night after the killing has disappeared. “My conscience is clear,” he said.

“He initiated this whole thing,” he said of Mr. Jolly. “I didn’t want anything to do with him.” He mentioned the show scheduled for later in the month. “The group was ready to get back together,” he said. “I was getting ready to go back to my life the way it was.”

The concert in Philadelphia went on without him.

PHOTOS: Nathaniel Glover, known as Kidd Creole, during his trial this year in Manhattan. He was convicted of manslaughter. (POOL PHOTO BY STEVEN HIRSCH) (MB1); Top, Kidd Creole, right, with other members of Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five in 1984. Above from left, Scorpio (Eddie Morris), Melle Mel (Melvin Glover), Kidd Creole (Nathaniel Glover) and Raheim (Guy Todd Williams) in 2007 at the group’s Rock &amp; Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTHONY BARBOZA/GETTY IMAGES; PETER KRAMER/GETTY IMAGES) (MB5)

**Load-Date:** August 1, 2022

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[***If This Country Won’t Listen to Moms, I’m Asking Men to Start Shouting; Jessica Grose***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6422-X891-DXY4-X160-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1569 words

**Byline:** Jessica Grose

**Highlight:** Moms have been telling their stories alone for too long.

**Body**

I’ve been covering work and family for more than a decade, and it seems about once a year, the fact that we have no federal system of paid parental leave is an issue that goes viral. Often the topic is in the news because of legislative tussling, as with [*the Build Back Better plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/06/opinion/biden-infrastructure-deal.html) making its way through Congress; a provision for 12 weeks of paid family leave was [*removed from the bill*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/28/us/politics/biden-framework-bill-plan.html), and as of this moment, a [*four-week provision is back in*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/us/politics/democrats-virginia-biden-congress.html).

When the paid leave topic breaks through, people tweet and retweet global maps, [*like this one from 2011*](https://www.npr.org/sections/babyproject/2011/08/09/139121410/parental-leave-the-swedes-are-the-most-generous), showing what an absurd outlier the United States is. Norway and Sweden are routinely invoked as paragons of humanity. Mothers take to social media to share their postnatal struggles.

An example of this kind of consciousness-raising tale [*is one on Instagram by Mona Amin*](https://www.instagram.com/p/CVmMgnLFel0/?utm_medium=copy_link), a physician married to another physician, who reported that she had no paid leave after a “traumatic birth.” Eight days after she delivered, she said, she was in an I.C.U. while her son was in an N.I.C.U., and she and her husband had to battle with her employer and the insurance company to manage her postpartum care and “to make sure I would still get a paycheck so we could pay off our $400,000+ hospital bill.”

Another is from the novelist Lydia Kiesling, who [*wrote*](https://thebaffler.com/latest/left-behind-kiesling) for The Baffler about how her maternity leave benefit was originally denied and she had to untangle a “bureaucratic snarl” in order to receive it while still wearing what amounted to a maternity diaper. “I am talking a lot about blood and torn vaginas and incisions here because birth is a physical trauma that affects the body in ways they don’t even tell you about beforehand,” Kiesling said. “It’s been four years since I had my second child, and my pelvic floor is still not quite right. Please Google ‘rectocele,’ and let your imagination run wild.”

After hearing hundreds, maybe thousands, of testimonies like this, I’m enraged that we are still having to tell these stories, still having to splay our vulnerability and torn-up bodies out to the universe to get some legislators to prioritize mothers as humans in need of the barest social supports. Four weeks?! If that even survives the ongoing Capitol Hill sausagemaking.

I had [*difficult pregnancies*](https://slate.com/human-interest/2012/08/pregnancy-and-prenatal-depression-why-didnt-anyone-warn-me-i-would-feel-so-bad.html) and then relatively easy births, and four weeks postpartum with my second child, I was so exhausted and out of sorts caring for a newborn and a preschooler that I bit my inner lip while eating — so hard that I needed expensive oral surgery. I also had a prolapsed uterus (don’t Google that) that ultimately resolved itself, in part because I had the opportunity to rest during my two months of paid leave. And I considered myself lucky to get that much time off in the first place. My husband had no time off at all.

Though I haven’t spoken to all of them, every member of Congress surely knows, deep down, that mothers shouldn’t be returning to work a mere two weeks after giving birth, which, In These Times reported in 2015, nearly [*an estimated quarter of employed moms do*](https://inthesetimes.com/article/the-real-war-on-families). And yet mothers such as Senator Patty Murray, Democrat of Washington, are still forced to [*explain*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/us-policy/2021/10/30/manchin-paid-leave/) to colleagues such as Joe Manchin of West Virginia how vital paid leave is. Even though — as a father of three and grandfather of 10 — he really should know.

That’s pretty clear, because he said he’s not against paid leave in theory but framed his concerns in terms of more general worries about the Build Back Better plan’s overall price tag. He said he would be more likely to support paid leave if it were considered as [*separate legislation*](https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/04/politics/joe-manchin-democrats-spending-bill-cnntv/index.html) under regular order (not the reconciliation process being used to avoid the possibility of filibuster). And while Republicans increasingly say they [*support paid leave*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/31/us/politics/paid-family-leave.html), some of their proposals for it are ungenerous, relying on funding mechanisms that involve borrowing from future Social Security benefits.

The problem, then, isn’t one of awareness. It’s one of political calculus. And for the moderate Senate Democrats Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona and most congressional Republicans, it doesn’t seem to be adding up.

Christine Matthews, a public opinion pollster who has surveyed voters on the issue of paid family leave, said that while [*most Republican voters want it enacted*](https://www.vox.com/2021/6/7/22380427/poll-paid-leave-popular-democrats-republicans-covid-19), Republican legislators know they will not be punished for voting it down. “It’s not that Republican voters don’t support it. It’s that politicians know they’re not voting on that particular issue,” she said.

Neither Democrat nor Republican voters seem to list paid leave as a top legislative priority. A 2017 Pew Research poll showed that [*only 35 percent of Americans listed paid leave*](https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2017/03/23/americans-widely-support-paid-family-and-medical-leave-but-differ-over-specific-policies/) as a top priority for President Donald Trump and Congress. A 2021 Pew [*poll of legislative priorities*](https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/01/28/economy-and-covid-19-top-the-publics-policy-agenda-for-2021/) didn’t list paid leave, with most Americans citing the economy and Covid as their biggest concerns. And according to [*an October CBS News/YouGov poll*](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/democrats-build-back-better-americans-dont-know-opinion-poll/#app), only 36 percent of Americans think the Build Back Better plan would help them and their families (with 33 percent saying it would hurt them and 31 percent saying it would have no effect at all).

The 2017 Pew poll found that paid leave [*provided by businesses*](https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2017/03/23/americans-widely-support-paid-family-and-medical-leave-but-differ-over-specific-policies/) rather than government was viewed more favorably. I worry, though, that if we leave it up to the private sector, it will never happen for the majority of parents, particularly ***working-class*** parents.

If we’re going to move large numbers of American voters toward more full-throated support of government-funded paid leave, we need more fathers — and men in general — to be vocal about it. Abby McCloskey, who has served as policy director for Republican and independent candidates, pointed out that while she’s no apologist for Trump, she thinks his public support of family leave helped senior Republicans become more “willing and open” to it. After all, around [*two million federal workers now have 12 weeks of paid family leave*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/federal-paid-parental-leave/2020/09/30/ac8e36c8-0335-11eb-b7ed-141dd88560ea_story.html) because of a Trump-era policy.

Matthews believes we can increase the salience of paid leave for men and for more conservative voters by elevating new narratives. Many people tune out these new-mom stories (which is why I’m so full of rage right now), but if we want to be savvy about getting support for this issue, we should start telling stories like the ones Matthews heard from rural men when she was conducting focus groups.

“They’re talking about having jobs that are very inflexible, where they don’t get time off to support their wife who has had a baby or a serious illness or problem,” she said. Because they live far away from medical services or extra help, they feel the lack of paid leave particularly acutely.

This doesn’t mean women should stop telling their stories. I will continue to tell mine. We should continue forever because these stories are worthy on their own terms. But as political motivation, perhaps we need a different tactic.

Would I prefer to live in a country that actually cared about women and their physical and emotional pain? I would. But if I can’t have that, I want paid leave for any people who need it to care for themselves or their loved ones. And if listening to men’s stories is what it takes, let’s hear them.

Tell us about how you bonded with a new child or helped a parent through an illness or saved somebody’s life. Drown out the [*Tucker Carlsons*](https://www.usatoday.com/story/life/health-wellness/2021/10/19/pete-buttigieg-tucker-carlson-and-debate-over-paternity-leave/8517293002/) and the [*Joe Lonsdales*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-10-28/men-who-take-six-months-of-parental-leave-are-losers-says-vc) who claim men taking parental leave are losers. Just do it now, while there’s still time for this bill, because while four weeks is not nearly enough, four weeks is better than nothing at all.

Want more on paid leave?

* Paternity leave is [*mentally and emotionally transformative for dads*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/08/opinion/paid-family-leave-fathers.html?referringSource=articleShare), according to Darby Saxbe and Sofia Cardenas, who research the way that bonding with children affects men’s brains.

1. Men who take paternity leave are [*less likely to get divorced*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/parenting/paternity-leave.html), and their partners are less likely to be on anti-anxiety medication, according to an article from Nathaniel Popper in 2019.
2. As Claire Cain Miller [*pointed out*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/25/upshot/paid-leave-democrats.html), “Globally, the average paid maternity leave is 29 weeks, and the average paid paternity leave is 16 weeks.”

Tiny Victories

Parenting can be a grind. Let’s celebrate the tiny victories.

During the pandemic, my 4-year-old was challenging. After many long days of trying to work and parent with no breaks, I would go to a drive-through and grab coffee and take the long way to an outdoor visit with my parents. Often my daughter would fall asleep in the car, and I would enjoy a moment — just myself, a podcast and a coffee. Some days this was my first moment to myself since my eyes opened. I learned that sometimes the little things can rejuvenate you.

— Diana Short, Indianapolis

If you want a chance to get your Tiny Victory published, find us on Instagram [*@NYTparenting*](https://www.instagram.com/nytparenting/) and use the hashtag #tinyvictories; [*email us*](mailto:parenting_submissions@nytimes.com?subject=Tiny%20Victories); or enter your [*Tiny Victory at the bottom of this page*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/19/reader-center/parenting-section-tiny-victories.html?module=inline). Include your full name and location. Tiny Victories may be edited for clarity and style. Your name, location and comments may be published, but your contact information will not. By submitting to us, you agree that you have read, understand and accept the [*Reader Submission Terms*](https://nyti.ms/2Q9M7i0) in relation to all of the content and other information you send to us.

Jessica Grose has written about parenting for The Times since 2019. She is the author of the novels “Soulmates” and “Sad Desk Salad” and the forthcoming “All Powerful and Totally Useless: The Creation of the Ideal American Mother.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Eleanor Davis FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***America’s Anti-Democratic Movement; The Morning Newsletter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6494-3X51-DXY4-X257-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1859 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** It’s making progress.

**Body**

It’s making progress.

American politics these days can often seem fairly normal. President Biden has had both big accomplishments and big setbacks in his first year, as is typical. In Congress, members are haggling over bills and passing some of them. At the Supreme Court, justices are hearing cases. Daily media coverage tends to reflect this apparent sense of political normalcy.

But American politics today is not really normal. It may instead be in the midst of a radical shift away from the democratic rules and traditions that have guided the country for a very long time.

An anti-democratic movement, inspired by Donald Trump but much larger than him, is making significant progress, as my colleague Charles Homans [*has reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/11/us/politics/trust-in-elections-trump-democracy.html). In the states that decide modern presidential elections, this movement has already changed some laws and ousted election officials, with the aim of overturning future results. It has justified the changes with blatantly false statements claiming that Biden did not really win the 2020 election.

The movement has encountered surprisingly little opposition. Most leading Republican politicians have either looked the other way or supported the anti-democratic movement. In the House, Republicans ousted Liz Cheney from a leadership position because she [*called out*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/us/politics/liz-cheney.html) Trump’s lies.

The pushback within the Republican Party has been so weak that about 60 percent of Republican adults now tell pollsters that they believe the 2020 election was stolen — a view that’s simply wrong.

Most Democratic officials, for their part, have been focused on issues other than election security, like Covid-19 and the economy. It’s true that congressional Democrats have tried to pass a new voting rights bill, only to be stymied by Republican opposition and the filibuster. But these Democratic efforts have been sprawling and unfocused. They have included proposals — on voter-ID rules and mail-in ballots, for example — that are almost certainly less important than a federal law to block the overturning of elections, as The Times’s Nate Cohn [*has explained*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/us/politics/voting-rights-bill.html).

All of which has created a remarkable possibility: In the 2024 presidential election, Republican officials in at least one state may overturn a legitimate election result, citing fraud that does not exist, and award the state’s electoral votes to the Republican nominee. Trump tried to use this tactic in 2020, but local officials rebuffed him.

Since then, his supporters have launched a campaign — with the Orwellian name “Stop the Steal” — to ensure success next time. Steve Bannon has played a central role, using his podcast to encourage Trump supporters to take over positions in election administration, [*ProPublica has explained*](https://www.propublica.org/article/heeding-steve-bannons-call-election-deniers-organize-to-seize-control-of-the-gop-and-reshape-americas-elections).

“This is a five-alarm fire,” Jocelyn Benson, the Democratic secretary of state in Michigan, who presided over the 2020 vote count there, told The Times. “If people in general, leaders and citizens, aren’t taking this as the most important issue of our time and acting accordingly, then we may not be able to ensure democracy prevails again in ’24.”

Barton Gellman, who wrote [*a recent Atlantic magazine article*](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2022/01/january-6-insurrection-trump-coup-2024-election/620843/) about the movement, told Terry Gross of NPR last week, “This is, I believe, a democratic emergency, and that without very strong and systematic pushback from protectors of democracy, we’re going to lose something that we can’t afford to lose about the way we run elections.”

Theda Skocpol, a Harvard political scientist, notes that the movement is bigger than Trump. “I think things have now moved to the point that many Republican Party officials and elected officeholders are self-starters,” she [*told Thomas Edsall*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/opinion/trump-democrats-republicans.html) of Times Opinion.

In plain sight

The main battlegrounds are swing states where Republicans control the state legislature, like Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Republicans control these legislatures because of both gerrymandered districts and Democratic weakness outside of major metro areas. (One way Democrats can push back against the anti-democratic movement: Make a bigger effort [*to win* ***working-class*** *votes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/briefing/democrats-election-working-class-voters.html).) The Constitution lets state legislatures set the rules for choosing presidential electors.

“None of this is happening behind closed doors,” Jamelle Bouie, a Times columnist, recently [*wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/03/opinion/trump-bannon-2024.html). “We are headed for a crisis of some sort. When it comes, we can be shocked that it is actually happening, but we shouldn’t be surprised.”

Here is an overview of recent developments:

Arizona. Republican legislators have passed a law taking away authority over election lawsuits from the secretary of state, who’s now a Democrat, and giving it to the attorney general, a Republican. Legislators are debating another bill that would allow them to revoke election certification “by majority vote at any time before the presidential inauguration.”

Georgia. Last year, Brad Raffensperger, Georgia’s Republican secretary of state, helped stop Trump’s attempts to reverse the result. State legislators in Georgia have since weakened his powers, and a Trump-backed candidate is running to replace Raffensperger next year. Republicans have also passed a law that gives a commission they control the power to remove local election officials.

Michigan. Kristina Karamo, a Trump-endorsed candidate who has repeated the lie that the 2020 elections were fraudulent, is running for secretary of state, the office that oversees elections. (Republican candidates are running on similar messages in Colorado, Florida, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas and elsewhere, according to ABC News.)

Pennsylvania. Republicans are trying to [*amend*](https://www.post-gazette.com/news/politics-state/2021/09/27/Republicans-aim-to-make-big-election-changes-in-constitution-Pennsylvania-voting/stories/202109270103) the state’s Constitution to make the secretary of state an elected position, rather than one that the governor appoints. Pennsylvania is also one of the states where Trump allies — like Stephen Lindemuth, who attended the Jan. 6 rally that turned into an attack on Congress — have won local races to oversee elections.

Wisconsin. Senator Ron Johnson is urging the Republican-controlled Legislature to [*take full control of federal elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/19/us/politics/wisconsin-republicans-decertify-election.html). Doing so could remove the governor, currently a Democrat, from the process, and weaken the bipartisan state elections commission.

What’s next?

The new anti-democratic movement may still fail. This year, for example, Republican legislators in seven states proposed bills that would have given partisan officials a direct ability to change election results. None of the bills passed.

Arguably the most important figures on this issue are Republican officials and voters who believe in democracy and are uncomfortable with using raw political power to overturn an election result.

Miles Taylor, a former Trump administration official, has helped to start the Renew America Movement, which supports candidates — of either party — running against Trump-backed Republicans. It is active in congressional races but does not have enough resources to compete in the state contests that often determine election procedures, Taylor told The Times.

Gellman, the Atlantic writer, argues that Democrats and independents — as well as journalists — can make a difference by paying more attention. “Grass-roots organizers who are in support of democratic institutions,” he [*said on NPR*](https://www.npr.org/2021/12/09/1062683521/journalist-says-republicans-now-have-more-reliable-ways-to-overturn-election-res), “could be doing what the Republicans are doing at the precinct and the county and the state level in terms of organizing to control election authorities to ensure that they remain nonpartisan or neutral.”

For more: Mark Meadows, Trump’s former chief of staff, [*was involved*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/12/us/politics/mark-meadows-capitol-attack.html) in fighting the election outcome, according to the House Committee investigating the Capitol attack.

THE LATEST NEWS

The Virus

* Covid has killed [*one in 100 Americans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/13/us/covid-deaths-elderly-americans.html) 65 or older.

1. [*Weak health care infrastructure*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/11/health/covid-vaccine-africa.html)poses challenges for many of Africa’s vaccination programs.
2. A sense of endlessness: [*Anxiety and depression*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/13/world/covid-omicron-depression-lockdowns.html) are taking hold.

Other Big Stories

* Tornadoes killed at least 90 people in the U.S. this weekend. Here’s [*where they struck*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/11/us/tornado-maps-damage.html).

1. Chris Wallace is [*leaving Fox News*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/12/business/chris-wallace-fox-news.html) after 18 years — and after raising questions about Tucker Carlson’s work — to join CNN.
2. Gov. Gavin Newsom of California [*called for legislation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/12/us/politics/newsom-texas-abortion-law-guns.html) modeled on Texas’s abortion law to go after the gun industry.
3. A litany of crises is [*confronting Los Angeles*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/12/us/los-angeles-mayor-race.html) before next year’s mayoral election.

Opinions

The climate crisis is reshaping the planet. Here’s [*what it looks like in 193 countries*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/13/opinion/climate-change-effects-countries.html).

Gail Collins and Bret Stephens discuss [*inflation and crime*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/13/opinion/charities-giving-politics.html).

MORNING READS

And just like that: It’s [*Peloton vs. “Sex and the City.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/11/arts/television/peloton-sex-and-the-city.html)

The Media Equation: A climate-change comedy [*nails the media’s failures*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/12/business/media/dont-look-up-news-media.html).

Quiz time: The average score on our latest news quiz was 8.6. [*See how well you do*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/10/briefing/news-quiz-bob-dole-biden-putin-call.html).

Advice from Wirecutter: Beware [*overpriced, mediocre wines*](https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/blog/wine-club-white-label-overpriced-wines/).

Lives Lived: Anne Rice wrote more than 30 novels, including the best seller “Interview With the Vampire.” She [*died at 80*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/12/books/anne-rice-dead.html).

Vicente Fernández was a powerful tenor whose songs of love, loss and patriotism inspired by life in rural Mexico endeared him to fans as “El Rey.” He [*died at 81*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/12/arts/music/vicente-fernandez-dead.html).

ARTS AND IDEAS

Yoko and the band

If you’ve watched “The Beatles: Get Back,” Peter Jackson’s documentary about the album “Let It Be,” [*you’ll have noticed Yoko Ono*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/arts/music/yoko-ono-beatles-get-back.html), sitting by John Lennon’s side and performing mundane tasks like opening mail.

“At first I found Ono’s omnipresence in the documentary bizarre” The Times’s Amanda Hess writes. But as more of the footage played, “I found myself impressed by her stamina, then entranced by the provocation of her existence and ultimately dazzled by her.”

Some people are seeing the documentary [*as proof*](https://decider.com/2021/12/06/the-beatles-get-back-yoko-ono-john-lennon/) that Ono wasn’t responsible for the band’s 1970 breakup, a rumor that is tinged with misogyny and racism.

Ono was vigilant about not being a typical artist’s wife, Amanda writes. Or, as Ono herself said about women in rock in a 1997 interview: “My first impression was that they were all wives, kind of sitting in the next room while the guys were talking. I was afraid of being something like that.” — Claire Moses, a Morning writer

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

This [*shrimp stew*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1020828-lemony-shrimp-and-bean-stew) requires minimal prep and cooks quickly.

What to Watch

“Sesame Street” was always political: [*A documentary on HBO explains*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/12/arts/television/sesame-street.html).

What to Read

[*The best poetry of the year,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/10/books/review/best-poetry-books-2021.html) according to our columnist.

Late Night

Kate McKinnon returned to “Saturday Night Live” [*as Dr. Anthony Fauci*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/12/arts/television/saturday-night-live-billie-eilish.html).

Now Time to Play

The pangram from Friday’s Spelling Bee was longboat. Here is today’s puzzle — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

More on the Bee: [*How the hivemind conquers it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/09/crosswords/spellingbee-tips.html).

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Dance at a Jewish wedding (four letters).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. — David

P.S. A [*hidden haiku*](https://twitter.com/nythaikus/status/1469427021415686151) from a story about a Ukrainian soldier who worries for his children: “They give him strength, but / he fears what would happen if / he didn’t come back.”

Here’s [*today’s print front page*](https://static01.nyt.com/images/2021/12/13/nytfrontpage/scan.pdf).

“[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about the Steele Dossier. On [*the Book Review podcast*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/10/books/review/a-new-oral-history-of-hbo.html), James Andrew Miller and Mayukh Sen discuss their new books.

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Ashley Wu and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](mailto:themorning@nytimes.com).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Stefani Reynolds for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***A Repudiation That Never Came***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:617C-T571-JBG3-63KJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 6, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 18

**Length:** 931 words

**Byline:** By Jamelle Bouie

**Body**

Trump may well end up losing to Biden, but Trumpism remains a viable political strategy.

The liberal hope for the 2020 presidential election was a decisive repudiation of Donald Trump and the Republican Party. This is no longer on the table. A Joe Biden win, if it happens, will be as narrow an Electoral College win as Trump's was in 2016. Biden has won the national popular vote -- which matters for popular legitimacy, even if it doesn't weigh on the outcome -- but Trump outperformed his job approval, winning more total votes than any Republican presidential nominee in history.

In spite of everything, the president expanded his support, most likely saving the Republican Senate majority in the process. A Trump loss is still possible -- perhaps even probable, since Biden holds a lead in states totaling 270 electoral votes -- but there's every reason to think Trumpism will survive as a viable strategy for winning national elections.

And what is Trumpism? It is a performance, or rather, a series of performances.

It is a performance of nationalism, one that triangulates between open chauvinism in favor of the dominant ethnic group and narrow appeals to inclusion, with the promise of material gain for anyone who joins his coalition. It is a performance, on the same score, of success, projecting an image of wealth and power and urging the public to embrace it as its own -- a version of ''The Apprentice'' in which the contestants are the American people. It is also the performance of an aggressive and aggrieved masculinity centered on the bullying and domination of others.

Even without policy to match the populist persona -- the Trump administration has been as generous to the wealthy and connected as it has been stingy with the poor and the ***working class*** -- Trumpism appeals to tens of millions of voters, from the large majority of white Americans to many people in traditionally Democratic constituencies.

That, if anything, is the surprise of this election. Although it is still too early to make any definitive statement about the shape of the electorate (broad white support for Trump notwithstanding), it is clear that the president made modest inroads with Black and Hispanic voters, especially men. This is most apparent in the states of Florida, Georgia and Texas, where Trump outperformed his 2016 totals in several areas where Hispanic voters make up a majority.

We don't yet know why Trump made those gains -- although the aforementioned performances, which figured prominently in his outreach to those groups, may have something to do with it -- but this shift is a useful reminder that politics does not move along a linear path. For all of our data, the political world is still a fundamentally unpredictable place.

A decade ago, for example, Democrats believed that demographic change -- the shift from a ''majority white'' country to a ''majority minority'' one -- would give the party an almost unbreakable lock on national politics; that a growing population of Asian and Hispanic Americans would inevitably redound to liberal benefit. At the time, I wrote that this was unlikely, that while it was a seductive theory, there was not much evidence to support the vision of an enduring Democratic majority. Racial and ethnic identity, I argued, were too fluid, and there was no guarantee that future members of those groups would think of themselves as ''minorities'' in the way that has been historically true of Black Americans. Changing conditions -- greater assimilation and upward mobility -- could make them as volatile in partisan politics as European ethnic groups were in the 20th century.

If the Hispanic shift is as large as it appears to be, then we are living in that reality. What I didn't expect is that it would come heralded by a Republican like Trump. But this only speaks to the diversity, ideological and otherwise, of the Hispanic electorate, which is as varied in racial background and national origin as most other groups of Americans. To extend an earlier analogy, it is probably as useful to speak of ''Hispanics'' in 2020 as it was to speak of ''Europeans'' in 1950. The category is just too broad, obscuring (in electoral politics, at least) far more than it illuminates.

Again, it is too early to say that there's been a permanent realignment, although some trends -- like the rising partisan significance of gender and education -- are clear. It's true, though, that the possibilities for change and transformation are wide open. Perhaps a future Republican, one with the same or similar fame and charisma, will build a real majority from the foundation laid over the last four years. Perhaps a future Democrat will turn the party's consistent voting majority into a greater share of electoral votes and congressional seats. Perhaps we see neither and are in for another decade of fierce partisan competition between two equal and evenly-matched sides.

The 2020 election, in other words, will have an outcome. But it won't be conclusive. It will be an uncertain result for an uncertain time in American life. Political trench warfare will continue. Total victory, whether in politics or anywhere else, is not on the immediate horizon. The future remains unwritten and is perhaps even more unknowable than before.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/05/opinion/trump-election-trumpism.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/05/opinion/trump-election-trumpism.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

EVE EDELHEIT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Recalling the Strands of a Life Amid Locks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61YN-5BS1-DXY4-X159-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 9, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 6; EXIT INTERVIEW

**Length:** 937 words

**Byline:** By Robin Pogrebin

**Body**

Time was when just about every bouffant on Broadway could be traced back to Paul Huntley.

From ''The Elephant Man'' to ''Chicago,'' ''Cats'' to ''Thoroughly Modern Millie,'' Huntley was the designer behind the wigs and often-elaborate locks that helped define the lasting visual impression of some 300 projects, earning him a special Tony Award in 2003.

He also designed hair for about 60 films, styling the likes of Bette Davis, Jessica Lange and Vivien Leigh. He turned Glenn Close into Cruella de Vil for the 1996 live-action ''101 Dalmatians'' and Al Pacino into Phil Spector for the 2013 HBO biopic. He fashioned ''Tootsie'' twice, transforming Dustin Hoffman for the 1982 film and Santino Fontana for the 2019 Broadway musical adaptation.

The costume designer William Ivey Long has pronounced him ''by far the premier hair designer on the planet hands down.''

Born in London to a ***working class*** family, Huntley grew up paging through his mother's movie magazines. He attended acting school but ended up helping with the wigs instead.

Following two years of military service, he worked as an apprentice at Wig Creations, a large London theatrical company, where he helped construct Elizabeth Taylor's bedazzling braids for ''Cleopatra.''

The actress introduced him to the director Mike Nichols, who asked Huntley to do hair for his 1973 Broadway production of ''Uncle Vanya.'' He has been at it ever since.

Much changed in the theater over the years. Rock musicals. Synthetic hair. Mic packs, which went inside wigs, forced them to be made more commodious.

Sporting a pinkie ring, wire-rimmed glasses and elegant black turtlenecks, Huntley remained a constant -- known for his patience in dealing with divas and his ability to channel characters through his curls, waves and tresses.

He repeatedly rose to the challenge, creating 48 wigs for ''Bullets Over Broadway'' in 2014 and more than 60 human hair wigs and facial pieces the same year for the Shakespeare Theater Company's two-part ''Henry IV'' in Washington.

But just as young Broadway ensemble players have been benched by Covid-19, so too has Huntley been out of work, which he said forced him to sell his Upper West Side home-studio townhouse.

Now, at 87, Huntley has decided to take a final bow. The Broadway musical ''Diana,'' which had begun previews before it was delayed by the pandemic, will be his last show. (It has been filmed for Netflix.)

He is ready to return to his flat in London. And, particularly after a bad fall that left his hip fractured, he is ready to rest.

In a telephone interview from his bed in New York -- a condition in which he declined to be photographed -- just before he was to board a flight to England, Huntley reflected on this bittersweet fork in the road.

You have threatened retirement before. After all these years, why leave Broadway now?

There is no work to be had, so it was a wise thing to do. And I'm in my late 80s, so I think it was time.

Looking back on your career, do you have favorites?

I preferred straight plays, like ''Amadeus'' -- the white powdered wigs, which I always loved. I think you could be more subtle, which is what I tried to do in my career -- make things as real as possible -- whereas musicals, of course, it's chorus girls and lots and lots of wigs.

Which of your musicals did you particularly enjoy?

One of my most favorite, of course, is ''Cats,'' which I adored because it was so very different from what I was used to doing. And I also loved ''Evita'' -- I love that show very much. I just loved the look. And I love the music. It was Patti LuPone, who I work with a lot, who always requested me.

Actors repeatedly asked to work with you, yes? Betty Buckley, Carol Channing ...

A lot of people requested me, you see, in their contracts. So that's what happened.

''Diana'' chronicles Lady Diana Spencer's royal romance and marriage. How did you like working on a musical about a recent real-life figure?

It actually went very well. We had to make sure that we captured her in as short a time as possible, because it is, after all, a show. So she in fact has four wigs -- when she started out, as a pudding face, she had a mousy look at the beginning and then gradually it got more flamboyant and windswept and windblown. And the color changed, of course, all the time. I was very fond of her and this was a tribute. I quite like the musical.

Why are you bedridden -- what happened?

I was holding a ''Diana'' wig in my hand at home and slipped. I went backward, took a nasty fall down the stairs and fractured my pelvis, which meant I couldn't walk. Now it's just physiotherapy and exercise and wishing I was better.

Have you received your Covid-19 vaccinations yet?

I finished my shots yesterday. If you don't guard against these things, as we can hear and see, the most terrible things have happened. There is no work for people and a lot of shows are not going to return.

When Broadway does resume, will you come back from London for the opening of ''Diana''?

I will. The show had two preview performances. Then it all stopped.

Why did you have to sell your house?

I am struggling financially. It's been very difficult. And the fact that I'm not well doesn't please me.

You shared that house with your partner, Paul Plassan, who died in 1991?

Yes, we were together for 21 years. They called us the Two Pauls.

What is it like looking back on your long career?

I was always interested in new things, so one was very happy to do it. There were certain projects that, aesthetically. I may not have thought much of. But generally speaking, I enjoyed the rush.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/07/theater/paul-huntley-wig-designer.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/07/theater/paul-huntley-wig-designer.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from left: Wigs designed by Paul Huntley for the musical ''Thoroughly Modern Millie''

Patti LuPone was one of many stars for whom Huntley made hairpieces

and his last project will be the musical ''Diana,'' starring Jeanna de Waal. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES

PAUL HUNTLEY)

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[***Jack Welch and the Rise of C.E.O.s Behaving Badly***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65H7-NXS1-DXY4-X0W2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By David Gelles

**Body**

When Jack Welch died on March 1, 2020, tributes poured in for the longtime chief executive of General Electric, whom many revered as the greatest chief executive of all time.

David Zaslav, the C.E.O. of Warner Bros. Discovery and a Welch disciple, remembered him as an almost godlike figure. ''Jack set the path. He saw the whole world. He was above the whole world,'' Mr. Zaslav said. ''What he created at G.E. became the way companies now operate.''

Mr. Zaslav's words were meant as unequivocal praise. During Mr. Welch's two decades in power -- from 1981 to 2001 -- he turned G.E. into the most valuable company in the world, groomed a flock of protégés who went on to run major companies of their own, and set the standard by which other C.E.O.s were measured.

Yet a closer examination of the Welch legacy reveals that he was not simply the ''Manager of the Century,'' as Fortune magazine crowned him upon his retirement.

Rather, he exerted a powerful and lasting influence on American business, informing how workers are treated, how shareholders are rewarded and how C.E.O.s comport themselves in an increasingly divisive age. When Donald J. Trump is elected president, when Jeff Bezos argues about inflation with the White House, when Elon Musk negotiates his $44 billion deal to buy Twitter by using the poop emoji -- this is the world that Jack Welch helped create.

For the past several years, I have written the Corner Office column for The Times, speaking with hundreds of executives about their careers and approaches to leadership. And time after time, Mr. Welch's name kept coming up. Some wanted to model themselves after him, while others sought to define themselves in opposition to all he stood for. Either way, it was clear that Mr. Welch still looms over the corporate world, living rent-free in the minds of C.E.O.s around the globe.

And in more than 100 conversations for ''The Man Who Broke Capitalism,'' my new book, from which this article is adapted, a broad range of people said some version of the same thing: While it has been more than two decades since Mr. Welch was C.E.O. of G.E., his legacy still affects millions of American households.

Almost immediately after Mr. Welch retired in September 2001 with a $417 million severance package, G.E. went into a tailspin from which it would never recover.

His pupils, though, went on to run dozens of other major companies, including Home Depot, Albertson's, Chrysler and Boeing. Most of them failed.

And in the decades since Mr. Welch assumed power, the economy at large has come to resemble his skewed priorities. Wages stagnated and jobs moved overseas. C.E.O. pay went stratospheric and buybacks and dividends boomed. Factories closed and companies found ways to pay fewer taxes.

Beyond his enduring influence on the economy, Mr. Welch also redefined what it meant to be a boss, personifying an aggressive, materialistic style of management that endures to this day.

''Jack was the rock star C.E.O. of my era,'' said Lynn Forester de Rothschild, one of the rare female media moguls of the 1980s. ''We all thought Jack was doing everything right and that success was defined by meeting quarterly earnings to the penny.''

In retirement, Mr. Welch continued to hold sway over the business world as an elder statesman, penning books and columns, and appearing on cable news to praise the executives he had groomed and continue his assault on taxation and regulation.

Mr. Welch also pursued an unexpected retirement pastime: He became an internet troll. His old friend Donald J. Trump seemed to lead the way on many conspiracy theories that Mr. Welch embraced. But by 2012, Mr. Welch was picking fights of his own with his online adversaries, trying to own the libs on Twitter and promulgating conspiracy theories about the Obama administration.

It was a career defined by a ruthless devotion to maximizing short-term profits at any cost, and punctuated by a foray into misinformation. And it opened the door to an era where billionaire C.E.O.s are endowed with vast power and near total impunity.

G.E., too, is still reckoning with Mr. Welch's legacy. For two decades after he retired, a succession of C.E.O.s tried and failed to return the company to its former glory. Then last year, G.E. management admitted defeat and made an announcement -- the company would be broken up for good.

'Neutron Jack'

G.E. was worth $14 billion when Mr. Welch became C.E.O., just months after Ronald Reagan took office. Not long before Mr. Welch retired, just days before Sept. 11, 2001, the company was worth $600 billion, the most valuable company on Earth.

But the ways in which Mr. Welch created so much shareholder value often did more harm than good.

He was a compulsive dealmaker, fueling G.E.'s growth with a relentless series of mergers and acquisitions that took G.E. far from its industrial roots and set in motion a wave of corporate consolidation that would reduce competition in industries as diverse as airlines and media.

He closed factories and fired employees by the tens of thousands, unleashing a series of mass layoffs that destabilized the American ***working class***. He devised systems like ''stack ranking,'' which mandated that the bottom 10 percent of workers be fired each year, and took root at other companies. And he embraced offshoring and outsourcing, sending labor overseas and turning to other companies to provide back-office functions like accounting and printing.

It was enough to earn him the nickname he hated but could never shake: ''Neutron Jack,'' a reference to the neutron bomb, which purportedly kills people while leaving buildings intact.

But more than the downsizing or the dealmaking, it was Mr. Welch's obsession with finance that allowed him to steadily inflate G.E.'s valuation in the public markets.

G.E. was an industrial company when he took over -- making most of its money selling appliances, light bulbs, power turbines and jet engines. By the time he retired, the company derived much of its profit from GE Capital, which was essentially a giant unregulated bank. Mr. Welch called it ''the blob'' -- it was an amorphous, ever-changing collection of financial assets, capable of delivering whatever adjustments were most advantageous to the parent company in a moment's notice.

The finance division became G.E.'s center of gravity, ultimately accounting for 40 percent of its revenue and 60 percent of its profit. With so much money coursing through the finance division, Mr. Welch used it to his advantage, shifting zeros throughout a sprawling international web of subsidiaries, and extracting whatever he needed to meet or beat analysts' estimates for nearly 80 quarters in a row, an unprecedented run. It was what one influential analyst called ''earnings on demand.''

Mr. Welch denied that GE Capital was employed as a tool to keep the company's stock price rising. ''We managed businesses -- not earnings,'' he once said. But his own deputies told a different story, acknowledging that the finance division was used to keep the stock price ticking up.

''There was very little transparency,'' said Beth Comstock, a longtime G.E. marketing executive. ''G.E. had a financial army that was able to close the quarter the way we'd said we would.''

Mr. Welch was never called to account for this questionable financial engineering while he was C.E.O. But in 2009, G.E. announced that it had settled sweeping accounting fraud charges with the Securities and Exchange Commission that pointed to decades of impropriety.

G.E. had been overstating profits in a bid to jack up its share price in the years after Mr. Welch retired, using myriad well-honed tactics to fudge the numbers, the S.E.C. said.

''G.E. bent the accounting rules beyond the breaking point,'' remarked Robert Khuzami, director of the S.E.C.'s enforcement division at the time.

This wasn't a one-off anomaly, as the S.E.C. made clear. Distorting earnings was a well established practice inside the company. In its complaint, the S.E.C. took pains to note that G.E. met or beat analyst expectations every quarter from 1995 through 2004.

The implication was unmistakable: When Mr. Welch was at the height of his powers, the same sort of deceptive tactics were being employed.

'They had the G.E. tool kit'

The roaring success Mr. Welch found at G.E. inspired countless imitators, as an entire generation of managers sought to emulate his techniques, his growth strategies and his values. And in G.E., Mr. Welch had the perfect apparatus to disseminate his ideology.

For the better part of a century, G.E. was the most influential company in the country when it came to organizational design and executive development.

Charles Coffin, who took over G.E. in 1892, was known as the ''father of professional management.'' An influential Harvard Business School case study chronicled how G.E. became ''a bellwether'' for American business operations. In refining its own internal processes and training methods over the decades, the study argued, ''G.E. found itself at the leading edge of management practice.''

G.E. was the corporation other C.E.O.s looked to for guidance on how they ought to run their own companies, and the place where headhunters went to find talent. ''When a company needs a loan, it goes to a bank,'' Fortune magazine once wrote. ''When a company needs a C.E.O., it goes to General Electric, which mints business leaders the way West Point mints generals.''

G.E. even had its own elite training ground for up-and-coming stars, a retreat where white collar gladiators could hone their skills. Known as Crotonville, the campus was spread across 52 acres in the bucolic village of Croton-on-Hudson, just north of New York City and not far from West Point.

The center was the first of its kind, and it would inspire other corporations, including IBM, Hitachi, and Boeing, to create similar centers. It served as an in-house business school for the dozens of G.E. executives who studied Mr. Welch's playbook and went on to manage other companies, including 3M, Equifax, Medtronic, Nielsen, Rubbermaid and more.

For a time in the early 2000s, five of the top 30 companies in the Dow Jones industrial average were run by men who had worked for Mr. Welch. ''That's why they got hired,'' said William Conaty, G.E.'s longtime chief of human resources. ''Because they had the playbook. They had the G.E. tool kit. And boards back then thought that was the answer.''

'A maniacal attachment to results'

The Welch protégés who struck out on their own rarely fared well. At Home Depot, Albertson's, Conseco, Stanley Works and many other companies, the same story seemed to repeat itself ad infinitum.

A G.E. executive was named C.E.O. of another company. News of the appointment sent the stock of that company soaring. The incoming leaders were lavished with riches when they took their new jobs, signing multimillion-dollar contracts that ensured them a gilded retirement, no matter how well they performed. A period of job cuts usually ensued, and profits sometimes rose for a few quarters, or even a few years. But inevitably, morale cratered, the business wobbled, the stock price sank and the Welch disciple was sent packing.

''A lot of G.E. leaders were thought to be business geniuses,'' said Bill George, the former C.E.O. of Medtronic. ''But they were just cost cutters. And you can't cost cut your way to prosperity.''

More than any company besides G.E., it was Boeing that was most directly shaped by Mr. Welch.

Over the past 25 years, a succession of men who worked for Mr. Welch refashioned the airplane maker's culture to resemble G.E.'s, transforming a company that once made a priority of aeronautical engineering into one that thrived on financial engineering.

The first was Harry Stonecipher, who joined Boeing in a 1997 merger. He moved the company headquarters to Chicago from Seattle to chase tax breaks, took a tough line with the labor unions and pushed the company to cut costs.

''When people say I changed the culture of Boeing, that was the intent, so it's run like a business rather than a great engineering firm,'' Mr. Stonecipher said in 2004. ''It is a great engineering firm, but people invest in a company because they want to make money.''

Next came Jim McNerney, a Welch lieutenant who was named C.E.O. of Boeing after Mr. Stonecipher was fired for having an affair with a subordinate.

Mr. McNerney moved operations to states with weak labor laws, embraced outsourcing, and in 2011 made the fateful decision to redesign the 737 -- a plane introduced in the 1960s -- once more, rather than lose out on a crucial order with American Airlines. That decision set in motion the flawed development of the 737 Max, which crashed twice in five months, killing 346 people. And while a number of factors contributed to those tragedies, they were ultimately the product of a corporate culture that cut corners in pursuit of short-term financial gains.

Even today Boeing is run by a Welch disciple. Dave Calhoun, the current C.E.O., was a dark horse candidate to succeed Mr. Welch in 2001, and he was on the Boeing board during the rollout of the Max and the botched response to the crashes.

When Mr. Calhoun took over the company in 2020, he set up his office not in Seattle (Boeing's spiritual home) or Chicago (its official headquarters), but outside St. Louis at the Boeing Leadership Center, an internal training center explicitly built in the image of Crotonville. He said he hoped to channel Mr. Welch, whom he called his ''forever mentor.''

'Mass neurosis'

The ''Manager of the Century'' was unbowed in retirement, barreling through the twilight of his life with the same bombast that defined his tenure as C.E.O.

He refashioned himself as a management guru and created a $50,000 online M.B.A. in an effort to instill his tough-nosed tactics in a new generation of business leaders. (The school boasts that ''more than two out of three students receive a raise or promotion while enrolled.'') He cheered on the political rise of Mr. Trump, then advised him when he won the White House.

In his waning days, Mr. Welch emerged as a trafficker of conspiracy theories. He called climate change ''mass neurosis'' and ''the attack on capitalism that socialism couldn't bring.'' He called for President Trump to appoint Rudy Giuliani attorney general and investigate his political enemies.

The most telling example of Mr. Welch's foray into political commentary, and the beliefs it revealed, came in 2012. That's when he took to Twitter and accused the Obama administration of fabricating the monthly jobs report numbers for political gain. The accusation was rich with irony. After decades during which G.E. massaged its own earnings reports, Mr. Welch was effectively accusing the White House of doing the same thing.

While Mr. Welch's claim was baseless, conservative pundits picked up on the conspiracy theory and amplified it on cable news and Twitter. Even Mr. Trump, then merely a reality television star, joined the chorus, calling Mr. Welch's bogus accusation ''100 percent correct'' and accusing the Obama administration of ''monkeying around'' with the numbers. It was one of the first lies to go viral on social media, and it had come from one of the most revered figures in the history of business.

When Mr. Welch died, few of his eulogists paused to consider the entirety of his legacy. They didn't dwell on the downsizing, the manipulated earnings, the Twitter antics.

And there was no consideration of the ways in which the economy had been shaped by Mr. Welch over the previous 40 years, creating a world where manufacturing jobs have evaporated as C.E.O. pay soars, where buybacks and dividends are plentiful as corporate tax rates plunge.

By glossing over this reality, his allies helped perpetuate the myth of his sainthood, adding their own spin on one of the most enduring bits of disinformation of all: the notion that Jack Welch was the greatest C.E.O. of all time.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/21/business/jack-welch-ge-ceo-behavior.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/21/business/jack-welch-ge-ceo-behavior.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, Jack Welch at the G.E. offices in New York before his retirement in 2001, and, near right, with Reginald Jones, the chairman and chief executive of G.E. in 1981, when Mr. Welch succeeded him. During his tenure at the company, Mr. Welch set the standard by which other chief executives were measured. Below, Mr. Welch with President Donald J. Trump in 2017. Mr. Trump seemed to lead the way on many conspiracy theories that Mr. Welch embraced in his retirement. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHESTER HIGGINS JR./THE NEW YORK TIMES

GENERAL ELECTRIC

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**Load-Date:** May 22, 2022

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[***We Waited in Vain for a Repudiation That Never Came***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6175-P881-DXY4-X0XB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 5, 2020 Thursday 13:16 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 938 words

**Byline:** Jamelle Bouie

**Highlight:** Trump may well end up losing to Biden, but Trumpism remains a viable political strategy.

**Body**

Trump may well end up losing to Biden, but Trumpism remains a viable political strategy.

The liberal hope for the 2020 presidential election was a decisive repudiation of Donald Trump and the Republican Party. This is no longer on the table. A Joe Biden win, if it happens, will be as narrow an Electoral College win as Trump’s was in 2016. Biden has won the national popular vote — which matters for popular legitimacy, even if it doesn’t weigh on the outcome — but Trump outperformed his job approval, winning more total votes than any Republican presidential nominee in history.

In spite of everything, the president expanded his support, most likely saving the Republican Senate majority in the process. A Trump loss is still possible — perhaps even probable, since Biden holds a lead in states totaling 270 electoral votes — but there’s every reason to think Trumpism will survive as a viable strategy for winning national elections.

And what is Trumpism? It is a performance, or rather, a series of performances.

It is a performance of nationalism, one that triangulates between open chauvinism in favor of the dominant ethnic group and narrow appeals to inclusion, with the promise of material gain for anyone who joins his coalition. It is a performance, on the same score, of success, projecting an image of wealth and power and urging the public to embrace it as its own — a version of “The Apprentice” in which the contestants are the American people. It is also the performance of an aggressive and aggrieved masculinity centered on the bullying and domination of others.

Even without policy to match the populist persona — the Trump administration has been as generous to the wealthy and connected as it has been stingy with the poor and the ***working class*** — Trumpism appeals to tens of millions of voters, from the large majority of white Americans to many people in traditionally Democratic constituencies.

That, if anything, is the surprise of this election. Although it is still too early to make any definitive statement about the shape of the electorate (broad white support for Trump notwithstanding), it is clear that the president made modest inroads with Black and Hispanic voters, especially men. This is most apparent in the states of Florida, Georgia and Texas, where Trump outperformed his 2016 totals in several areas where Hispanic voters make up a majority.

We don’t yet know why Trump made those gains — although the aforementioned performances, which figured prominently in his outreach to those groups, may have something to do with it — but this shift is a useful reminder that politics does not move along a linear path. For all of our data, the political world is still a fundamentally unpredictable place.

A decade ago, for example, Democrats believed that demographic change — the shift from a “majority white” country to a “majority minority” one — would give the party an almost unbreakable lock on national politics; that a growing population of Asian and Hispanic Americans would inevitably redound to liberal benefit. At the time, I [*wrote*](https://prospect.org/power/democrats-demographic-dreams/) that this was unlikely, that while it was a seductive theory, there was not much evidence to support the vision of an enduring Democratic majority. Racial and ethnic identity, I argued, were too fluid, and there was no guarantee that future members of those groups would think of themselves as “minorities” in the way that has been historically true of Black Americans. Changing conditions — greater assimilation and upward mobility — could make them as volatile in partisan politics as European ethnic groups were in the 20th century.

If the Hispanic shift is as large as it appears to be, then we are living in that reality. What I didn’t expect is that it would come heralded by a Republican like Trump. But this only speaks to the diversity, ideological and otherwise, of the Hispanic electorate, which is as varied in racial background and national origin as most other groups of Americans. To extend an earlier analogy, it is probably as useful to speak of “Hispanics” in 2020 as it was to speak of “Europeans” in 1950. The category is just too broad, obscuring (in electoral politics, at least) far more than it illuminates.

Again, it is too early to say that there’s been a permanent realignment, although some trends — like the rising partisan significance of gender and education — are clear. It’s true, though, that the possibilities for change and transformation are wide open. Perhaps a future Republican, one with the same or similar fame and charisma, will build a real majority from the foundation laid over the last four years. Perhaps a future Democrat will turn the party’s consistent voting majority into a greater share of electoral votes and congressional seats. Perhaps we see neither and are in for another decade of fierce partisan competition between two equal and evenly-matched sides.

The 2020 election, in other words, will have an outcome. But it won’t be conclusive. It will be an uncertain result for an uncertain time in American life. Political trench warfare will continue. Total victory, whether in politics or anywhere else, is not on the immediate horizon. The future remains unwritten and is perhaps even more unknowable than before.

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PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES; EVE EDELHEIT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2020

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[***Broadway’s Hair Master Puts Away the Wigs; Exit Interview***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61Y9-4CW1-JBG3-642G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 7, 2021 Sunday 23:36 EST

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 970 words

**Byline:** Robin Pogrebin

**Highlight:** Challenged physically and financially, Paul Huntley, a backstage legend whose artistry is demanded in many a star’s contract, says this show will be his last.

**Body**

Time was when just about every bouffant on Broadway could be traced back to Paul Huntley.

From “The Elephant Man” to “Chicago,” “Cats” to “Thoroughly Modern Millie,” Huntley was the designer behind the wigs and often-elaborate locks that helped define the lasting visual impression of some 300 projects, earning him a special Tony Award in 2003.

He also designed hair for about 60 films, styling the likes of Bette Davis, Jessica Lange and Vivien Leigh. He turned Glenn Close into Cruella de Vil for the 1996 live-action “101 Dalmatians” and Al Pacino into Phil Spector for the 2013 HBO biopic. He fashioned “Tootsie” twice, transforming Dustin Hoffman for the 1982 film and [*Santino Fontana for the 2019 Broadway musical adaptation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/23/theater/review-tootsie.html?searchResultPosition=4).

The costume designer William Ivey Long has [*pronounced him*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/23/theater/review-tootsie.html?searchResultPosition=4) “by far the premier hair designer on the planet hands down.”

Born in London to a ***working class*** family, Huntley grew up paging through his mother’s movie magazines. He attended acting school but ended up helping with the wigs instead.

Following two years of military service, he worked as an apprentice at Wig Creations, a large London theatrical company, where he helped construct [*Elizabeth Taylor’s bedazzling braids*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/23/theater/review-tootsie.html?searchResultPosition=4) for “Cleopatra.”

The actress introduced him to the director Mike Nichols, who asked Huntley to do hair for his 1973 [*Broadway production of “Uncle Vanya.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/23/theater/review-tootsie.html?searchResultPosition=4) He has been at it ever since.

Much changed in the theater over the years. Rock musicals. Synthetic hair. Mic packs, which went inside wigs, forced them to be made more commodious.

Sporting a pinkie ring, wire-rimmed glasses and elegant black turtlenecks, Huntley remained a constant — known for his patience in dealing with divas and his ability to channel characters through his curls, waves and tresses.

He repeatedly rose to the challenge, creating 48 wigs for “Bullets Over Broadway” in 2014 and more than 60 human hair wigs and facial pieces the same year for the Shakespeare Theater Company’s two-part “Henry IV” in Washington.

But just as young Broadway ensemble players have been benched by Covid-19, so too has Huntley been out of work, which he said forced him to sell his Upper West Side home-studio townhouse.

Now, at 87, Huntley has decided to take a final bow. The Broadway musical “Diana,” which had begun previews before it was delayed by the pandemic, will be his last show. (It has been [*filmed for Netflix*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/23/theater/review-tootsie.html?searchResultPosition=4).)

He is ready to return to his flat in London. And, particularly after a bad fall that left his hip fractured, he is ready to rest.

In a telephone interview from his bed in New York — a condition in which he declined to be photographed — just before he was to board a flight to England, Huntley reflected on this bittersweet fork in the road.

You have threatened retirement before. After all these years, why leave Broadway now?

There is no work to be had, so it was a wise thing to do. And I’m in my late 80s, so I think it was time.

Looking back on your career, do you have favorites?

I preferred straight plays, like “Amadeus” — the white powdered wigs, which I always loved. I think you could be more subtle, which is what I tried to do in my career — make things as real as possible — whereas musicals, of course, it’s chorus girls and lots and lots of wigs.

Which of your musicals did you particularly enjoy?

One of my most favorite, of course, is “Cats,” which I adored because it was so very different from what I was used to doing. And I also loved “Evita” — I love that show very much. I just loved the look. And I love the music. It was Patti LuPone, who I work with a lot, who always requested me.

Actors repeatedly asked to work with you, yes? Betty Buckley, Carol Channing …

A lot of people requested me, you see, in their contracts. So that’s what happened.

“Diana” chronicles Lady Diana Spencer’s royal romance and marriage. How did you like working on a musical about a recent real-life figure?

It actually went very well. We had to make sure that we captured her in as short a time as possible, because it is, after all, a show. So she in fact has four wigs — when she started out, as a pudding face, she had a mousy look at the beginning and then gradually it got more flamboyant and windswept and windblown. And the color changed, of course, all the time. I was very fond of her and this was a tribute. I quite like the musical.

Why are you bedridden — what happened?

I was holding a “Diana” wig in my hand at home and slipped. I went backward, took a nasty fall down the stairs and fractured my pelvis, which meant I couldn’t walk. Now it’s just physiotherapy and exercise and wishing I was better.

Have you received your Covid-19 vaccinations yet?

I finished my shots yesterday. If you don’t guard against these things, as we can hear and see, the most terrible things have happened. There is no work for people and a lot of shows are not going to return.

When Broadway does resume, will you come back from London for the opening of “Diana”?

I will. The show had two preview performances. Then it all stopped.

Why did you have to sell your house?

I am struggling financially. It’s been very difficult. And the fact that I’m not well doesn’t please me.

You shared that house with your partner, Paul Plassan, who died in 1991?

Yes, we were together for 21 years. They called us the Two Pauls.

What is it like looking back on your long career?

I was always interested in new things, so one was very happy to do it. There were certain projects that, aesthetically. I may not have thought much of. But generally speaking, I enjoyed the rush.

PHOTOS: Clockwise from left: Wigs designed by Paul Huntley for the musical “Thoroughly Modern Millie”; Patti LuPone was one of many stars for whom Huntley made hairpieces; and his last project will be the musical “Diana,” starring Jeanna de Waal. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES; PAUL HUNTLEY)

**Load-Date:** February 8, 2021

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[***How Jack Welch’s Reign at G.E. Gave Us Elon Musk’s Twitter Feed***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65H1-4Y11-DXY4-X1SP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 21, 2022 Saturday 01:39 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 2749 words

**Byline:** David Gelles

**Highlight:** The onetime ‘manager of the century’ paved the way for C.E.O.s to moonlight as internet trolls.

**Body**

When Jack Welch died on March 1, 2020, tributes poured in for the longtime chief executive of General Electric, whom many revered as the greatest chief executive of all time.

David Zaslav, the C.E.O. of Warner Bros. Discovery and a Welch disciple, remembered him as an almost godlike figure. “Jack set the path. He saw the whole world. He was above the whole world,” Mr. Zaslav said. “What he created at G.E. became the way companies now operate.”

Mr. Zaslav’s words were meant as unequivocal praise. During Mr. Welch’s two decades in power — from 1981 to 2001 — he turned G.E. into the most valuable company in the world, groomed a flock of protégés who went on to run major companies of their own, and set the standard by which other C.E.O.s were measured.

Yet a closer examination of the Welch legacy reveals that he was not simply the “Manager of the Century,” as Fortune magazine crowned him upon his retirement.

Rather, he exerted a powerful and lasting influence on American business, informing how workers are treated, how shareholders are rewarded and how C.E.O.s comport themselves in an increasingly divisive age. When Donald J. Trump is elected president, when Jeff Bezos argues about inflation with the White House, when Elon Musk negotiates his $44 billion deal to buy Twitter by using the poop emoji — this is the world that Jack Welch helped create.

For the past several years, I have written the Corner Office column for The Times, speaking with hundreds of executives about their careers and approaches to leadership. And time after time, Mr. Welch’s name kept coming up. Some wanted to model themselves after him, while others sought to define themselves in opposition to all he stood for. Either way, it was clear that Mr. Welch still looms over the corporate world, living rent-free in the minds of C.E.O.s around the globe.

And in more than 100 conversations for “The Man Who Broke Capitalism,” my new book, from which this article is adapted, a broad range of people said some version of the same thing: While it has been more than two decades since Mr. Welch was C.E.O. of G.E., his legacy still affects millions of American households.

Almost immediately after Mr. Welch retired in September 2001 with a $417 million severance package, G.E. went into a tailspin from which it would never recover.

His pupils, though, went on to run dozens of other major companies, including Home Depot, Albertson’s, Chrysler and Boeing. Most of them failed.

And in the decades since Mr. Welch assumed power, the economy at large has come to resemble his skewed priorities. Wages stagnated and jobs moved overseas. C.E.O. pay went stratospheric and buybacks and dividends boomed. Factories closed and companies found ways to pay fewer taxes.

Beyond his enduring influence on the economy, Mr. Welch also redefined what it meant to be a boss, personifying an aggressive, materialistic style of management that endures to this day.

“Jack was the rock star C.E.O. of my era,” said Lynn Forester de Rothschild, one of the rare female media moguls of the 1980s. “We all thought Jack was doing everything right and that success was defined by meeting quarterly earnings to the penny.”

In retirement, Mr. Welch continued to hold sway over the business world as an elder statesman, penning books and columns, and appearing on cable news to praise the executives he had groomed and continue his assault on taxation and regulation.

Mr. Welch also pursued an unexpected retirement pastime: He became an internet troll. His old friend Donald J. Trump seemed to lead the way on many conspiracy theories that Mr. Welch embraced. But by 2012, Mr. Welch was picking fights of his own with his online adversaries, trying to own the libs on Twitter and promulgating conspiracy theories about the Obama administration.

It was a career defined by a ruthless devotion to maximizing short-term profits at any cost, and punctuated by a foray into misinformation. And it opened the door to an era where billionaire C.E.O.s are endowed with vast power and near total impunity.

G.E., too, is still reckoning with Mr. Welch’s legacy. For two decades after he retired, a succession of C.E.O.s tried and failed to return the company to its former glory. Then last year, G.E. management admitted defeat and made an announcement — the company would be [*broken up*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/business/general-electric-break-up.html) for good.

‘Neutron Jack’

G.E. was worth $14 billion when Mr. Welch became C.E.O., just months after Ronald Reagan took office. Not long before Mr. Welch retired, just days before Sept. 11, 2001, the company was worth $600 billion, the most valuable company on Earth.

But the ways in which Mr. Welch created so much shareholder value often did more harm than good.

He was a compulsive dealmaker, fueling G.E.’s growth with a relentless series of mergers and acquisitions that took G.E. far from its industrial roots and set in motion a wave of corporate consolidation that would reduce competition in industries as diverse as airlines and media.

He closed factories and fired employees by the tens of thousands, unleashing a series of mass layoffs that destabilized the American ***working class***. He devised systems like “stack ranking,” which mandated that the bottom 10 percent of workers be fired each year, and took root at other companies. And he embraced offshoring and outsourcing, sending labor overseas and turning to other companies to provide back-office functions like accounting and printing.

It was enough to earn him the nickname he hated but could never shake: “Neutron Jack,” a reference to the neutron bomb, which purportedly kills people while leaving buildings intact.

But more than the downsizing or the dealmaking, it was Mr. Welch’s obsession with finance that allowed him to steadily inflate G.E.’s valuation in the public markets.

G.E. was an industrial company when he took over — making most of its money selling appliances, light bulbs, power turbines and jet engines. By the time he retired, the company derived much of its profit from GE Capital, which was essentially a giant unregulated bank. Mr. Welch called it “the blob” — it was an amorphous, ever-changing collection of financial assets, capable of delivering whatever adjustments were most advantageous to the parent company in a moment’s notice.

The finance division became G.E.’s center of gravity, ultimately accounting for 40 percent of its revenue and 60 percent of its profit. With so much money coursing through the finance division, Mr. Welch used it to his advantage, shifting zeros throughout a sprawling international web of subsidiaries, and extracting whatever he needed to meet or beat analysts’ estimates for nearly 80 quarters in a row, an unprecedented run. It was what one influential analyst called “earnings on demand.”

Mr. Welch denied that GE Capital was employed as a tool to keep the company’s stock price rising. “We managed businesses — not earnings,” he once said. But his own deputies told a different story, acknowledging that the finance division was used to keep the stock price ticking up.

“There was very little transparency,” said Beth Comstock, a longtime G.E. marketing executive. “G.E. had a financial army that was able to close the quarter the way we’d said we would.”

Mr. Welch was never called to account for this questionable financial engineering while he was C.E.O. But in 2009, G.E. announced that it had settled sweeping accounting fraud charges with the Securities and Exchange Commission that pointed to decades of impropriety.

G.E. had been overstating profits in a bid to jack up its share price in the years after Mr. Welch retired, using myriad well-honed tactics to fudge the numbers, the S.E.C. said.

“G.E. bent the accounting rules beyond the breaking point,” remarked Robert Khuzami, director of the S.E.C.’s enforcement division at the time.

This wasn’t a one-off anomaly, as the S.E.C. made clear. Distorting earnings was a well established practice inside the company. In its complaint, the S.E.C. took pains to note that G.E. met or beat analyst expectations every quarter from 1995 through 2004.

The implication was unmistakable: When Mr. Welch was at the height of his powers, the same sort of deceptive tactics were being employed.

‘They had the G.E. tool kit’

The roaring success Mr. Welch found at G.E. inspired countless imitators, as an entire generation of managers sought to emulate his techniques, his growth strategies and his values. And in G.E., Mr. Welch had the perfect apparatus to disseminate his ideology.

For the better part of a century, G.E. was the most influential company in the country when it came to organizational design and executive development.

Charles Coffin, who took over G.E. in 1892, was known as the “father of professional management.” An influential Harvard Business School case study chronicled how G.E. became “a bellwether” for American business operations. In refining its own internal processes and training methods over the decades, the study argued, “G.E. found itself at the leading edge of management practice.”

G.E. was the corporation other C.E.O.s looked to for guidance on how they ought to run their own companies, and the place where headhunters went to find talent. “When a company needs a loan, it goes to a bank,” Fortune magazine once wrote. “When a company needs a C.E.O., it goes to General Electric, which mints business leaders the way West Point mints generals.”

G.E. even had its own elite training ground for up-and-coming stars, a retreat where white collar gladiators could hone their skills. Known as Crotonville, the campus was spread across 52 acres in the bucolic village of Croton-on-Hudson, just north of New York City and not far from West Point.

The center was the first of its kind, and it would inspire other corporations, including IBM, Hitachi, and Boeing, to create similar centers. It served as an in-house business school for the dozens of G.E. executives who studied Mr. Welch’s playbook and went on to manage other companies, including 3M, Equifax, Medtronic, Nielsen, Rubbermaid and more.

For a time in the early 2000s, five of the top 30 companies in the Dow Jones industrial average were run by men who had worked for Mr. Welch. “That’s why they got hired,” said William Conaty, G.E.’s longtime chief of human resources. “Because they had the playbook. They had the G.E. tool kit. And boards back then thought that was the answer.”

‘A maniacal attachment to results’

The Welch protégés who struck out on their own rarely fared well. At Home Depot, Albertson’s, Conseco, Stanley Works and many other companies, the same story seemed to repeat itself ad infinitum.

A G.E. executive was named C.E.O. of another company. News of the appointment sent the stock of that company soaring. The incoming leaders were lavished with riches when they took their new jobs, signing multimillion-dollar contracts that ensured them a gilded retirement, no matter how well they performed. A period of job cuts usually ensued, and profits sometimes rose for a few quarters, or even a few years. But inevitably, morale cratered, the business wobbled, the stock price sank and the Welch disciple was sent packing.

“A lot of G.E. leaders were thought to be business geniuses,” said Bill George, the former C.E.O. of Medtronic. “But they were just cost cutters. And you can’t cost cut your way to prosperity.”

More than any company besides G.E., it was Boeing that was most directly shaped by Mr. Welch.

Over the past 25 years, a succession of men who worked for Mr. Welch refashioned the airplane maker’s culture to resemble G.E.’s, transforming a company that once made a priority of aeronautical engineering into one that thrived on financial engineering.

The first was Harry Stonecipher, who joined Boeing in a 1997 merger. He moved the company headquarters to Chicago from Seattle to chase tax breaks, took a tough line with the labor unions and pushed the company to cut costs.

“When people say I changed the culture of Boeing, that was the intent, so it’s run like a business rather than a great engineering firm,” Mr. Stonecipher said in 2004. “It is a great engineering firm, but people invest in a company because they want to make money.”

Next came Jim McNerney, a Welch lieutenant who was named C.E.O. of Boeing after Mr. Stonecipher was fired for having an affair with a subordinate.

Mr. McNerney moved operations to states with weak labor laws, embraced outsourcing, and in 2011 made [*the fateful decision*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/23/business/boeing-737-max-crash.html) to redesign the 737 — a plane introduced in the 1960s — once more, rather than lose out on a crucial order with American Airlines. That decision set in motion the flawed development of the 737 Max, which crashed twice in five months, killing 346 people. And while a number of factors contributed to those tragedies, they were ultimately [*the product of a corporate culture*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/sunday-review/boeing-737-max.html) that cut corners in pursuit of short-term financial gains.

Even today Boeing is run by a Welch disciple. Dave Calhoun, the current C.E.O., was a dark horse candidate to succeed Mr. Welch in 2001, and he was on the Boeing board during the rollout of the Max and the botched response to the crashes.

When Mr. Calhoun took over the company in 2020, he set up his office not in Seattle (Boeing’s spiritual home) or Chicago (its official headquarters), but outside St. Louis at the Boeing Leadership Center, an internal training center explicitly built in the image of Crotonville. He said he hoped to channel Mr. Welch, whom he called his “forever mentor.”

‘Mass neurosis’

The “Manager of the Century” was unbowed in retirement, barreling through the twilight of his life with the same bombast that defined his tenure as C.E.O.

He refashioned himself as a management guru and created a $50,000 online M.B.A. in an effort to instill his tough-nosed tactics in a new generation of business leaders. (The school boasts that “more than two out of three students receive a raise or promotion while enrolled.”) He cheered on the political rise of Mr. Trump, then advised him when he won the White House.

In his waning days, Mr. Welch emerged as a trafficker of conspiracy theories. He called climate change “mass neurosis” and “the attack on capitalism that socialism couldn’t bring.” He called for President Trump to appoint Rudy Giuliani attorney general and investigate his political enemies.

The most telling example of Mr. Welch’s foray into political commentary, and the beliefs it revealed, came in 2012. That’s when he took to Twitter and accused the Obama administration of fabricating the monthly jobs report numbers for political gain. The accusation was rich with irony. After decades during which G.E. massaged its own earnings reports, Mr. Welch was effectively accusing the White House of doing the same thing.

While Mr. Welch’s claim was baseless, conservative pundits picked up on the conspiracy theory and amplified it on cable news and Twitter. Even Mr. Trump, then merely a reality television star, joined the chorus, calling Mr. Welch’s bogus accusation “100 percent correct” and accusing the Obama administration of “monkeying around” with the numbers. It was one of the first lies to go viral on social media, and it had come from one of the most revered figures in the history of business.

When Mr. Welch died, few of his eulogists paused to consider the entirety of his legacy. They didn’t dwell on the downsizing, the manipulated earnings, the Twitter antics.

And there was no consideration of the ways in which the economy had been shaped by Mr. Welch over the previous 40 years, creating a world where manufacturing jobs have evaporated as C.E.O. pay soars, where buybacks and dividends are plentiful as corporate tax rates plunge.

By glossing over this reality, his allies helped perpetuate the myth of his sainthood, adding their own spin on one of the most enduring bits of disinformation of all: the notion that Jack Welch was the greatest C.E.O. of all time.

Audio produced by Jack D’Isidoro.

Audio produced by Jack D’Isidoro.

PHOTOS: Above, Jack Welch at the G.E. offices in New York before his retirement in 2001, and, near right, with Reginald Jones, the chairman and chief executive of G.E. in 1981, when Mr. Welch succeeded him. During his tenure at the company, Mr. Welch set the standard by which other chief executives were measured. Below, Mr. Welch with President Donald J. Trump in 2017. Mr. Trump seemed to lead the way on many conspiracy theories that Mr. Welch embraced in his retirement. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHESTER HIGGINS JR./THE NEW YORK TIMES; GENERAL ELECTRIC; GETTY IMAGES) (BU8)

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[***The Secondhand Clothing Boom***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64P6-3DJ1-DXY4-X3V7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Ezra Marcus

**Body**

Sellers from the country have become a reliable source of sought-after labels, finding high value in discarded items.

Maybe it was the pandemic, or growing concerns about the environment, or a bit of both, but one thing's certain: People are doing a lot more secondhand shopping these days.

Secondhand clothing is one of the fastest growing sectors in the global fashion marketplace, as consumers seek out affordable, eco-friendly alternatives to fast fashion. Even celebrities are picking pre-owned looks for red carpet appearances.

A 2021 report from the resale platform ThredUp and the analytics firm GlobalData projected that used clothing sales would rise to nearly $77 billion by 2025 from $36 billion this year.

Much of that activity is happening online, on resale sites like Etsy, eBay and Grailed. Spend enough time on any of them, and you may find that a surprisingly large number of sellers are operating in South Asia, and Malaysia in particular.

''We've all just noticed this, especially when we're shopping on Etsy,'' said Rachel Tashjian, the fashion critic at GQ.

''I was looking for an Agnès B. cardigan, and all of them were from Malaysia,'' said Sarah Brown, a designer for a jewelry company in Manhattan.

The concentration of Malaysian storefronts has caused some shoppers to wonder: Why?

For the sellers, the answer is obvious: Supply and demand.

Bundles and Bundles of Discards

Secondhand shopping -- also known as ''bundle'' shopping -- is popular in Malaysia. There are thrift stores across the country, ranging from tiny roadside stalls to vast warehouses run by corporate chains. One such company is Jalan Jalan Japan, an importer of Japanese items that operates eight stores in the country, and Family Bundle, a chain with numerous outlets in Kuala Lumpur.

Over the last decade, ''there's been a tremendous rise in doing this kind of shopping, and it's quite fascinating,'' said Naim Azhar, 28, who works at a cybersecurity company in Kuala Lumpur. In 2019, he went viral locally for his luxury fashion bought from thrift stores.

''I spent hours and hours just diving into the pool of unwanted clothes, and I found a lot of cool trench coats, like a Burberry trench coat,'' he said in a Zoom interview. Most of his designer finds cost the standard rate for an item of used clothing in the country: 1 ringgit, or about 25 cents. Online, such pieces could easily fetch between $20 and $60 from American secondhand shoppers; rare and collectible items can go for well north of $500. But most Malaysians don't shop to sell. They do it for the love of clothes.

The term ''bundle'' refers to the large bales that local merchants buy from wholesalers. ''Selam bundle,'' which translates as ''diving into bundles of clothing,'' is used to describe thrift culture.

Amirul Ruslan, 31, a musician in Kuala Lumpur, said in a Zoom interview that Malaysian thrift stores sometimes turn the opening of large bundles into an event. ''It's quite literally one guy climbing on top and tearing it open with a knife, and just like pulling stuff out,'' he said, ''and people start diving into it, seeing what they like.'' He especially loves shops ''that don't have any social media presence, barely have a Google Maps location.''

Recently, Mr. Ruslan brought a reporter on a shopping tour, stopping first at a Family Bundle outlet in Kuala Lumpur's Chinatown. On the racks were Japanese brands like Edwin, as well as Adidas, Nike and Levi's. The cheapest items cost around $1; the most expensive, $23.

Up next was Mr. Ruslan's favorite roadside stall, Maxstation. Situated in a ***working-class*** neighborhood, it consists of four canopy tents with walls made of recycled tarpaulin. A pair of kittens mewed in the corner, and a rabbit sat in a cage on the counter.

Just a few months earlier, Mr. Ruslan showed up to the shop to find a crowd gathered outside: Maxstation was burning down.

Its proprietor, Nor Muhamad Mat Nor, 34, is still not sure what happened. ''Nobody was in there and there's no clues from firefighter forensics,'' he wrote in a message on WhatsApp. Ultimately, though, the local market is less profitable for him than his business selling designer clothes overseas on Grailed.

''I'm doing this almost 10 years, with passion,'' he wrote.

The American Market

Mr. Muhamad got started selling clothing locally after noticing demand for vintage clothing and band T-shirts. He began selling overseas in 2017, and his physical stall followed three years later. Today, he said, he sells about 10 to 15 items online per month; some of his most profitable sales have been items from Japanese fashion brands: Comme des Garçons, Yohji Yamamoto and Kapital.

Mr. Muhamad spends about three hours a day looking for clothes. He buys in bulk from a wholesale outlet that sells bales of clothes from overseas. He prefers American and Japanese clothing, he wrote, ''because of the high chance to get the good items.'' A single high-quality find priced at $100 or more can pay for an entire bale of clothing, he said. He sells the rest locally.

To follow the whims of American consumers, he does ''simple research with media and magazines,'' he said, and keeps up with fashionable figures like Kanye West, Vivienne Westwood and the Malaysian influencer Wak Doyok. Done correctly, Mr. Muhamad wrote, ''this thing is good business actually.''

After the fire in October, he was able to rebuild, and in December the store reopened. On a reporter's visit in January, Mr. Muhamad wore shorts and a denim apron, ready to open and sort through a handful of wholesale bundles containing 300 to 400 pieces of clothing each.

''It takes me about an hour to sort out these items. I look at each piece thoroughly, inspecting the threads, the sewing, the zip and if it's of a valuable brand,'' he said, as he cut open a bag and sifted for sartorial gold with the help of his wife, Mariati Muhamad.

''Johnbull, this is a valuable brand from Japan, so this is something I would list online on Grailed,'' he said, holding up the label of a vintage leather varsity jacket.

When Mr. Muhamad's store went up in flames, he lost nearly $10,000 worth of merchandise, including a Barbour jacket he'd listed on Grailed for $180 and a Bape jacket, for $590.

''I had sorted all my high-value items to be listed online for sale, so I had them kept in the store,'' he said. ''But it's all gone in the fire.''

Do You Know Where Your Donation Is Going?

Most people who donate old clothes assume their garments' final destination is the racks of Goodwill and Salvation Army, where they might find a second life. However, according to Adam Minter, the author of ''Secondhand: Travels in the New Global Garage Sale,'' thrift stores are often just the first stop on a circuitous international journey.

''Only about one-third of the stuff that is put on the shelves of an American thrift store actually sells,'' said Mr. Minter, who has a home in Malaysia but currently lives in Minnesota. The thrift stores sell the excess clothing to bulk clothing exporters, which then ship it around the world: ''Your clothing in Fremont, Calif., could be sent by truck or rail to Houston, where it's sorted for Pakistan and India and Malaysia,'' he said.

There, sellers can buy them cheaply and list them online. ''You buy the bale, you bring it back to the shop, you break it open, and you know, maybe if you're lucky, there's a good piece of designer clothing in there that didn't make it through the screen at the thrift store and the sorting warehouse in Mississauga,'' Mr. Minter said.

Nowadays, a given clothing item -- say, a Nike hoodie -- may be made in a factory in Taiwan or Bangladesh, sold to the United States, donated to Goodwill, shipped in a bale to Malaysia, and then sold back to the U.S. on Etsy. It's simple arbitrage: Buyers in developed countries will pay a lot more for name brands than they cost in the developing world, where wholesalers typically sell huge quantities of merchandise priced by the kilogram.

According to the Observatory for Economic Complexity, which tracks international trade, the largest exporter of used clothing in 2019 (the most recent year for which data is available) was the United States, where exports totaled $720 million. The top importers were Ukraine ($203 million), Pakistan ($189 million), Ghana ($168 million) and Kenya ($165 million). Malaysia's imports totaled $105 million.

In some countries, especially in East Africa, secondhand clothing from the West makes up a majority of all clothing sold. Although people often characterize America as ''dumping'' unwanted clothes on less affluent countries, Mr. Minter emphasized that the reality is more complicated: Clothes are being bought by people in those countries. ''They want them,'' he said. ''There are wholesalers buying in these places, and then distributing them.''

Still, this industry is not without friction. In 2015, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda jointly announced that they would ban incoming clothing by 2019 in order to protect their homegrown garment industries. The used clothes coming in were just too cheap.

A U.S. trade organization called SMART, the Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association, said the ban on imported clothes could cost 40,000 American jobs and $124 million in exports. In response, the Trump administration threatened to raise tariffs on imports from those countries, and all of them except for Rwanda backed down.

Whether people are able to sell secondhand clothing internationally depends on the state of their country's shipping logistics.

''Some of the poor countries where you'll see bales of clothes going in, you know, there just isn't the infrastructure,'' Mr. Minter said. ''If a bale of clothes ends up in, say, northern Nigeria, and it's got a really great pair of Levi's in it, somebody in northern Nigeria is probably not going to try and sell that via Etsy. The logistics aren't there.''

''But in places like Kenya and in Malaysia,'' he continued, ''the logistics are there. The familiarity with e-commerce is there. You have a fairly globalized population.''

Mr. Minter noted that Malaysia is one of many countries -- including Thailand, Indonesia, Ukraine and Latvia -- taking part in this trade.

Malaysia, he said, has ''a population that's savvy to global fashion trends and has the disposable income to do this kind of business.'' The World Bank projects that Malaysia will transition from a middle- to high-income country in the next two to six years.

The country also has a long history as a manufacturing base for companies like Dell and Intel, which ship huge amounts of products to America. There's also its proximity to Japan, which exports rare and highly desirable merchandise to the region; most used clothing that ends up in Malaysia comes from Japan originally.

''I've noticed a lot of pieces on eBay and Etsy by Vivienne Westwood and Jean Paul Gaultier from Malaysia and Thailand,'' Collin James, a founder of the Manhattan vintage store James Veloria, wrote in an email. ''Both had a lot of pieces produced solely for the Japanese market in the 1990s and early 2000s with interesting prints and designs that weren't released for European and American markets.''

Julian Neo, the managing director of DHL Express Malaysia and Brunei, wrote in an email statement that the shipping company has ''over 260 vintage clothing sellers shipping from Malaysia to the U.S.''

''Since 2013, we have seen the number of vintage clothing customers growing each year,'' he wrote.

Yoppy Ardiyanto, an Indonesian seller from Bandung City, said, ''In my country, and also, I think, in many, many other countries, they are already seeing this business is a big opportunity.'' He and his wife have sold vintage racing jackets on Etsy for five years. Recently, he said, they've become ''very, very hard to find'' at secondhand stalls.

He welcomes the competition, even if it has made his job harder. ''It's very fun, actually,'' he said. ''Because we are having a lot of friends, you know?''

Ushar Daniele contributed reporting from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.Ushar Daniele contributed reporting from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Sora Bundle in Kuala Lumpur is one of many secondhand stores in Malaysia. (D1)

Top, Sora Bundle, like many secondhand stores in Malaysia, carries American brands, including Levi's and Lacoste. ''Bundle'' shopping refers to the large bales of clothes that local merchants buy from wholesalers. Above, items at Bundle Murah in Kuala Lumpur. Right, Nor Muhamad Mat Nor at his stall, Maxstation. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN TEH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (D4)

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[***How Malaysia Got in on the Secondhand Clothing Boom***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64P6-3NG1-JBG3-6188-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** STYLE

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**Byline:** Ezra Marcus

**Highlight:** Sellers from the country have become a reliable source of sought-after labels, finding high value in discarded items.

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Over the last decade, “there’s been a tremendous rise in doing this kind of shopping, and it’s quite fascinating,” said Naim Azhar, 28, who works at a cybersecurity company in Kuala Lumpur. In 2019, he [*went viral locally*](https://sg.news.yahoo.com/entrepreneur-rm1-high-fashion-clothes-084942211.html) for his luxury fashion bought from thrift stores.

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[***Crackdown Erases a Pro-Democracy Landslide in Hong Kong***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63CP-XFN1-DXY4-X396-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Austin Ramzy and Tiffany May

**Body**

The landslide victory of pro-democracy politicians in local elections in 2019 was a stunning rebuke of Beijing. Now, fear of retaliation has driven them to quit.

HONG KONG -- When Hong Kong's pro-democracy politicians won a resounding victory in local council elections in 2019, they inspired hopes of democratic change. Now, fears of arrest have driven most of them to quit, laying bare that dream's dramatic collapse.

The opposition had swept nearly 90 percent of the 452 seats in Hong Kong's district councils, riding on widespread antigovernment sentiment that had turned into months of protests. Though the polls were for the lowest rung of elected office, they were regarded as an informal referendum that showed the public's support for the pro-democracy camp. The victory dealt a stinging defeat to Beijing and raised the opposition's expectations that even greater electoral successes were within reach.

But in less than two years, Beijing has struck back, demolishing those gains as part of a broader security crackdown that has drastically raised the risk of political dissent.

More than half of the council members from the pro-democracy camp, over 250 of them, have quit in recent weeks to avoid being ensnared in Beijing's campaign. Those who remain are worried about being arrested.

''Before, we had a lot of hope and anticipation. Now, it feels like our hands and feet are tied,'' said Zoe Chow, an elected district official who had represented the ***working-class*** neighborhood of Sham Shui Po since 2015 before resigning in July. ''We have to think very hard about what to do next because it feels as though everything we do is considered wrong.''

By targeting opposition figures in local councils, the authorities are effectively burying the last vestige of democracy in Hong Kong. Dozens of politicians are in jail and facing potential life sentences on national security charges. Apple Daily, a major pro-democracy newspaper, has been forced to close after the arrest of its founder and top editors. Hong Kong's largest teachers union and the Civil Human Rights Front, which organized large protest marches, both said in recent days that they would disband. Beijing has rewritten the rules for future elections to bar candidates it deems disloyal.

The district councilors said they were alarmed by the government's plans to impose a new loyalty oath on them and reports that perceived violations could leave them imprisoned, barred from politics or bankrupted.

District councilors are not usually in the political limelight. They handle unglamorous tasks such as dealing with pest infestations, overflowing trash and illegal parking. They help residents with everyday problems such as the payment of bills or economic aid.

But in 2019, when the city was consumed with antigovernment protests, the councils took on outsize political importance. Many first-time candidates campaigned on issues raised by the protesters, even though the councils have little say on questions of police accountability or universal suffrage.

After the opposition swept up the bulk of the seats, Beijing ordered, as part of a sweeping national security law, that anyone who assumed public office must swear allegiance to the Hong Kong government and its laws. The new condition was widely seen as paving the way to disqualifying the government's critics.

''It was only when so many radicals got on to the district councils through the 2019 election did the problems arise,'' according to Lau Siu-kai, a senior adviser to Beijing on Hong Kong affairs.

Beijing has said only patriots are allowed to run the city. It has applied vague definitions to what it means to break an oath of loyalty to the government. Last year, it ordered the ouster of four opposition leaders in Hong Kong from the city's legislature for expressing support for U.S. sanctions against Hong Kong's officials. The remainder of the pro-democracy camp in the legislature then resigned in protest.

The government has not told the district councilors what consequences they may face for breaching the oath, or even when they are supposed to take it. But the city's pro-Beijing news outlets carried reports warning that district councilors found infringing the oath could be forced to repay two years of salary and expenses. They also cited officials as warning that district councilors who had displayed protest slogans in their offices could be targeted.

Michael Mo, a district councilor in the satellite town of Tuen Mun, said he quit to avoid the oath and the risk of being accused of disloyalty. He said he believed that such an allegation could later become the grounds for a national security investigation; in July, he fled to London.

''It's scary,'' he said. ''It's like they're trying to make a trap for you.''

The exodus also follows months of tensions with city officials and pro-Beijing politicians. Many democrats wanted to use their platforms as district councilors to pressure the government on political issues. When they raised complaints about police conduct, for instance, local officials would sometimes cancel meetings or walk out.

Some pro-government district council members have criticized the opposition representatives' approach as unproductive.

Lam Kong-kwan, one of two establishment representatives on the Sha Tin district council, pointed to a statement opposing the national security law that was approved last year by the 17 district councils controlled by the pro-democracy camp, calling it a distraction.

''They always say they are reflecting the will of the people. But what does the will of the people even mean?'' Mr. Lam added. ''The people aren't telling you to oppose the government or oppose central authorities.''

But many pro-democracy district council members say the government is unwilling to work with opposition politicians even on public service improvement projects.

Paul Zimmerman, a pro-democracy representative who did not step down, said the Home Affairs Department has not allowed him to approve agendas for committee meetings of the Southern District Council, even though he is now the most senior officer after a wave of resignations.

That will hold up plans for projects like a pedestrian bridge over a bay in the district, he said. He called it part of a campaign ''to disempower the district councils.''

The government has acknowledged that the resignations have crippled some district councils but said it did not plan to hold elections to fill the empty seats before next July.

In Sham Shui Po, a district in the northwest corner of the Kowloon peninsula known for its walk-up tenement buildings, street vendors and old temples, older residents have long relied on council members to navigate the complexities of applying for government benefits and services.

Yeung Yuk, a pro-democracy politician, resigned as one of its district councilors in July but said he would continue to help residents on a voluntary basis until the end of this month. His name is still visible on a sign outside his office on the ground floor of a high-rise in the Hoi Lai public housing complex, but a sheet of paper was taped over the Chinese characters for his former title, ''councilor.''

As he worked from his desk on a recent weekday, a steady stream of residents dropped by the office. Some wanted to buy cockroach poison. Others wanted to watch the television. Stacked on the tables were boxes of masks, bags of rice and bottles of tea. A poster on the wall showed the 25 council members from the district, with the photos of 20 crossed out.

''I don't want to leave them, and they don't want me to leave,'' Mr. Yeung said, adding that he would find a part-time job in social work to support his family. Mr. Yeung, 36, was covering the rent of the office space out of pocket and with donations from residents. He planned to close the office at the end of August.

Ngan Siu, a 71-year-old retiree, said she often sought Mr. Yeung's help when she received government notices she did not understand. He had helped her register for her Covid-19 vaccine appointment and to receive a $640 spending voucher.

''The government keeps telling us to go online, but how?'' Ms. Siu asked. ''If he didn't help me, where else would I go?''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/15/world/asia/hong-kong-china-politics.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/15/world/asia/hong-kong-china-politics.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top: In the district Sham Shui Po, older residents rely on district councilors for help in applying for government benefits and services

Roy Tam, right, a district councilor, boarded a prison van in March

a pro-democracy councilor handed out copies of Apple Daily last year after its founder was arrested. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAM YIK FEI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

JEROME FAVRE/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK

ISAAC LAWRENCE/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** August 16, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Silver-Spoon Socialists***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61D9-JFF1-JBG3-639K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 29, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 2170 words

**Byline:** By Zoë Beery

**Body**

Lately, Sam Jacobs has been having a lot of conversations with his family's lawyers. He's trying to gain access to more of his $30 million trust fund. At 25, he's hit the age when many heirs can blow their money on harebrained businesses or a stable of sports cars. He doesn't want to do that, but by wealth management standards, his plan is just as bad. He wants to give it all away.

''I want to build a world where someone like me, a young person who controls tens of millions of dollars, is impossible,'' he said.

A socialist since college, Mr. Jacobs sees his family's ''extreme, plutocratic wealth'' as both a moral and economic failure. He wants to put his inheritance toward ending capitalism, and by that he means using his money to undo systems that accumulate money for those at the top, and that have played a large role in widening economic and racial inequality.

Millennials will be the recipients of the largest generational shift of assets in American history -- the Great Wealth Transfer, as finance types call it. Tens of trillions of dollars are expected to pass between generations in just the next decade.

And that money, like all wealth in the United States, is extremely concentrated in the upper brackets. Mr. Jacobs, whose grandfather was a founder of Qualcomm, expects to receive up to $100 million over the course of his lifetime.

Most of his fellow millennials, however, are receiving a rotten inheritance -- debt, dim job prospects and a figment of a social safety net. The youngest of them were 15 in 2011 when Occupy Wall Street drew a line between the have-a-lots and everyone else; the oldest, if they were lucky, were working in a post-recession economy even before the current recession. Class and inequality have been part of the political conversation for most of their adult lives.

In their time, the ever-widening gulf between the rich and poor has pushed left-wing politics back into the American political mainstream. President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. trailed Senator Bernie Sanders, the socialist candidate, by 20 points among millennial voters in this year's Democratic presidential primary. And over the last six years, millennials have taken the Democratic Socialists of America from a fringe organization with an average member age of 60 to a national force with chapters in every state and a membership of nearly 100,000, most of them under 35.

Mr. Jacobs, as both a trust-fund kid and an anticapitalist, is in a rare position among leftists fighting against economic inequality. But he isn't alone in trying to figure out, as he put it, ''what it means to be with the 99 percent, when you're the 1 percent.''

Challenging the System

''I was always taught that this is just the way the world is, that my family has wealth while others don't, and that because of that, I need to give some of it away, but not necessarily question why it was there,'' said Rachel Gelman, a 30-year-old in Oakland, Calif., who describes her politics as ''anticapitalist, anti-imperialist and abolitionist.''

Her family always gave generously to liberal causes and civil society groups. Ms. Gelman supports groups devoted to ending inequality, including the Movement for Black Lives, the National Day Laborer Organizing Network and Critical Resistance, a leading prison abolition group.

''My money is mostly stocks, which means it comes from underpaying and undervaluing ***working-class*** people, and that's impossible to disconnect from the economic legacies of Indigenous genocide and slavery,'' Ms. Gelman said. ''Once I realized that, I couldn't imagine doing anything with my wealth besides redistribute it to these communities.''

According to the consulting firm Accenture, the Silent Generation and baby boomers will gift their heirs up to $30 trillion by 2030, and up to $75 trillion by 2060. These fortunes began to amass decades ago -- in some cases centuries. But the concentration of wealth became stratospheric starting in the 1970s, when neoliberalism became the financial sector's guiding economic philosophy and companies began to obsessively pursue higher returns for shareholders.

''The wealth millennials are inheriting came from a mammoth redistribution away from the working masses, creating a super-rich tiny minority at the expense of a fleeting American dream that is now out of reach to most people,'' said Richard D. Wolff, a Marxist and an emeritus economics professor at University of Massachusetts Amherst who has published 12 books about class and inequality.

He said he has been professionally arguing against capitalism's selling points since his teaching career began, in 1967, but that his millennial students ''are more open to hearing that message than their parents ever were.''

Heirs whose wealth has come from a specific source sometimes use that history to guide their giving. Pierce Delahunt, a 32-year-old ''socialist, anarchist, Marxist, communist or all of the above,'' has a trust fund that was financed by their former stepfather's outlet mall empire. (Mx. Delahunt takes nongendered pronouns.)

''When I think about outlet malls, I think about intersectional oppression,'' Mx. Delahunt said. There's the originally Indigenous land each mall was built on, plus the low wages paid to retail and food service workers, who are disproportionately people of color, and the carbon emissions of manufacturing and transporting the goods. With that on their mind, Mx. Delahunt gives away $10,000 a month, divided between 50 small organizations, most of which have an anticapitalist mission and in some way tackle the externalities of discount shopping.

If money is power, then true wealth redistribution also means redistributing authority. Margi Dashevsky, who is 33 and lives in Alaska, gets guidance on her charitable giving from an advisory team of three women activists from Indigenous and Black power movements. ''The happenstance of me being born into this wealth doesn't mean I'm somehow omniscient about how it should be used,'' she said. ''It actually gives me a lot of blind spots.''

She also donates to social justice funds like Third Wave Fund, where grant-making is guided by the communities receiving funding, instead of being decided by a board of wealthy individuals. The latter sort of nonprofit, Ms. Dashevsky said, ''comes from a place of assuming incompetence, putting up all these hurdles for activists and wasting their time on things like impact reporting. I want to flip that on its head by stepping back, trusting and listening.''

Of course, an individual act of wealth redistribution does not, on its own, change a system. But these heirs see themselves as part of a bigger shift, and are dedicated to funding its momentum.

The Revolution Starts at the Dinner Table

Any leftist trying to shake off an inheritance will, at some point, find their way to Resource Generation; all of the heirs in this article did. The organization, founded in 1998, is a politicization machine for wealthy 18- to 35-year-olds.

The nonprofit offers programming that encourages members to see capitalism not as a market-based equalizer promising upward mobility, but as a damaging system predicated on, as Resource Generation puts it, ''stolen land, stolen labor and stolen lives.'' In go young people knotted by tension between their progressive values and their wealth; out come determined campaigners with a plan to redistribute.

Maria Myotte, the organization's communications director, said that membership grows each time the nation has a reckoning: Occupy Wall Street, the 2016 presidential election, and this year's twin jolts of the Covid-19 pandemic and the uprising against anti-Black racism all attracted newbies. There are currently around 1,000 dues-paying members at local chapters around the U.S. According to the most recent internal survey, the wider Resource Generation network, which includes some nonmembers, collectively expects to control $22 billion in their lifetimes.

Heirs who want to redistribute their wealth said that, at first, they approached the task with the righteous fire of revolutionaries, castigating family members for their coziness with privilege. ''There were many angry conversations around the dinner table where I was an impatient, arrogant brat,'' said Sam Vinal, a 34-year-old in Los Angeles. But many have found that they can be more persuasive when they treat these conversations like friendly political canvassing.

When Mr. Vinal's mother wanted to start a family foundation, an arrangement typically focused on a single charitable issue, Mr. Vinal saw an opportunity to instead create a vehicle for more comprehensive change. He set up conversations with leaders of various social movements to convince his mother to change the mission. ''That was a light bulb moment for my mom, to hear directly from the front lines,'' he said.

Since its creation in 2017, the foundation has supported radical organizations, with guidance from a group of activists. Mr. Vinal spends much of his time organizing other young people with family foundations to take theirs in this direction.

''I try to understand where people are coming from, the bubbles of race and class we get stuck in, so that I can help them be more imaginative about where we can go beyond capitalism,'' he said.

Building the 'Solidarity Economy'

The racial wealth gap means that heirs who want to redistribute their wealth are overwhelmingly white. People of color who are members of Resource Generation, for instance, tend to have access to less overall wealth, or will not inherit until later in life. The wealthiest are transracial adoptees or those who have a white parent. This makes the approach to redistribution a little more complicated.

''The narrative of giving away everything feels like it's being framed by white inheritors,'' said Elizabeth Baldwin, a 34-year-old democratic socialist in Cambridge, Mass., who was adopted from India by a white family when she was a baby. Heirs in her position, she said, must decide whether to redistribute to their own communities or others', and what it means to give up economic privilege when they don't have the kind of safety net that comes with being white. She plans to keep enough of her inheritance to buy an apartment and raise a family, enjoying the sort of pleasant middle-class existence denied to many people of color in the United States.

Because her adoptive family's wealth originated in land ownership and slavery, she donates to anti-racist groups and will soon begin making low-interest loans to Black-owned businesses. ''The money I'm living on was made from exploiting people that look like me, so I see my giving as reparations,'' she said.

Ms. Baldwin has long-term relationships with Grassroots International and Thousand Currents, philanthropy networks working in many postcolonial countries, including India, whose impoverishment she sees as a symptom of Western capitalism. It is sometimes ''strange,'' she admitted, to be making reparations to her own people. ''But no one else in my family talks about where this money came from, and I feel like I have to do it,'' she said.

There's another hitch: Because the stock market is both an engine of American capitalism and responsible in many cases for heirs' massive individual wealth, few want anything to do with it.

''I get rich because other people aren't getting rich, and I don't want to keep making more wealth off investments in things like Coca-Cola and Exxon-Mobil,'' said Ms. Baldwin. ''I would rather put my money into a community that has been denied economic resources and disrupt the system.''

She is doing this by investing in what she and her peers call the ''solidarity economy.''

In short, this means using their money to support more equitable economic infrastructures. This includes investing in or donating to credit unions, worker-owned businesses, community land trusts, and nonprofits aiming to maximize quality of life through democratic decision making, instead of maximizing profits through competition. Emma Thomas, a 29-year-old democratic socialist who is also taking her money out of the stock market, described what she's now investing in as ''an economy that is about exchange and taking care of needs, that is cooperative and sustainable, and that doesn't demand unfettered growth.''

This summer, she was part of a team that organized about 250 people to support the Black Land and Power Project, moving money from asset portfolios to 10 Black-run land sites across the U.S. (Because of the nation's history of economic racism, many solidarity economy projects include a racial justice element.)

To Ms. Thomas, the prospect of contributing to a solidarity economy is a refreshingly tangible expression of her values, compared to the abstraction of accumulating portfolio returns. ''At some point, these numbers on a screen are imaginary,'' she said. ''But what's not imaginary is whether you have shelter, food and a community. Those are true returns.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/style/trust-fund-activism-resouce-generation.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/style/trust-fund-activism-resouce-generation.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY JESSE UNTRACHT-OAKNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (ST1)

Rachel Gelman, left, said because her family's wealth accumulated in stocks, ''it comes from underpaying and undervaluing ***working-class*** people.'' Below, Pierce Delahunt donates to anticapitalist organizations. (ST8-ST9)

Top, Elizabeth Baldwin said, ''The money I'm living on was made from exploiting people that look like me.'' Above, Emma Thomas favors an economy that ''is about exchange and taking care of needs.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY KAYANA SZYMCZAK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (ST9)

**Load-Date:** November 29, 2020

**End of Document**



[***‘Our Hands and Feet Are Tied’: Hong Kong’s Opposition Quits in Droves***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63CH-TKG1-JBG3-63KB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 15, 2021 Sunday 07:34 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; asia

**Length:** 1441 words

**Byline:** Austin Ramzy and Tiffany May

**Highlight:** The landslide victory of pro-democracy politicians in local elections in 2019 was a stunning rebuke of Beijing. Now, fear of retaliation has driven them to quit.

**Body**

The landslide victory of pro-democracy politicians in local elections in 2019 was a stunning rebuke of Beijing. Now, fear of retaliation has driven them to quit.

HONG KONG — When [*Hong Kong’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/18/world/asia/hong-kong-university-arrests.html) pro-democracy politicians won a [*resounding victory*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/24/world/asia/hong-kong-election-results.html) in local council [*elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/24/world/asia/hong-kong-elections.html) in 2019, they inspired hopes of democratic change. Now, fears of arrest have driven most of them to quit, laying bare that dream’s dramatic collapse.

The opposition had swept nearly 90 percent of the 452 seats in [*Hong Kong’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/18/world/asia/china-afghanistan-taliban-usa.html) district councils, riding on [*widespread antigovernment sentiment*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/world/asia/hong-kong-protests-arc.html) that had turned into months of protests. Though the polls were for the lowest rung of elected office, they were regarded as an informal referendum that showed the public’s support for the pro-democracy camp. The victory dealt a [*stinging defeat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/25/world/asia/hong-kong-election-protests.html) to Beijing and raised the opposition’s expectations that even greater electoral successes were within reach.

But in less than two years, Beijing has struck back, demolishing those gains as part of a broader security crackdown that has drastically raised the risk of political dissent.

More than half of the council members from the pro-democracy camp, over 250 of them, have quit in recent weeks to avoid being ensnared in Beijing’s campaign. Those who remain are worried about being arrested.

“Before, we had a lot of hope and anticipation. Now, it feels like our hands and feet are tied,” said Zoe Chow, an elected district official who had represented the ***working-class*** neighborhood of Sham Shui Po since 2015 before resigning in July. “We have to think very hard about what to do next because it feels as though everything we do is considered wrong.”

By targeting opposition figures in local councils, the authorities are effectively burying the [*last vestige*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/20/world/asia/hong-kong-elections-democracy.html) of democracy in Hong Kong. [*Dozens of politicians are in jail*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/06/world/asia/china-hong-kong-arrests.html) and facing potential life sentences on national security charges. Apple Daily, a major pro-democracy newspaper, has been [*forced to close*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/world/asia/apple-daily-hong-kong.html) after the arrest of its founder and top editors. Hong Kong’s largest teachers union and the Civil Human Rights Front, which organized large protest marches, both said in recent days that they would disband. Beijing has rewritten the rules for future elections to [*bar candidates it deems disloyal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/04/world/asia/china-hong-kong-election-law.html).

The district councilors said they were alarmed by the government’s plans to impose a new loyalty oath on them and reports that perceived violations could leave them imprisoned, barred from politics or bankrupted.

District councilors are not usually in the political limelight. They handle [*unglamorous tasks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/02/world/asia/hong-kong-democracy-councilors.html) such as dealing with pest infestations, overflowing trash and illegal parking. They help residents with everyday problems such as the payment of bills or economic aid.

But in 2019, when the city was consumed with antigovernment protests, the councils took on outsize political importance. Many first-time candidates campaigned on issues raised by the protesters, even though the councils have little say on questions of [*police accountability*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/11/world/asia/hong-kong-protests-shooting.html) or universal suffrage.

After the opposition swept up the bulk of the seats, Beijing ordered, as part of a sweeping national security law, that anyone who assumed public office must swear allegiance to the Hong Kong government and its laws. The new condition was widely seen as paving the way to disqualifying the government’s critics.

“It was only when so many radicals got on to the district councils through the 2019 election did the problems arise,” according to Lau Siu-kai, a senior adviser to Beijing on Hong Kong affairs.

Beijing has said only patriots are allowed to run the city. It has applied vague definitions to what it means to break an oath of loyalty to the government. Last year, it ordered the ouster of four opposition leaders in Hong Kong from the city’s legislature for expressing support for U.S. sanctions against Hong Kong’s officials. The remainder of the pro-democracy camp in the legislature then [*resigned in protest*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/world/asia/hong-kong-protest-democracy.html).

The government has not told the district councilors what consequences they may face for breaching the oath, or even when they are supposed to take it. But the city’s pro-Beijing news outlets carried reports warning that district councilors found infringing the oath could be forced to repay two years of salary and expenses. They also cited officials as warning that district councilors who had displayed protest slogans in their offices could be targeted.

Michael Mo, a district councilor in the satellite town of Tuen Mun, said he quit to avoid the oath and the risk of being accused of disloyalty. He said he believed that such an allegation could later become the grounds for a national security investigation; in July, he fled to London.

“It’s scary,” he said. “It’s like they’re trying to make a trap for you.”

The exodus also follows months of tensions with city officials and pro-Beijing politicians. Many democrats wanted to use their platforms as district councilors to pressure the government on political issues. When they raised complaints about police conduct, for instance, local officials would sometimes cancel meetings or walk out.

Some pro-government district council members have criticized the opposition representatives’ approach as unproductive.

Lam Kong-kwan, one of two establishment representatives on the Sha Tin district council, pointed to a statement opposing the national security law that was approved last year by the 17 district councils controlled by the pro-democracy camp, calling it a distraction.

“They always say they are reflecting the will of the people. But what does the will of the people even mean?” Mr. Lam added. “The people aren’t telling you to oppose the government or oppose central authorities.”

But many pro-democracy district council members say the government is unwilling to work with opposition politicians even on public service improvement projects.

Paul Zimmerman, a pro-democracy representative who did not step down, said the Home Affairs Department has not allowed him to approve agendas for committee meetings of the Southern District Council, even though he is now the most senior officer after a wave of resignations.

That will hold up plans for projects like a pedestrian bridge over a bay in the district, he said. He called it part of a campaign “to disempower the district councils.”

The government has acknowledged that the resignations have crippled some district councils but said it did not plan to hold elections to fill the empty seats before next July.

In Sham Shui Po, a district in the northwest corner of the Kowloon peninsula known for its walk-up tenement buildings, street vendors and old temples, older residents have long relied on council members to navigate the complexities of applying for government benefits and services.

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“The government keeps telling us to go online, but how?” Ms. Siu asked. “If he didn’t help me, where else would I go?”

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top: In the district Sham Shui Po, older residents rely on district councilors for help in applying for government benefits and services; Roy Tam, right, a district councilor, boarded a prison van in March; a pro-democracy councilor handed out copies of Apple Daily last year after its founder was arrested. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAM YIK FEI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; JEROME FAVRE/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK; ISAAC LAWRENCE/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** September 24, 2021

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[***$650,000 Homes in South Carolina, Nebraska and New Jersey; What You Get***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62GT-9R11-DXY4-X068-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 21, 2021 Wednesday 10:45 EST

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**Section:** REALESTATE

**Length:** 1206 words

**Byline:** Julie Lasky

**Highlight:** A 1945 cottage in Charleston, a two-bedroom condo in an industrial loft in Omaha and a converted stone church in Bernardsville.

**Body**

A 1945 cottage in Charleston, a two-bedroom condo in an industrial loft in Omaha and a converted stone church in Bernardsville.

Charleston, S.C. | $625,000

A 1945 brick-clad cottage with three bedrooms and two bathrooms, on a 0.2-acre lot

This home is in Byrnes Downs, a neighborhood west of the Ashley River. On the other side of the river is the peninsula with historic downtown Charleston; you can drive over the bridge and be there in less than 10 minutes. The West Ashley Greenway, a rail trail that extends more than 10 miles, is less than two blocks from this property, and a number of restaurants, bars and shops are clustered along main roads to the north and east. A Whole Foods and a tennis center that charges a nominal fee for court use are less than a mile west. Folly Beach is about 10 miles south.

Size: 1,384 square feet

Price per square foot: $452

Indoors: The front door opens into a living room with original hardwood floors and traditional molding painted a glossy white. Next to it is a dining room lit by a brass chandelier with spidery arms and double-hung windows with energy-efficient glass. The adjacent galley kitchen was recently remodeled and has marble-topped, white custom cabinets, subway-tiled walls, wide-board flooring and stainless steel appliances, including a gas range.

Two bedrooms with hardwood floors, chair-rail molding and sash windows with shutters are on the main level. They share a bathroom that has an original cast-iron tub, basket-weave floor tile and striped wallpaper. A small third bedroom was converted into a windowed laundry room. The attic was remade into a bedroom that is currently being used as an office. The en suite bathroom has striped wallpaper and a shower.

Outdoor space: A white picket fence surrounds the front lawn. The kitchen opens to a moss-covered stone patio with boxwoods, azaleas and camellias. Beyond that is a rear lawn area and additional garden beds. A small storage shed is attached to one side of the house, and a driveway for off-street parking is on the other side.

Taxes: $1,548 (2020, based on a tax assessment of $11,330)

Contact: Jimmy Dye, The Cassina Group, 843-628-0008; [*thecassinagroup.com*](https://www.thecassinagroup.com/homes/13-Colleton-Drive/Charleston/SC/29407/114959160/?utm_source=NEWSPAPER&amp;utm_campaign=NYT+4.21&amp;mdv=2&amp;mpv=30&amp;utm_medium=referral)

Omaha | $650,000

A two-bedroom, two-bathroom condo in a converted industrial loft building

This home is one of eight units in a turn-of-the-20th-century brick factory building in the Old Market neighborhood of Omaha. It is surrounded by restaurants, pubs and coffeehouses and a few blocks from a library, a farmers’ market and the Orpheum Theater for the performing arts. The CHI Health Center, which holds sporting events, is a mile northeast. The 31-acre Heartland of America Park is about half a mile east, at the edge of the Missouri River.

Size: 2,287 square feet

Price per square foot: $284

Indoors: This unit is on the second floor of the three-story elevator building. Vintage features include exposed brick, timber posts and beams, hardwood floors (carpeted in some rooms) and oversized windows, many arched. The living-and-dining room includes modern pendant lights that have the look of Saturn and an enormous vestigial metal door set into a brick wall that once connected rooms and was preserved as an architectural element. The kitchen opens to this space with an L-shaped bar and see-through upper cabinets suspended by cables. Within the kitchen are a corner sink with two basins and stainless steel appliances.

One bedroom has painted wood floors and contains a raised corner office area with built-in wood-and-concrete shelves. The walk-in closet just outside is fitted with a dresser and multiple nooks for hanging clothes. It is next to a bathroom that includes a vanity with double sinks, a jetted tub set into a concrete pedestal and a glass-and-concrete-walled shower with interior tiling. The second bedroom has a wall of exposed brick, natural wood floors and a large closet. The second bathroom includes a combined tub and shower.

Outdoor space: Residents share a courtyard with seating and planted areas (and huge exposed ducts crossing the area like steampunk sculpture). This unit comes with two heated garage spaces and a large basement storage space.

Taxes: $6,710 (2020, based on a tax assessment of $313,400), plus a $330 monthly homeowner fee

Contact: Sandi S. Downing, Sandi Downing Real Estate, 402-214-5621; [*sandidowningrealestate.com*](https://www.thecassinagroup.com/homes/13-Colleton-Drive/Charleston/SC/29407/114959160/?utm_source=NEWSPAPER&amp;utm_campaign=NYT+4.21&amp;mdv=2&amp;mpv=30&amp;utm_medium=referral)

Bernardsville, N.J. | $634,900

A converted stone church with four bedrooms and two and a half bathrooms, on a 0.27-acre lot

George B. Post, the Beaux-Arts architect, designed a number of Gilded Age mansions for the wealthy summer residents of Bernardsville, a borough of 7,500 people, about 40 miles west of Manhattan and about eight miles southwest of Morristown, N.J. It is believed that in the 1890s or early 1900s, his office furnished the plans for a parish church in a ***working-class*** neighborhood, to be used by the Italian Catholic stonemasons who built the houses of tycoons on Bernardsville Mountain. In 1995, the little church was turned into a residence. It has undergone multiple updates since then, including a new kitchen, new bathrooms and a renovated basement with two bedrooms and a rec room.

The house is half a mile south of the historic center of Bernardsville, which includes restaurants, shopping, a library, a barber shop, a weekly farmers’ market and a New Jersey Transit train station. The ride to Pennsylvania Station takes about an hour and a quarter, with a transfer in Summit, N.J.

Size: 2,310 square feet

Price per square foot: $275

Indoors: The phrase “cathedral ceiling” certainly applies to this living room, whose sloping timber ceiling with exposed trusses is 24 feet high and still has the hole through which the bell rope dangled. The floors are refinished hardwood, and windows bring in light on three sides.

A second cathedral ceiling (this one is 14 feet) is in the family room, where there is a wood-burning fireplace set in an exposed-stone chimney. The adjacent kitchen has wood cabinets topped in granite and an island topped in Polarstone quartz. It also has wood floors, blown-glass pendant lights and a double-doored Elfa pantry, and is connected to a separate dining room.

A staircase off the kitchen leads up to a newly carpeted second floor. Both bedrooms on this level have sloped ceilings and interior windows overlooking the main room below. They share a hall bathroom with a walk-in shower with sliding-glass doors.

The refinished basement has a dropped ceiling with decorative paneling, engineered wood flooring in the rec room and vinyl flooring in the bedrooms. There is a full bathroom attached to one of the bedrooms.

Outdoor space: A grassy front lawn and large pine tree are in front of the house. In back, a recently replaced French door opens to a new deck, which steps down to a fenced yard with a central firepit and a koi pond. A gravel driveway leads to a two-year-old carport and a storage shed beyond that.

Taxes: $10,524 (2020, based on a tax assessment of $500,200)

Contact: Rich Lattmann, Kienlen Lattmann Sotheby’s International Realty, 908-839-8487; [*sothebysrealty.com*](https://www.thecassinagroup.com/homes/13-Colleton-Drive/Charleston/SC/29407/114959160/?utm_source=NEWSPAPER&amp;utm_campaign=NYT+4.21&amp;mdv=2&amp;mpv=30&amp;utm_medium=referral)

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Keen Eye Marketing FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Prime Minister Helps Change 'So Long' of British Soccer Clubs to 'So Sorry'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62H1-1MV1-JBG3-60RT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 22, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1216 words

**Byline:** By Stephen Castle

**Body**

The British prime minister was able to take the moral high ground by opposing the breakaway European soccer league that proved to be highly unpopular with fans.

LONDON -- Fans loathed it, politicians opposed it and even Prince William warned of the damage it risked ''to the game we love.''

So swift and ferocious was the backlash to a plan to create a new super league for European soccer that on Wednesday six of England's most famous clubs were in disarray, issuing abject apologies as they disowned the failed breakaway project they had pledged to join.

Yet not everyone was a loser. For Prime Minister Boris Johnson of Britain, the crisis has presented a rare opportunity to seize the moral high ground on an issue that matters to many of the voters who helped him to a landslide victory in the 2019 election.

Threatening to use any means he could to block the plan, Mr. Johnson positioned himself as the defender of the ***working-class*** soccer fans whose forebears created England's soccer clubs -- and the enemy of the billionaire owners who now dominate the English game.

''Boris Johnson is a populist by instinct,'' said Anand Menon, professor of European politics and foreign affairs at King's College London, adding that the prime minister spotted a political opportunity in a sporting disaster. The backlash to the super league plan was so complete that Mr. Johnson's opposition was a ''no brainer,'' he said -- the political equivalent of scoring in an open goal.

''His only slight gamble in trying to stop it was that he might lose, but it was hard to see how that could happen,'' Professor Menon said. Once English and international soccer authorities threatened reprisals against the super league clubs and players, their position was untenable, he said.

Others believe that there could be risks down the line, however, and that in allowing his government to threaten to put everything on the table to prevent the formation of the new league -- even raising the prospect of tampering with the ownership of soccer clubs -- Mr. Johnson might have raised expectations that could not be fulfilled.

Significantly, the government refused to rule out suggestions that it could legislate over ownership or copy German rules that give fans real control by preventing commercial investors from owning more than 49 percent of clubs.

In the short-term, however, the soccer crisis has helped Mr. Johnson by distracting attention away from negative headlines over a lobbying scandal largely centered on one of his predecessors, David Cameron, and his contacts with a current cabinet minister.

On Wednesday that issue crept closer to Mr. Johnson with the emergence of text messages he sent to a businessman and Brexit supporter, James Dyson, promising that Mr. Dyson's employees would not have to pay extra tax if they came to Britain to make ventilators during the early stages of the pandemic. Mr. Dyson's company announced in 2019 that it would move its headquarters to Singapore, citing growing demand in Asia.

In recent months, the successful roll out of vaccines against Covid-19 has revived Mr. Johnson's fortunes after a succession of missteps last year when the government's handling of the pandemic faltered.

So prevalent is soccer now in Britain's national life that it cropped up then, too.

In April 2020, the health secretary, Matt Hancock, attacked highly paid soccer players, calling on them to ''take a pay cut and play their part,'' during the pandemic. But within months the government was outmaneuvered by Marcus Rashford, a star player for Manchester United and England.

Invoking his own poor childhood, Mr. Rashford galvanized a campaign against child poverty, and ultimately forced Mr. Johnson to change policy over free school meals.

This week the boot was on the other foot as Mr. Johnson was able to condemn the super league plans before Mr. Rashford, whose club initially signed up to the proposals.

It required no expertise to be ''horrified'' at the prospect of the super league ''being cooked up by a small number of clubs.,'' wrote Mr. Johnson in the Sun newspaper.

''Football clubs in every town and city and at every tier of the pyramid have a unique place at the heart of their communities, and are an unrivaled source of passionate local pride,'' he added.

Never a big soccer fan himself, Mr. Johnson framed his opposition to the plan in his belief in competition.

Each year the three worst performing clubs are relegated from England's Premier League -- its top domestic tier -- while the top ones qualify to play in European competitions the following season. The European Super League proposal would have seen a number of big soccer clubs becoming permanent members -- something that Mr. Johnson likened to creating a cartel.

In fact, when England's first Football League was established in 1888 it was on a similar model and its membership was not selected on merit, said Matthew Taylor, professor of history at De Montfort University, Leicester who has written widely on soccer.

Yet the furor over the European Super League illustrates the growing role soccer has played in national life in recent decades.

''In the last 15-20 years it seems to be so pervasive and so significant to British culture -- very broadly defined -- that politicians have to say something,'' Professor Taylor said.

No longer does it seem odd for politicians and members of the government ''to make statements on issues that 40-50 years ago would have been seen as private matters,'' he added.

That change first became noticeable under Tony Blair's premiership as the growing success of the English Premier League, combined with the country's ''cool Britannia'' branding, gave soccer a great profile.

But soccer can be dangerous territory too for politicians. Mr. Cameron was much mocked when he once appeared to forget his long-running claim to support the Birmingham team Aston Villa and seemed to suggest he favored a rival that played in similar colors.

Mr. Johnson, who appears to prefer rugby to soccer, has avoided that fate by never declaring his allegiance to any team.

But suggestions that the government might legislate to control the ownership of clubs seemed to conflict with Mr. Johnson's free-market instincts.

Although a Saudi Arabian plan to buy the Premier League club Newcastle United ultimately failed, Mr. Johnson promised the Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, that he would investigate a holdup to the proposed takeover, according to British media reports.

''One of the many dishonesties in all this is that it would allow money to corrupt football,'' said Professor Menon, referring to the European Super League plan. ''Money has already corrupted football. Rich clubs get richer.''

The professor said he believed that very little would ultimately change because any substantial intervention would upset the successful operations of the Premier League, and therefore annoy fans.

But Professor Taylor pointed to Germany as a successful alternative model, and said that in threatening to intervene in the running of soccer Mr. Johnson might ultimately disappoint some of those who are applauding him now.

''Having made such a significant and bold statement, I don't think this discussion will go away now,'' Professor Taylor.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/21/world/europe/soccer-super-league-britain-johnson.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/21/world/europe/soccer-super-league-britain-johnson.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Manchester United's Old Trafford Stadium on Wednesday, after the collapse of English involvement in the proposed European Super League. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jon Super/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 22, 2021

**End of Document**



[***'Stoker,' 'Synchronic' and More Hidden Streaming Gems***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:630F-5F21-JBG3-63G3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 24, 2021 Thursday

The New York Times on the Web

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**Section:** Section ; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk

**Length:** 1346 words

**Byline:** By Jason Bailey

**Body**

Keep your home viewing interesting with these options off the beaten path.

This month, tucked away in the quiet corners of your subscription streaming services, you'll find a trio of modest sci-fi indies, a handful of powerful character dramas, a smart and savvy rom-com, and a pair of thoughtful documentaries on entertainment figures of both the mainstream and the fringe.

'Supernova' (2021)

Stream it on Hulu.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

There is a scene midway through Harry MacQueen's marvelous drama, in which Tusker (Stanley Tucci), a novelist, begins to give a big speech at a gathering of family and friends. But Tusker has early-onset dementia, and he cannot get through it -- so he hands the speech to Sam (Colin Firth), his partner of decades, to read for him. Firth attempts to read his partner's words without choking up, and Tucci listens with a mixture of shame and conviviality. The entire film has that kind of power, as its stars, who do some of the best acting of the year, convey the running jokes and sly little jabs of a long, comfortable, lived-in relationship, and show how they must summon up all of its accumulated emotion to make it through the toughest trial of their lives.

'Stoker' (2013)

Stream it on HBO Max.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The great South Korean director Park Chan-wook (''The Handmaiden,'' ''Oldboy'') crafts an exhilarating riff on Hitchcock's classic ''Shadow of a Doubt'' with this story of a young woman (here played by Mia Wasikowska) and her mysterious, and perhaps murderous, ''Uncle Charlie'' (Matthew Goode). But Park isn't content with empty homage; he and the screenwriter Wentworth Miller can take their story to places Hitchcock, in his era, could not, and they do so gleefully and unapologetically. Park's direction is stunning, homing in on details, textures and moods, keeping the viewer unbalanced with bizarre compositions and left-field dark comedy, and his entire cast (which also includes Nicole Kidman, Jacki Weaver and Dermot Mulroney) is superb.

'Prospect' (2018)

Stream it on Netflix.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The writing and directing team Christopher Caldwell and Zeek Earl mine a ***working class*** sci-fi groove, reminiscent of ''Alien'' and ''Moon,'' in this story of a father (Jay Duplass) and daughter (Sophie Thatcher), prospectors for hire on a gem-mining mission on a distant moon. The filmmakers neatly fold in Western and action elements, as the duo encounters a verbose outlaw (Pedro Pascal) and wind up fighting not only for their job, but their lives. Caldwell and Earl use their modest budget ingeniously, creating a convincing, otherworldly environment, while Pascal's ''Mandalorian'' fans should enjoy the film's similarly freewheeling fusion of genres and influences.

'Robot & Frank' (2012)

Stream it on Hulu.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Frank Langella is at his absolute best -- wry, funny, cranky and compelling -- as a retired jewel thief who puts together one last score with an unexpected accomplice: the robot companion who's intended to take care of him in his golden years. Peter Sarsgaard voices ''Robot,'' and it says much about the skill of both actors that we not only believe the relationship, but root for it. The director Jake Schreier and the screenwriter Christopher Ford create a believable (slightly) futuristic setting, working through the slight tweaks to current technology that would make Frank's ''butler'' not only possible, but ideal for the task at hand.

'Synchronic' (2020)

Stream it on Netflix.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Justin Benson and Aaron Moorhead, the filmmakers behind the brainteasers ''The Endless'' and ''Spring,'' tell the story of two New Orleans EMT drivers (Anthony Mackie and Jamie Dornan) sniffing out the source of a dangerous synthetic drug. At least, that's what it seems to be about; the script takes a hard turn in another, unexpected direction just past the halfway mark, into territory best left unspoiled. Crackerjack work from a sturdy ensemble cast, but the standout is ''The Falcon and the Winter Soldier'' star Mackie, who does some of his best work to date as a man with nothing left to lose.

'The Hunter' (2011)

Stream it on Amazon.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Snowy, mournful and frequently bleak, this introspective action-tinged drama from the director Daniel Nettheim stars Willem Dafoe (in yet another powerhouse performance) as a mercenary who is hired by a mysterious client to track and kill the Tasmanian tiger -- long thought extinct, and valuable in ways he may not fully understand. What could've been a mindless thriller or a clumsily earnest environmental exposé instead plays as a thoughtful meditation on nature and our place in it. And it's a first-rate character study, brought to life by a stirring actor whose work here, even in lengthy scenes of totally silent preparation and execution, is never less than fascinating.

'Friends with Kids' (2012)

Stream it on HBO Max.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Jennifer Westfeldt's comedy-drama was marketed as something of a companion piece to the previous year's ''Bridesmaids,'' mostly since the films shared four key cast members (Kristen Wiig, Maya Rudolph, Chris O'Dowd and Jon Hamm). But that was about all they had in common, and ''Friends'' suffered in comparison -- unfairly, as Westfeldt (who writes, directs and stars) is quite a different filmmaker, and ''Friends with Kids'' is a much more direct and intimate examination of maturity, relationships and the quest for happiness. Westfeldt and Adam Scott are Harry and Sally-style best friends who decide to have a child without getting romantic; complications, as you might imagine, ensue. But Westfeldt's wise script avoids the easy outs, while displaying a keen ear for character-driving dialogue.

'Like Someone In Love' (2013)

Stream it on Hulu.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The penultimate feature film of the acclaimed director Abbas Kiarostami was a notable departure in setting, marking only the second time he made a film entirely outside of Iran, this time working with a Japanese cast in Tokyo. But his mesmerizing style is as present as ever in this modest but moving story of three people -- a young sex worker, her oblivious boyfriend, and the old man who begins as her client, but becomes more of a confidante. Kiarostami lets his scenes unfold with a dreamlike delicacy, yet his touch is precise; it's the kind of film that sneaks up on you, casting a spell that isn't clear until it comes to its shattering conclusion.

'Whitney: Can I Be Me' (2017)

Stream it on Amazon.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

In 1999, Whitney Houston went on a world tour, accompanied by her husband Bobby Brown, her best friend (and onetime romantic partner) Robyn Crawford and a documentary crew that was given total access to her, onstage and off. That footage never saw the light of day -- until the director Nick Broomfield coupled it with additional archival footage and contemporary interviews, in an attempt to puzzle out why happiness so evaded Houston that she turned for refuge to the drugs that eventually took her life. The result of this marriage of materials is an unflinching portrait of addiction and codependence, by turns heart-wrenching and insightful.

'Beaver Trilogy Part IV' (2015)

Stream it on Amazon.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

In 1979, the filmmaker Trent Harris met a strange guy named ''Groovin' Gary,'' switched his video camera on, and turned their conversation into a short film called ''The Beaver Kid.'' Two years later, he reenacted that conversation with an unknown young actor named Sean Penn to make another short film; four years later, he did it again with another then-unknown actor, Crispin Glover. Harris's ''Beaver Trilogy'' became an underground sensation, one of the first of what we now call ''viral videos,'' and this smart, funny and knowing documentary from the director Brad Besser not only tells that story, but also explores how these strange little short films changed the lives of those who made them. Bill Hader narrates.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/movies/stoker-synchronic-streaming-movies.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/movies/stoker-synchronic-streaming-movies.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Mia Wasikowska in ''Stoker,'' from Park Chan-wook. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Macall Polay/Fox Searchlight Pictures FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***What We Know (So Far) About New York’s Altered Political Landscape; On Politics***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6309-0S71-JBG3-62GG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 23, 2021 Wednesday 20:44 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1312 words

**Byline:** Giovanni Russonello

**Highlight:** As Eric Adams has moderate Democrats feeling bullish, the City Council appears to be shifting leftward.

**Body**

As Eric Adams has moderate Democrats feeling bullish, the City Council appears to be shifting leftward.

In the end, the Yang Gang went bust.

Andrew Yang entered the race for New York mayor in January as the front-runner, but his happy-go-lucky, antipolitical style of campaigning left him unable to hold onto voters’ confidence. As early results came in for the Democratic primary after polls closed on Tuesday, Mr. Yang was on track to finish in a distant fourth place. He’s since conceded.

Still, that doesn’t necessarily mean that New Yorkers wanted a boldly ideological candidate either — or one with a wonky political approach. [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html), a longtime Brooklyn politician and a former Republican, whose docket of endorsements and donors arguably looked more similar to Mr. Yang’s than any other candidate’s did and who similarly positioned himself as a no-nonsense Everyman, held a wide lead as early returns arrived.

With 83 percent of precinct results in, [*Mr. Adams currently has 31.7 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html) of the first-choice votes. He’s far from the certain winner: New York City elections are using a ranked-choice system this year for the first time, so it’ll probably take weeks to know who will be the Democratic nominee (a.k.a., the next mayor, almost guaranteed).

But Mr. Adams is in a very strong position, meaning that even as the New York City Council has drifted leftward in recent years, its voters may choose a mayor with more moderate — and in some cases, even conservative-leaning — politics.

“We always say people like divided government, and if you think of the Democratic Party as a very large and diverse party, we can see an element of divided government here,” said Christina Greer, a political scientist at Fordham University and host of “FAQ NYC,” a podcast about New York City politics.

Maya Wiley, the leading progressive candidate in the race and Mr. Adams’s closest runner-up, is currently at 22.3 percent — just shy of 10 points behind Mr. Adams. Many elections experts consider a 10-point divide to be the threshold beyond which it becomes virtually impossible for a candidate to overtake the leader in subsequent rounds.

If Mr. Adams’s numbers hold, he will outperform his already-strong showing in pre-election polls, demonstrating that he gained momentum only in the last days of the campaign, as Mr. Yang was losing his. Many lapsed Mr. Yang supporters appear to have gone for Mr. Adams instead.

“We know that there’s going to be twos and threes and fours,” Mr. Adams told his supporters during a wide-ranging speech on Tuesday night. “But there’s something else we know. We know that New York City said, ‘Our first choice is Eric Adams.’”

In the speech, Mr. Adams picked up on the major themes of his campaign, particularly public safety. Just a year after the City Council responded to activists by passing a budget that [*made major changes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html) to police funding, Mr. Adams ran his campaign in direct opposition to the “defund” narrative.

He insisted on both “prevention and intervention,” in campaign speeches, emphasizing his past as a police officer and his support for law enforcement, while also nodding to liberals’ demand for youth programs and other root-cause approaches to crime prevention. On education and business regulation, he has sounded many moderate-to-conservative notes, including robust support for charter schools. His campaign’s ties to conservative and business-friendly groups [*have drawn scrutiny*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html).

But Dr. Greer said that his authenticity and his direct appeals to ***working-class*** New Yorkers had seemingly gone a long way. “With eight years of Bill de Blasio and 12 years of Michael Bloomberg, I think people felt left out and ignored,” she said, making a particular note of Mr. Adams’s support outside Manhattan. “I think Adams really tapped into that effectively.”

What we know, and when we’ll know more

Partly in response to the coronavirus pandemic, election officials allowed any voter to request an absentee ballot in the primary, and about 220,000 New Yorkers did. The deadline for those ballots to be received at election offices isn’t until next week, and then the process of curing ballots will begin.

Since election officials can’t move past tallying the first round until all ballots have been counted, there’s no way for them to release more than first-round results until July 9.

From there, the [*complex but ruthlessly simple math*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html) of ranked-preference tallying will be executed swiftly, and the winner will be declared.

Possibly working in Mr. Adams’s favor is the fact that very few other candidates banded together in strategic coalitions. The one exception is the 11th-hour pact made by Mr. Yang and Kathryn Garcia, who is currently just behind Ms. Wiley, at 19.5 percent.

In the final weeks of the race, when Mr. Adams was seen as the front-runner, some progressives mounted an “anyone but Adams” campaign, but the other candidates didn’t formally get behind it. At this point, he would have to have performed dismally in second-choice tallies and lower to lose the election.

Is the City Council tilting further left?

Put together, Mr. Yang, Mr. Adams and Ms. Garcia — the most prominent centrist candidates — accounted for more than 60 percent of voters’ first-choice picks. Ms. Wiley, Scott Stringer and Dianne Morales, the three progressives, received a combined total of closer to 30 percent.

Still, whoever enters Gracie Mansion will have to contend with a New York City Council that appears to be on a leftward trajectory. Progressives gained significant clout during Bill de Blasio’s eight years as mayor, and Tuesday’s primary may have pushed it even further in that direction.

Most races remain uncalled, but an array of progressive candidates appeared to be strongly positioned as results came in. Tiffany Cabán, who narrowly lost a closely watched race in 2019 for Queens district attorney, had a wide lead in the race for a council seat that includes the Astoria neighborhood.

With Corey Johnson, the speaker, barred by term limits from running for re-election, the council will vote early next year to choose its speaker, in what will be a measure of progressives’ influence under the new mayor.

Other New York races

Progressives scored victories in other, slightly less-high-profile elections across the state.

[*Brad Lander*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html), a member of the City Council whose campaign was endorsed by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Senator Bernie Sanders and other left-wing figures, earned the most first-place votes in the race for New York City comptroller.

Mr. Johnson, the council speaker, whose efforts to find compromise on police reform last year left him at odds with many on the party’s left wing, is in second place. The results for that race also won’t be fully known until July 9 at the earliest.

The Manhattan district attorney’s race is technically a statewide position, meaning the race did not use a ranked-choice system. Alvin Bragg — who ran on fighting mass incarceration and racism in policing — appears most likely to win outright, even though he held only a [*three-percentage-point lead*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html) over Tali Farhadian Weinstein, his main rival.

In Buffalo, the state’s second-largest city, India Walton — a 38-year-old nurse and democratic socialist organizer — won the Democratic nomination for mayor, defeating a four-term incumbent with close ties to Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

If she wins the general election, Ms. Walton would become the first self-described socialist to run a major city since 1960 (because, no, the tiny city of [*Burlington doesn’t count*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html)).

On Politics is also available as a newsletter. [*Sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html) to get it delivered to your inbox.

Is there anything you think we’re missing? Anything you want to see more of? We’d love to hear from you. Email us at [*onpolitics@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/nyregion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor-transition.html).

PHOTO: Eric Adams passed an Andrew Yang volunteer on Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY James Estrin/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 25, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Rich Kids Who Want to Tear Down Capitalism***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61CW-2BP1-DXY4-X24P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 27, 2020 Friday 14:06 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 2240 words

**Byline:** Zoë Beery

**Highlight:** Socialist-minded millennial heirs are trying to live their values by getting rid of their money.

**Body**

Lately, Sam Jacobs has been having a lot of conversations with his family’s lawyers. He’s trying to gain access to more of his $30 million trust fund. At 25, he’s hit the age when many heirs can blow their money on harebrained businesses or a stable of sports cars. He doesn’t want to do that, but by wealth management standards, his plan is just as bad. He wants to give it all away.

“I want to build a world where someone like me, a young person who controls tens of millions of dollars, is impossible,” he said.

A socialist since college, Mr. Jacobs sees his family’s “extreme, plutocratic wealth” as both a moral and economic failure. He wants to put his inheritance toward ending capitalism, and by that he means using his money to undo systems that accumulate money for those at the top, and that have played a large role in widening economic and racial inequality.

Millennials will be the recipients of the largest generational shift of assets in American history — the Great Wealth Transfer, as finance types call it. Tens of trillions of dollars are expected to pass between generations in just the next decade.

And that money, like all wealth in the United States, is extremely concentrated in the upper brackets. Mr. Jacobs, whose grandfather was a founder of Qualcomm, expects to receive up to $100 million over the course of his lifetime.

Most of his fellow millennials, however, are receiving a rotten inheritance — [*debt, dim job prospects and a figment of a social safety net*](https://highline.huffingtonpost.com/articles/en/poor-millennials/). The youngest of them were 15 in 2011 when Occupy Wall Street drew a line between the have-a-lots and everyone else; the oldest, if they were lucky, were working in a post-recession economy even before the current recession. Class and inequality have been part of the political conversation for most of their adult lives.

In their time, the ever-widening gulf between the rich and poor has pushed left-wing politics back into the American political mainstream. President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. trailed Senator Bernie Sanders, the socialist candidate, by 20 points among millennial voters in this year’s Democratic presidential primary. And over the last six years, millennials have taken the Democratic Socialists of America from a fringe organization with an average member age of 60 to a national force with chapters in every state and a membership of nearly 100,000, most of them under 35.

Mr. Jacobs, as both a trust-fund kid and an anticapitalist, is in a rare position among leftists fighting against economic inequality. But he isn’t alone in trying to figure out, as he put it, “what it means to be with the 99 percent, when you’re the 1 percent.”

Challenging the System

“I was always taught that this is just the way the world is, that my family has wealth while others don’t, and that because of that, I need to give some of it away, but not necessarily question why it was there,” said Rachel Gelman, a 30-year-old in Oakland, Calif., who describes her politics as “anticapitalist, anti-imperialist and abolitionist.”

Her family always gave generously to liberal causes and civil society groups. Ms. Gelman supports groups devoted to ending inequality, including the Movement for Black Lives, the National Day Laborer Organizing Network and Critical Resistance, a leading prison abolition group.

“My money is mostly stocks, which means it comes from underpaying and undervaluing ***working-class*** people, and that’s impossible to disconnect from the economic legacies of Indigenous genocide and slavery,” Ms. Gelman said. “Once I realized that, I couldn’t imagine doing anything with my wealth besides redistribute it to these communities.”

According to the consulting firm Accenture, the Silent Generation and baby boomers will gift their heirs up to $30 trillion by 2030, and up to $75 trillion by 2060. These fortunes began to amass decades ago — in some cases centuries. But the concentration of wealth became stratospheric starting in the 1970s, when neoliberalism [*became the financial sector’s guiding economic philosophy*](https://highline.huffingtonpost.com/articles/en/poor-millennials/) and companies began to [*obsessively pursue*](https://highline.huffingtonpost.com/articles/en/poor-millennials/) higher returns for shareholders.

“The wealth millennials are inheriting came from a mammoth redistribution away from the working masses, creating a super-rich tiny minority at the expense of a fleeting American dream that is now out of reach to most people,” said Richard D. Wolff, a Marxist and an emeritus economics professor at University of Massachusetts Amherst who has published 12 books about class and inequality.

He said he has been professionally arguing against capitalism’s selling points since his teaching career began, in 1967, but that his millennial students “are more open to hearing that message than their parents ever were.”

Heirs whose wealth has come from a specific source sometimes use that history to guide their giving. Pierce Delahunt, a 32-year-old “socialist, anarchist, Marxist, communist or all of the above,” has a trust fund that was financed by their former stepfather’s outlet mall empire. (Mx. Delahunt takes nongendered pronouns.)

“When I think about outlet malls, I think about intersectional oppression,” Mx. Delahunt said. There’s the originally Indigenous land each mall was built on, plus the low wages paid to retail and food service workers, who are disproportionately people of color, and the carbon emissions of manufacturing and transporting the goods. With that on their mind, Mx. Delahunt gives away $10,000 a month, divided between 50 small organizations, most of which have an anticapitalist mission and in some way tackle the externalities of discount shopping.

If money is power, then true wealth redistribution also means redistributing authority. Margi Dashevsky, who is 33 and lives in Alaska, gets guidance on her charitable giving from an advisory team of three women activists from Indigenous and Black power movements. “The happenstance of me being born into this wealth doesn’t mean I’m somehow omniscient about how it should be used,” she said. “It actually gives me a lot of blind spots.”

She also donates to social justice funds like Third Wave Fund, where grant-making is guided by the communities receiving funding, instead of being decided by a board of wealthy individuals. The latter sort of nonprofit, Ms. Dashevsky said, “comes from a place of assuming incompetence, putting up all these hurdles for activists and wasting their time on things like impact reporting. I want to flip that on its head by stepping back, trusting and listening.”

Of course, an individual act of wealth redistribution does not, on its own, change a system. But these heirs see themselves as part of a bigger shift, and are dedicated to funding its momentum.

The Revolution Starts at the Dinner Table

Any leftist trying to shake off an inheritance will, at some point, find their way to Resource Generation; all of the heirs in this article did. The organization, founded in 1998, is a politicization machine for wealthy 18- to 35-year-olds.

The nonprofit offers programming that encourages members to see capitalism not as a market-based equalizer promising upward mobility, but as a damaging system predicated on, as Resource Generation puts it, “stolen land, stolen labor and stolen lives.” In go young people knotted by tension between their progressive values and their wealth; out come determined campaigners with a plan to redistribute.

Maria Myotte, the organization’s communications director, said that membership grows each time the nation has a reckoning: Occupy Wall Street, the 2016 presidential election, and this year’s twin jolts of the Covid-19 pandemic and the uprising against anti-Black racism all attracted newbies. There are currently around 1,000 dues-paying members at local chapters around the U.S. According to the most recent internal survey, the wider Resource Generation network, which includes some nonmembers, collectively expects to control $22 billion in their lifetimes.

Heirs who want to redistribute their wealth said that, at first, they approached the task with the righteous fire of revolutionaries, castigating family members for their coziness with privilege. “There were many angry conversations around the dinner table where I was an impatient, arrogant brat,” said Sam Vinal, a 34-year-old in Los Angeles. But many have found that they can be more persuasive when they treat these conversations like friendly political canvassing.

When Mr. Vinal’s mother wanted to start a family foundation, an arrangement typically focused on a single charitable issue, Mr. Vinal saw an opportunity to instead create a vehicle for more comprehensive change. He set up conversations with leaders of various social movements to convince his mother to change the mission. “That was a light bulb moment for my mom, to hear directly from the front lines,” he said.

Since its creation in 2017, the foundation has supported radical organizations, with guidance from a group of activists. Mr. Vinal spends much of his time organizing other young people with family foundations to take theirs in this direction.

“I try to understand where people are coming from, the bubbles of race and class we get stuck in, so that I can help them be more imaginative about where we can go beyond capitalism,” he said.

Building the ‘Solidarity Economy’

The [*racial wealth gap*](https://highline.huffingtonpost.com/articles/en/poor-millennials/) means that heirs who want to redistribute their wealth are overwhelmingly white. People of color who are members of Resource Generation, for instance, tend to have access to less overall wealth, or will not inherit until later in life. The wealthiest are transracial adoptees or those who have a white parent. This makes the approach to redistribution a little more complicated.

“The narrative of giving away everything feels like it’s being framed by white inheritors,” said Elizabeth Baldwin, a 34-year-old democratic socialist in Cambridge, Mass., who was adopted from India by a white family when she was a baby. Heirs in her position, she said, must decide whether to redistribute to their own communities or others’, and what it means to give up economic privilege when they don’t have the kind of safety net that comes with being white. She plans to keep enough of her inheritance to buy an apartment and raise a family, enjoying the sort of pleasant middle-class existence denied to many people of color in the United States.

Because her adoptive family’s wealth originated in land ownership and slavery, she donates to anti-racist groups and will soon begin making low-interest loans to Black-owned businesses. “The money I’m living on was made from exploiting people that look like me, so I see my giving as reparations,” she said.

Ms. Baldwin has long-term relationships with Grassroots International and Thousand Currents, philanthropy networks working in many postcolonial countries, including India, whose impoverishment she sees as a symptom of Western capitalism. It is sometimes “strange,” she admitted, to be making reparations to her own people. “But no one else in my family talks about where this money came from, and I feel like I have to do it,” she said.

There’s another hitch: Because the stock market is both an engine of American capitalism and responsible in many cases for heirs’ massive individual wealth, few want anything to do with it.

“I get rich because other people aren’t getting rich, and I don’t want to keep making more wealth off investments in things like Coca-Cola and Exxon-Mobil,” said Ms. Baldwin. “I would rather put my money into a community that has been denied economic resources and disrupt the system.”

She is doing this by investing in what she and her peers call the “solidarity economy.”

In short, this means using their money to support more equitable economic infrastructures. This includes investing in or donating to credit unions, worker-owned businesses, community land trusts, and nonprofits aiming to maximize quality of life through democratic decision making, instead of maximizing profits through competition. Emma Thomas, a 29-year-old democratic socialist who is also taking her money out of the stock market, described what she’s now investing in as “an economy that is about exchange and taking care of needs, that is cooperative and sustainable, and that doesn’t demand unfettered growth.”

This summer, she was part of a team that organized about 250 people to support the Black Land and Power Project, moving money from asset portfolios to 10 Black-run land sites across the U.S. (Because of the nation’s [*history of economic racism*](https://highline.huffingtonpost.com/articles/en/poor-millennials/), many solidarity economy projects include a racial justice element.)

To Ms. Thomas, the prospect of contributing to a solidarity economy is a refreshingly tangible expression of her values, compared to the abstraction of accumulating portfolio returns. “At some point, these numbers on a screen are imaginary,” she said. “But what’s not imaginary is whether you have shelter, food and a community. Those are true returns.”

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY JESSE UNTRACHT-OAKNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (ST1); Rachel Gelman, left, said because her family’s wealth accumulated in stocks, “it comes from underpaying and undervaluing ***working-class*** people.” Below, Pierce Delahunt donates to anticapitalist organizations. (ST8-ST9); Top, Elizabeth Baldwin said, “The money I’m living on was made from exploiting people that look like me.” Above, Emma Thomas favors an economy that “is about exchange and taking care of needs.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY KAYANA SZYMCZAK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (ST9)

**Load-Date:** December 16, 2020

**End of Document**



[***In Chaos of Super League Fiasco, Johnson Seizes an Opportunity to Score***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62GV-BF01-JBG3-64V8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Stephen Castle

**Highlight:** The British prime minister was able to take the moral high ground by opposing the breakaway European soccer league that proved to be highly unpopular with fans.

**Body**

The British prime minister was able to take the moral high ground by opposing the breakaway European soccer league that proved to be highly unpopular with fans.

LONDON — Fans loathed it, politicians opposed it and even Prince William warned of the damage it risked “to the game we love.”

So swift and ferocious was the backlash to a plan to create a new super league for European soccer that on Wednesday six of England’s most famous clubs were in disarray, issuing abject apologies as they disowned the [*failed breakaway project*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/sports/soccer/super-league-collapse.html?searchResultPosition=3) they had pledged to join.

Yet not everyone was a loser. For [*Prime Minister Boris Johnson of Britain*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/sports/soccer/super-league-collapse.html?searchResultPosition=3), the crisis has presented a rare opportunity to seize the moral high ground on an issue that matters to many of the voters who helped him to a landslide victory in the 2019 election.

Threatening to use any means he could to block the plan, Mr. Johnson positioned himself as the defender of the ***working-class*** soccer fans whose forebears created England’s soccer clubs — and the enemy of the billionaire owners who now dominate the English game.

“Boris Johnson is a populist by instinct,” said Anand Menon, professor of European politics and foreign affairs at King’s College London, adding that the prime minister spotted a political opportunity in a[*sporting disaster*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/sports/soccer/super-league-collapse.html?searchResultPosition=3). The backlash to the super league plan was so complete that Mr. Johnson’s opposition was a “no brainer,” he said — the political equivalent of scoring in an open goal.

“His only slight gamble in trying to stop it was that he might lose, but it was hard to see how that could happen,” Professor Menon said. Once English and [*international soccer authorities*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/sports/soccer/super-league-collapse.html?searchResultPosition=3) threatened reprisals against the super league clubs and players, their position was untenable, he said.

Others believe that there could be risks down the line, however, and that in allowing his government to threaten to put everything on the table to prevent the formation of the new league — even raising the prospect of tampering with the ownership of soccer clubs — Mr. Johnson might have raised expectations that could not be fulfilled.

Significantly, the government refused to rule out suggestions that it could legislate over ownership or copy German rules that give fans real control by preventing commercial investors from owning more than 49 percent of clubs.

In the short-term, however, the [*soccer crisis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/sports/soccer/super-league-collapse.html?searchResultPosition=3) has helped Mr. Johnson by distracting attention away from negative headlines over a lobbying scandal largely centered on one of his predecessors, David Cameron, and his contacts with a current cabinet minister.

On Wednesday that issue crept closer to Mr. Johnson with the emergence of text messages he sent to a businessman and [*Brexit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/sports/soccer/super-league-collapse.html?searchResultPosition=3)supporter, James Dyson, promising that Mr. Dyson’s employees would not have to pay extra tax if they came to Britain to make ventilators during the early stages of the pandemic. Mr. Dyson’s company [*announced in 2019*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/sports/soccer/super-league-collapse.html?searchResultPosition=3) that it would move its headquarters to Singapore, citing growing demand in Asia.

In recent months, the [*successful roll out of vaccines*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/sports/soccer/super-league-collapse.html?searchResultPosition=3) against Covid-19 has revived Mr. Johnson’s fortunes after a succession of missteps last year when the government’s handling of the pandemic faltered.

So prevalent is soccer now in Britain’s national life that it cropped up then, too.

In April 2020, the health secretary, Matt Hancock, attacked highly paid soccer players, calling on them to “take a pay cut and play their part,” during the pandemic. But within months the government was outmaneuvered by Marcus Rashford, a star player for Manchester United and England.

Invoking his own poor childhood, Mr. Rashford galvanized a campaign against child poverty, and ultimately forced Mr. Johnson to change policy over free school meals.

This week the boot was on the other foot as Mr. Johnson was able to condemn the super league plans before Mr. Rashford, whose club initially signed up to the proposals.

It required no expertise to be “horrified” at the prospect of the super league “being cooked up by a small number of clubs,” [*wrote Mr. Johnson in the Sun newspaper*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/sports/soccer/super-league-collapse.html?searchResultPosition=3).

“Football clubs in every town and city and at every tier of the pyramid have a unique place at the heart of their communities, and are an unrivaled source of passionate local pride,” he added.

Never a big soccer fan himself, Mr. Johnson framed his opposition to the plan in his belief in competition.

Each year the three worst performing clubs are relegated from England’s Premier League — its top domestic tier — while the top ones qualify to play in European competitions the following season. [*The European Super League*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/sports/soccer/super-league-collapse.html?searchResultPosition=3) proposal would have seen a number of big soccer clubs becoming permanent members — something that Mr. Johnson likened to creating a cartel.

In fact, when England’s first Football League was established in 1888 it was on a similar model and its membership was not selected on merit, said Matthew Taylor, professor of history at De Montfort University, Leicester who has written widely on soccer.

Yet the furor over the European Super League illustrates the growing role soccer has played in national life in recent decades.

“In the last 15-20 years it seems to be so pervasive and so significant to British culture — very broadly defined — that politicians have to say something,” Professor Taylor said.

No longer does it seem odd for politicians and members of the government “to make statements on issues that 40-50 years ago would have been seen as private matters,” he added.

That change first became noticeable under Tony Blair’s premiership as the growing success of the English Premier League, combined with the country’s “cool Britannia” branding, gave soccer a great profile.

But soccer can be dangerous territory too for politicians. Mr. Cameron was much mocked when he once appeared to forget his long-running claim to support the Birmingham team Aston Villa and seemed to suggest he favored a rival that played in similar colors.

Mr. Johnson, who appears to prefer rugby to soccer, has avoided that fate by never declaring his allegiance to any team.

But suggestions that the government might legislate to control the ownership of clubs seemed to conflict with Mr. Johnson’s free-market instincts.

Although a Saudi Arabian plan to buy the Premier League club Newcastle United ultimately failed, Mr. Johnson promised the Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, that he would investigate a holdup to the proposed takeover, according to British media reports.

“One of the many dishonesties in all this is that it would allow money to corrupt football,” said Professor Menon, referring to the European Super League plan. “Money has already corrupted football. Rich clubs get richer.”

The professor said he believed that very little would ultimately change because any substantial intervention would upset the successful operations of the Premier League, and therefore annoy fans.

But Professor Taylor pointed to Germany as a successful alternative model, and said that in threatening to intervene in the running of soccer Mr. Johnson might ultimately disappoint some of those who are applauding him now.

“Having made such a significant and bold statement, I don’t think this discussion will go away now,” Professor Taylor.

PHOTO: Manchester United’s Old Trafford Stadium on Wednesday, after the collapse of English involvement in the proposed European Super League. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jon Super/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 30, 2021

**End of Document**



[***‘Stoker,’ ‘Synchronic’ and More Hidden Streaming Gems***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6307-MWP1-DXY4-X3YC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 23, 2021 Wednesday 11:28 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1347 words

**Byline:** Jason Bailey

**Highlight:** Keep your home viewing interesting with these options off the beaten path.

**Body**

Keep your home viewing interesting with these options off the beaten path.

This month, tucked away in the quiet corners of your subscription [*streaming*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html) services, you’ll find a trio of modest sci-fi indies, a handful of powerful character dramas, a smart and savvy rom-com, and a pair of thoughtful documentaries on entertainment figures of both the mainstream and the fringe.

‘Supernova’ (2021)

[*Stream it on Hulu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html)]

There is a scene midway through Harry MacQueen’s marvelous drama, in which Tusker (Stanley Tucci), a novelist, begins to give a big speech at a gathering of family and friends. But Tusker has early-onset dementia, and he cannot get through it — so he hands the speech to Sam (Colin Firth), his partner of decades, to read for him. Firth attempts to read his partner’s words without choking up, and Tucci listens with a mixture of shame and conviviality. The entire film has that kind of power, as its stars, who do some of the best acting of the year, convey the running jokes and sly little jabs of a long, comfortable, lived-in relationship, and show how they must summon up all of its accumulated emotion to make it through the toughest trial of their lives.

‘Stoker’ (2013)

[*Stream it on HBO Max*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html)]

The great South Korean director Park Chan-wook (“The Handmaiden,” “Oldboy”) crafts an exhilarating riff on Hitchcock’s classic “Shadow of a Doubt” with this story of a young woman (here played by Mia Wasikowska) and her mysterious, and perhaps murderous, “Uncle Charlie” (Matthew Goode). But Park isn’t content with empty homage; he and the screenwriter Wentworth Miller can take their story to places Hitchcock, in his era, could not, and they do so gleefully and unapologetically. Park’s direction is stunning, homing in on details, textures and moods, keeping the viewer unbalanced with bizarre compositions and left-field dark comedy, and his entire cast (which also includes Nicole Kidman, Jacki Weaver and Dermot Mulroney) is superb.

‘Prospect’ (2018)

[*Stream it on Netflix*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html)]

The writing and directing team Christopher Caldwell and Zeek Earl mine a ***working class*** sci-fi groove, reminiscent of “Alien” and “Moon,” in this story of a father (Jay Duplass) and daughter (Sophie Thatcher), prospectors for hire on a gem-mining mission on a distant moon. The filmmakers neatly fold in Western and action elements, as the duo encounters a verbose outlaw (Pedro Pascal) and wind up fighting not only for their job, but their lives. Caldwell and Earl use their modest budget ingeniously, creating a convincing, otherworldly environment, while Pascal’s “Mandalorian” fans should enjoy the film’s similarly freewheeling fusion of genres and influences.

‘Robot &amp; Frank’ (2012)

[*Stream it on Hulu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html)]

Frank Langella is at his absolute best — wry, funny, cranky and compelling — as a retired jewel thief who puts together one last score with an unexpected accomplice: the robot companion who’s intended to take care of him in his golden years. Peter Sarsgaard voices “Robot,” and it says much about the skill of both actors that we not only believe the relationship, but root for it. The director Jake Schreier and the screenwriter Christopher Ford create a believable (slightly) futuristic setting, working through the slight tweaks to current technology that would make Frank’s “butler” not only possible, but ideal for the task at hand.

‘Synchronic’ (2020)

[*Stream it on Netflix*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html)]

Justin Benson and Aaron Moorhead, the filmmakers behind the brainteasers “The Endless” and “Spring,” tell the story of two New Orleans EMT drivers (Anthony Mackie and Jamie Dornan) sniffing out the source of a dangerous synthetic drug. At least, that’s what it seems to be about; the script takes a hard turn in another, unexpected direction just past the halfway mark, into territory best left unspoiled. Crackerjack work from a sturdy ensemble cast, but the standout is “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” star Mackie, who does some of his best work to date as a man with nothing left to lose.

‘The Hunter’ (2011)

[*Stream it on Amazon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html)]

Snowy, mournful and frequently bleak, this introspective action-tinged drama from the director Daniel Nettheim stars Willem Dafoe (in yet another powerhouse performance) as a mercenary who is hired by a mysterious client to track and kill the Tasmanian tiger — long thought extinct, and valuable in ways he may not fully understand. What could’ve been a mindless thriller or a clumsily earnest environmental exposé instead plays as a thoughtful meditation on nature and our place in it. And it’s a first-rate character study, brought to life by a stirring actor whose work here, even in lengthy scenes of totally silent preparation and execution, is never less than fascinating.

‘Friends with Kids’ (2012)

[*Stream it on HBO Max*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html)]

Jennifer Westfeldt’s comedy-drama was marketed as something of a companion piece to the previous year’s “Bridesmaids,” mostly since the films shared four key cast members (Kristen Wiig, Maya Rudolph, Chris O’Dowd and Jon Hamm). But that was about all they had in common, and “Friends” suffered in comparison — unfairly, as Westfeldt (who writes, directs and stars) is quite a different filmmaker, and “Friends with Kids” is a much more direct and intimate examination of maturity, relationships and the quest for happiness. Westfeldt and Adam Scott are Harry and Sally-style best friends who decide to have a child without getting romantic; complications, as you might imagine, ensue. But Westfeldt’s wise script avoids the easy outs, while displaying a keen ear for character-driving dialogue.

‘Like Someone In Love’ (2013)

[*Stream it on Hulu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html)]

The penultimate feature film of the acclaimed director Abbas Kiarostami was a notable departure in setting, marking only the second time he made a film entirely outside of Iran, this time working with a Japanese cast in Tokyo. But his mesmerizing style is as present as ever in this modest but moving story of three people — a young sex worker, her oblivious boyfriend, and the old man who begins as her client, but becomes more of a confidante. Kiarostami lets his scenes unfold with a dreamlike delicacy, yet his touch is precise; it’s the kind of film that sneaks up on you, casting a spell that isn’t clear until it comes to its shattering conclusion.

‘Whitney: Can I Be Me’ (2017)

[*Stream it on Amazon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html)]

In 1999, Whitney Houston went on a world tour, accompanied by her husband Bobby Brown, her best friend (and [*onetime romantic partner*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html)) Robyn Crawford and a documentary crew that was given total access to her, onstage and off. That footage never saw the light of day — until the director Nick Broomfield coupled it with additional archival footage and contemporary interviews, in an attempt to puzzle out why happiness so evaded Houston that she turned for refuge to the drugs that eventually took her life. The result of this marriage of materials is an unflinching portrait of addiction and codependence, by turns heart-wrenching and insightful.

‘Beaver Trilogy Part IV’ (2015)

[*Stream it on Amazon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movies.html)]

In 1979, the filmmaker Trent Harris met a strange guy named “Groovin’ Gary,” switched his video camera on, and turned their conversation into a short film called “The Beaver Kid.” Two years later, he reenacted that conversation with an unknown young actor named Sean Penn to make another short film; four years later, he did it again with another then-unknown actor, Crispin Glover. Harris’s “Beaver Trilogy” became an underground sensation, one of the first of what we now call “viral videos,” and this smart, funny and knowing documentary from the director Brad Besser not only tells that story, but also explores how these strange little short films changed the lives of those who made them. Bill Hader narrates.

PHOTO: Mia Wasikowska in “Stoker,” from Park Chan-wook. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Macall Polay/Fox Searchlight Pictures FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 23, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Inquiry Decades Later Further Tangles Case Of Woman's Murder***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6410-JDD1-JBG3-6444-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 5, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Byline:** By Jesse McKinley and Danny Hakim

**Body**

A bid to exonerate two men in a Buffalo-area murder centers on the possible role in the crime of Richard Matt, a notorious New York killer.

TONAWANDA, N.Y. -- In February 1993, Deborah Meindl walked into her house in this ***working-class*** Buffalo suburb on a blustery Wednesday afternoon, and never left.

Police reports recount what happened: Ms. Meindl, a nursing student with two young daughters, was stabbed dozens of times, her hands cuffed behind her back, and strangled with a man's tie that was left around her neck.

Suspicions quickly fell on her husband, who had spoken about having his wife killed, according to court records. But the investigation soon pivoted to two petty thieves who were later convicted of murder despite a lack of forensic evidence linking either to the crime.

Now, an explosive new claim is at the center of a renewed effort by defense lawyers to clear the two: The real killer was one of New York's most infamous criminals, Richard Matt, whose 2015 escape from a state prison set off a nationwide manhunt that ended when he was fatally shot by a federal agent.

The new theory emerged from a monthslong investigation by two prosecutors from the Erie County, N.Y., district attorney's office, who presented their findings -- and their belief in Mr. Matt's involvement -- to their boss, John J. Flynn, the district attorney, in August.

But Mr. Flynn rejected the findings, demoted one of the prosecutors and reassigned the other. He said he could not comment on personnel issues, but said the two men had been removed because they ''did not accept my decision with the professionalism expected of career prosecutors.'' His office said that despite the lack of forensic evidence there was still ample trial testimony to support the convictions.

Lawyers for the convicted men make another incendiary claim in court filings: Not only did Mr. Matt kill Ms. Meindl; he may have carried out the murder at the behest of the lead detective who investigated the crime, David Bentley.

On Tuesday, Mr. Bentley adamantly denied any role and offered to take a lie-detector test.

''It's totally, absolutely, unequivocally insane,'' Mr. Bentley said, adding that he had not known Ms. Meindl and had testified against Mr. Matt in a different murder case.

''I could never say that stuff,'' Mr. Bentley said of his testimony in that case, ''and have hired him to murder somebody.''

In a motion filed in State Supreme Court in Buffalo last month, the defense lawyers said there is evidence that Mr. Matt confessed to killing Ms. Meindl in 2015. He made the confession to his fellow escapee, David Sweat, according to another document. Mr. Sweat is imprisoned in Ulster County.

Adding more mystery to an already perplexing case, recent DNA sampling of crime scene evidence has excluded both men convicted in the murder -- and Mr. Matt.

On Wednesday, in a Buffalo courtroom, lawyers for the men convicted in the killing, James Pugh and Brian Scott Lorenz, cited the DNA evidence, Mr. Bentley's ties to Mr. Matt and inconsistencies in prosecution witnesses' accounts as reasons their clients should be cleared.

Mr. Pugh, who was recently paroled after 25 years in prison, was there; Mr. Lorenz appeared via video from the state prison in Auburn, N.Y., where he remains. Ms. Meindl's daughter, Lisa Payne, sat in the front row.

Justice Christopher J. Burns seemed inclined to favor a deep re-examination of the case -- ''I'd like to get an answer to this,'' he said -- raised the prospect of an additional hearing.

''I knew, in my heart, that I didn't commit this crime,'' Mr. Lorenz said in an interview last month, adding, ''But I never gave up.''

In a statement, Mr. Flynn, a Democrat, flatly denied that there was any credible evidence ''to link Richard Matt to the murder of Deborah Meindl.'' He also defended his response to the findings of the prosecutors who revisited the case.

''I, along with my entire senior leadership team, several of my senior bureau chiefs and most experienced trial attorneys, disagreed with their conclusions due to a lack of any credible evidence,'' he said.

Because the two prosecutors have not detailed their findings publicly, it is not fully clear what they believe implicates Mr. Matt. Neither man would comment, although one is seeking to testify in the case, court filings show. Both still work for Mr. Flynn.

Mr. Bentley helped raise Mr. Matt's daughter Jamie, who once wrote that the detective ''knew my father probably as well as anyone on the outside.'' In an interview and text messages, Mr. Bentley, who retired in 2003, acknowledged having had a close relationship with Mr. Matt -- whom he used as an informant -- bordering on that of father-son.

''I related to Rick: I felt bad for him,'' Mr. Bentley said. ''You could almost say I loved the kid.''

But he does not believe Mr. Matt -- a convicted killer -- could have murdered Ms. Meindl, saying, ''he was just a punk'' and ''wasn't a candidate for a crime like that.''

''Somebody planted the idea about him just to defend Pugh and Lorenzo,'' he said.

Mr. Bentley also suggested that Mr. Matt ''was known to brag about all sorts of stuff that never existed.''

After Ms. Meindl was killed, suspicion initially fell on her husband, Donald Meindl, who was in his early 30s and a Taco Bell manager at the time. A friend told the police that Mr. Meindl had once sought his advice about hiring someone to kill his wife. ''It should be made to look like a robbery,'' the friend recalled Mr. Meindl saying, court records show.

Mr. Meindl, who did not respond to interview requests, insisted that he was joking and has always maintained his innocence. Police and court records describe an open marriage and Mr. Meindl's involvement with a 17-year-old girl who worked for him. He had an alibi: The day of the murder, he was at work getting fired for sexual harassment.

After a tip from an informant, investigators at the time shifted their focus to Mr. Lorenz, a 23-year-old with a history of minor crimes who was in Iowa after being arrested for car theft.

Desperate to return home, Mr. Lorenz concocted a bizarre plan to confess to Deborah Meindl's murder, according to his defense team, and implicated Mr. Pugh, his sometime burglary partner, thinking it would bolster his story. He told a police officer he was innocent, but was willing to plead guilty to a manslaughter charge, according to a prosecution filing.

Mr. Lorenz's confession got details wrong -- for instance, he said a hogtie was used when one was not -- and it was deemed inadmissible at trial. Still, the jury returned a guilty verdict in less than six hours. (Mr. Lorenz's name was listed as ''Lorenzo'' in court records although his legal name is Lorenz.)

Mr. Pugh was in his 30s when the slaying occurred. ''I was a criminal,'' he said in an interview. ''But I certainly wasn't somebody that would kill somebody. I'm not capable of that.''

Mr. Lorenz, who is still in prison, recalled being incredulous at the verdict. ''I can't believe, I can't believe this,'' he said in an interview. He added: ''Anger turns into bewilderment, then the depression sets in.''

Then in 2018 a state judge forced Erie County officials to conduct DNA testing of blood-splattered items from the crime scene. Neither man's DNA was found.

Mr. Lorenz was elated.

''I thought I was going home immediately,'' he said.

Instead, earlier this year, Mr. Flynn's office appointed two prosecutors to review the case, Michael J. Hillery, who ran the office's appeals bureau, and David A. Heraty, an assistant district attorney.

After interviewing more than 50 witnesses, Mr. Hillery called Ilann Maazel, a civil rights lawyer representing Mr. Lorenz, and told him that the prosecutors believed his client was innocent. Moreover, they suspected Mr. Matt.

''I almost fell out of my chair,'' Mr. Maazel said.

Mr. Pugh's lawyer, Zachary Margulis-Ohnuma, said he was ''gratified that honest, courageous prosecutors followed the evidence.''

In a court filing last month, Mr. Lorenz's lawyers said Ms. Meindl had been having an affair with Mr. Bentley and had become aware of unspecified acts of corruption by the detective. The detective, the filing said, had ''sent Matt to murder her to ensure that she would not tell anyone else what she knew.''

During his career, Mr. Bentley was the subject of at least 15 police brutality and harassment complaints, The Buffalo News has reported. But in interviews, he defended his record, saying he was tough but never corrupt.

''I solved more crimes than the whole department did because I was savvy,'' he said on Tuesday. ''But I was not crooked.''

He also insisted he had been not in a romantic relationship with Ms. Meindl, a denial that Mr. Flynn echoed.

In a filing this week, Mr. Flynn's office assailed Mr. Heraty, suggesting that he had essentially fed details of the crime to Mr. Sweat, the onetime fugitive. Mr. Heraty has declined to sign an affidavit agreeing to those findings, and has said he wants to testify in the matter.

On Wednesday, Mr. Maazel and Mr. Margulis-Ohnuma suggested than Mr. Sweat's testimony would most likely be included at any future hearing, possibly as soon as Dec. 13.

In a late September letter to Mr. Heraty that was turned over to the defense, Mr. Sweat suggested that he could offer another plausible explanation to who had killed Deborah Meindl.

''It's been 6 ½ years since he told me and until you showed up it wasn't real to me,'' Mr. Sweat wrote, adding that he was concerned about the prosecutor being removed from the case and angry about ''the two guys being in prison too who didn't do it!''

''I hope,'' he wrote, ''someone is working on that.''

Benjamin Weiser contributed reporting. Susan C. Beachy contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/richard-matt-buffalo-murder.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/richard-matt-buffalo-murder.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Richard Matt, who died after a 2015 prison escape, has been implicated in the 1993 killing of Deborah Meindl near Buffalo. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES NEISS/NIAGARA GAZETTE, VIA AP)

**Load-Date:** November 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Inheritance***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63PG-M9J1-DXY4-X24J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section M2; Column 0; T: Design Magazine; Pg. 123

**Length:** 1447 words

**Byline:** By Michael Snyder and Ana Topoleanu

**Body**

IN THE MID-1940s, while serving as the director of public works in Guadalajara, Mexico, the architect Rafael Urzúa Arias slated the first two houses he had ever designed for demolition in order to widen what would become one of the city's main roads. When the homes were finally torn down in 1952, colleagues asked why he hadn't chosen another street, a decision that might have better preserved his legacy. Urzúa, then 47, responded with a proverb: ''El buen juez por su casa empieza'' -- ''The good judge begins with his own home.''

By that point, Urzúa was retired, and had left Guadalajara to live in his hometown, Concepción de Buenos Aires, a tranquil village in the pleats of the Sierra del Tigre, some 50 miles south of the city. For the previous two decades, he'd built widely, one of four architects -- along with Pedro Castellanos Lambley, Ignacio Díaz Morales and Luis Barragán Morfín -- credited with founding the Tapatía school of architecture, from which an idiosyncratic regional style emerged in the 1920s, as Guadalajara grew into one of Mexico's major urban centers. Of the four architects who reshaped the metropolis, Urzúa's influence is perhaps the least obvious: He built a few houses, mostly in a regionalist aesthetic; several dignified blocks of ***working-class*** town homes; and, during his two terms in government, oversaw many important urbanization projects, from public parks and botanical gardens to roads that connected the historic center with new neighborhoods.

But if Urzúa is less known than his peers, that's because his greatest works were made not in Guadalajara but in his hometown. From 1948 to 1987, Urzúa brought sewage, electricity and a paved road to Concepción de Buenos Aires. He renovated houses for neighbors, reorganized the century-old cemetery (the village was founded in 1869) and redesigned the cedar-shaded plaza. As Modernism reached its zenith in Mexico City and Guadalajara in the 1960s, he chose instead to design mission-style chapels with stucco walls and peaked terra-cotta roofs, their humble forms proportioned to blend in with the surrounding mountains.

''When I was a student, there was a lot of criticism that he built outside of his era,'' says Urzúa's 45-year-old grandson Agustín Elizalde Urzúa, an architect and product designer based in Guadalajara. But the elder Urzúa had no interest in what Modernism might have dictated. Instead, as Elizalde wrote in his 2006 monograph on his grandfather, his career constituted ''an intimate, almost secret search to find harmony in the things around him.''

NO PROJECT DISTILLED Urzúa's preoccupations more completely than his own 9,192-square-foot home in Concepción de Buenos Aires. Built by his grandparents around the turn of the 20th century, the house has lime-slaked adobe walls; a terra-cotta roof; a shaded entryway called a zaguán that opens off the cobbled street; and a broad central courtyard circled by a parlor, an office, four bedrooms, a dining room and a kitchen. A consummate collector, Urzúa filled these rooms with relics of Guadalajara's disappearing architectural heritage, including grinding stones from defunct village mills, 17th-century religious statuary and altar rails removed from the city's Catholic churches after the Second Vatican Council.

After Urzúa's death in 1991, his descendants used the home less and less, gradually surrendering whole rooms to decay and disrepair. Mold ate through the walls; the wooden columns that held up the 11-foot-deep interior verandas began to rot; downspouts that Urzúa had improvised from sardine cans rusted. During torrential summer storms, half the building would become uninhabitable. ''When we fix the village house'' became a familiar refrain. Then, in 2016, an attic beam broke, threatening the entire structure. The family knew they couldn't wait any longer.

Despite his training as an architect, Elizalde had no desire to lead the project himself. He'd spent most of his career in interiors, designing restaurants in Puerto Vallarta and, more recently, housewares in collaboration with rural craftspeople. ''I'm not a builder,'' Elizalde says. ''And especially in a project like this -- my grandparents' house, with lots of emotions involved, with a lot of expectations -- it was complicated.''

So he asked his friend Francisco Javier Gutiérrez Peregrina, the 45-year-old director of COA Arquitectura in Guadalajara, to guide the renovation. A decade earlier, Gutiérrez had begun a master's degree in historic restoration, but most of his work since then had consisted of private homes. Elizalde had watched Gutiérrez's practice evolve over the years -- the two became friends in 2005 while working on book projects for the state's secretary of culture -- and appreciated his rigor and humanity. ''You can see that he cares about understanding his clients,'' Elizalde says. ''And this project wasn't about just repairing damage. It was about preserving the house for the next generations.''

It took nearly a year for Elizalde and Gutiérrez to document every piece of pottery, artwork and furniture in the house, from elaborately carved neo-colonial tables and chairs by the artist León Muñiz, most of it commissioned by Urzúa after his 1940 marriage to María del Rosario Zambrano, to hand-painted tiles from the nearby village of Sayula, where such craft work has gone extinct. Meanwhile, Gutiérrez's team measured every ceiling beam and cobbled hallway, assessing which parts of the house would need to be rebuilt and which could remain unchanged. ''The question we had throughout the process was: 'What does original mean?''' Elizalde says.

Rather than creating a museum or a memorial to Urzúa's work, Gutiérrez describes the process as ''a dialogue with preexistence,'' leaving the marks of time visible wherever possible but focusing, above all, on making a livable home. In the 118-square-foot zaguán, for instance, Gutiérrez made virtually no adjustments, leaving the earthenware floor tiles intact, their emerald glaze worn down by a century of footfalls, a striking contrast to the electric shades of blue and coral that Urzúa used to paint the coffered ceiling some six decades ago. In the 344-square-foot kitchen, Gutiérrez built custom cabinetry from rosa morada, a tropical hardwood, and installed utilitarian countertops of hammered black granite. In the back of the property, behind the kitchen, he built a 700-square-foot guest apartment over the footprint of the former servants' quarters. Here, rather than incorporating antiques from Urzúa's collection, Gutiérrez and Elizalde relied upon contemporary furnishings from design firms like Supermorphe and Alvaluz, based in Guadalajara, inscribing a new era within the house's thick mud-brick walls.

At the core of the house is the 650-square-foot central courtyard, where the architects executed their most ambitious idea: Temporarily lifting the entire 10-foot roof of the veranda that surrounds the interior garden by four inches, they extracted four 33-foot crossbeams -- each the length of a mature pine tree -- and eight wooden columns in order to remake them from scratch, precisely recreating the building's century-old structure. Planted with heliconias, calla lilies, begonias and bird's-nest ferns, the garden now grows lush around a stone fountain flanked by a pair of metal dragons that Urzúa rescued from the mansard roof of Guadalajara's first department store when it was torn down in the 1950s.

Each of these details, whether newly introduced or carefully preserved, bears the seal of Urzúa's idiosyncratic vision of beauty: Some are decorative, like neo-Baroque finials added to the terra-cotta gables, while others are functional, like the indented baseboards of a deep concrete wash basin, ingeniously designed to make the faucets easier to reach -- a choice that, at the time of its inception, would have gone unnoticed by anyone but the house's staff.

In Urzúa's aesthetic universe, there was no hierarchy between these elements of design, just as there was no hierarchy between time periods, between architectural styles, between city and village, discarded trash and potential treasure. The work -- from his own home to pro bono projects scattered throughout the village and region -- might have seemed anachronistic, but it was also forward-looking in its clever reuse of urban detritus, its democratic eclecticism, its commitment to community over personal legacy. Where so much Modernist architecture aimed to transform society, Urzúa wanted instead to reflect its joyful complexity. The good judge, as he once said, begins with his own home. Or, perhaps, the good judge doesn't judge at all.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/t-magazine/rafael-urzua-arias-home-architecture.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/t-magazine/rafael-urzua-arias-home-architecture.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: In one of the guest rooms of the architect Rafael Urzúa Arias's family home in Concepción de Buenos Aires, Mexico, a reproduction of a Sacred Heart of Jesus painting and an Art Nouveau glass and brass lighting fixture over twin beds

the night stand and the bed on the left are made by the Mexican artist León Muñiz. The wood ceiling is painted indigo blue and poppy red and decorated with brass stars. Opposite: in the living room, family photos line the walls and traditional equipal chairs from Zacoalco de Torres sit around a cement and Cantera San Andrés stone table. The clay floor tiles and ceiling are original to the house.

In the dining room, shelves with glass dinnerware and clay and ceramic pieces, and a photograph of Michelangelo's ''David'' over a dining table covered in a pink cotton tablecloth designed by Estudio Pomelo and handwoven on a pedal loom in Oaxaca. The floor is made of early 20th-century vitrified clay tiles. Opposite, from top: in the old kitchen, Urzúa created a dining nook with a banquette and a cement and Cantera San Andrés stone table.

A photographic reproduction of a José Clemente Orozco drawing was a gift by the artist to Urzúa

in one of the corridors on the main patio, clay pots, a wooden sculpture of Melchizedek and an early 20th-century wood and woven palm bench. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANA TOPOLEANU)

**Load-Date:** September 26, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Fervent Base Props Up Netanyahu in Face of Corruption Charges***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YBX-B9C1-JBG3-6340-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1560 words

**Byline:** By David M. Halbfinger

**Body**

The Israeli prime minister's fervent base can make President Trump's look pallid. And they don't care that he has been charged with corruption.

JERUSALEM -- What does Benjamin Netanyahu have to do to get defeated?

Two weeks before his trial on bribery and other serious corruption charges, it might have been reasonable to expect Israel's embattled prime minister to struggle merely to avoid disaster in Israel's parliamentary election on Monday.

His chief rival, Benny Gantz, nearly defeated him twice last year, before Mr. Netanyahu had even been indicted.

But Mr. Netanyahu's relationship with his fervent political base -- Jews of Middle Eastern and North African descent -- may be even stronger than Donald Trump's support from white ***working-class*** Americans.

Thanks to them, Mr. Netanyahu -- Bibi, as he is known to Israelis -- seems unsinkable.

He won a plurality in Monday's vote, according to still-incomplete returns, giving him a decent shot at forming a government and earning a record fifth term. He clobbered Mr. Gantz, and his conservative Likud party won some 175,000 more voters than it did in September's election, analysts said.

Mr. Netanyahu's criminal indictments not only failed to dent his support, they may have rallied it.

''When you attack Bibi, it just makes the base support him,'' said Revital Amiran, a political columnist for Haaretz whose father was born in Iraq. ''They just feel they have to protect him.''

Mr. Netanyahu failed to win an outright majority, leaving Israel's political standoff unresolved until he or another candidate can build a governing coalition, a process that seemingly could last indefinitely.

But the Likud voters came out in droves.

In cities in central Israel like Rishon Letzion, blue-collar and middle-class police officers, contractors and government workers who had dallied with other parties over pocketbook issues came home to Likud in Mr. Netanyahu's hour of need.

They turned out in cities like Beersheba, in the south, and in a string of rural northern towns where Mr. Netanyahu had gone hunting votes ''from neighborhood to neighborhood, from street to street,'' as he said in his victory speech.

These Likud strongholds are replete with so-called Mizrahi Jews, whose parents and grandparents immigrated to Israel at midcentury from countries like Morocco, Egypt, Libya and Iraq.

Mizrahim -- the name is Hebrew for eastern, or Oriental, Jews -- have been a crucial pillar of the Likud party since its formation in the 1970s, when Menachem Begin galvanized them as a political force that drove the party's rise to power. Having fled or been expelled from Arab countries, they readily took to the party's hard line against Israel's Arab adversaries and its embrace of Jewish nationalism.

Progressive Israelis have been baffled for years by the Mizrahi allegiance to Likud when liberal politicians promise earnestly to address the social inequities and economic inequality that have disadvantaged the Mizrahim.

But many Mizrahim credit Likud for their advancement: Its local centers serve as social hubs and hiring halls. The party's push to expand settlements in occupied territory has improved the lives of many ***working-class*** Mizrahim who moved into subsidized homes in the West Bank.

Mr. Netanyahu has made himself one with the Mizrahim, championing their causes and nursing their grievances.

He has elevated Mizrahi lawmakers to prominent posts, including some who are lightning rods for the left, like his culture minister, Miri Regev, best known for crusading against artists she sees as anti-Israel.

''When they attack her, it just makes the base stronger,'' Ms. Amiran, the columnist, said.

For many younger Mizrahim, Mr. Netanyahu, who has been prime minister for a decade, most of their adult lives, is not only Likud, he is a towering figure in the great Jewish narrative, a latter-day king of Israel.

Prof. Nissim Mizrachi, a Tel Aviv scholar of Iraqi descent, said that many experts made the mistake of treating Mizrahi voters as a minority.

''Just like white people in rural America feel that they're the real Americans, Mizrahim don't feel like a minority group,'' Professor Mizrachi said. ''They feel like the Jewish people. And Bibi, for them, is their safeguard.''

They also account for upward of 40 percent of the population, though their families have become so blended that government demographers have given up trying to count them.

But identity dies hard.

The Mizrahim remember well the harsh assimilation of their parents and grandparents at the hands of the Ashkenazi elite, the European-born Jews and their descendants who founded and led the state of Israel through its early decades.

Generally poorer and less educated, thousands of Mizrahim suffered bigotry, discrimination and abuse in health care, housing, education, employment, and even army service, historians and activists say.

While Ashkenazi children were encouraged to go to college, experts say, Mizrahi children were steered into vocational schools. While Ashkenazi immigrants were settled in the heart of Israel, Mizrahim were shunted to slum-like peripheral ''development towns.''

Those resentments have not cooled with time. Many still mourn relatives who were kidnapped as infants and secretly given away for adoption, or died of cancer after being irradiated to treat ringworm upon arrival in Israel.

Mr. Netanyahu, a scion of Ashkenazi elite himself, has played to those resentments, attacking as illegitimate the media and legal establishments, powerful sectors of Israeli society considered bastions of Ashkenazi power. Where the Ashkenazi see checks and balances, Mr. Netanyahu's base sees the deep state.

''The tension is between democracy as Mizrahim view it, and liberalism, the deep state,'' Professor Mizrachi said. ''The Blue and White people'' -- Mr. Gantz's party -- ''basically want to undermine their position by using the institutions of the deep state. They have control over the media, the legal system. But the Mizrahim can win the election. And they felt like it was an emergency.''

In cementing his role as defender of the Mizrahim, Mr. Netanyahu had a great deal of help from Mr. Gantz.

By stripping his campaign down to a single argument -- that Mr. Netanyahu was unfit for office -- Mr. Gantz aligned himself with the legal and media establishments, the very groups that Mizrahim see as trying to destroy their champion -- and unfairly, at that.

''They say, 'I don't care about cigars and champagne -- he's the best leader in the world,''' Ms. Amiran said, referring to some of the gifts Mr. Netanyahu is accused of receiving as bribes. He is also charged with offering favors to media moguls in exchange for fawning coverage.

''They don't think he's an angel,'' she continued. ''But they even like that he's not Mr. Clean, because they think that to be in politics and be a great leader you can't be so honest and pure -- you have to be a bit of a bastard. You have to be a bit mean.''

The blue-eyed Mr. Gantz, who looks like he was chiseled from Ashkenazi granite, seemed to blunder into cultural booby traps.

When Mr. Gantz spoke of Israel's pioneers, those who farmed, built and fought for early Israel, or talked of the ''stateliness'' of Israel's founding generation, Mizrahi voters could only be suspicious, said Tom Mehager, a Mizrahi activist. ''This stateliness gave them nothing,'' he said. ''It only treated them as backward.''

When Mr. Gantz accused Mr. Netanyahu of autocratic tendencies, and invoked President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey as a similar leader, Avishai Ben Haim, a religious-affairs reporter for Channel 13, heard a dog whistle.

Mr. Erdogan, after all, is ''from the Orient,'' Mr. Ben Haim said. ''I don't think they thought about it, but it's subtext.''

And when Mr. Gantz's Blue and White party posted billboards assailing Mr. Netanyahu, his education minister and his justice minister for contributing to an Erdogan-style administration in Jerusalem, the ads happened to single out Israeli government ministers with Moroccan ancestry.

''For me, it was very symbolic,'' Mr. Ben Haim said.

Nothing compared, however, to an interview in which Yoaz Hendel, a Blue and White lawmaker, spoke of Israel's melting pot by noting that ''some came here with a mentality of Vienna concerts, and some came with a mentality of darbukas,'' goblet drums popular in Mizrahi music. Mr. Hendel insisted his meaning had been twisted, but Mizrahi politicians pounced.

''Everybody says to Blue and White, you're a whitish party, you represent the white tribe,'' said Ms. Amiran, the columnist. ''And they always say, 'No we're not.' They say, 'Let's not talk about divisions, we're all Israelis, there's no place for identity politics.' And then you have this.''

In Mr. Ben Haim's view, Mr. Netanyahu has taken on historical stature. Mizrahim do not see themselves as voting against their interests at all, he said, but as voting for their interests in a Jewish state, in being part of the long story of the Jewish people.

He likened Mr. Netanyahu to a modern day Julius Caesar, ''the son of the elite who leads the struggle of the poor.''

''This is a huge fight between the Israeli elite and the masses,'' Mr. Ben Haim said. ''The elite wanted to send him to jail. And a lot of people felt, we don't want to let them.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/03/world/middleeast/netanyahu-election-mizrahi.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/03/world/middleeast/netanyahu-election-mizrahi.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel celebrating in Tel Aviv on Tuesday. His conservative Likud party won some 175,000 more votes than in September. Left, Netanyahu supporters rallying in Jerusalem on Friday. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAN BALILTY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 5, 2020

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[***He Escaped Prison in 2015. Did He Kill a Young Mother Decades Before?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:640J-YF31-DXY4-X42B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 3, 2021 Wednesday 13:35 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1634 words

**Byline:** Jesse McKinley and Danny Hakim

**Highlight:** A bid to exonerate two men in a Buffalo-area murder centers on the possible role in the crime of Richard Matt, a notorious New York killer.

**Body**

A bid to exonerate two men in a Buffalo-area murder centers on the possible role in the crime of Richard Matt, a notorious New York killer.

TONAWANDA, N.Y. — In February 1993, Deborah Meindl walked into her house in this ***working-class*** Buffalo suburb on a blustery Wednesday afternoon, and never left.

Police reports recount what happened: Ms. Meindl, a nursing student with two young daughters, was stabbed dozens of times, her hands cuffed behind her back, and strangled with a man’s tie that was left around her neck.

Suspicions quickly fell on her husband, who had spoken about having his wife killed, according to court records. But the investigation soon pivoted to two petty thieves who were later convicted of murder despite a lack of forensic evidence linking either to the crime.

Now, an explosive new claim is at the center of a renewed effort by defense lawyers to clear the two: The real killer was one of New York’s most infamous criminals, Richard Matt, whose 2015 escape from a state prison set off a nationwide manhunt that ended when he was fatally shot [*by a federal agent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/27/nyregion/new-york-escaped-prisoners.html).

The new theory emerged from a monthslong investigation by two prosecutors from the Erie County, N.Y., district attorney’s office, who presented their findings — and their belief in Mr. Matt’s involvement — to their boss, John J. Flynn, the district attorney, in August.

But Mr. Flynn rejected the findings, demoted one of the prosecutors and reassigned the other. He said he could not comment on personnel issues, but said the two men had been removed because they “did not accept my decision with the professionalism expected of career prosecutors.” His office said that despite the lack of forensic evidence there was still ample trial testimony to support the convictions.

Lawyers for the convicted men make another incendiary claim in court filings: Not only did Mr. Matt kill Ms. Meindl; he may have carried out the murder at the behest of the lead detective who investigated the crime, David Bentley.

On Tuesday, Mr. Bentley adamantly denied any role and offered to take a lie-detector test.

“It’s totally, absolutely, unequivocally insane,” Mr. Bentley said, adding that he had not known Ms. Meindl and had testified against Mr. Matt in a different murder case.

“I could never say that stuff,” Mr. Bentley said of his testimony in that case, “and have hired him to murder somebody.”

In a motion filed in State Supreme Court in Buffalo last month, the defense lawyers said there is evidence that Mr. Matt confessed to killing Ms. Meindl in 2015. He made the confession to his fellow escapee, David Sweat, according to another document. Mr. Sweat is imprisoned in Ulster County.

Adding more mystery to an already perplexing case, recent DNA sampling of crime scene evidence has excluded both men convicted in the murder — and Mr. Matt.

On Wednesday, in a Buffalo courtroom, lawyers for the men convicted in the killing, James Pugh and Brian Scott Lorenz, cited the DNA evidence, Mr. Bentley’s ties to Mr. Matt and inconsistencies in prosecution witnesses’ accounts as reasons their clients should be cleared.

Mr. Pugh, who was recently paroled after 25 years in prison, was there; Mr. Lorenz appeared via video from the state prison in Auburn, N.Y., where he remains. Ms. Meindl’s daughter, Lisa Payne, sat in the front row.

Justice Christopher J. Burns seemed inclined to favor a deep re-examination of the case — “I’d like to get an answer to this,” he said — raised the prospect of an additional hearing.

“I knew, in my heart, that I didn’t commit this crime,” Mr. Lorenz said in an interview last month, adding, “But I never gave up.”

In a statement, Mr. Flynn, a Democrat, flatly denied that there was any credible evidence “to link Richard Matt to the murder of Deborah Meindl.” He also defended his response to the findings of the prosecutors who revisited the case.

“I, along with my entire senior leadership team, several of my senior bureau chiefs and most experienced trial attorneys, disagreed with their conclusions due to a lack of any credible evidence,” he said.

Because the two prosecutors have not detailed their findings publicly, it is not fully clear what they believe implicates Mr. Matt. Neither man would comment, although one is seeking to testify in the case, court filings show. Both still work for Mr. Flynn.

Mr. Bentley helped raise Mr. Matt’s daughter Jamie, who once wrote that the detective “knew my father probably as well as anyone on the outside.” In an interview and text messages, Mr. Bentley, who retired in 2003, acknowledged having had a close relationship with Mr. Matt — whom he used as an informant — bordering on that of father-son.

“I related to Rick: I felt bad for him,” Mr. Bentley said. “You could almost say I loved the kid.”

But he does not believe Mr. Matt — a convicted killer — could have murdered Ms. Meindl, saying, “he was just a punk” and “wasn’t a candidate for a crime like that.”

“Somebody planted the idea about him just to defend Pugh and Lorenzo,” he said.

Mr. Bentley also suggested that Mr. Matt “was known to brag about all sorts of stuff that never existed.”

After Ms. Meindl was killed, suspicion initially fell on her husband, Donald Meindl, who was in his early 30s and a Taco Bell manager at the time. A friend told the police that Mr. Meindl had once sought his advice about hiring someone to kill his wife. “It should be made to look like a robbery,” the friend recalled Mr. Meindl saying, court records show.

Mr. Meindl, who did not respond to interview requests, insisted that he was joking and has always maintained his innocence. Police and court records describe an open marriage and Mr. Meindl’s involvement with a 17-year-old girl who worked for him. He had an alibi: The day of the murder, he was at work getting fired for sexual harassment.

After a tip from an informant, investigators at the time shifted their focus to Mr. Lorenz, a 23-year-old with a history of minor crimes who was in Iowa after being arrested for car theft.

Desperate to return home, Mr. Lorenz concocted a bizarre plan to confess to Deborah Meindl’s murder, according to his defense team, and implicated Mr. Pugh, his sometime burglary partner, thinking it would bolster his story. He told a police officer he was innocent, but was willing to plead guilty to a manslaughter charge, according to a prosecution filing.

Mr. Lorenz’s confession got details wrong — for instance, he said a hogtie was used when one was not — and it was deemed inadmissible at trial. Still, the jury returned a guilty verdict in less than six hours. (Mr. Lorenz’s name was listed as “Lorenzo” in court records although his legal name is Lorenz.)

Mr. Pugh was in his 30s when the slaying occurred. “I was a criminal,” he said in an interview. “But I certainly wasn’t somebody that would kill somebody. I’m not capable of that.”

Mr. Lorenz, who is still in prison, recalled being incredulous at the verdict. “I can’t believe, I can’t believe this,” he said in an interview. He added: “Anger turns into bewilderment, then the depression sets in.”

Then in 2018 a state judge forced Erie County officials to conduct DNA testing of blood-splattered items from the crime scene. Neither man’s DNA was found.

Mr. Lorenz was elated.

“I thought I was going home immediately,” he said.

Instead, earlier this year, Mr. Flynn’s office appointed two prosecutors to review the case, Michael J. Hillery, who ran the office’s appeals bureau, and David A. Heraty, an assistant district attorney.

After interviewing more than 50 witnesses, Mr. Hillery called Ilann Maazel, a civil rights lawyer representing Mr. Lorenz, and told him that the prosecutors believed his client was innocent. Moreover, they suspected Mr. Matt.

“I almost fell out of my chair,” Mr. Maazel said.

Mr. Pugh’s lawyer, Zachary Margulis-Ohnuma, said he was “gratified that honest, courageous prosecutors followed the evidence.”

In a court filing last month, Mr. Lorenz’s lawyers said Ms. Meindl had been having an affair with Mr. Bentley and had become aware of unspecified acts of corruption by the detective. The detective, the filing said, had “sent Matt to murder her to ensure that she would not tell anyone else what she knew.”

During his career, Mr. Bentley was the subject of at least 15 police brutality and harassment complaints, The Buffalo News [*has reported*](https://buffalonews.com/news/police-veteran-draws-praise-brutality-suits/article_6a70c6c8-9511-5531-9890-bf222af20254.html). But in interviews, he defended his record, saying he was tough but never corrupt.

“I solved more crimes than the whole department did because I was savvy,” he said on Tuesday. “But I was not crooked.”

He also insisted he had been not in a romantic relationship with Ms. Meindl, a denial that Mr. Flynn echoed.

In a filing this week, Mr. Flynn’s office assailed Mr. Heraty, suggesting that he had essentially fed details of the crime to Mr. Sweat, the onetime fugitive. Mr. Heraty has declined to sign an affidavit agreeing to those findings, and has said he wants to testify in the matter.

On Wednesday, Mr. Maazel and Mr. Margulis-Ohnuma suggested than Mr. Sweat’s testimony would most likely be included at any future hearing, possibly as soon as Dec. 13.

In a late September letter to Mr. Heraty that was turned over to the defense, Mr. Sweat suggested that he could offer another plausible explanation to who had killed Deborah Meindl.

“It’s been 6 \xC2 years since he told me and until you showed up it wasn’t real to me,” Mr. Sweat wrote, adding that he was concerned about the prosecutor being removed from the case and angry about “the two guys being in prison too who didn’t do it!”

“I hope,” he wrote, “someone is working on that.”

Benjamin Weiser contributed reporting. Susan C. Beachy contributed research.

PHOTO: Richard Matt, who died after a 2015 prison escape, has been implicated in the 1993 killing of Deborah Meindl near Buffalo. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES NEISS/NIAGARA GAZETTE, VIA AP)

**Load-Date:** December 11, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Ace of Base: Why Netanyahu Seems Unsinkable; News analysis***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YBK-51V1-DXY4-X2XJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** The Israeli prime minister’s fervent base can make President Trump’s look pallid. And they don’t care that he has been charged with corruption.

**Body**

The Israeli prime minister’s fervent base can make President Trump’s look pallid. And they don’t care that he has been charged with corruption.

JERUSALEM — What does Benjamin Netanyahu have to do to get defeated?

Two weeks before his trial on bribery and other serious corruption charges, it might have been reasonable to expect Israel’s embattled prime minister to struggle merely to avoid disaster in Israel’s parliamentary election on Monday.

His chief rival, Benny Gantz, nearly defeated him twice last year, before Mr. Netanyahu had even been indicted.

But Mr. Netanyahu’s relationship with his fervent political base — Jews of Middle Eastern and North African descent — may be even stronger than Donald Trump’s support from white ***working-class*** Americans.

Thanks to them, Mr. Netanyahu — Bibi, as he is known to Israelis — seems unsinkable.

He [*won a plurality in Monday’s vote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/02/world/middleeast/Israel-election-results.html), according to still-incomplete returns, giving him a decent shot at forming a government and earning a record fifth term. He clobbered Mr. Gantz, and his conservative Likud party won some 175,000 more voters than it did in September’s election, analysts said.

Mr. Netanyahu’s [*criminal indictments*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/02/world/middleeast/Israel-election-results.html) not only failed to dent his support, they may have rallied it.

“When you attack Bibi, it just makes the base support him,” said Revital Amiran, a political columnist for Haaretz whose father was born in Iraq. “They just feel they have to protect him.”

Mr. Netanyahu failed to win an outright majority, leaving Israel’s political standoff unresolved until he or another candidate can build a governing coalition, a process that seemingly could last indefinitely.

But the Likud voters came out in droves.

In cities in central Israel like Rishon Letzion, blue-collar and middle-class police officers, contractors and government workers who had dallied with other parties over pocketbook issues came home to Likud in Mr. Netanyahu’s hour of need.

They turned out in cities like Beersheba, in the south, and in a string of rural northern towns where Mr. Netanyahu had gone hunting votes “from neighborhood to neighborhood, from street to street,” as he said in his victory speech.

These Likud strongholds are replete with so-called Mizrahi Jews, whose parents and grandparents immigrated to Israel at midcentury from countries like Morocco, Egypt, Libya and Iraq.

Mizrahim — the name is Hebrew for eastern, or Oriental, Jews — have been a crucial pillar of the Likud party since its formation in the 1970s, when Menachem Begin galvanized them as a political force that drove the party’s rise to power. Having fled or been expelled from Arab countries, many readily took to the party’s hard line against Israel’s Arab adversaries and its embrace of Jewish nationalism.

Progressive Israelis have been baffled for years by the Mizrahi allegiance to Likud when liberal politicians promise earnestly to address the social inequities and economic inequality that have disadvantaged the Mizrahim.

But many Mizrahim credit Likud for their advancement: Its local centers serve as social hubs and hiring halls. The party’s push to expand settlements in occupied territory has improved the lives of many ***working-class*** Mizrahim who moved into subsidized homes in the West Bank.

Mr. Netanyahu has made himself one with the Mizrahim, championing their causes and nursing their grievances.

He has elevated Mizrahi lawmakers to prominent posts, including some who are lightning rods for the left, like his culture minister, Miri Regev, best known for crusading against artists she sees as anti-Israel.

“When they attack her, it just makes the base stronger,” Ms. Amiran, the columnist, said.

For many younger Mizrahim, Mr. Netanyahu, who has been prime minister for a decade, most of their adult lives, is not only Likud, he is a towering figure in the great Jewish narrative, a latter-day king of Israel.

Prof. Nissim Mizrachi, a Tel Aviv scholar of Iraqi descent, said that many experts made the mistake of treating Mizrahi voters as a minority.

“Just like white people in rural America feel that they’re the real Americans, Mizrahim don’t feel like a minority group,” Professor Mizrachi said. “They feel like the Jewish people. And Bibi, for them, is their safeguard.”

They also account for upward of 40 percent of the population, though their families have become so blended that government demographers have given up trying to count them.

But identity dies hard.

The Mizrahim remember well the harsh assimilation of their parents and grandparents at the hands of the Ashkenazi elite, the European-born Jews and their descendants who founded and led the state of Israel through its early decades.

Generally poorer and less educated, thousands of Mizrahim suffered bigotry, discrimination and abuse in health care, housing, education, employment, and even army service, historians and activists say.

While Ashkenazi children were encouraged to go to college, experts say, Mizrahi children were steered into vocational schools. While Ashkenazi immigrants were settled in the heart of Israel, Mizrahim were shunted to slum-like peripheral “development towns.”

Those resentments have not cooled with time. Many still mourn relatives who were kidnapped as infants and secretly given away for adoption, or died of cancer after being irradiated to treat ringworm upon arrival in Israel.

Mr. Netanyahu, a scion of Ashkenazi elite himself, has played to those resentments, attacking as illegitimate the media and legal establishments, powerful sectors of Israeli society considered bastions of Ashkenazi power. Where the Ashkenazi see checks and balances, Mr. Netanyahu’s base sees the deep state.

“The tension is between democracy as Mizrahim view it, and liberalism, the deep state,” Professor Mizrachi said. “The Blue and White people” — Mr. Gantz’s party — “basically want to undermine their position by using the institutions of the deep state. They have control over the media, the legal system. But the Mizrahim can win the election. And they felt like it was an emergency.”

In cementing his role as defender of the Mizrahim, Mr. Netanyahu had a great deal of help from Mr. Gantz.

By stripping his campaign down to a single argument — that Mr. Netanyahu was unfit for office — Mr. Gantz aligned himself with the legal and media establishments, the very groups that Mizrahim see as trying to destroy their champion — and unfairly, at that.

“They say, ‘I don’t care about cigars and champagne — he’s the best leader in the world,’” Ms. Amiran said, referring to some of the gifts Mr. Netanyahu is accused of receiving as bribes. He is also charged with offering favors to media moguls in exchange for fawning coverage.

“They don’t think he’s an angel,” she continued. “But they even like that he’s not Mr. Clean, because they think that to be in politics and be a great leader you can’t be so honest and pure — you have to be a bit of a bastard. You have to be a bit mean.”

The blue-eyed Mr. Gantz, who looks like he was chiseled from Ashkenazi granite, seemed to blunder into cultural booby traps.

When Mr. Gantz spoke of Israel’s pioneers, those who farmed, built and fought for early Israel, or talked of the “stateliness” of Israel’s founding generation, Mizrahi voters could only be suspicious, said Tom Mehager, a Mizrahi activist. “This stateliness gave them nothing,” he said. “It only treated them as backward.”

When Mr. Gantz accused Mr. Netanyahu of autocratic tendencies, and invoked President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey as a similar leader, Avishai Ben Haim, a religious-affairs reporter for Channel 13, heard a dog whistle.

Mr. Erdogan, after all, is “from the Orient,” Mr. Ben Haim said. “I don’t think they thought about it, but it’s subtext.”

And when Mr. Gantz’s Blue and White party posted billboards assailing Mr. Netanyahu, his education minister and his justice minister for contributing to an Erdogan-style administration in Jerusalem, the ads happened to single out Israeli government ministers with Moroccan ancestry.

“For me, it was very symbolic,” Mr. Ben Haim said.

Nothing compared, however, to an interview in which Yoaz Hendel, a Blue and White lawmaker, spoke of Israel’s melting pot by noting that “some came here with a mentality of Vienna concerts, and some came with a mentality of darbukas,” goblet drums popular in Mizrahi music. Mr. Hendel insisted his meaning had been twisted, but Mizrahi politicians pounced.

“Everybody says to Blue and White, you’re a whitish party, you represent the white tribe,” said Ms. Amiran, the columnist. “And they always say, ‘No we’re not.’ They say, ‘Let’s not talk about divisions, we’re all Israelis, there’s no place for identity politics.’ And then you have this.”

In Mr. Ben Haim’s view, Mr. Netanyahu has taken on historical stature. Mizrahim do not see themselves as voting against their interests at all, he said, but as voting for their interests in a Jewish state, in being part of the long story of the Jewish people.

He likened Mr. Netanyahu to a modern day Julius Caesar, “the son of the elite who leads the struggle of the poor.”

“This is a huge fight between the Israeli elite and the masses,” Mr. Ben Haim said. “The elite wanted to send him to jail. And a lot of people felt, we don’t want to let them.”

PHOTOS: Above, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel celebrating in Tel Aviv on Tuesday. His conservative Likud party won some 175,000 more votes than in September. Left, Netanyahu supporters rallying in Jerusalem on Friday. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAN BALILTY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 4, 2020

**End of Document**



[***A School Where the Student Body Is Obsessed With Student Bodies; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y07-FVT1-JBG3-62JM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 645 words

**Byline:** Lydia Millet

**Highlight:** In Scarlett Thomas’s new novel, “Oligarchy,” the skinny girls rule the roost.

**Body**

OLIGARCHY

By Scarlett Thomas

Fat is fat, to the boarding-school girls in the English writer Scarlett Thomas’s new novel, but fat is also a flag of pathos and victimhood.

The privileged teenage girls in “Oligarchy,” attending a dysfunctional, third-string boarding school in the countryside north of London, get caught up in a mass-psychogenic, contagious version of anorexia nervosa. For the girls — mostly pretty smart, though also profoundly and willfully superficial — fat people are to be pitied, obviously, but empathized with, too. Since all of us, as the girls understand it, hover precariously and constantly on the brink of potential fatness. When Tash, the main character, sees fat people in church, she prays for the fat to be lifted off them.

In “Oligarchy” it’s almost as though the flab that comes to rest on bodies, permitted to settle there only because weak minds are powerless against it, possesses independent life and will. In fact these young women — including Tash, whose father is a rich Russian criminal; the enigmatic and skeletal Bianca; and Rachel, who at first is fat herself (a.k.a. normal weight) — are so captivated by the specter of excess flesh that it functions as an antihero.

Fat is a socioeconomic marker as well as a symptom of vulnerability, of course. Often it claims ***working-class*** people as its victims, examples of whom the girls occasionally spot in the nearby town of Stevenage. In one scene they ask their favorite teacher, a depressed and bearded Marxist existentialist, about the townies walking past them on a village field trip:

“Oh my God, sir, it’s full of plebs!”

“We don’t use that word, Rachel. That’s five house points you’ve just lost.” …

“And so many fat people. Why are they all so fat, sir?”

“Because of capitalism, Lissa.”

Thomas’s humor has a sharp, rhythmic perfection. Her prose is fast-thinking, entertaining and punchy, her dialogue fully authentic without sinking into the tedium of real-life conversation.

“Oligarchy” is a study in obsessiveness pinned to a vague, whodunit structure we don’t really need, with a couple of barely felt deaths thrown in. But in Thomas’s hands we don’t care: If the back story has the quality of a flippant gesture, frankly, what of it? In the best fiction, plot is strictly nonmandatory. We shift and slide among perspectives, from omniscience to Tash and Bianca and Rachel and even some ancient, half-fossilized teachers, and hardly notice the sequence of events. Intriguing, fluid and frequently funny interior monologues are what Thomas does best.

No one here is an angel, except on the surface: The girls are as flawed as any of us. But they’re also formidable. Tash is a survivor, while at least one of her friends ends up dead, but dead or alive, all the girls in the novel are strong — when they want something, they usually get it.

They easily manipulate most of their teachers, for example, persuading one of them to let them take their backpacks shopping so they’ll be able to hide the booze and cigarettes they buy:

“Miss Annabel has already eyed the rucksacks suspiciously but been told firmly that this is for the environment, because doesn’t she understand that we don’t have a Planet B? Doesn’t she know how many turtles have to be killed to produce one plastic bag?”

It would be glib to fail to mention the sadness hidden in the folds of this novel’s dark playfulness — particularly the sadness of its protagonists’ relentless self-objectification. These Gen Z girls may not care much about men or the so-called male gaze, but as it turns out, that doesn’t set them free. Their own gaze is brutal enough.

Lydia Millet’s latest novel, “A Children’s Bible,” will be published in May. Oligarchy By Scarlett Thomas 230 pp. Counterpoint. $26.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Melanie Lambrick FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Related Articles**

* [*‘The Seed Collectors,’ by Scarlett Thomas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/22/books/review/the-seed-collectors-by-scarlett-thomas.html)

1. [*Reading Minds*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/22/books/review/the-seed-collectors-by-scarlett-thomas.html)

**Load-Date:** January 24, 2020

**End of Document**



[***A Wide-Ranging Sampler of British Dance***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61W9-7HG1-JBG3-6216-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 29, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 14; CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

**Length:** 1019 words

**Byline:** By Brian Seibert

**Body**

The context of the pandemic provides ''Dancing Nation'' with the common themes of loss, touch and confinement.

When one door closes, another opens. During the pandemic, that maxim has acquired a corollary for concert dance: When theater doors shut, digital portals proliferate. With Britain is in another lockdown, Sadler's Wells Theater in London is shut to audiences, but its dance programming is now accessible on its website for free, at least in the form of a tasting menu, three hourlong shows called ''Dancing Nation.''

For London audiences, it's partly a take-what-you-can-get substitute. But for the rest of the world, this is something we didn't have before, certainly not in so convenient a package: an opportunity to sample British dance. And the selections, most filmed at the theater recently, are clearly designed as a sampler: big national institutions alongside upstarts, a range of styles, a geographical spread.

''You don't think of the U.K. as a dancing nation, but it is,'' Alistair Spalding, the artistic director of Sadler's Wells, says in the first episode. That statement is telling. These are shows that profess to believe in dance (and take pride in the local scene) but presume that audiences don't -- that they need to be sold.

''Dancing Nation'' is a collaboration with BBC Arts, and the programs have the feel of a BBC travel show. The veteran correspondent Brenda Emmanus hosts, introducing each piece with boosterish adjectives (''astonishing,'' ''groundbreaking''), brochure descriptions (''a powerful piece about a couple dealing with depression'') and instructions on how to react (''once seen, never forgotten''). After each dance, she continues the hand holding, repeating some of those elements, just in case.

Before some footage, Emmanus interviews choreographers and artistic directors, checking in on how they've been surviving, on who was able to put on live shows between lockdowns, on how they've converted to digital. Nothing really rises above polite chitchat, but in this way the shows deliver a little contextual padding, a little news.

In all, it's a reassuring product, welcoming a broad audience with conventions of bland professionalism. That's surely useful -- would that PBS apply the same to American dance!-- but I couldn't help but wish for something more artful, if not more challenging, something more trusting of dance to justify itself.

As for the dances themselves, they are unsurprisingly a mixed bag. Almost all samplers are, and this one has a fast-forward option. What's distinctive here is the context of the pandemic: the common themes of loss, touch and confinement, and how each work, in that context, strains for relevance.

The best program is the second one, and not only because it contains the star pairing of Akram Khan and Natalia Osipova, together for the first time. His ''Mud of Sorrow: Touch'' starts with recited text: ''Who will remember the history of touch?'' And touch they do. The melding of his kathak-contemporary style with her ballet results in a four-armed creature, part Shiva, part swan. That's striking, though it's more moving when they dance in simple ballroom position, and when she leaves and his arms go empty.

The second program also includes part of ''Hope Hunt and the Ascension into Lazarus'' by the breakout Belfast choreographer Oona Doherty. A woman rolls out of the back of a car and postures like a ***working-class*** man. The excerpt is truncated, but it serves to introduce an important, original voice and also to confirm its power, since the piece retains its force without the choreographer in the calling-card role she originated.

The second program is representative too in presenting strong hip-hop and weak ballet. ''Lazuli Sky,'' a new work by Will Tuckett for Birmingham Royal Ballet, is fluid, conventionally pretty and entirely ordinary. But a section of ''Blak Whyte Gray,'' a 2017 work by the hip-hop troupe Boy Blue, is still urgent, a trio of precise robots, prisoners who inspire empathy as puppets do.

And a piece of ''BLKDOG,'' a 2018 effort by Far From the Norm, is enough to establish its choreographer, Botis Seva, as a major new talent. Hooded figures sit, shake, run, fall. When they cover ground quickly in a squat, knees pistoning, feet scurrying like a ballerina's in bourrées, it's the most piercing moment of dance action in the whole festival.

For strongest selection in the festival, ''BLKDOG'' is in competition with Matsena Productions' ''Shades of Blue,'' which begins the third episode. Contemporary hip-hop has its conventions, too, like this work's prison cells of light and zombie motion. The image of a police officer standing on a Black man's back is all too familiar. But the chaotic repetitions of protest and imprisonment capture an emotion of 2020 better than anything else in ''Dancing Nation.'' At the end, a Black man soliloquizes to an empty auditorium. ''Are you numb?'' he asks. The silence, he says, is frightening.

Nothing else in the third program cuts through like that. Not Northern Ballet's ''States of Mind,'' with its hokey voice-over about pandemic loneliness and the healing power of love. Not Shobana Jeyasingh's ''Contagion,'' a 2018 evocation of the 1918 Spanish Flu. And certainly not Rambert's new ''Rouge,'' in which Marion Motin's music-video moves stagnate without music-video editing.

The first episode is the feeblest, and the anomaly, in the sense that the ballet is solid (Matthew Bourne's ''Spitfire,'' a funny 1988 sendup of male vanity and underwear ads) and the hip-hop is wispy (a trip through the Sadler's Wells building, courtesy of Breakin' Convention).

Despite the faults and limitations of ''Dancing Nation,'' a dance lover across an ocean from London can be grateful for it. It's too soon to say whether such presentations will continue after the pandemic. Asked about what's most needed, Jonzi D of Breakin' Convention answers with the hope that audiences will return to the theater ''and experience real dance in the flesh.'' Alistair Spalding's answer? ''Ticket sales.''Dancing NationAvailable at sadlerswells.com.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/28/arts/dance/dancing-nation-sadlers-wells.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/28/arts/dance/dancing-nation-sadlers-wells.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, Akram Khan and Natalia Osipova in Khan's ''Mud of Sorrow: Touch,'' part of ''Dancing Nation'' from Sadler's Wells. Far left, ''Shades of Blue'' from Matsena Productions. Left, a scene from the Belfast choreographer Oona Doherty's ''Hope Hunt and the Ascension Into Lazarus.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BBC ARTS/SADLER'S WELLS)

**Load-Date:** January 29, 2021

**End of Document**